Organization of Photos on your Computer

Donald Gudehus, February, 2016

Under my account name I have a folder called Images, and within that folder I have a folder for each month of each year labeled for example, as 2016-01, 2016-02, etc. Within each of those folders are folders for each camera, labeled, for example, as 1Ds, 5D, 5D II, 5D III, SD850, etc. The photo files from the camera cards are periodically placed into these folders. Each folder has a text file with the name Notes.rtf which contains each photo's name from the card, its date, location, and status. For example, a photo session at a nature preserve might initially be entered as:
Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, July 6, 2015
IMG_6219.JPG   Blue eyed grass
IMG_6220.JPG   "
IMG_6221.JPG   frog
IMG_6222.JPG   Crimson Columbine
IMG_6223.JPG   blue butterfly

Later, upon reviewing the photos, doing some editing with Photoshop, and making some identifications, the entries in Notes.rtf will look like
Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, July 6
IMG_6219.JPG   x   Blue eyed grass
IMG_6220.JPG   es   "
IMG_6221.JPG   e   Northern Red-legged Frog
IMG_6222.JPG   er   Crimson Columbine - Aquilegia formosa
IMG_6223.JPG   er   Blue Copper - Lycaena heteronea

The lower case letters in the second column have the following meanings:
e   The file has been edited
r   The file has been renamed
s   A small sized version of the file has aslo been created
x   The file has been deleted

The names of the photo files in the folder would then become
IMG_6220.JPG
IMG_6220e.jpg
IMG-6220es.jpg
IMG_6221.JPG
IMG_6221e.jpg
IMG_6222.JPG
Aquilegia_formosa_2015-07-06.jpg
IMG_6223.JPG
Lycaena_heteronea_2015-07-06.jpg

Note that the original files are retained. It's sometimes useful after an editing and/or renaming operation, to place the original file in a subfolder called "Originals of edited/renamed". If on your camera, you save in the raw format as well as JPG, then the entries in your Notes.rtf file might be
IMG_6300.CR2   e   Red ruffed Lemur
IMG_6300.JPG   "
Since in this case, editing should start from the raw file, the "e" sould be on the same line as the file with the CR2 extension. Even when saving as raw on your camera, it's useful to temporarily have the JPG files on your computer in order to have a quick look at the photo. Later after editing and renaming are complete, the JPG files can be deleted.

The next step is to put the renamed files into folders that match the subject of the files. Therefore, Aquilegia_formosa_2015-07-06.jpg would go into a folder called Plants, and Lycaena heteronea_2015-07-06.jpg would go into a folder called Insects. If you have more than one photo for a particular species for that date, add subscripts to the names, e.g. Aquilegia_formosa_2015-07-06_2.jpg. Each folder for given subject should have a correponding text file which lists each file in the folder along with its

pertinent data. The text files could be kept in your Images folder or in each corresponding file folder. Here is are a few lines of my text file "Notes for Mammals.rtf".

Family Cercopithecidae Gray, 1821 - Old World Monkeys
Subfamily Cercopithecinae Gray, 1821 - Baboons, Macaques, and Vervet Monkeys
Tribe Cercopithecini
Chlorocebus pygerythrus (Linnaeus, 1758) - The Vervet Monkey

New File Name	Origin	Date	Location	Sex
Chlorocebus_pygerythrus_2007-01-02.jpg	5D IMG_1260e.jpg	Jan. 2, 2007	Singita Game Reserve, Sabi Sand Reserve, South Africa	

Tribe Papionini
Papio ursinus griseipes (Pocock, 1911) - The Chacma Baboon aka Gray-footed Chacma

New File Name	Origin	Date	Location	Sex
Papio_ursinus_griseipes_2007-01-02_1.jpg	5D IMG_1359e.jpg	Jan. 2, 2007	Singita Game Reserve, Sabi Sand Reserve, South Africa	F
Papio_ursinus_griseipes_2007-01-02_2.jpg*	5D IMG_1360e.jpg	Jan. 2, 2007	Singita Game Reserve, Sabi Sand Reserve, South Africa	F
Papio_ursinus_griseipes_2007-01-03_1.jpg*	5D IMG_1408e.jpg	Jan. 3, 2007	Singita Game Reserve, Sabi Sand Reserve, South Africa	F
Papio_ursinus_griseipes_2007-01-03_2.jpg	5D IMG_1409e.jpg	Jan. 3, 2007	Singita Game Reserve, Sabi Sand Reserve, South Africa	F

The asterisk indicates that that particular photo is used in a special collection of photos, say a website on the internet.

Although the examples presented here fall under the category of nature photography, photographs on any subject could be organized in a similar way. For example, photos of family members, photos of sports activities, photos of musical activities, etc