

## The Jose Gabriel Rig for Flashlight Photography at Night

At night when you spot a mammal and want to get a shot, the problem is that if you're holding a light, you want to be able to use your both hands to operate the camera, especially with fast moving subjects.

Headlamps are usually blocked by the flash mounted on the camera and even when you have someone shining the light for you, the angle might cast shadows that don't let the camera acquire focus.

With this setup described below, you should be able to use a telephoto lens and illuminate whatever is in the viewfinder while keeping both hands to operate the camera.

The originator of the idea is José Gabriel Martínez-Fonseca. This document was made by Charles Hood based on his ideas.

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(1) Get a “SmallRig” brand (or equivalent) cinema rig for your camera body, so you have a side rail. This can be a full cage or an L-bracket.

Add an Arca-Swiss receiver to the side rail your rig does not come with one.



(2) Using a small Arca Swiss baseplate, attach the torch of choice to the plate with a small foam gasket (optional; this one turned out to be too thick) and cable ties (these turned out to be too short).



(3) This Nikon D850 body has a 300mm lens, just as an experiment. The green climbing rope loop is for using a Black Rapid or carabiner attachment on a shoulder sling. Tied with a double fisherman knot, this loop is absurdly strong. The swivel would pull out of the camera body before the rope loop would break.

For travel, just unscrew the base plate and take it off the rig cage.

Pillowcase not included.





This shot shows the torch taken off the rig for travel or camp use; below are three shots by Jose Gabriel taken on a recent trip in Southeastern Arizona. All three are “torch only” (no additional flash).



