

Camera JPG and RAW

What's the difference anyway?

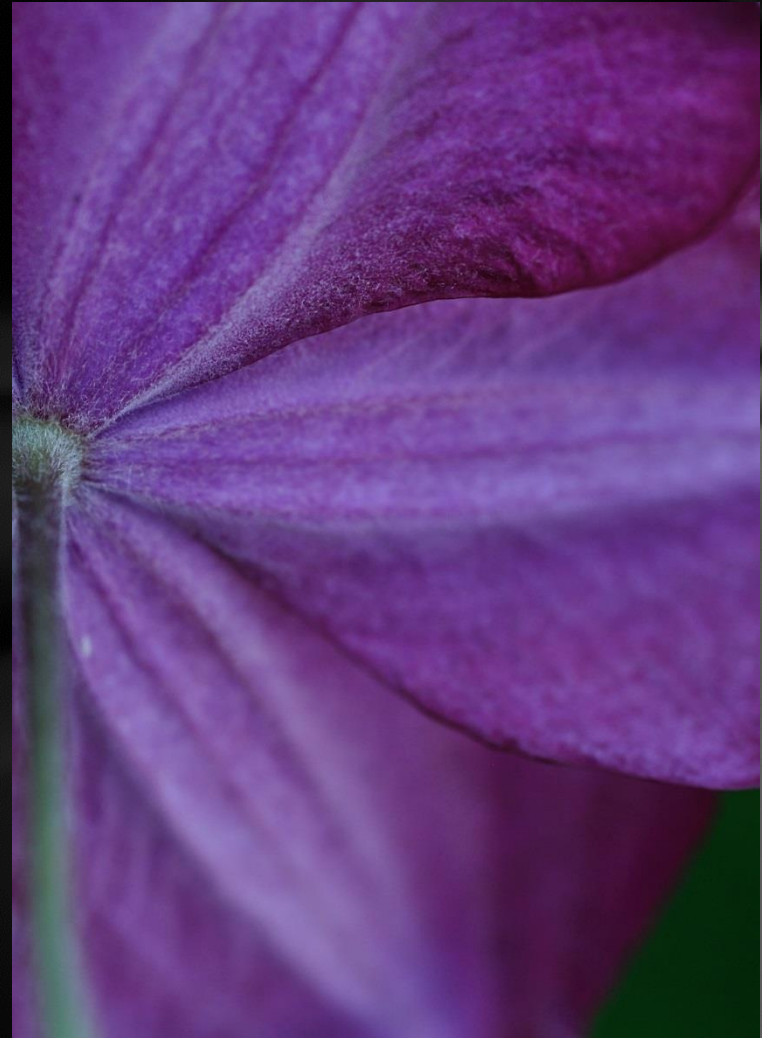
Shooting in RAW has Many Benefits

- Most of the time, when camera enthusiasts are excited about the RAW format, they concentrate on the extra freedoms in processing that you get.
- There are other benefits to using the RAW format, however!
 - You lose a lot of colour range when you use the in-camera JPG compression.
 - RAW files can generate more depth in an image than camera JPGs, which means that they can look more three dimensional.
 - You also lose a lot of levels of brightness in camera-generated JPG files. Levels of brightness are the number of steps between black and white in an image.
 - You can get sharper details out of a RAW file than you can from a camera-generated JPG.
 - Camera JPG compression is not the best – you can end up with weird compression errors sometimes, such as banding in a subtle gradient.

The RAW file on the right has a greater range of colour than the JPG on the left. Note the deeper green in the bottom left, and the darker magenta on the petal edges.



JPG

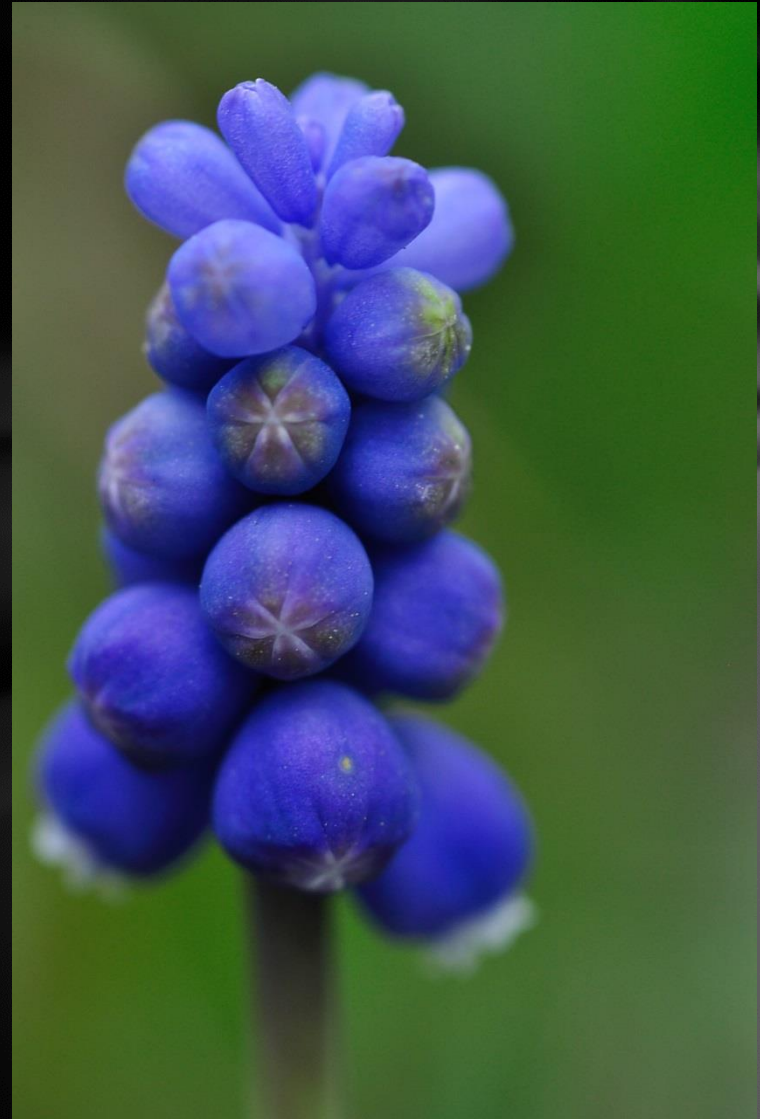


RAW

The camera-generated JPG on the left looks a good deal flatter than the image on the right, which came from the RAW file.



JPG

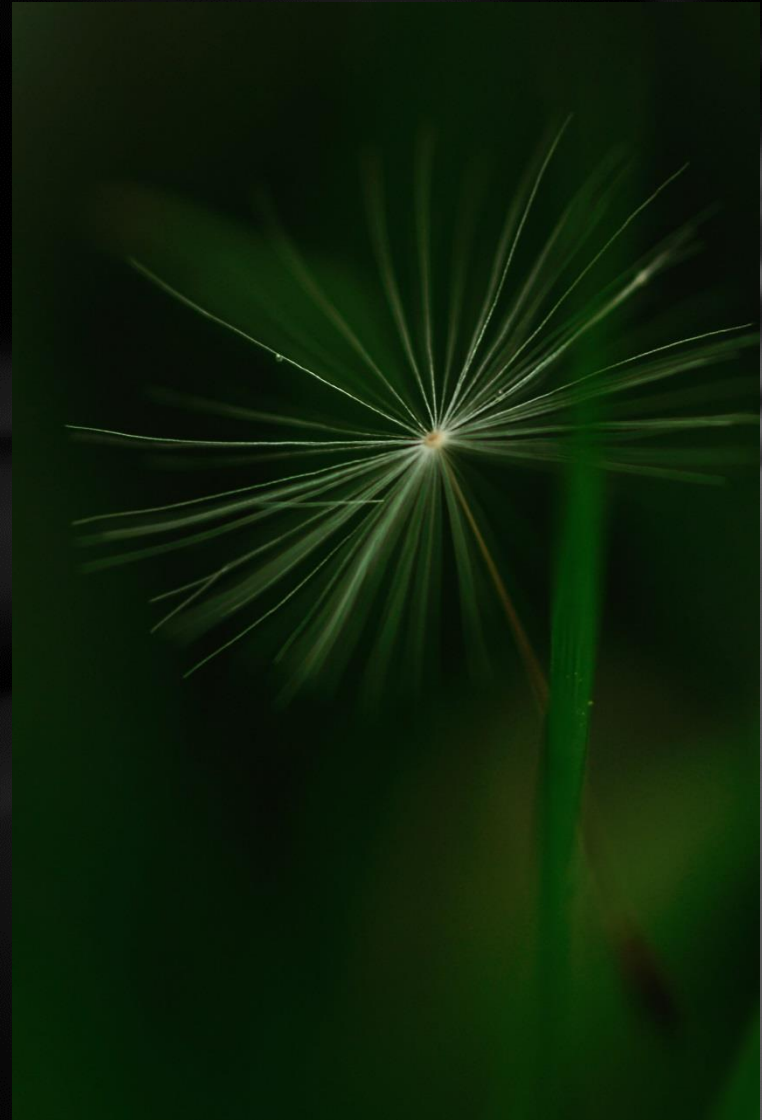


RAW

Here we see that the RAW image on the right has more black values, and therefore deeper shadows, than the camera-generated JPG file on the left.



JPG

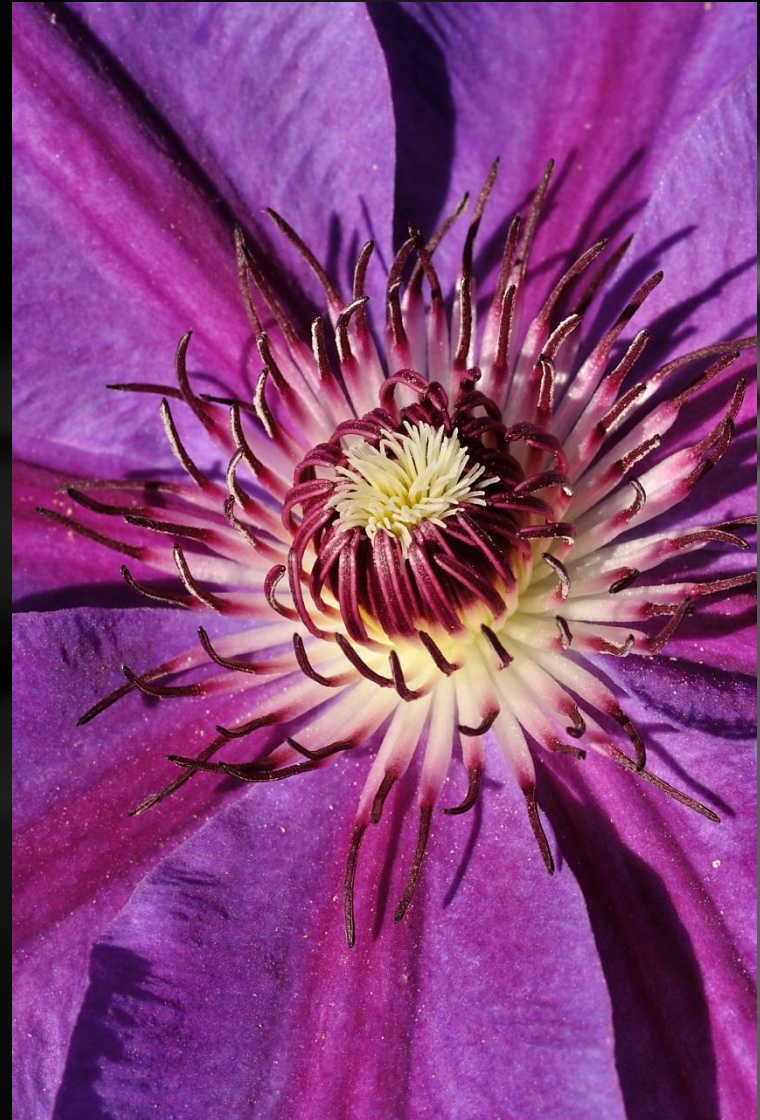


RAW

The darker shadows and greater colour variety available in the RAW file also allows us to see more details in the image on the right.

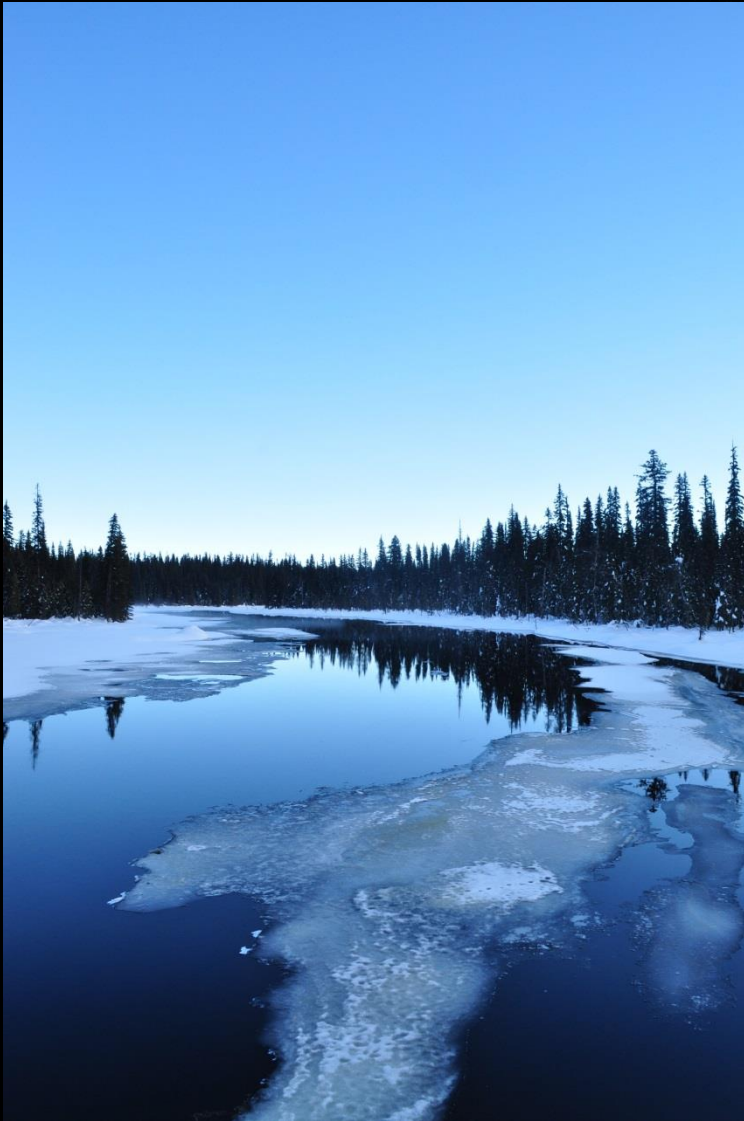


JPG

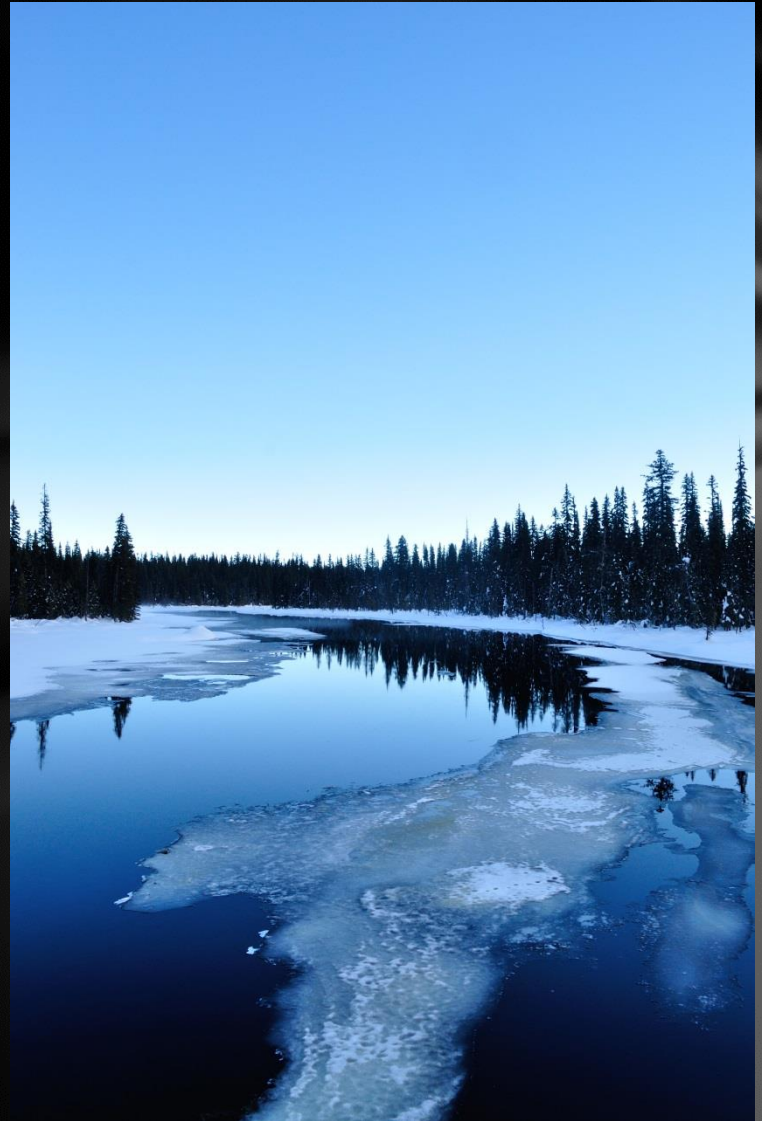


RAW

The camera-generated JPG on the left has banding in the gradient in the sky, which is caused by the compression algorithm. These bands are absent in the RAW file.



JPG



RAW

Sources

- [10 Reasons Why You Should Be Shooting RAW](#)
- [RAW vs. JPEG](#)
- All photography by Dana Schwehr