



BUZZ

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JULY 2010

DONNA BRUNET *macro photography*

Managing Your Digital Images

When it comes to digital photos, there are three primary goals:

- get the photographs off of your camera and onto your computer
- make sure that you never lose any photographs
- be able to find any photograph that is on your computer

I was stunned recently when I learned that several people I know had photographs that were taken months, and even years, ago that were still only on a memory card. They also couldn't find specific

photographs they had taken and wanted to share with others.

Leaving photographs only on a memory card is asking for problems. The cards are very small and easily lost. While unusual, the cards can also develop errors which prevent photos from downloading. If the images are only on the card, there is only a single copy of the image. You should always have multiple copies of any digital file that is important to you.

To ensure that you never lose any images, you should have

a second copy of your files, preferably not in the same place as your computer. In case of fire, theft, etc., you don't want the same thing to happen to your backup as happened to your computer. Store the off-site backup at your office, the home of family or friends, or in a safe-deposit box. Just not right next to your computer. I have two backups, one off-site and the other next to my computer so I can back up each day. Approximately once a week, the backups trade locations so the off-site backup stays current.

Yellowjacket Hover Fly (*Milesia virginiensis*)

Many flies resemble stinging insects; this fly is a mimic of the Southern Yellowjacket. Predators might ignore this fly because they think it can sting.

The adults feed on nectar from a variety of flowers; the larvae feed on decaying wood.

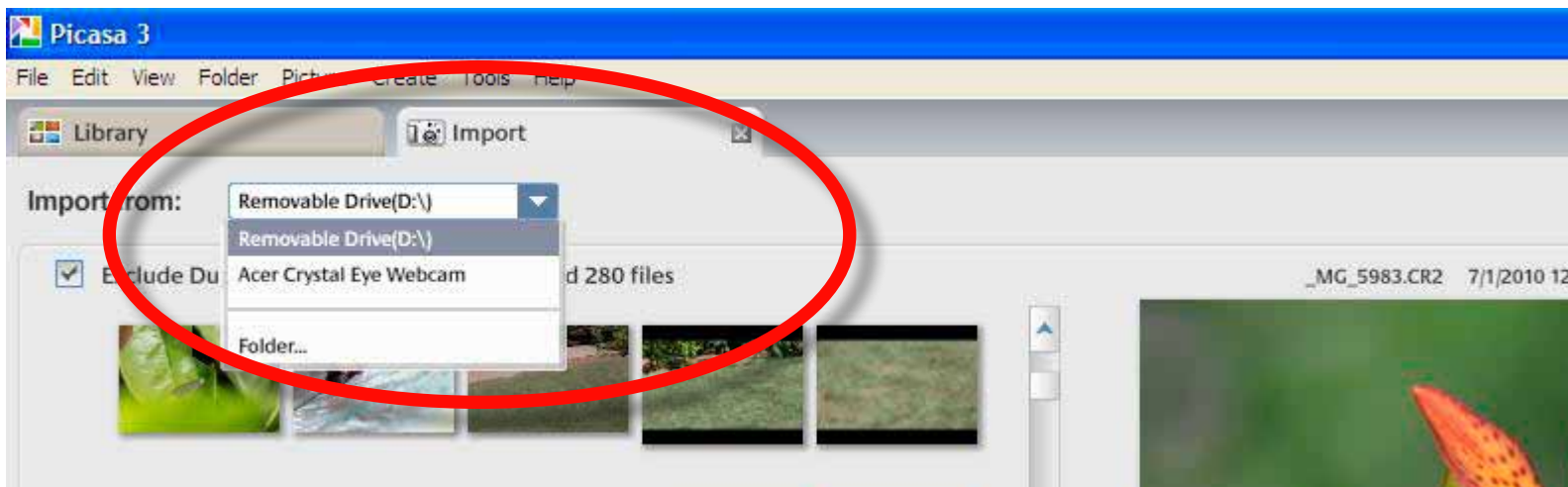


The most important thing about a backup strategy is to make sure you keep up with it – whether you decide you need to backup every day or every week, or whatever seems best for you. You need to backup frequently enough to minimize your risk of losing files.

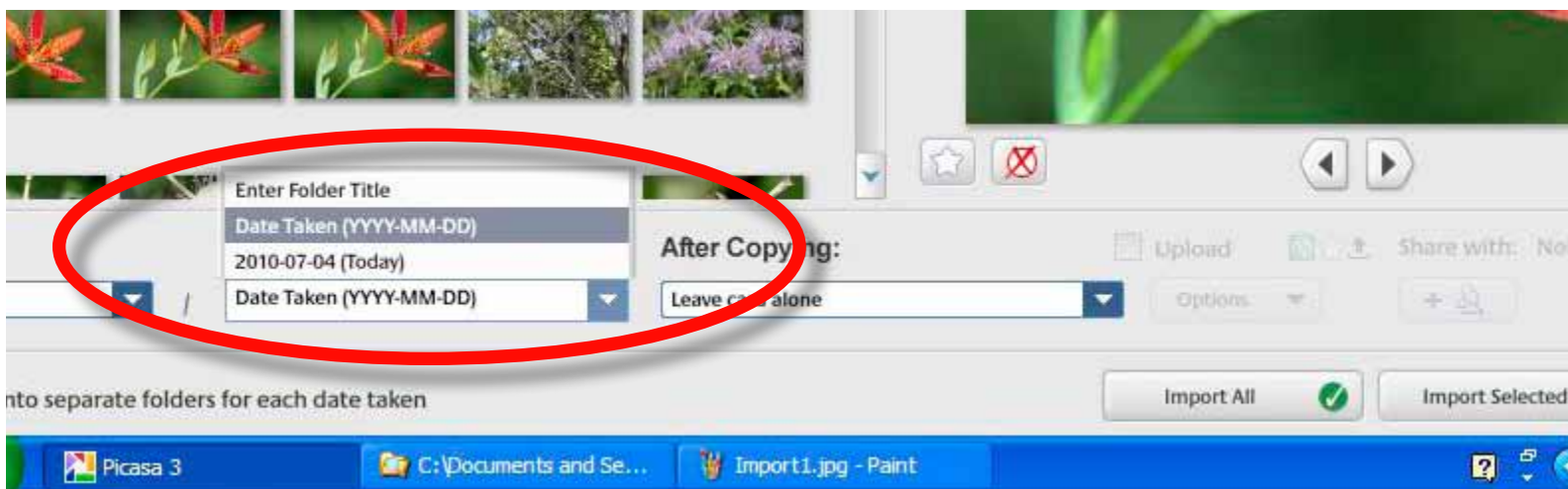
Images are much easier to locate if you use cataloging software such as Lightroom or Picasa. If you don't currently have any photography software on your computer, Picasa is a great option. It is provided free from Google; get it at <http://picasa.google.com> (make sure you download the correct file – either for Windows,

Mac or Linux).

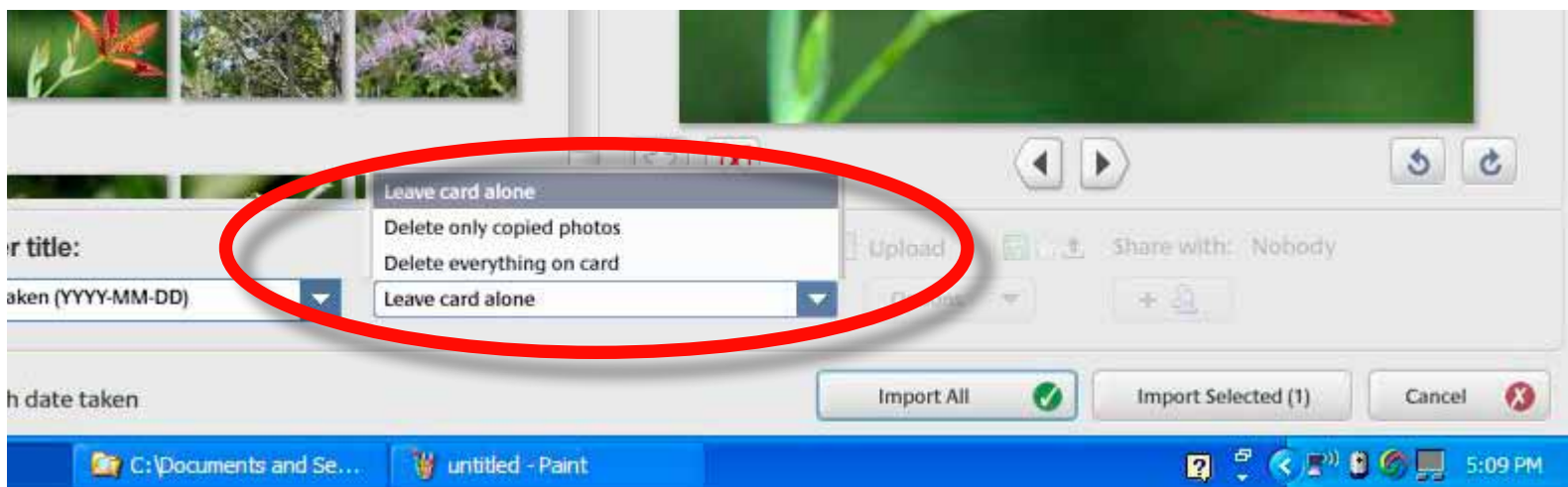
When you install Picasa, it will scan either your entire computer or just a portion of it (your choice) for images to put into its database. The actual files remain in their original location. Picasa is an easy way to select a particular image, perform some basic editing, and share images with friends and family. Keywords, stars, and albums help to quickly find any image. Picasa can also edit jpgs without saving over your original files. The program does this by maintaining a database of your images, edits, and albums.



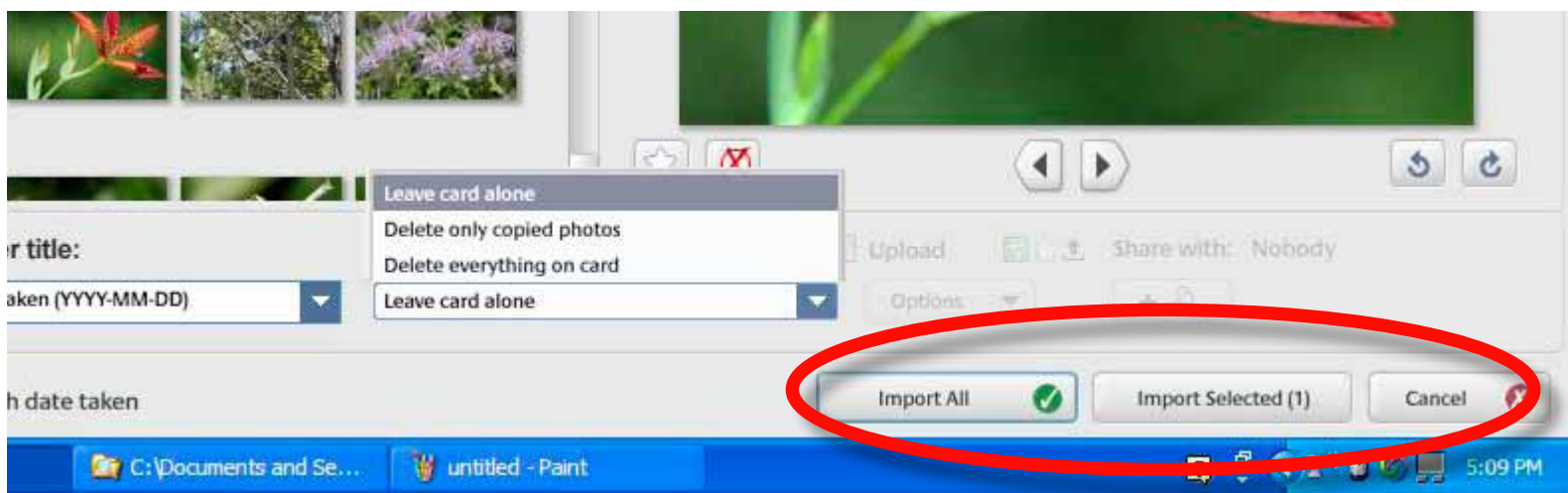
The above Picasa screenshot was taken while downloading images from a compact flash card inserted into a card reader. Click on the Import tab at the top of the screen and then select the appropriate drive from the drop-down list.



At the bottom of the screen, select one of the date choices for a folder name or type in any folder name you would like.



Then select a choice from the drop-down menu indicating what Picasa should do with the card from the camera after copying the images to your computer. "Leave card alone" is the best option.



Click "Import All" if you would like to copy all of the images on the card to your computer. Otherwise, select multiple images by shift-clicking on the thumbnails and then click "Import Selected."

Downloading Images from Your Camera with Picasa

Most cameras use memory cards to store photos rather than built-in internal memory. While you can connect your camera to your computer to download images, it's usually faster and easier to use a card reader.

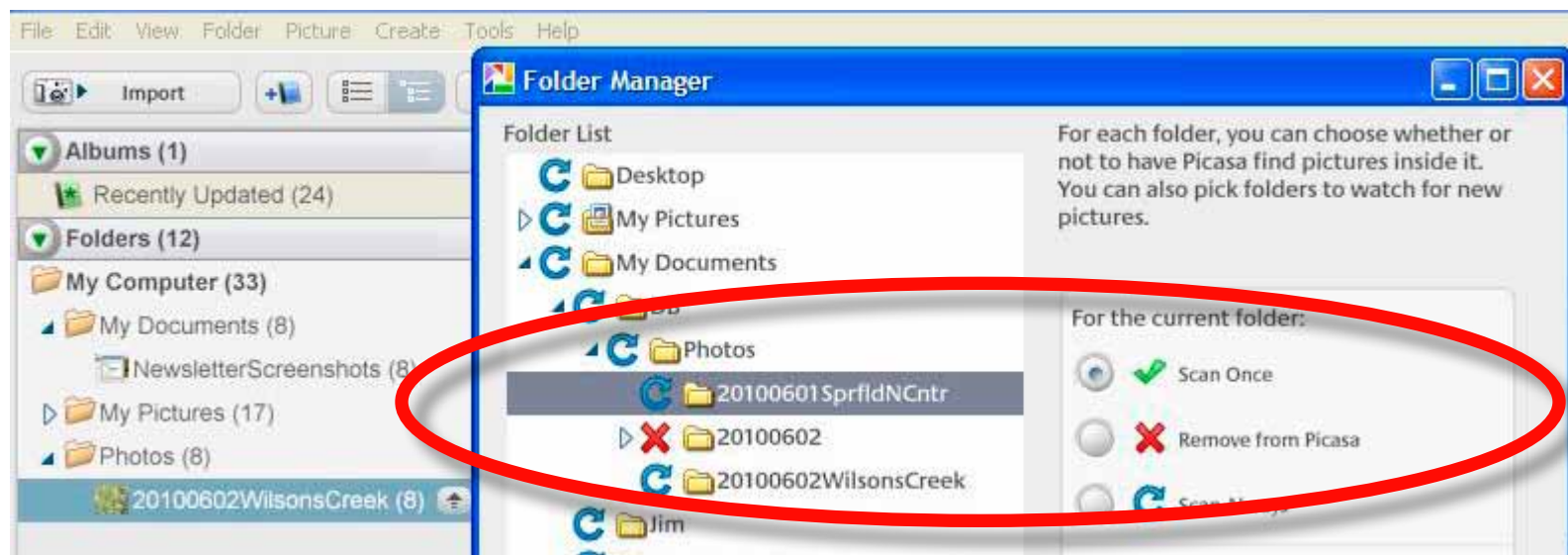
Your camera almost certainly came with software that will help you to move the photos onto your computer. But if you've decided to use Picasa for its cataloging features, you can use Picasa to copy your images from your camera to your computer.

I maintain my images in a folder structure based on date and location. Inside of a Photos folder,

I have folders for each year, month, day and location:

- Photos
- 2009
- 2010
- 04Apr
- 05May
- 2010_05_18JeffFarm
- 2010_05_18RBSP
- 2010_05_22Pinnacles

You can also create a folder structure based on location and then date. I think it is easier to download photos into the correct place by date, but that may not be true for everyone. If you use photo cataloging software, such as either Picasa or Lightroom, you can easily search your images by either location, date or subject.



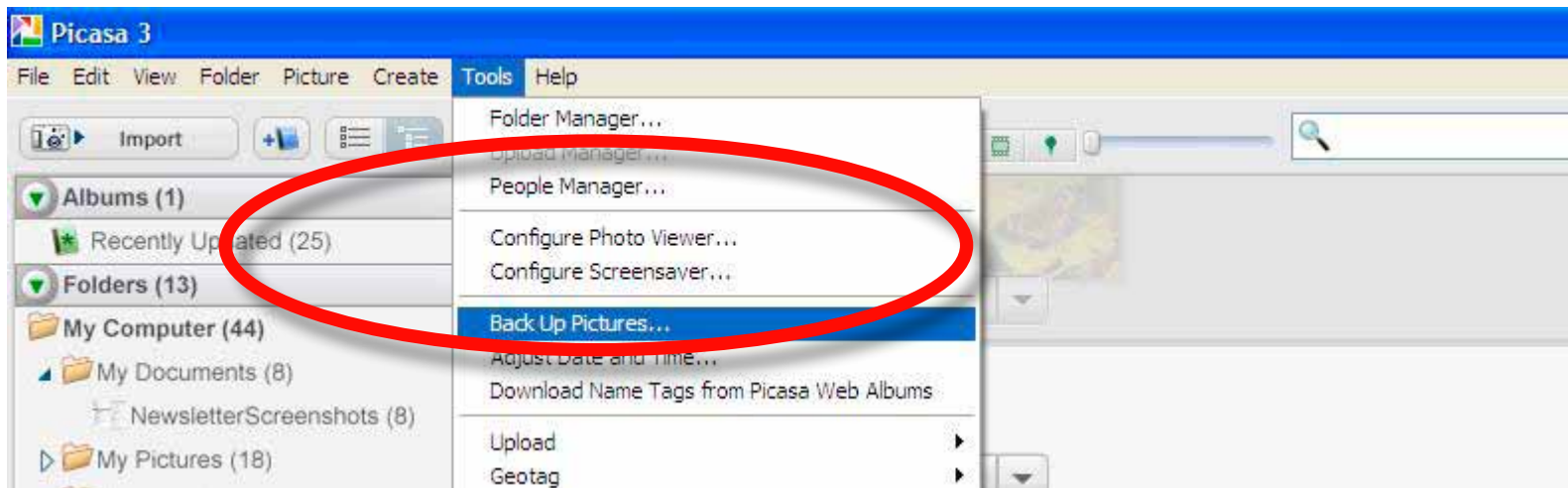
Picasa can search your hard drive for images, but you can also choose to add specific folders on your own instead of allowing it to search your entire computer which can take a substantial amount of time depending on your files.

Click on File and then select "Add Folder to Picasa." The Folder Manager window will open. Search the folder tree to find the desired folder and then select "Scan Once." Or select "Scan Always" if you would like Picasa to examine that folder for additional images each time you run Picasa.

After saving the images onto your computer (and, preferably, backing them up so you have a second copy) re-format the card in your camera. While it is possible to erase the images from the card in your computer, it's best to erase the images by re-formatting the card in your camera. Re-formatting the cards after each use will decrease the chance of card errors. If you have more than one camera, make sure to format the card in the camera you are currently using – don't format the card in one camera and then use it in a different camera.

Backup Strategies

If you are using Picasa (or other cataloging software) make sure you back up your database. Otherwise, if your hard drive crashes and your images are backed up but your database is not, you'll lose any edits and albums. Picasa can backup all of your images and the database.



Open the Tools menu and select "Back Up Pictures" to have Picasa create a back-up of your database and images. Place the backup on another drive or on removable media.



Two boxes open at the bottom of the screen. In the first box, click "New Set" and give your backup a name, select whether you want to use a CD or DVD or an external hard drive, and whether you would like to back up jpgs or all file types including movies. Once your Backup Set is created and named, step 2 is to choose the folders that should be backed up. Click "Select All" to back up images in all folders plus the database.

MKT Trail
March 6, 2010

This was taken with a
Lensbaby Double Glass Optic.

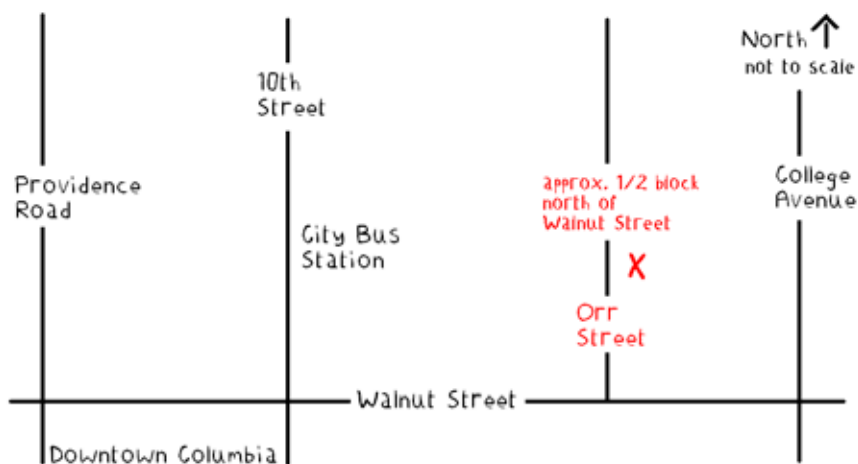
Find out more about
Lensbaby at
<http://lensbaby.com>



Orr Street Studios

On June 1st, I moved into a different studio inside of Orr Street Studios. I'm now in the third door down the hall that parallels Orr Street.

Stop by for a look during the next Artrageous Friday on July 23rd.



Why You Shouldn't Save Over Your Original Jpgs

While I won't pretend to understand all of the math involved in jpg compression, the gist of the process is that when saving a jpg, the image is grouped into 8x8 blocks of pixels. Color and luminance data for each pixel is replaced by an average for each 8x8 block of pixels.

Each time you re-save a jpg, you will have some loss of data. Selecting a high jpg quality will minimize the loss of image data. Unless saved multiple times, the loss in quality will probably be minimal, but it is probably best to avoid saving over your

original jpgs.

In addition, if you save over your original and then decide you don't like your edits, you can't revert back to your original image.

Opening and closing a jpg without re-saving the file doesn't recompress the image and doesn't degrade your original. Edits performed in Picasa do not harm your original jpg. The Picasa database stores edits you have applied to an image, but the edits are not actually saved to the jpg.

Slide Show on Web Site

In March 2010, I presented a program on Missouri insects at the Daniel Boone Library in Columbia.

If you missed it, you can view the slides and read the script in a pdf on my web site: <http://donnabrunet.com/pages/pdfs/pdfs.html>

Next Issue:

October 2010:

Keywording and flagging images make them easy to find.

There are no rules for good photographs, there are only good photographs.

- Ansel Adams

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macro photography



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