

January 2020

1. This is Morro Bay on November 24, shot with my Phantom 4 Pro at ISO 100, f/4, 1/120 raw and enhanced with Luminar. Sea otters tend to rest together in single-sex groups called rafts. A raft typically contains 10 to 100 animals. They are the heaviest members of the weasel family, but among the smallest marine mammals. They didn't seem scared of the drone, and I probably could have gotten closer, but didn't want to get accused of harassing wildlife.
2. Kayakers and larger tour boats came up to the otters, and eventually they dissipated. This was shot with my Canon 5D Mark 4 at 340mm, ISO 100, f10, and a too slow shutter speed of 1/20. Sea otters have an exceptionally thick coat of fur, the densest in the animal kingdom. They once numbered at 150,000 to 200,000 but were hunted extensively between 1741 and 1911 and their population fell to 1,000 to 2,000 individuals. With a ban on hunting and other conservation efforts, their population has rebounded but the sea otter remains classified as an endangered species.
3. This lone tree caught my eye at Big Sur November 26, here shot at 200 mm, ISO 100, f/5.6, 1/250. It is along Highway 1 between Wild Cattle and Prewitt Creeks, south of Kirk Creek Campground.
4. Here is the same lone tree from the perspective of my drone, shot at ISO 100, f/5, 1/200. This is not to be confused with the famous Lone Cypress in Pebble Beach along the 17-mile drive, an icon that has become one of the photographed trees in North America, and is the logo for a resort.
5. Here the one-inch sensor drone works well in low light on the cranes at UCSD at 6:45 a.m. December 18 shot at ISO 100, f/4.5, 1/200. For this \$400 drone job I got some amazing footage. You can see videos of this, and the otters and lone tree, at [YOUTUBE PAUL EMUS](#).