

By Jack and Sue Drafaahl

**PHOTOGRAPHIC'S
USER REPORT**

Kodak must have reached its limit on how many different films it could manufacture at one time. They are now replacing Kodak Ektar 125 with Kodak Ektar 100. We were not exactly sure why Kodak made the change, which made us a little suspicious. So, when we received an egg carton filled with 20 rolls of unboxed Kodak Ektar 100, our first thought was, "Do we have any Kodak Ektar 125 left in the refrigerator?" We looked, and sure enough, we still had some. Off we headed for the great outdoors, with our color chart, camera, tripod, lens, and one roll each of the two films.

We set up the camera on a tripod, and set the color chart at a 30° angle to the sun. After running both rolls through the camera, we raced back into the lab and processed them in C-41 developer. Once the films were dry, we didn't need a loupe to see the difference. They looked like films from two different manufacturers. The new Kodak Ektar 100 was much more magenta than the older Kodak Ektar 125, and it had an overall density increase. With the loupe we saw very little difference in grain or sharpness, and at a 30X enlargement we still saw no difference other than the increased density.

A New Color-Print Film Joins the Family

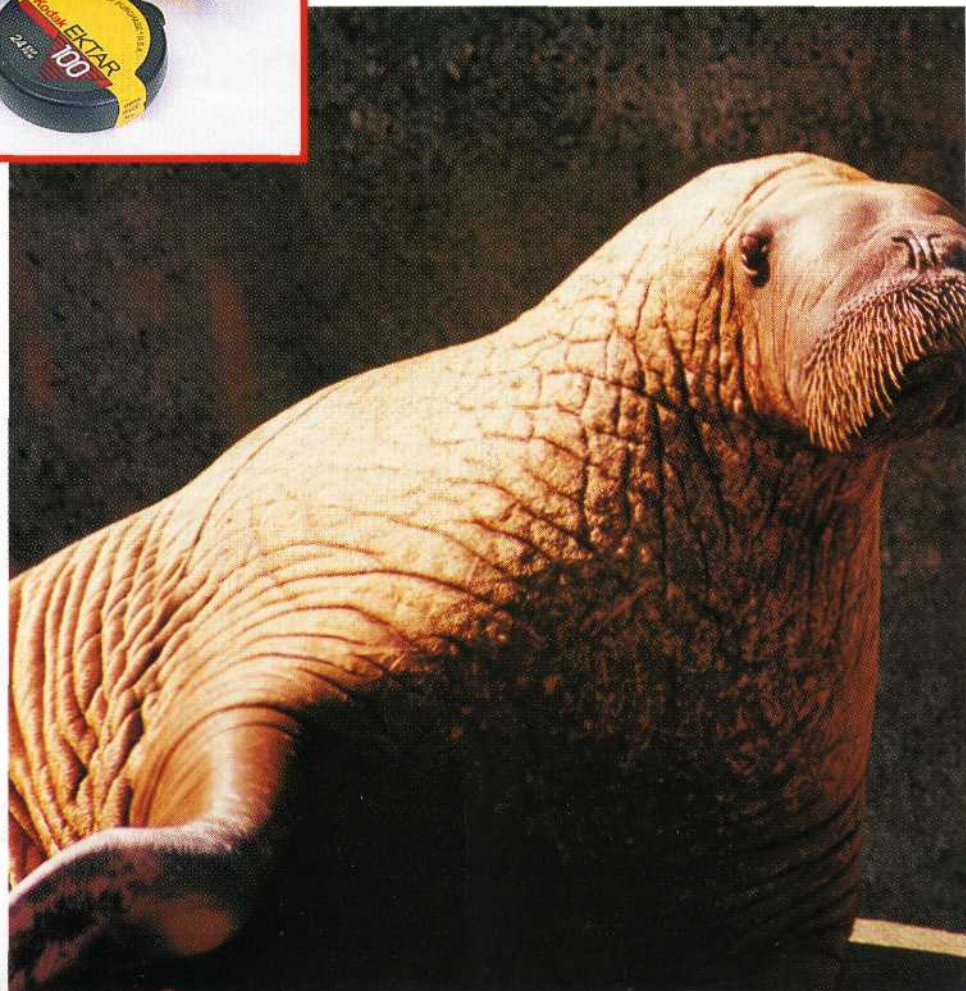
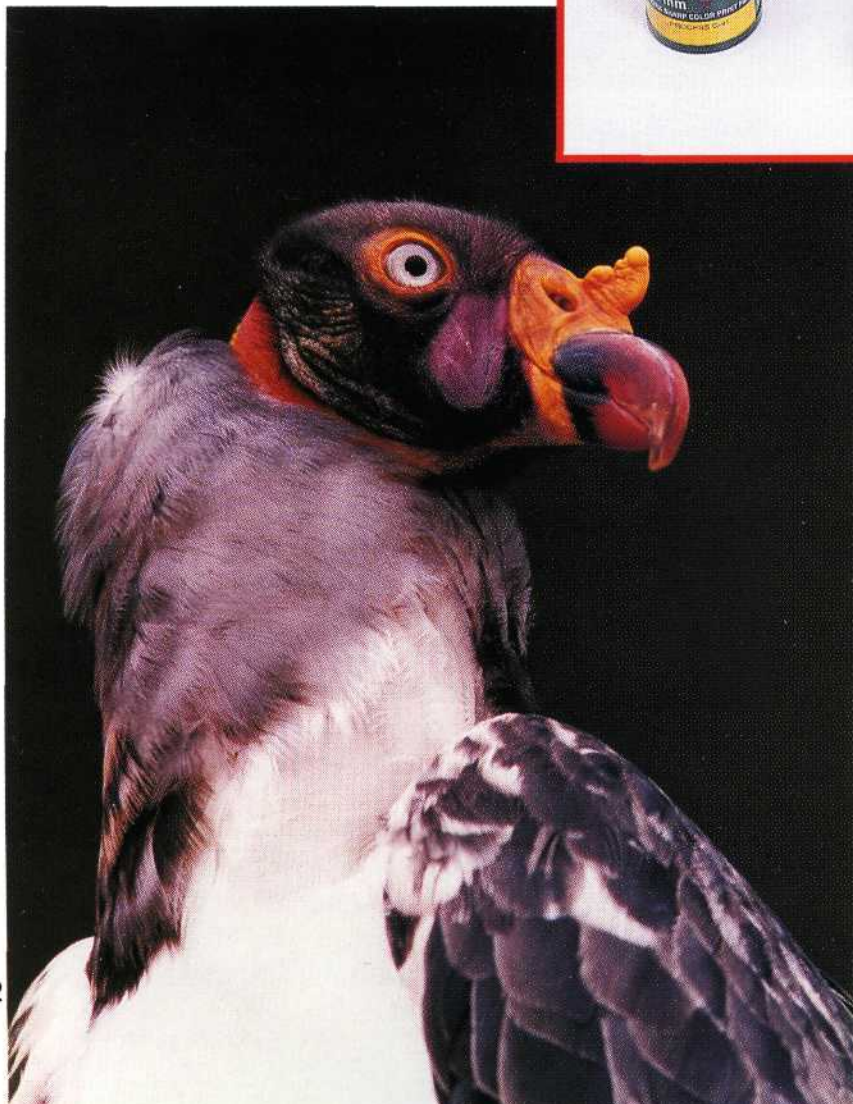
KODAK EKTAR 100

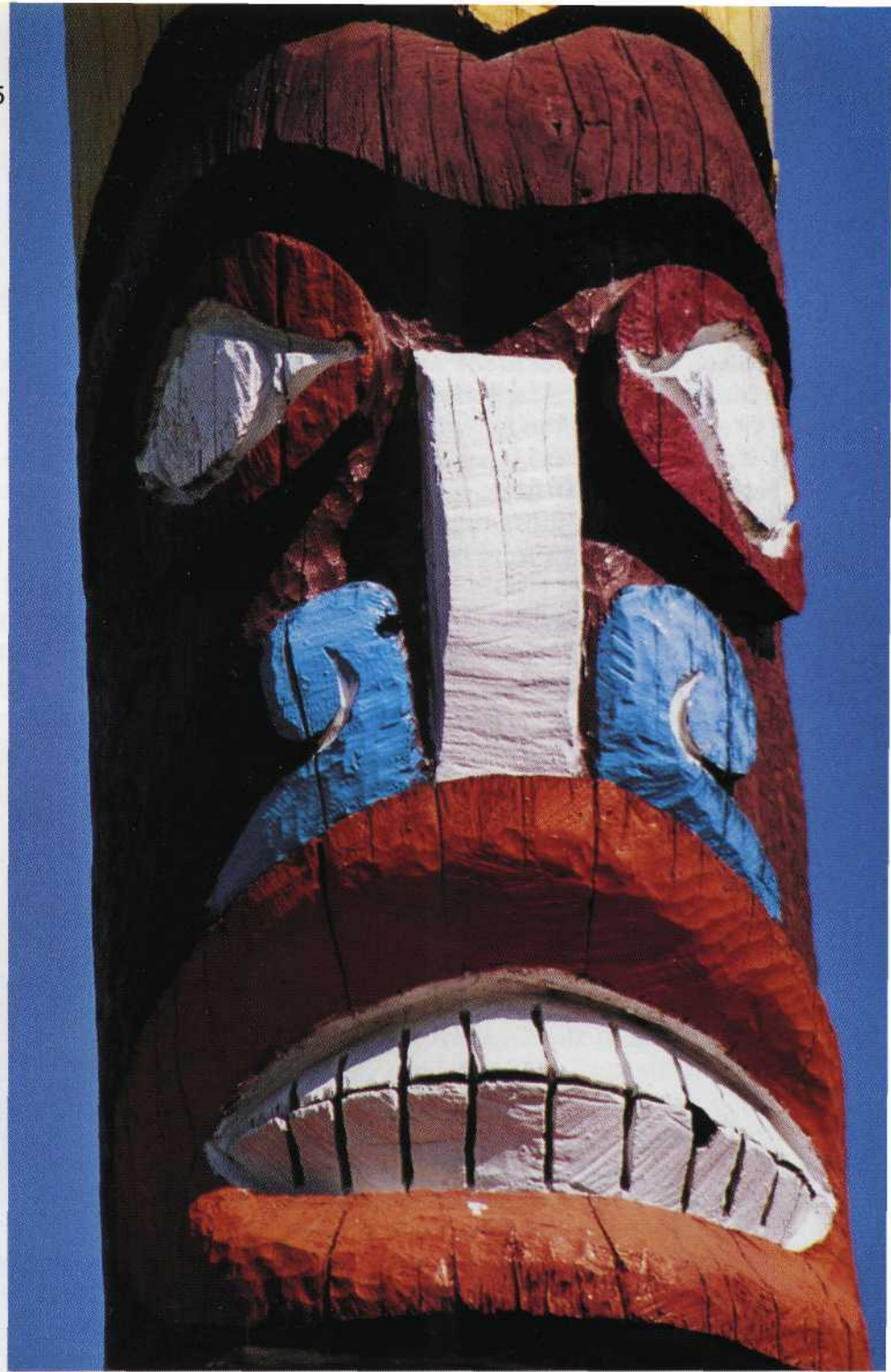
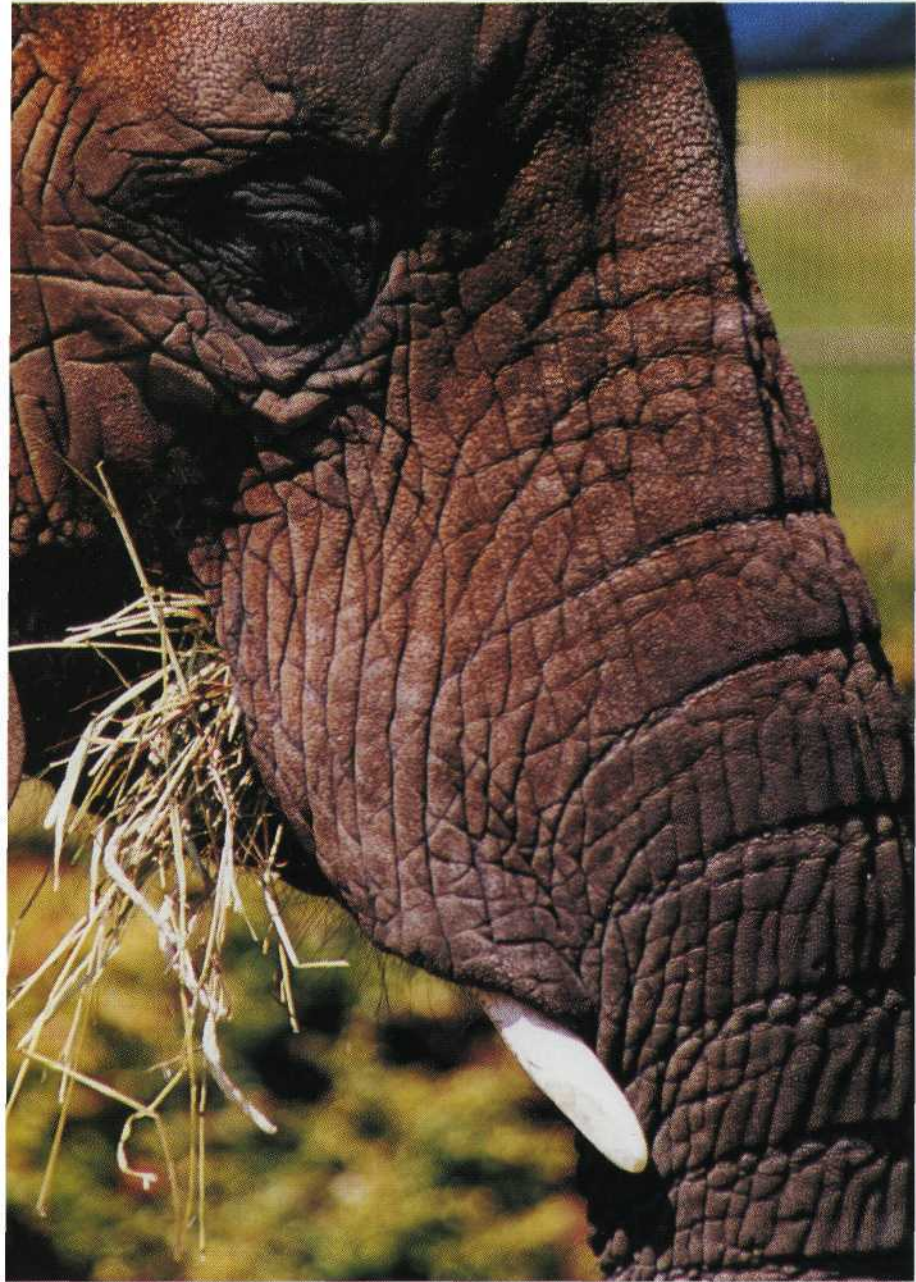
Is there a mystery behind the apparent changes in Kodak Ektar 100? Since this is a brand-new film, and it was accompanied by little information, we put a hurried call into Kodak to get the straight scoop.

THE MYSTERY SOLVED?

According to Kodak, there is no mystery at all. Kodak just worked on improving the Kodak Ektar line of films and found that this improved version of Kodak Ektar had a lower ISO, which caused an increased density in the new film. Tips from users told Kodak to adjust the Kodak Ektar's tonal scale in order to make it easier to obtain a color-printing balance. Kodak has made no

1. A replacement for Kodak Ektar 125, Kodak's new Kodak Ektar 100 color-print film offers higher color saturation, greater contrast, and finer grain.
2. Thanks to the extra contrast provided by the new Kodak Ektar 100 film, the lower contrast inherent with overcast lighting is counteracted.
3. Even in bright daylight conditions, detail is apparent in both highlights and shadows.
4. This neutral-gray subject reproduced as just that—neutral gray. A successful test of the new Kodak Ektar 100 emulsion.
5. This colorful subject shows Kodak Ektar 100's high color saturation.
6. Because of Kodak Ektar 100's relatively high contrast, scenes with inherently high contrast, such as this, can be somewhat problematic.





ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHORS



KODAK EKTAR

changes in the masking dyes or image couplers, but has increased the film's latent-image keeping and improved its process sensitivity.

So, how do these changes benefit you? According to Robert C. Sharp, Kodak's vice-president and general manager of U.S. Marketing and Sales, "Users can expect more consistent color fidelity and overall image quality. Kodak Ektar 100 film...is the world's finest grain, highest resolution 100-speed film." Sharp went on to say, "We believe that this film's neutral highlights and outstanding image structure provide today's 35mm camera user with a level of photographic performance undreamed of only a few years ago." Another Kodak Ektar 100 advantage is its ability to accept a wider range of processing variations without inconsistencies in color and image quality.

FIELD TESTS

We decided that Kodak representatives could say all they wanted about Kodak Ektar 100's capabilities, but we had to give it the Drafaul Endurance Tests to be sure. We had been looking for an excuse to return to the local zoo—the perfect opportunity to combine work with pleasure. On our first shooting day at the zoo, we were under bright sunny skies, which produced a lot of contrast, harsh shadows, and a never-ending thirst for a cold drink.

In the Africa exhibit, we photographed a four-legged 18% gray card, otherwise known as a rhinoceros. From there we moved on to an area where our compositional animals were located. The white and brown patterns of the giraffe would show us how the film handled highlights and midtones. The rough, textured skin of the elephants would show us just how well this Kodak Ektar would handle fine detail. As we continued to wander, we looked for animals with high contrast, fine detail, and a pleasing background behind them.

Upon our return to the lab, we processed the film and viewed our newest negatives. We were pleased. This new Kodak Ektar 100 is good. It holds excellent detail in both highlights and shadows, and is very sharp. Color saturation is above normal, and the grain pattern is very tight. We found the exposure latitude to be less than that of Kodak Gold films, but better than that of Kodak Ektar 25 and Kodak Ektar 1000 films (from +2 to -1 stops).

We tried various-size color prints and found that Kodak Ektar 100 performed better than the others in the Kodak Ektar family. The other Kodak Ektar members are more delicate and require more testing to get a good color balance. Kodak

Ektar 100, with its better tonal scale, makes it easier to obtain a good color balance. Kodak Ektar 100 is designed for enlargements, and tends to look better the bigger you make the print. At about 8x10 and 11x14, the contrast of the print seems to match the scene exactly.

We did not like the results of Kodak Ektar 100 reversed onto print film, but feel that all the films in the Kodak Ektar family do not match up closely with

SPECIFICATIONS

FILM: Kodak Ektar 100
TYPE: Color-print
BALANCE: Daylight
PROCESS: C-41
ISO: 100
DESIGNATION: CX
EXPOSURE-TIME RANGE: 10 sec. to $\frac{1}{10,000}$
TUNGSTEN FILTRATION: 80A, +2 stops
RESOLVING POWER (1.6:1 TEST OBJECT): 63 lpm
RESOLVING POWER (1000:1 TEST OBJECT): 160 lpm
DISTRIBUTOR: Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; telephone 1-800-242-2424

Kodak's present print film, 5072. We feel the problem is not with the Kodak Ektar films, but in the fact that the print film was designed for emulsions created before Kodak Ektar. We hope that Kodak is working on a new emulsion of print film that will possibly have matching contrast levels. Meanwhile, we're still working on resolving the problem, and should have it solved by the time you see the article on "Stock Negative Photography."

Someone must have been watching over us, because on the second day at the zoo, we were presented with gray skies, low contrast, and cooperative animals. If you are interested in zoo photography, you will quickly realize that the best days are the gray days. The colors are more vivid, the contrast range is workable, and, best of all, the animals are more active. We photographed as many exhibits as we could, and headed back to the lab once again. The results from this day told us another story. We obtained excellent results from prints of all sizes. Even the 3.5x5-inch prints that were contrasty before looked great.

For our color test, we decided to make a trip to the local Saturday market, where we could shoot colorful fruits and vegetables in sunlight and shade, and with a small pop-up flash. Working our way from oranges and apples to carrots and peppers, we collected a variety

of colorful tests. Upon inspection of these negatives, we found the overall color saturation to be excellent, holding each of the specific colors within their boundaries. Detail in the bright red subjects holds up very well, which has been difficult for many color-negative films of past years. Kodak Ektar 100 performs extremely well in shade, as the extra contrast in the film counteracted the lower contrast found in these situations.

BEYOND GENERAL USE

Although Kodak Ektar 100 is considered the general-use film in the Kodak Ektar family, we found that pushing the film one stop has some additional advantages. In the scientific arena, microscopes require high contrast, fine grain, and a moderate film speed to best capture the data on the substage. Pushing Kodak Ektar 100 to EI 200 increases the color saturation even more, while maintaining fine grain.

In telephoto applications, where contrast and color saturation are low because of lighting or lens quality, the one-stop push can be a marked improvement. The extra stop of film speed also helps minimize vibrations due to the focal length of the lens.

NEW PACKAGING

In an effort to maintain environmentally sound standards, Kodak has redesigned the packaging of the Kodak Ektar films. They will now be available in user-friendly, cartonless containers that not only serve to reduce the amount of waste a photographer can leave behind, but the containers they're in are biodegradable. The individual film canisters are sealed with a tamper-evident seal, and the lid has a writable surface for notes. They also have a new color-coding system to help identify ISO speeds at a glance. For those who do not need 20 rolls at a time, there will also be individual carded packaging. List price of a 24-exposure roll of 35mm Kodak Ektar 100 is \$5.69, and the 135-36 is \$7.25—the same prices as the film it replaces.

CONCLUSION

Kodak is trying to broaden the appeal of Kodak Ektar 100. Because of the film's modifications, its users can expect more consistent results. This film is designed for the discriminating picture-taker who wants fine grain, high resolution, and more contrast and color saturation. Since its exposure latitude is less than that of the standard Kodak Gold films, it requires closer scrutiny when making exposures. But, if big enlargements, high color saturation, and good contrast are your goals, then Kodak Ektar 100 is the film for you. ■