

# March 9, 2024: Northern Lights Photography Workshop Recap

written by Chris Guibert | March 15, 2024

The March 9, 2024 Northern Lights Photography Workshop was the second workshop this year. The January Night Sky Photo Workshop was canceled due to weather, however we were able to host the February 9th, Northern Lights Photo Workshop. The monthly night sky photo workshops can have different themes throughout the year. Near the spring and fall equinoxes they are focused on the northern lights because that is “aurora season” (Please note auroras can be seen any time of year, they are just slightly more frequent near the spring and fall equinoxes). In the summer months the Milky Way is more prevalent in the Northern Hemisphere (where the Lodge is located) so during those times the workshops offer a more in-depth discussion of our home galaxy. Throughout the whole year we offer educational initiatives at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge in association with being the headquarters of the Keweenaw Dark Sky Park.

March 9, 2024 was a beautiful evening. I checked our Ambient Weather Station and it was 28 degrees before the workshop started. The guests at the lodge witnessed a colorful sunset over Brockway Mountain. It seemed as if Mother Nature wanted to provide us a little creative inspiration to start our night.

Unfortunately, our regular instructor, Nate Bett, had called in sick a few hours before the class. I reached out to another one of our instructors, Tom Oliver but I was unsure if he would make it. I started to prepare to teach the class myself using Nate’s

curriculum but then I received a text from Tom saying he was available. Tom is currently the Director, Center for Science and Environmental Outreach at Michigan Tech and had previously worked at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge. He has a rich and diverse background in education, wildlife biology and photography. Coincidentally he was teaching a class earlier in the day at Copper Country Arts Center, Photograph the Aurora Using Science, Data, and Forecasting. Apparently he was up for round two!

Having taught this workshop before, Tom used his own presentation. Only one participant had shown up for the workshop so she was treated to a personable one-on-one lesson. The guest and I listened intently as Tom touched base on camera techniques, locations to shoot and equipment. The Night Sky Photo Workshops are broken into two segments: an inside presentation and an outside, hands-on portion. Outside it was still clear skies, ideal to take some night sky photos. The guest informed us that since she traveled by plane and had left her photo gear at home. Tom asked if she would like to hear more about the aurora and offered to run through his Photograph the Aurora Using Science, Data, and Forecasting class. She thought that would be a great idea and Tom launched into a discussion on the science of the northern lights, referencing some of the many websites and apps that can help with aurora forecasting.

At the end of the night our minds were filled and we both left the Lodge with more knowledge than when we came. Thank you Tom! Our next photo workshop will be held during the [2024 Upper](#)

[Peninsula Dark Sky Festival](#) in April.

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[Chris Guibert](#)

Chris Guibert: I have a strong passion for all things outdoors and have worked as a tour guide and professional photographer for the last twenty five years. As the Lead of Outdoor Activities at the Mountain Lodge I want make sure you and your family have a great experience while staying and playing. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the trails, regional activities and local secrets.

