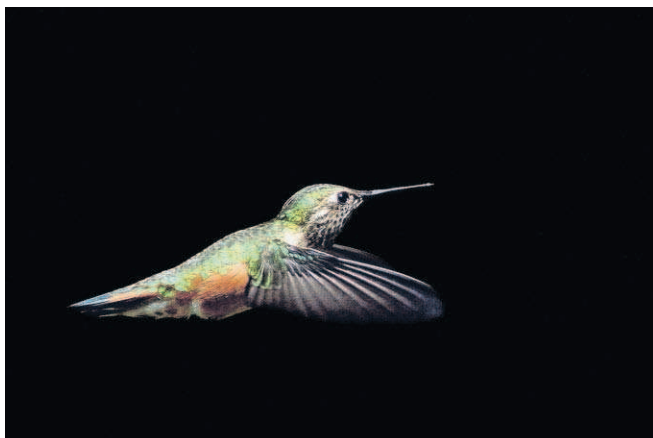




Submitted photo by Michael Wing

A hummingbird, caught in midair by photographer Michael Wing, is a popular attraction for visitors at Fairweather House and Garden in Seaside, where photos taken by Wing and his grandfather, Neal Maine, are featured.

Costal life

Continued from page 8

get,” Maine said.

He points to the photo of a male salmon with a big hook nose. “It just says, ‘spawning, life cycle, migration.’”

What Maine calls Wing’s “finest picture of all” is just a simple icicle.

“He’s just walking along a stream and then stops, and all of a sudden he’s laying almost flat in the water. The way the water had been going — it built that perfect icicle.”

Wing was about 13 years old when he shot the photo.

“I just saw an icicle on the end of a stick, and I thought ‘Oh that’s pretty cool, I’m going to lay down and get a different angle’ and just took the picture,” he said.

Usually the youngster looked for “action” shots, like a fish swimming or a hummingbird flying. But, eventually, he learned that waiting has its rewards.

“And that’s another thing I learned from photography, (that) patience is key,” Wing said. “And I use it in everyday life now. I’m not constantly in a hurry to do anything; I just take life one step at a time, no matter how long it takes that step.”

Some of the photos taken throughout the years are set up in their own “gallery” corner at Fairweather House and Garden in Seaside. They are

popular attractions during the city’s First Saturday Art Walk.

“People come in, and their jaws drop. It’s more than a pretty picture; there’s a story behind it,” Denise Fairweather said, who owns the shop.

They seem to have pride of ownership over some photos, especially those of the local elk crossing the Necanicum estuary or bobbing up in dune grass. “They call it ‘our elk,’” Fairweather said.

Forty percent of the proceeds from the photos’ sales



Submitted photo by Michael Wing

“For some reason, I can tell when things are just about to be spooked or fly,” says Michael Wing, recalling this shot of a wood duck lifting off from Neacoxie Creek.

goes to the North Coast Land Conservancy. Maine was on the conservancy’s founding board and was its executive director for many years. Since its inception in 1985, the conservancy has raised money to buy and preserve hundreds of acres of ecologically sensitive land between the Columbia River, Lincoln City, the Coast Range and the ocean.

“PacificLight Images has been a wonderful asset in support of the North Coast Land Conservancy and conservation on the coast,” said Katie Voelke, the conservancy’s director. “Yes, significant funds have been raised,

but the awareness and the inspiration that the images create for people is priceless.

“It’s so easy to drive past the natural world around us and take it for granted during busy work-a-day life,” she added. “The images that they capture of the phenomenal natural world surrounding us all allows people time to pause and take it all in, and this often leads to a desire to care for it as well.”

While the mission is

worthwhile, the fun is the photography. Even if that means spending hours operating a 12-pound, 500 mm lens on a tripod while covered in shrubs, waiting for the split second when a wood duck lifts off a stream.

“I think maybe a twig snapped, and it completely spooked him,” Wing recalled of that particular experience on Neacoxie Creek. “For some reason, I can tell when things are just about to be spooked or fly — they sort of get this hunch to them that I notice. I held down the trigger just enough to get two

shots as he was taking off.

“I looked down at the (camera) screen and I turned to Grandpa, and I said, ‘Oh boy!’”

Maine and Wing say they will continue to tell the story about the wildlife wonders on the North Coast.

“We want the photograph not to be the end but the means to living in paradise and valuing it as a quality of life issue, not so much just conservation,” Maine said. “When you pay attention to what’s going on around you here, you have a wildlife safari every day.”

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