SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTER

Bonus Tutorials

In This Chapter

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- Removing Distracting Objects

Removing the Red-Eye Effect

The red-eye effect often plagues our favorite snapshots, detracting from what would otherwise be good pictures. Essentially, this effect occurs when the light created by the camera's flash reflects off the retinas of the subject's eyes. When the subject is photographed in dimly lit settings, the pupils are fairly wide open, letting in a large amount of light from the flash. The flash occurs too quickly for the pupil to constrict and reduce the amount of light hitting the retina. The red coloring is due to blood-vessel rich tissue the light reflects from (Figure B-1).

Figure B-1. *The red-eye effect is a result of light reflecting off of the retina*

Bonus Tutorial 1: Correcting a Mild Red-Eye Effect

This example of the red-eye effect is fairly mild. The Red-Eye Removal filter can quickly correct this issue (as long as the effect isn't too severe).

To correct this image, follow these steps:

1. Open the image ***(Bonus Practice Image 1_red eye)*** located in the Bonus Practice Images folder.
2. Duplicate the background image and rename the duplicate layer Edit Layer.
3. Using the Free Select Tool (F) with the Feather Edges radius set to 1, draw a selection around the affected areas of each eye (Figure B-2).

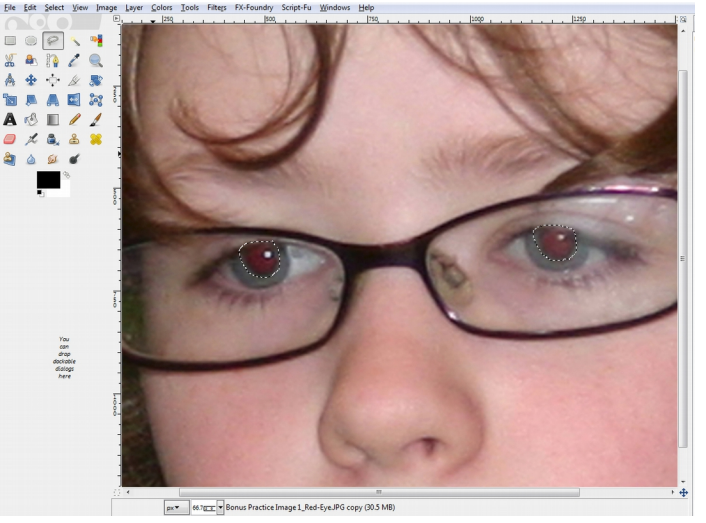

Figure B-2. *Draw a selection around the affected part of each eye using the Free Select tool*

4. Apply the Red-Eye Removal filter (Image Menu ➤ Filters ➤ Enhance ➤ Red Eye Removal). Set the threshold value to about 60 then click OK (Figure B-3).

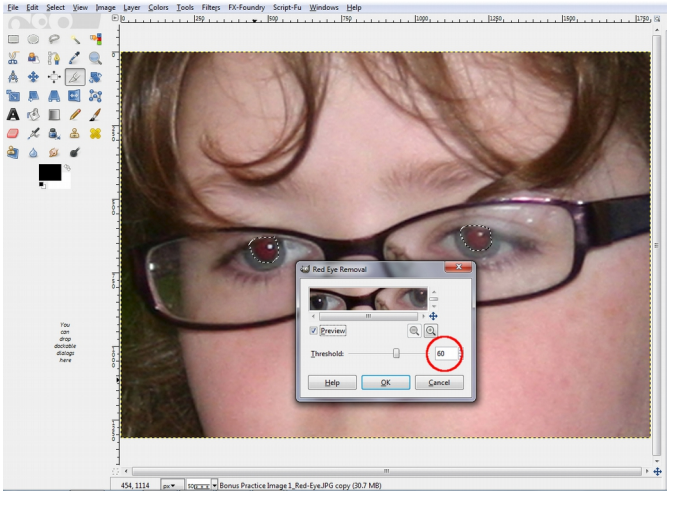

Figure B-3. *Set the Red Eye Removal filter's threshold value to about 60*

The filter did a decent job of correcting the red-eye effect in this image, and the eyes no longer look "supernatural" (Figure B-4).

Figure B-4. *Before and after comparison*

Bonus Tutorial 2: Correcting Severe Red-Eye Effect

This is an example of a more severe red-eye effect, which is often more pronounced in pets (Figure B-5). Depending on the animal, the effect could be white, yellow, or green instead of red This gives the pet a spooky appearance. Correcting the eyes in this image will require a little more work than the previous tutorial.

Figure B-5. *An example of severe red-eye effect, giving the dog a spooky appearance*

To correct this image, follow these steps:

1. Open the image *(Bonus Practice Image 2_demon eye)* located in the Bonus Practice Images folder.

2. Duplicate the background image and rename the duplicate layer Edit Layer.

3. Using the Free Select Tool (F) with the Feather Edges radius set to 1, draw a selection around the affected areas of each eye (Figure B-6).

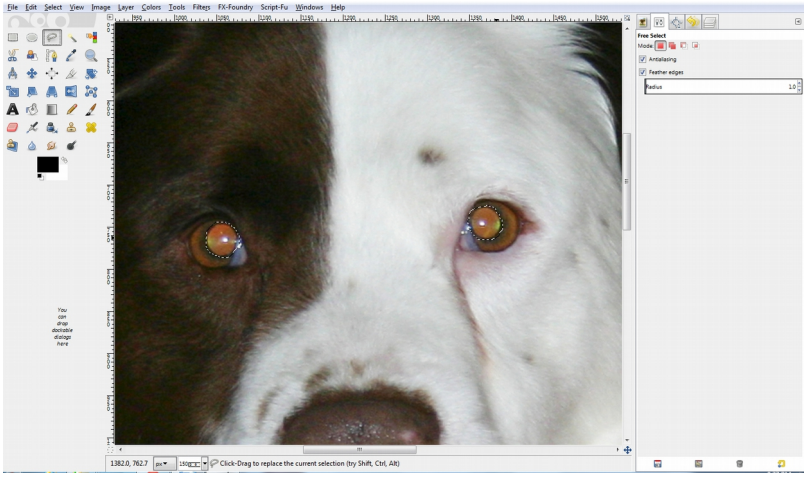

Figure B-6. *Draw a selection around the affected part of each eye using the Free Select tool*

4. Apply the Decompose filter (Image Menu ➤ Colors ➤ Components ➤ Decompose). This will create a separate file and extract the channels as layers. You'll need to access the image information from the blue channel.

5. Using the Free Select Tool (F) with the Feather Edges radius set to 1, draw a selection around the areas of each eye (Figure B-7) on the layer created from the blue channel of the new image file. Make each selection is slightly larger than those made on the original image.

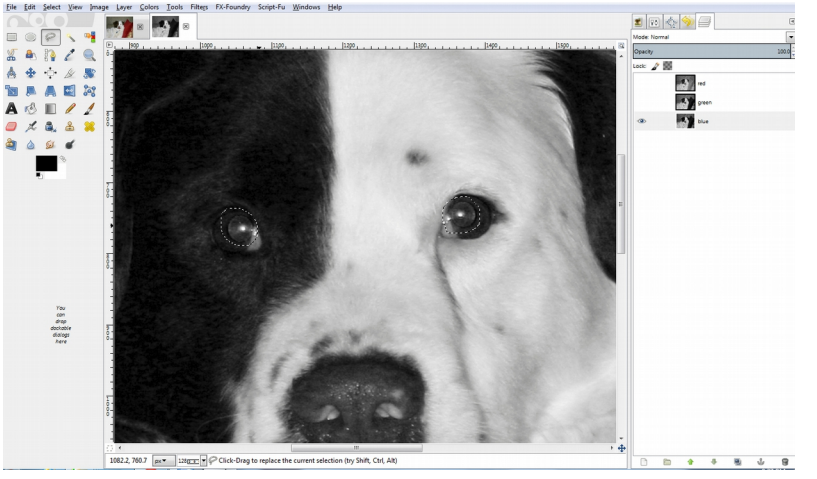

Figure B-7. *Draw a selection around the eyes on the layer created from the blue color channel*

6. Copy the selections to the clipboard (Control + C). Make the original image active, and paste the image data into the selections that were made around the eyes earlier (Image Menu ➤ Edit ➤ Paste Into).

7. Deactivate the selections (Shift + Control + A) and turn the floating selection into a new layer (Image Menu ➤ Layer ➤ To New Layer).

8. If the alignment is slightly off, activate the Move tool (M) and click on the layer and nudge it into place using the arrow keys until the replacement pupils are exactly in place (Figure B-8).

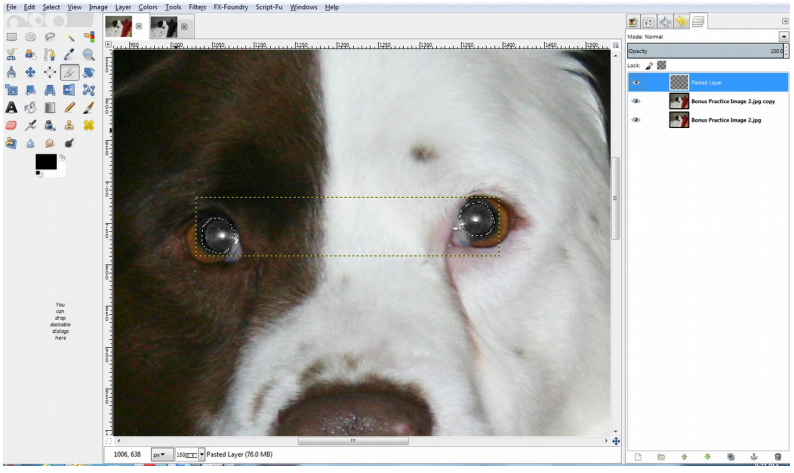

Figure B-8. *Nudge the pupils into place using the arrow keys*

9. Use the Erase tool (Shift + E) to remove any excess pixels around the pupils.

10. The dog's pupils aren't pure black, so let's add a little color. Open the Colorize filter (Image Menu ➤ Colors ➤ Colorize). Set the hue value to about 25 and the saturation value to about 16 then click OK (Figure B-9).

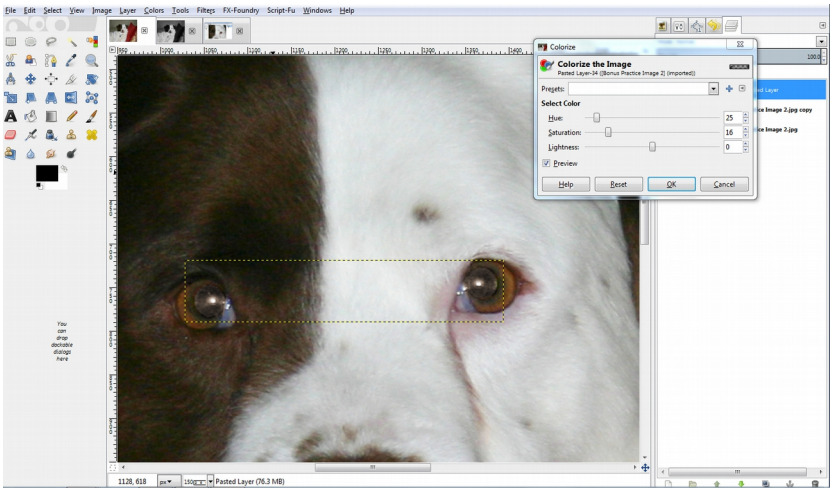

Figure B-9. *Using the Colorize filter to add natural coloring to the dog's pupils*

Using this method of correcting severe red-eye effect by unitizing the color channel containing the best image information (usually the blue color channel) is very effective. The end result is an image of a friendly dog, as opposed to a demon-possessed animal (Figure B-10).

Figure B-10. *Using the Colorize filter to add natural coloring to the dog's pupils*

Removing Distracting Objects

I love going to the zoo and photographing the exotic animals there. The photo of an African elephant is one of my favorites, but the wire fence is rather distracting (Figure B-11). It wouldn't hurt for the structures in the background to be removed as well, but for this tutorial we'll focus on the fence (and the elephant's waste matter).

Figure B-11. *A distracting wire fence*

Bonus Tutorial 3: Removing a Wire Fence

In this tutorial, you'll use the Heal Selection filter (The Resynthesizer plug-in must be installed in order to use it) and the Clone tool to remove the wire fence, and the patch technique for covering the elephant's “bathroom business”. Using Heal Selection will speed up the editing process by reducing the amount of cloning that would be otherwise necessary.

To correct this image, follow these steps:

1. Open the image ***(Bonus Practice Image 3_elephant)*** located in the Bonus Practice Images folder.

2. Duplicate the background layer and rename it Edit Layer (Figure B-12).

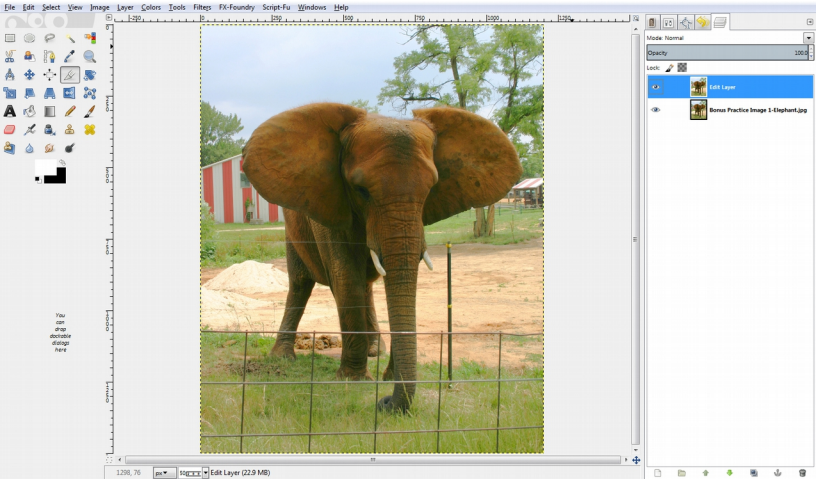

Figure B-12. *Create a duplicate layer to edit on*

3. Toggle the Quick Mask mode on (Shift + Q). With black as the active color, and the Brush tool set to a diameter of 020 with a hardness of 025, paint along a part of the fence (Figure B-13).

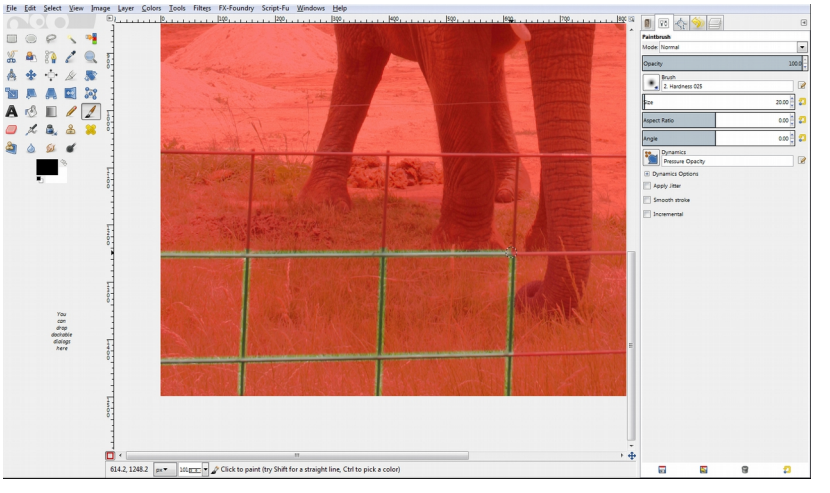

Figure B-13. *Paint along a small section of the fence on the Quick Mask*

4. Toggle the Quick Mask mode off (Shift + Q). The selection should extend slightly beyond the wire.

5. Run the Heal Selection filter (Image Menu ➤ Filters ➤ Enhance ➤ Heal Selection) leaving the default settings in place. If your results leave behind any slightly noticeable traces (Figure B-14), use the Clone Tool (C) to clean up the traces.

Figure B-14. *Use the Clone tool to clean up any traces left behind by the Heal Selection filter*

6. Repeat the process throughout the rest of the fence, working on short sections at a time where the image detail is contiguous (Figure B-15). This will help avoid creating distorted areas after applying the Heal Selection filter.

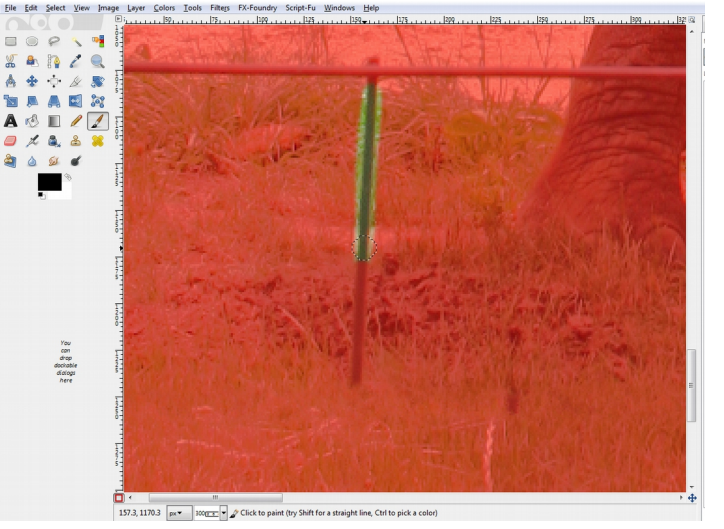

Figure B-15. *Work in short segments where the image detail is contiguous*

7. The Heal Selection filter might not work well on all sections of the fence, such as the top left area (Figure B-16). Use the Clone tool (C) to remove that portion.

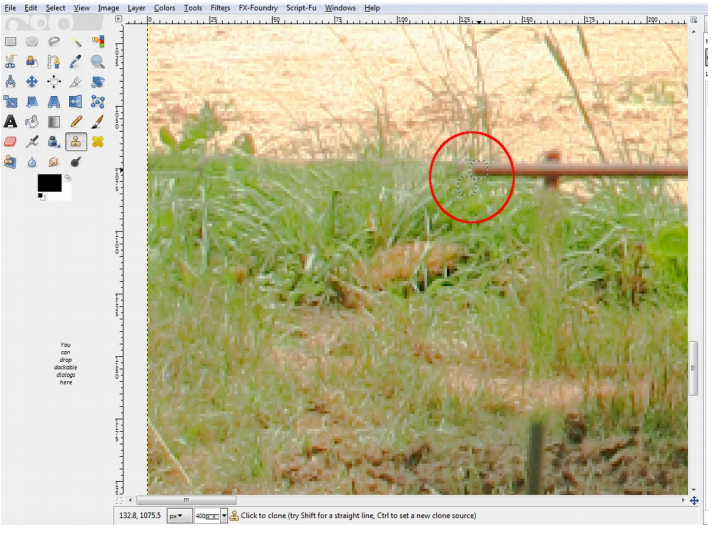

Figure B-16. *Use the Clone tool on areas where the Heal Selection filter doesn't work*

8. After the fence has been completely edited out, we'll now remove the elephant's waste by-product (thankfully, in digital fashion). Using the Free Select tool (F) with the Feather Edges radius set to 20, make a selection around a sandy area (Figure B-17). Be sure the selection is larger than the area to be covered.

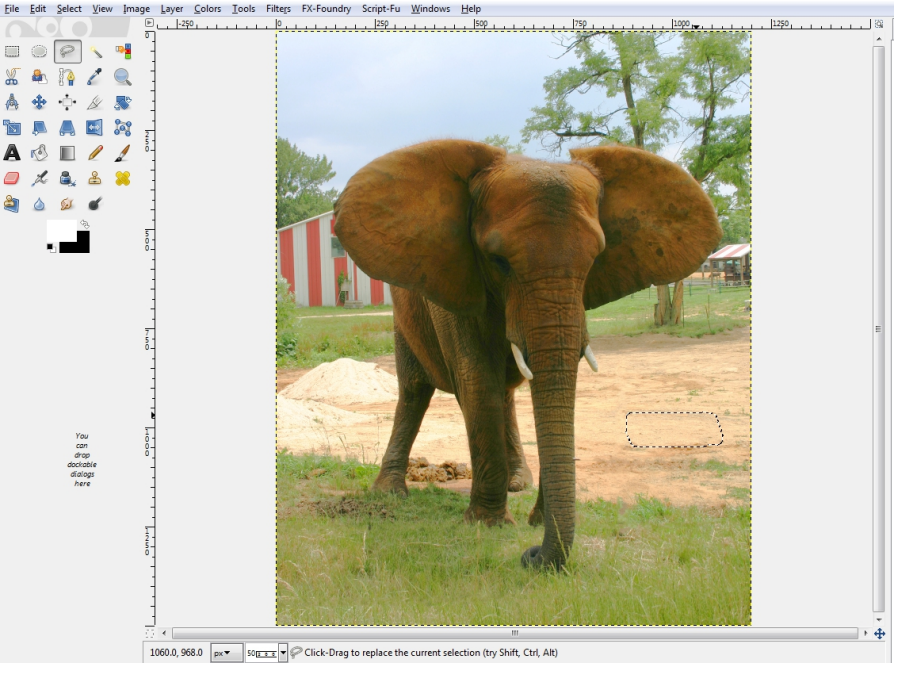

Figure B-17. *Select a sandy area to use a a patch to cover the elephant's waste*

9. Copy and paste (Control + C and Control + V) the selection. Convert the floating selection into a layer (Image Menu ➤ Layer ➤ To New Layer).

10. Move the patch layer over the elephant waste matter. Lower the opacity to see underneath, and use the Erase tool (Shift + E) to remover the excess pixels (Figure B-18).

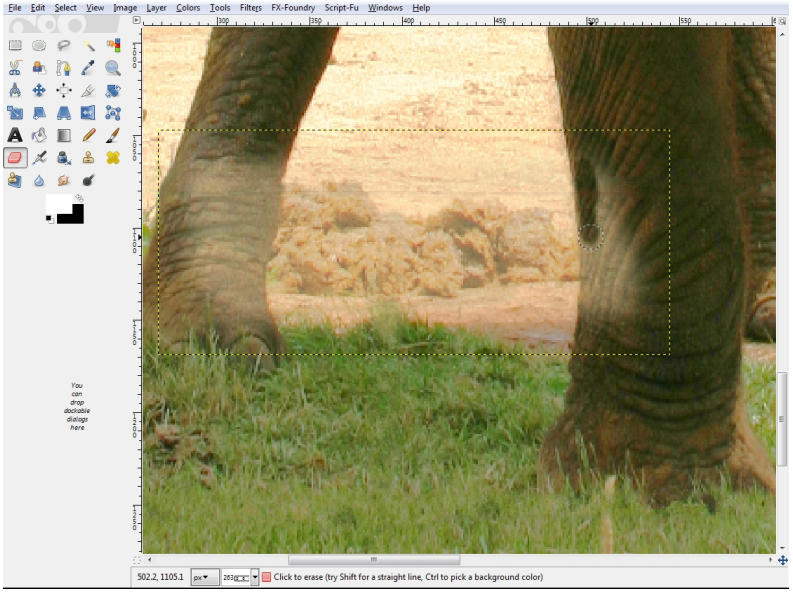

Figure B-18. *Use the Erase tool to remove excess pixels*

11. Select a grassy area and repeat the process to cover the waste near the elephant's foot.

With the distracting fence and the waste removed, the resulting image is less cluttered and cleaner (Figure B-19). Without using the Heal Selection, the process would have taken much longer.

Figure B-19. *Before and after comparison*

Summary

GIMP is a great tool for removing the red-eye effect and restoring eyes to their natural state, eliminating the spooky, “supernatural” look. The Heal Selection feature can drastically reduce the time spent removing unwanted objects from images. As we saw in the previous tutorial (and even though it doesn't always work perfectly), the Heal Selection filter can save a great deal of time when removing unwanted objects from images.