

## Canadian Nature Photographer Image Critique by Robert Berdan ©

**Image:** Baby Swift Fox

**Photographer's Name:** John Doe **Experience:** Advanced

**Photographers Contact:** [johndoe@hotmail.com](mailto:johndoe@hotmail.com)



**Description of the image – what is the photographer trying to show in this image? What is there? Does the photo have a message or story?**

Baby swift fox lying in the grass – green grass on the left of the picture slightly out of focus, red colors in out of focus background – the light appears to be soft overcast, no distinct shadows, colors appear saturated. The eye and nose are in focus and the shot overall appears to be sharp. The image was taken at a low angle – photographer appears to have used a telephoto lens set to a wide aperture to put the background out of focus. The Bokeh (out-of-focus area in an image produced by a camera lens using a shallow depth of field) is soft and does not detract from the main subject – except for the red colors

The image shows a baby animal, resting quietly. The eyes stare directly at the viewer and engage anyone looking at this photo. The animal does not appear to be disturbed or threatened by the photographers' presence if visible. Photo may have been taken from a blind or perhaps the animal was in a zoo or rehabilitation center.

**Analysis and Composition - How do the elements in the picture relate to each other? Do the elements support each other or detract? Has the photographer used elements of design such a form, shape, line to draw and direct the viewers attention?**

The main element in the picture is the fox, a viewer is first drawn to the eyes which have small soft highlights, then the nose and finally to the background colors. The red color in the background is a bit distracting in that it should not pull the viewers eye off the foxes eyes or face. The grass on the left side is soft and out of focus – this image would be better if the grass were not present. It is appreciated that it might not have been possible to remove the grass, but the photographer might have been able to move a bit more to the right as the grass hides part of the animal. On the other hand, the fact that the foreground grass is out of focus as is the background helps to isolate the animal between the foreground and background with the narrow depth of field. Though the image has a narrow depth of field the most important elements the eyes and nose are sharp and in focus. The position of the eyes are slightly off centered which is good, had the eye been placed in the centre of the frame it would not be as effective. A bit of darkening (vignetting) around the outside of the image helps draw the viewer to the animals face.

**Technical aspects of the image – is it sharp, in focus, color correct, does it show artifacting, is the exposure good, are there components that are distracting, too bright, too dark or that should be left out of the picture?**

The main components of the image are sharp, exposure looks good with lots of detail in the fur and a soft highlight in the eyes. The photographer appears to have burned around the image of the image and possibly the background creating a vignette that tries to separate the fox from the background, but these effects could be more effective if they were more subtle. The colors are saturated, perhaps too saturated in parts of the photo. Pulling the saturation down just a little bit might make the image more effective and draw less attention to the colors and put more emphasis on the animal's eyes.

**Mood and feeling – has the photographer presented the image in such a way as to create a mood or feeling in the image? Has the photographer used unusual lighting to achieve this?**

The overall mood is relaxed with soft overcast light. The colors bit too saturated especially in the backgrounds. This photo might be appropriate for a children's book, poster, calendar or postcard.

**Viewpoint and originality. Has the photographer showed us something new or taken an unusual viewpoint to enhance the image?**

The photographer has taken this photo low to the ground and made an effort to get to the animals level. The grass is a bit of a distraction. While the animal is "beautiful" or cute, the fox does not reveal any special behavior other than it is resting. Nice shot but not a great or outstanding image.

**General comments and suggestions for improvement.**

Overall the image has some strong points technically, the subject matter is attractive, and swift foxes are relatively rare making this photograph publishable and sellable. The photograph however is not likely to be a winning shot because technically it could be improved and the photograph does not reveal any special behaviour or emotional quality. Impact is good, but not great.

**Request for Feed back: (Photographers response to the comments)**

**Was the information useful if not why not?**

For the most part I think your comments are correct. While the grass is distracting, there really wasn't anything I could do about it. I agree the red colors in the background are somewhat distracting and toning them down might improve the shot, but I also thought the color adds to the image.

**What would you like to know that the reviewer did not touch on?**

I was wondering if this photo might have been improved by using a fill flash set to about minus 2 F-stops so as to add a more distinct highlight in the eyes.

Reviewrs Response – maybe, but it might also scare the animal or come across as looking artificial – still if you were finished this could be something you try at the end as you might only get one chance

**Overall do you think the review was good value?**

Yes I appreciate the honest opinion and I am encouraged to try and improve my photography.