

Rod Sidley: photographer of birds and nature

Story by Cathy Hollander, photos by Rod Sidley

With offices at the crossroads of Springfield Pike and Wyoming Avenue, Rod Sidley's is a familiar face around Wyoming. He is widely known for his architectural designs. You may not know about his talent as a photographer. In fact, Sidley was a photographer before he was an architect. His works spans almost thirty years in pictures.

Photos reflect interest in nature

"Over time, I've amassed a collection of shots that I like," said Sidley. From the beginning, Sidley has recorded his interest in birds and nature.

"When I go from job site to job site, and I've been doing a lot of jobs in Indiana, I keep the camera with me," said Sidley. "A Kestrel was just sitting on a wire along a road in Indiana. They can actually stand still, hover in air like a helicopter. That's why I got a decent picture. I went to Maine for a project. I pulled off the road and I found a guy taking pictures of water birds. He told me where I could take pictures of eagles."

"Birds of prey are fascinating to me," said Sidley. "I try to get them, not sitting on a tree. I try to get them doing something. There might be three hundred



Robin in a snow storm eating a Hawthorn berry (from a tree outside of Dr. Kinlaw's office.)

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pictures to get one really usable one. I'd rather get a picture of a bird taking off, than a really good picture of one standing still."

Photos become books

Some of his photos are bound in books. *Birds and Butterflies* (2007-2008), *The Way I See it* (2005-2006), and *Rust Never Sleeps* (2009), his study of rusted objects, are his most recent books. He has an album of frogs and an album of flowers.

"Nature is the way I've looked at it," said Sidley. "It's a way of looking at things-- seeing pieces of things. It used to be that I'd only look at special things. A lot of the pictures in the early books are pictures of vacations. I find that now I can just go into my back yard, turn over a log, and find a picture of a beetle or grasshopper that's interesting."

Individual photos mounted on board capture the art he sees in a bird aloft or the unexpected purples of a frog camouflaged amid the brush and rocks. At his other home that he built in Vermont, he studies the frogs. A lot of times people see a panoramic of a mountain. Sidley would rather take a picture of a rock in the mountain.

How he does it

Sidley has two cameras, a digital SLR