

CAPTURING THE WORLD:

Creative Nature and Landscape Photography

BY **PETER BAUMGARTEN**



◀ “Spring Breakup” Manitoulin Island has innumerable bays and during the winter, most freeze solid. A sure sign of spring is when the ice starts to pile up on the shore. It’s the perfect foreground feature for a landscape photo. This was shot just a short distance from where I live on Manitowaning Bay. Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve can be seen in the distance. (Manitowaning)



“Wolf Moon Rising” The full moon in January is called the Wolf Moon, and it wasn’t until I viewed this shot on my computer that I realized I caught an animal running on the ice. It could be a dog, or a coyote, but I’d like to think it was a wolf making its way across the bay as the moon rose over the Escarpment in Wikwemikong. (South Baymouth)

Photographer, educator, outdoor enthusiast, father, husband, grandpa, actor, singer —

these are some of the labels that can be attached to me, a down-to-earth guy who lives on Manitoulin Island in northern Ontario. As a photographer, I specialize in nature and landscape photography. Recently, I have started to delve more deeply into the “dark side” of photography – astro-landscapes. I don’t like to be constrained by those styles of imagery, however, and will often shoot all types of subject matter. If it catches my eye, I’ll photograph it. I love exploring the natural world and you can often find me out hiking, canoeing or kayaking.

My interest in photography started when I was 12. I had just finished my first summer job and my dad suggested I use my creative skill and invest my newly-earned money in a 35mm SLR camera. I was hooked! I loved the challenge of trying to capture the world in a small rectangular frame.

I grew up in Sauble Beach, at the base of the Bruce Peninsula, with miles of fields, forests, lakes and rivers to explore. It seemed natural for my eye to be attracted to the beauty of the great outdoors, and today it’s still my favourite subject matter to photograph. I recently retired from teaching, after 30 years.

I now operate my own business, Creative Island Photography and am an Olympus Visionary, the only Canadian ambassador for the company. My goal in all of my images is to try and capture the world around me in ways that most people miss.



► “Organized Chaos” A thick fog greeted the day and that got me excited. I love shooting in fog because it helps isolate your subject. With that in mind I headed to a local wetland on Manitoulin Island and spent some time shooting the skeletonized trees and their almost perfect reflections. (Squirreltown)



► “Rocking the Galaxy” I am an avid astro-landscape photographer and Manitoulin Island is the perfect location to enjoy this pursuit. There are countless areas in which to enjoy dark skies. To capture this scene, I crawled under one of the overhangs of the Niagara Escarpment and photographed the Milky Way rising in the east. (South Bay, Tehkummah Township)



◀ “Memories of the Old Days” I love photographing grand landscapes, whether it be in the mountains, the desert, or at a stunning waterfall. But a rural landscape can be just as impressive and tell an even better story. Manitoulin is filled with history and the old farmsteads are definitely part of that history. (Assignack Township)



◀ “Stars on Ice” During the winter, when the core of the Milky Way is no longer visible, I enjoy shooting star trails. In order to create this shot I started shooting an hour before the moonrise and then stopped just after the moon crested over the eastern horizon. (South Bay, Tehkummah Township)



▲ “Building an ice Wall” Each winter Bridal Veil Falls in Kagawong freezes up. Although the falls has plenty of summer visitors, I find that it is most appealing in the winter. This was photographed in mid December, just as the ice wall was beginning to form. (Kagawong)



▲ “A Room with a View” This old, concrete farmhouse is well known by anyone who regularly travels Hwy 6 on Manitoulin. It is located at Ten Mile Point, one of the best scenic views on the Island. The snake rail fence is also indicative of Manitoulin. Many operating farms still use these barriers to keep their livestock in the fields. (Ten Mile Point, Sheguiandah Township)



▲ “Winter Blanket” A fresh blanket of snow covers this field and abandoned farmhouse. Winter is a great time for landscape photography. The scenery can change dramatically from day to day and the snow can add a pristine look to greyish landscapes of late autumn.



▲ “A Piece of History” I love the old farmhouses that can be found on Manitoulin Island. Each has a story to tell about the life of its inhabitants, but many of those stories have been silenced over time. (Clover Valley, Assignack Township)



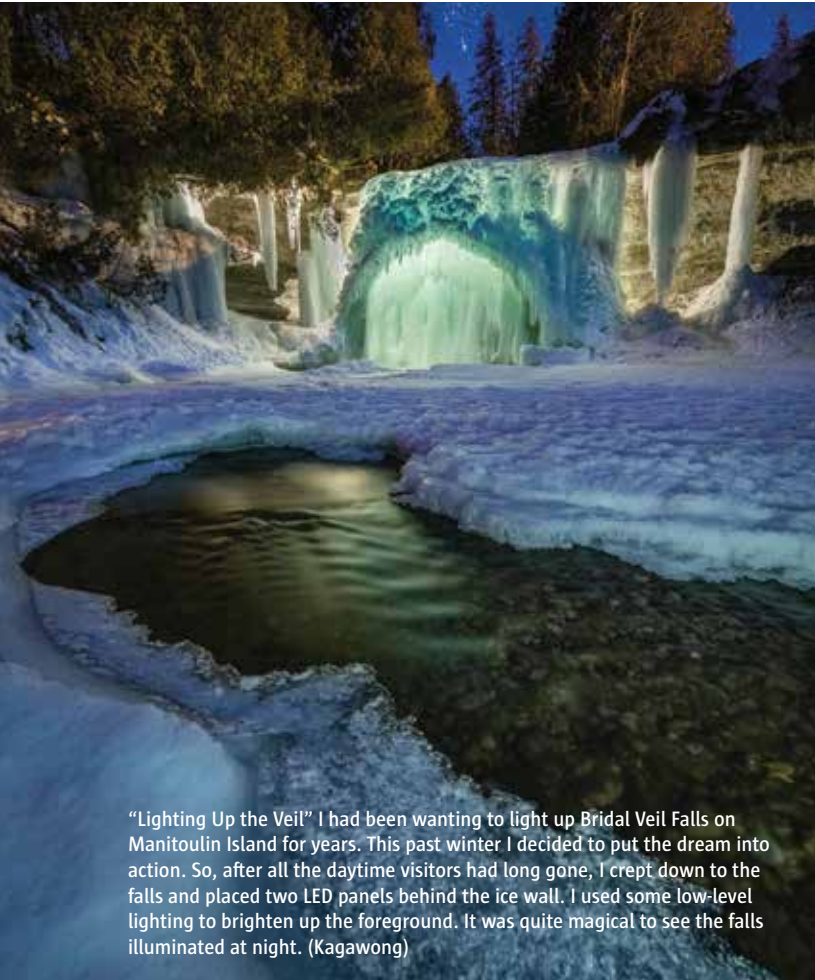
▲ “Behind the Wall” Bridal Veil Falls is an overhanging waterfall. This means there is plenty of room to climb behind the falls, including during the winter when a spectacular ice wall forms. The daylight is transmitted through the ice, making it glow with a beautiful teal colour. (Kagawong)



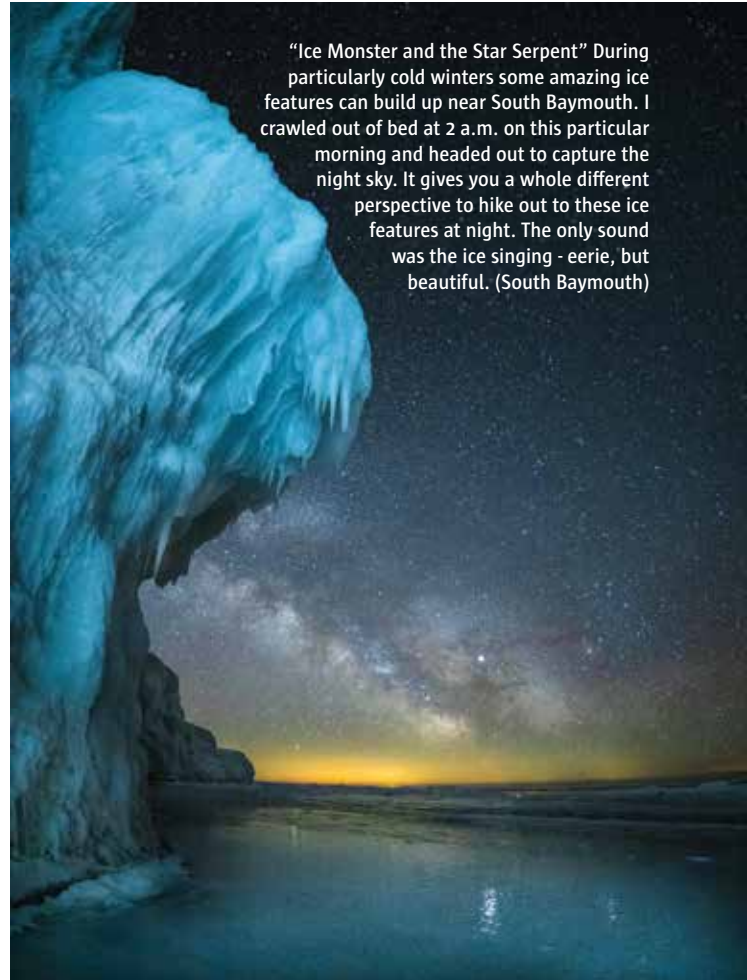
“Snow Drift” Ten Mile Point, on the eastern end of Manitoulin has one of the most spectacular lookouts found anywhere. This is definitely one of the highest Escarpment views and is a great place to capture the sunrise, regardless of the season. This image was photographed just a few days before spring’s arrival but winter still had a firm grip on the landscape. (Ten Mile Point, Sheguiandah)



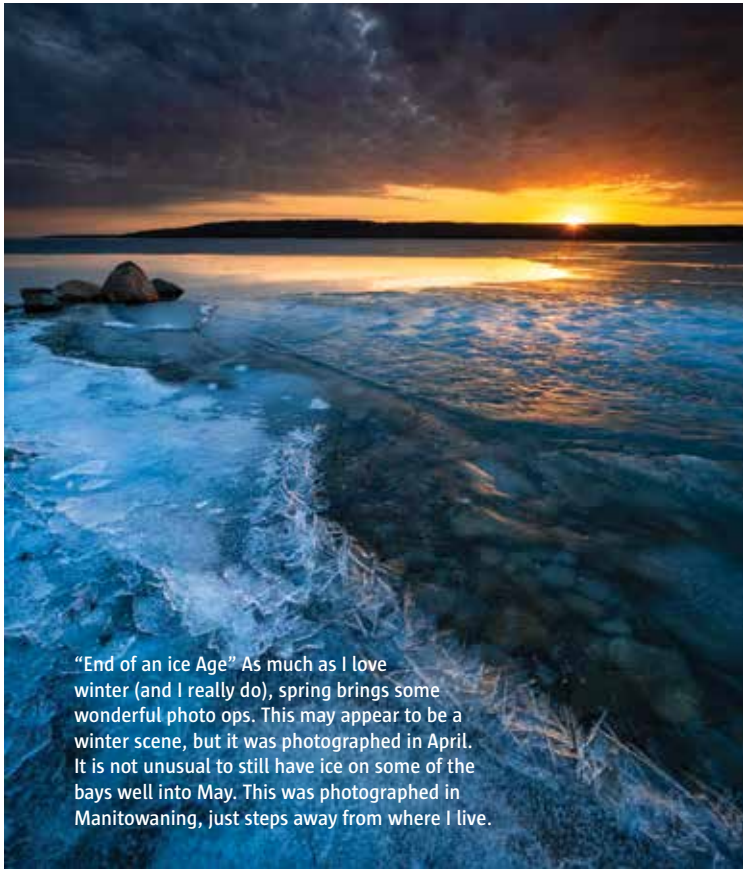
“On Top of the World” As a landscape photographer my day often starts early. I arrived at the head of the Cup and Saucer hiking trail when it was still dark in order to capture the sunrise. After about a 45-minute walk in rather dim conditions I arrived at the popular lookout and was quite surprised to find a young couple had gotten there ahead of me. (Township of Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands)



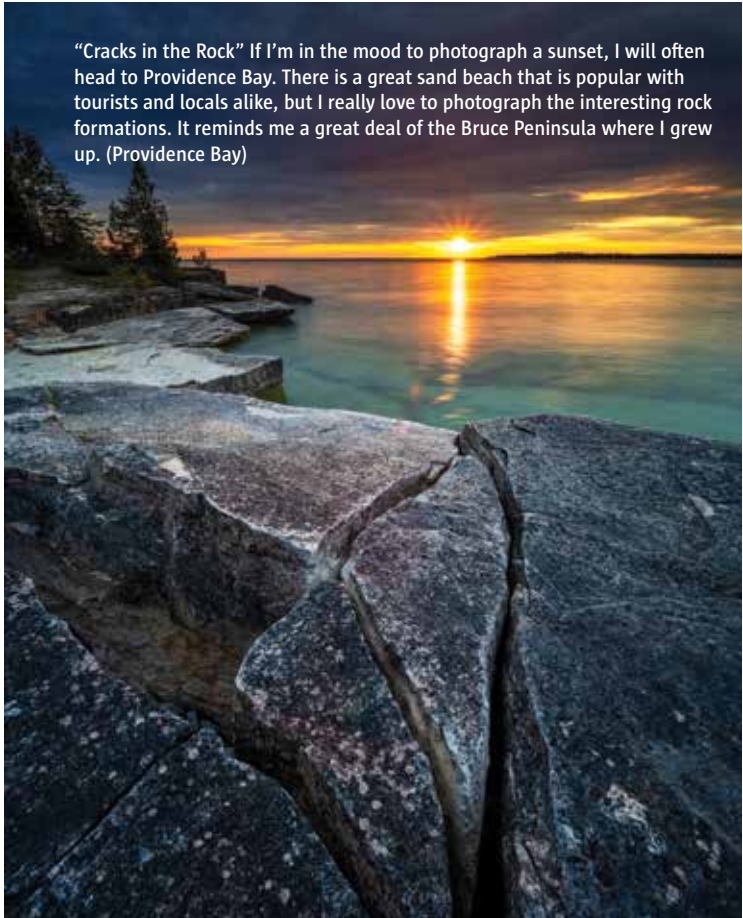
“Lighting Up the Veil” I had been wanting to light up Bridal Veil Falls on Manitoulin Island for years. This past winter I decided to put the dream into action. So, after all the daytime visitors had long gone, I crept down to the falls and placed two LED panels behind the ice wall. I used some low-level lighting to brighten up the foreground. It was quite magical to see the falls illuminated at night. (Kagawong)



“Ice Monster and the Star Serpent” During particularly cold winters some amazing ice features can build up near South Baymouth. I crawled out of bed at 2 a.m. on this particular morning and headed out to capture the night sky. It gives you a whole different perspective to hike out to these ice features at night. The only sound was the ice singing - eerie, but beautiful. (South Baymouth)



“End of an ice Age” As much as I love winter (and I really do), spring brings some wonderful photo ops. This may appear to be a winter scene, but it was photographed in April. It is not unusual to still have ice on some of the bays well into May. This was photographed in Manitowaning, just steps away from where I live.



“Cracks in the Rock” If I’m in the mood to photograph a sunset, I will often head to Providence Bay. There is a great sand beach that is popular with tourists and locals alike, but I really love to photograph the interesting rock formations. It reminds me a great deal of the Bruce Peninsula where I grew up. (Providence Bay)

For more about Peter Baumgarten’s photography, see creativeislandphoto.com, facebook.com/creativeislandphoto, instagram.com/creativeislandphoto.

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