

SENSOR DUST

By Bob Huelsdonk

Last January, I submitted a digital projected competition print from my digital Canon D60 SLR which showed some wind generators against a plain blue sky. Two of our discerning members, Jean Timmermeister and Valerie Henschel commented that the sky had a dim but noticeable dust spot on it. I had not noticed it on my computer screen or even on the projected image until it was pointed out.

Returning home, I put the print on my computer screen. Indeed it showed as about a 1/2 inch, slightly darker blob (on an 8x10 image). I then increased the contrast greatly, and lo and

behold, there were five such spots. Most of them were on the non-sky portions of the print. I then took a photo of a grey sky and again increased the contrast. The spots showed very well.

I took a small squeeze blower I bought years ago (on the left in the picture) and used the special clean function of the camera to lock the mirror up and expose the sensor, I blew over the surface of the sensor, being careful not to touch it, and then tried another sky shot. Four of the spots had gone away but one was left. I then gave it another dose of the small blower to no avail.

I then purchased a much larger blower with a bulb about four inches long made by Giotto (in the picture on the right) and went through the process again. This time success; I got a uniform gray from an over cast sky.

Single Lens Reflex cameras are more subject to dust infiltration than point and shoot (mostly sealed) cameras since the inner workings are exposed when lenses are changed.

I would encourage photographers to check for dust as a regular maintenance function.



The most violent element of society is ignorance.

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