

What's the best camera for wildlife photography?

That's a question that I asked myself several times. But every time I got the same answer: it's not mine!!!

Yes, with my old camera, all Sony cameras, I had always some issue: sometimes it was an autofocus problem, some time was a speed problem, and so on. To be more precise, I had the followings cameras: a **Sony A57**, a **Sony A77II** and a **Sony A99II**. Every camera of that was good in some way but bad in others way, so in the end, I had to change it. I don't want to say that they weren't completely good for **wildlife photography**, because I wouldn't be honest, but despite their "quick-action" vocation, they weren't comparable to the other brands, like Canon and Nikon, for lenses as well, due to the poor selection of long lenses by Sony, or at least not close to the others. So now, for me, what's the **best camera for wildlife photography**?? It's simple, the **Sony A9**. Why? I'm going to explain to you, so let's get started!



Main "wildlife" features

There are some features that for me are essential for a wildlife camera.

#1 - Autofocus System

The **AF (AutoFocus)** system of the **Sony A9** is excellent. It's hard to tell that it isn't true that fact. Its consistency and reliability is really sturdy, and it's difficult that it goes wrong. Usually the AF system of the A9 works very well in almost all conditions. But the best specific feature of the Sony A9 AF system is the **realtime**

autofocus tracking system, which allows following a subject incredibly well. Just to make an example, in the following sequence of pictures, you can see how precise is the focus on the buzzard coming towards me.



In every frame, the buzzard, is in focus, a sign of the good job made by the camera. To achieve that result these are my **AF settings**:

- Aperture (A) mode
- AF-C
- Priority set in AF-C: balanced emphasis
- Focus Area: tracking with Medium size area, or Large, depending on the subject
- Animal-Eye AF
- AF Tracking Sensibility: 3

#2 - Electronic shutter

One of the most annoying thing in **wildlife photography** is **noise**. There nothing worse than making noise during a **wildlife photography session**, when you lose your subject for the shutter sound, maybe after waiting many hours. But the **Sony A9** with its "**silent mode**" allow you to take every picture without making any noise. Yes, using the **electronic shutter**:

1. MENU →  2 (Camera Settings2) → [ Shutter Type] → [Electronic Shut.].

- Select [Electronic Shut.] or [Auto] for continuous shooting.

you'll be able to not get in trouble with any animals, because of the fact that they can't hear you during the shot. As you know, every camera has a shutter sound, due to its specific construction method, and more or less every shutter make noise, even the most silent. Then there's in addition, the noise of the mirror moving during the shot, in DSLR cameras to worse the situation. For that issue I made some different "[silencer box](#)" in order to decrease the sound of my cameras, and, to be honest, they worked pretty well. But every time I needed to carry extra and big stuff with me, making the photographic session a little annoying.

Now using the electronic shutter I forgot that problem. Nothing better!!

#3 - 20FPS shooting burst

Often I read some user asking when they can use a shooting burst of 20 frames per second in their photography, and maybe they are "portrait photographer" or "wedding photographer". In that situation maybe you don't need it, but perhaps you may use it, why not. Having a so fast way to take pictures to allow you to choose the best shot from many, instead of that only from a few, regardless of your photographic genre. But mostly in **wildlife photography, 20FPS** could make the difference to bring home or not a picture. I mean that in many situations of moving subjects, a fast shooting rate allows you to be sure to have at least some shot, rather than nothing or maybe one or two, and perhaps neither in focus!! The example is always in the above sequence of the buzzard flying.

To have the best chance to use this feature, you need to have good light in order to get at least **1/2000** a second of shutter speed. But why that specific value? In my opinion that value is suitable for a focal length up to 600mm, the most used focal length in wildlife photography, mostly for birds. Of course, it's not a "law", and there are many other situations where you can use a shorter focal length and get a good result, but birds usually people tend to stay on that focal length, and with the modern hi-res sensor it's better having a triple value of the focal length (do you remember the rule of the "double the focal length" for a shot in focus?), in order to be very, very sure of the result.

Speaking of shutter speed, I set my A9 in this way:

- High Drive speed
- AUTO ISO Min SS at 1/2000
- ISO AUTO Maximum at 6400 or 12800
- White balance AUTO

#4 - EVF - Electronic View Finder

Photography world is divided between two factions: who hates the **EVF** and who loves it. I'm in the second 😊 and I couldn't get back using a "normal/traditional" **viewfinder**. Yes, a traditional "analog" viewfinder is better in some situation. First of all they don't consume your battery charge, as the EVF does, but having so much information during the shot, even during the burst, without any issue (someone complains about the "black" issue), it's invaluable, at least for me. Then with the EVF I can see in **low light conditions** as well, differently from using a normal viewfinder that is "blind" if there isn't enough light. That aspect permitted me to

shot, before some friends of mine, many times pictures that I couldn't take with a different camera, like in the picture below.



So, what's better for you?

Conclusion

Ok, ok, I know, the **Sony A9** is not the only camera in the market that allow wildlife photography, and in the past, as I said before, the market was dominated by Canon and Nikon, in fact they had the best gears for **wildlife photography** and not only that. But now the games are changed, and we can choose from many different brands, that offers us their specific camera for any purpose. At the end if you prefer a specific brand, you needn't to change. For example Canon with its R5 model is very competitive in wildlife photography as well, so don't worry because maybe you just have got the **best wildlife camera**, until you'll try Sony 😊

About this topic a made a short video that you can see on my [Youtube channel](#), or here.

As always, thanks for reading and if you want leave a comment I'll be very glad to answer you.

Cheers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bDJ4spNlgU>