

Kodak Ektachrome E100VS

VS stands for vivid, saturated colors **by Jack and Sue Drafa**



You might think that testing a new film emulsion every month would start to get a little boring. Actually, a lot depends on how you look at film tests. We consider a film test to be more than just analyzing layers of color dye, silver-halide crystals, film backing, and all that makes up today's complex films. Each film test is a new adventure for us. Most new films have a niche, a preference, or a specific field of photography for which it is best suited. When a new film comes in for review, we look at its specifications, preferred application, and then we're off on a new shooting expedition. One month we may be taking portraits and next it may be high-speed action. Whatever the application, these new films give us an excuse for going out on a variety of photo escapades and legally calling it work.

The newest member of Kodak's "E Family" of professional transparency films is E100VS (vivid saturation). The E100VS is designed for photographers looking for the extra visual intensity of increased saturation. Photographers who want normal color saturation can choose E100S film, or the E100SW offers a slightly warmer color balance. Now you can pick and choose your ISO 100 emulsion based on your subject matter or saturation preference.

We love nature photography, so when the Kodak E100VS came up

for testing, we were champing at the bit. Bring on the flowers, small critters, or whatever Mother Nature has to offer!

But wait, before any field testing, we had to do our research. Not too long ago, this involved calling Kodak for tech sheets and PR releases, then waiting days for the info to arrive. Today the same task takes just minutes. Don't you just love technology? We just log onto the Kodak home page and download the PDF files for a specific film. Well, as it turns out, this neat new increased-color-saturation technology is due to Kodak's new Color Amplifying Technology (patent pending). When we first heard about this VS emulsion, we had visions of a super-saturated film designed for artistic effects, but the curve charts told us that the difference was not extreme, just increased.

E100VS also features Kodak's T-Grain technology, so it should have the image sharpness that we have come to know and love. The only way to really tell was to finally take the film out for a spin.

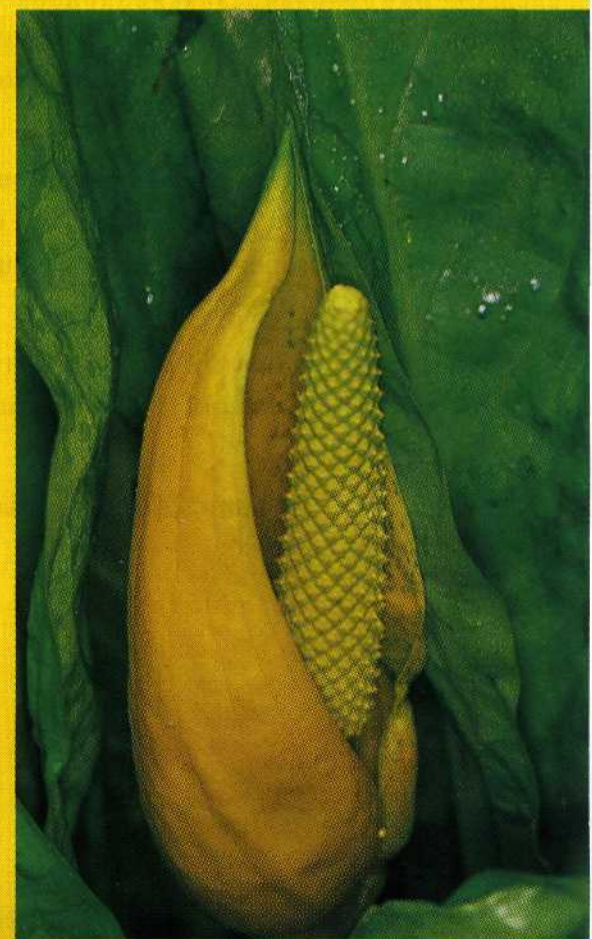
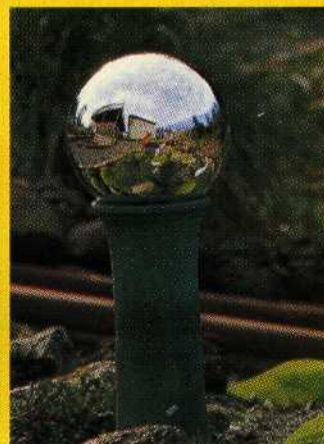
As we sat discussing what subjects to shoot on this new emulsion, the sun created silhouette images of a hummer against our office blinds. The migrating hummingbirds had returned just in time for our film test. We have not had much past luck with these small wonders of nature, but the vivid color in the Rufous Hummingbird's feathers seemed so perfect for the test.

We discovered that this single hummer has staked our feeder as his very own, and would sit for hours guarding it. So, we attached a branch to our deck railing, put the camera on remote, loaded E100VS and waited. This little bird was



Opposite page: Mr. T., a five-inch-long Jackson Chameleon, demonstrates that E100VS handles greens very well.

This page: Natural and man-made objects record beautifully and vividly on E100VS, the newest and most colorful member of Kodak's professional E100 Ektachrome family, yet neutral tones remain neutral. Yellows are difficult for saturated films, yet look great on E100VS.



ALL PHOTOS BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL

USER REPORT
PHOTOGRAPHIC



incredible! He was so happy on his branch that we could pick our poses—move a little to the left—lower your head a bit—lift your wings—now smile.

Thirty minutes and three rolls later, we raced downstairs to process our first rolls. We waited impatiently as the film worked its way through the E-6 process and another few minutes drying before we were finally able to lay a loupe on these first rolls. Wow! The color saturation was definitely greater than we had seen in past films, which really made the colors of the Rufous stand out. Even the blue sky behind our fine feathered friend had great saturation. The fine T-grains allowed us to make very nice 16x20 enlargements.

We had seen how the film reacted with red and blue in this first test, so next would be the green test. Again, fate stepped in to give us a hand as our daughter, Kristy, brought Mr. T. home from college with her. No, this wasn't a "guess who's coming to dinner," as Mr. T. was a five-inch-long Jackson Chameleon. He was going to be perfect as he was bright green, very slow moving, and had lots of fine detail to help check out the film's sharpness. Two more rolls quickly flew through the camera and we were in the lab again. At this rate we were only going to get about 10 subjects for this film test! When we looked at these images we were really impressed. We knew the E100VS film could resolve fine detail, but the intricate detail in his scales was phenomenal. Needless to say, we like this film a whole lot more than we like Mr. T.

At the recent Photo Marketing Association trade show (PMA), Kodak told us to be careful when using this film to photograph people, as the results may be more saturated than you want. We remembered that Kodak had a couple of sample images of people on their Web page, so we think that if you avoid people with reddish skin, you will be OK.

We are not especially "people" people, so again we moved outdoors for some more nature shots. The photo session went downhill from here as our flower garden is located at the bottom of the hillside. Yellow is one color that is often difficult to capture using

saturated film. As luck would have it, most of our yellow flowers were in full bloom. We even found a smelly yellow plant down at the lake called skunk cabbage. We made several bracket tests and found that if you underexpose $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ stop, these yellow subjects look great.

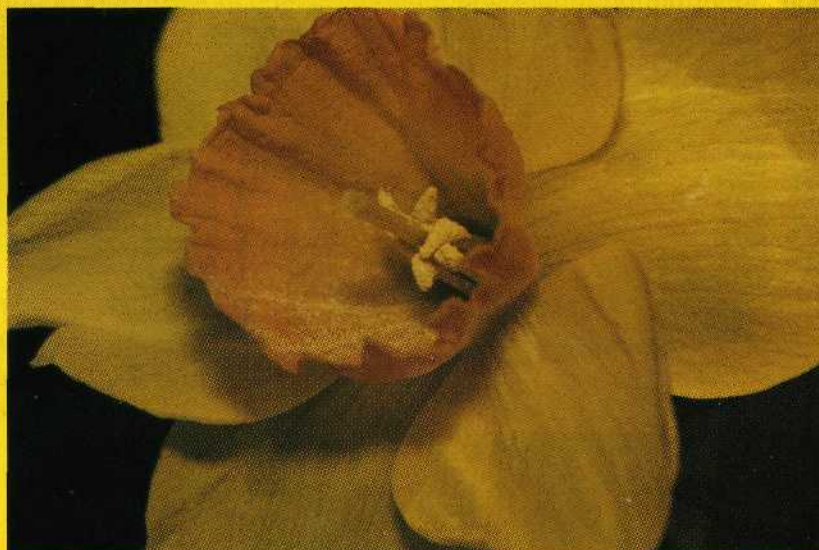
To make this test fair, we thought we better capture some subjects not created by Mother Nature. Our selection included a deserted park bench, a train with just a hint of red, a colorful doll, and a few pieces of jewelry. Careful evaluation of these images indicated to us that photographers who love rich colors will shoot a lot of this film. Kodak must think so too, because E100VS comes in 35mm cartridges, 100-foot 35mm bulk rolls, 120, 220, 4x5 inches, 8x10 inches, 9x12 cm, and 13x18 cm. Looks like that just about covers every type of camera made today.

If you want to increase the saturation

even more and pick up a little more film speed, E100VS can be pushed to EI 200 with minimal change in image quality. Since digital photography is becoming commonplace, we always try to scan in a few images. We thought we might have to adjust for the increased saturation, but found that most of the images came in as straight scans. The grain remained very tight, and the sharpness carried very well into the digital world.

Well, the film test is over. Mr. T is back at college, the hummers are busy doing what they do best, and more flowers are getting ready for the next film test. The only thing that has really changed is that we now have a great new emulsion for our camera bag. Better make some room in your camera bag too.

For more information contact Eastman Kodak Co., 343 State St., Rochester, NY 14650; 800/242-2424; on the Internet www.kodak.com/go/professional. ■



More good examples of E100VS's vivid saturation. The ISO 100 speed is fast enough for lots of shooting situations, even hummingbirds (hint: we used electronic flash for the hummer).

