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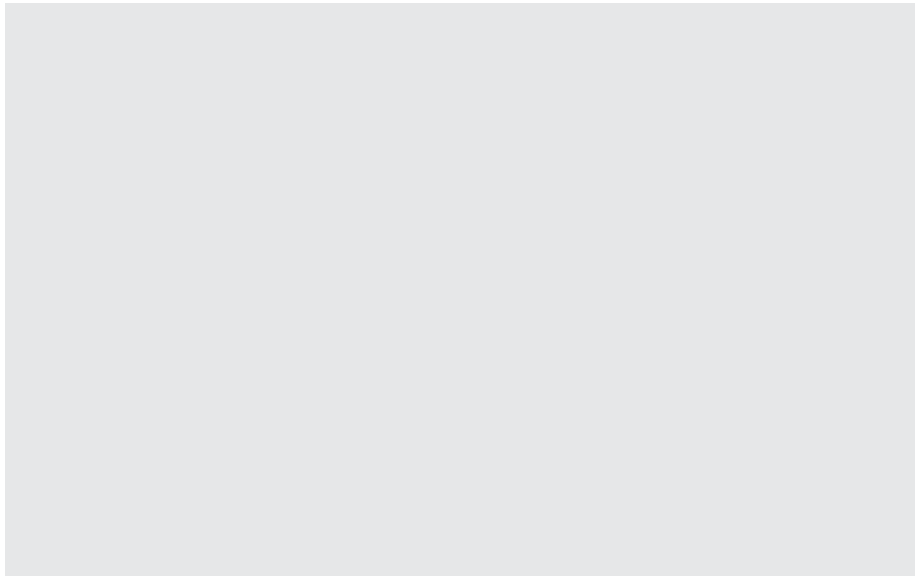


MONTREAL CAMERA CLUB

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Nature Division Handbook



About Nature Competitions

MONTREAL CAMERA CLUB

All members, from beginners to old pros, are encouraged to enter their work in competition with other members; it's an excellent way to improve your abilities and knowledge.

What qualifies as a Nature division image? Nature images are restricted to all things that are WILD, as generally defined in the P.S.A. or C.A.P.A. regulations.

An example of acceptable images would be those depicting wild animals in their natural habitat, birds, insects, plants, landscapes, seascapes, wetlands, rocks, fossils, stars and planets.

Roads, houses, fences or man himself should not be present although, for instance, a pelican on a piling would be in order as it is part of their habitat. Photographs taken in zoos are permitted, but should not show human intervention such as the cage bars, concrete walls, zoo straw or bedding, for instance.

Photographs depicting cultivated plants (tulips, roses, etc), still life studies, domestic animals, mounted specimens and museum specimens are not eligible but may be submitted in the Pictorial division.



CAROLE MIKLOS

Not eligible in the Nature Division

(Incidentally, certain artistic or creative representations of nature may be more suitable for entry in the Pictorial division.)

Eligibility

The criteria for eligibility of an image to compete in the Nature division shall be decided by a consensus of the judges on judging night. A photographer whose image(s) are disqualified will be allowed to enter a "catch up" of the disqualified slide(s)/digital images in a subsequent competition.

Titles

Descriptive titles should correctly identify the subject by its common name or its species name. For example: "Black-headed Grosbeak" and not simply "bird on a branch"; "Red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)", not the generic "Hawk".

Reference material

Excellent guides published by Peterson, Audubon, and National Geographic are available at most large bookstores to assist you in identifying your subject, and to learn more about it. The Nature Chairperson and some of the more experienced Nature Photographers in the Club may also be able to help. Online search is a valuable tool and public libraries are an excellent source for reference material

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHS
(clockwise from top right)
Kathryn Mason
Barbara Deans
Kathryn Mason
Bonnie Nichol
Catherine Rasmussen

Entering Images in Competition

A maximum of three images per competition in each of the five competitions are allowed for a total of 15 submissions over the year.

Images should be digital (best quality .jpg),

Digital files should be a maximum of 1400 pixels wide by 1050 pixels high (landscape) or 1050 pixels high (portrait) to benefit from the MCC's excellent projector resolution. Not adhering to the guidelines of size and colour space may negatively impact quality when projected.

For digital entries, rename each image file that you enter as illustrated below (separated with underscore "_")

Submissions for each competition are due on the Monday evening the week before the competition presentation.

Note: If entries are submitted by email no entry form is required.

It is preferable to receive entries via e-mail but for those without high-speed access, entries on a CD are acceptable. Returned CD's will be placed in the "Pick-up" box the week after the competition together with all the marking sheets. Nature submissions should be sent to: MCCNature1@gmail.com Please note the "1" in MCCNature1.

Three Judges will rate all the images in advance of their presentation. Images will be marked for nature value, composition, technique and impact. At the presentation evening, the judges will provide commentary on the images. All images are judged to the same standards. Monthly ribbons are awarded and annual trophies handed-out in the spring.

FILE NAME
G_1_1234_B_GreatBlueHeroninHabitat.jpg

↑ File must be saved as a high quality jpg

↑ Image title ****Maximum 60 characters****

↑ Membership Class: A as designated by the Committee. Otherwise B

↑ Membership number

↑ Image number: 1, 2 or 3 (or 4 for makeup entry)

G for General Nature; B for Botany; Z for Zoology; A for Action in Nature

The Nature Photographer's Code of Practice

PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

Introduction

The Nature Division of the Photographic Society of America, in order to help protect all nature subjects and the environment have adopted a Code of Practice as a guideline for all photographers to follow.

General

Always be considerate of your subjects be they animal vegetable or mineral. Killing or injuring any living thing is not a proper part of our nature photography.

Be courteous to your fellow photographer.

For the good name of nature Photography observe normal courtesies. Permission should be obtained before trespassing on land on which there is not customarily free access.

Be familiar with the life history and the geographic or geologic setting of your subject. The more complex the life form and rarer the species, the greater your knowledge, care and respect should be.

Abide by all requests of rangers and wardens in national and state parks and wildlife refuges.

Birds and Other Small Animals
Try to observe birds and other small animals so they are unaware of your presence. Thus you are provided an opportunity to learn their interesting everyday habits.

When photographing a nest don't keep it

unduly exposed to the sun, cold, rain, or snow which may cause death to the eggs or young and/or desertion by the parents. This protocol also applies to the burrows or dens of small animals, reptiles and lower life forms as well. Instead of cutting off branches or grasses near a nest or den, tie the branches back or lay the grass down with rocks or sticks. Before tying back branches, provide temporary shade, if needed. When you have finished photographing, place everything back properly, the way you found it, as a protection for the inhabitants.

Generally, do not keep a blind set up on a nest or burrow if the parents do not return within a half hour - especially on extremely hot or cold days.

Do not frighten birds from a nest to get a picture of them returning. You may cause the eggs or young to die. The normal intervals on the nest will not be too long. It is preferable not to take longer than 15 minutes to set up a blind at a nest or burrow. It will be that much longer before the parents return. It is better to set your blind up at the car and carry it in.

Do not approach a blind by car or foot if it is occupied. You may frighten the animal subject from the other photographer's spot and spoil his/her picture.

Beware of approaching a nest, den or burrow too closely. This could cause abandonment of the young by some parents, and expose the area to predation. Careful judgment is necessary.

Do not handle young birds or other small animals. Some parents may abandon them.

Tracks to and from a nest, den or burrow should be very inconspicuous. As far as possible, the area should be restored to its natural state after you are through photographing

Blinds should not be positioned along a regularly used approach line to the nest, den or burrow and should not be allowed to flap in the wind.

For cold-blooded animals and invertebrates, temporary removal from the wild to a studio or aquarium for photography should be undertaken with caution, as some states and countries have laws against this practice without a permit. Subsequent release, in any case, should be to the original habitat as soon as possible.

Botany

A competent photographer never needs to pick wildflowers. In many states and all National Parks and Monuments it is not only illegal to pick flowers, but a true nature photographer should be the first to protect them.

If rocks or logs or other objects natural to the area are brought in to provide scientifically correct, but more photogenic background, these should be returned to their original place.

While "gardening" is often desirable to simplify the immediate environment, this should not include pulling up, cutting off or otherwise destroying other plants in the picture area. Kneeholes, heel or tow scuffing etc., should be prevented.

Avoid trampling fragile habitats, especially grasslands, marshes and wildflower patches. Remember, damage to the habitat affects all species in the ecosystem.

Insects

Insects or spiders captured for photographic purposes should be released at the point of capture within a reasonably short time.

Day-flying insects, particularly butterflies and wasps, are most suitably controlled by working in a darkened room at night, focusing by means of a weak flashlight.

Chilling is suitable for such insects as beetles and grasshoppers only. Butterflies, many moths and almost all insect larvae, may be irreparably damaged by such treatment.

Freezing should not be attempted. The photographer should not endanger the lives of the insects. Bear in mind that they also play a part in the balance of nature.

Photographing insects and arachnids In the field would probably tell a more accurate story.

Tidepool Subjects

Tidepool animals have a definite ecological niche. Animals that live on top of rocks, and those that live underneath, will die if rocks turned over for photographic purposes are not replaced the way they were found. All marine life moved for any purpose should be returned to its original Location. Certain tidepool creatures such as brittle stars are extremely fragile. Handle them with great care.

Marine animals require large amounts of frequently replaced oxygen, and may die rather quickly if placed in aquaria without artificial oxygenation and temperature control.

Newts, Salamanders & Other Amphibians

While this group of animals make delightful aquaria subjects, they should not be held for more than a few hours while being photographed, unless they are provided with proper food, and kept in well-simulated nature conditions.

If chilling is used for partial control, it should be used carefully and for brief periods only. This practice applies to all animal subjects.

Reptiles

It is preferable that lizards and snakes be held for no more than very brief periods, since artificial feeding is usually not successful with a number of these species. If held overnight for photography the next morning, they should be given protection roughly equivalent to that which they would find for themselves in the

wild.

Snakes should never be picked up by the neck alone, as this may permanently injure their spinal column. Similarly, they should never be controlled by lifting them by their tail end.

Geology

Pictographs and petroglyphs should never be altered for photographic reasons by applying any substance, even though they are not eligible in NATURE exhibitions.

Miscellaneous

It is unethical to throw rocks at an animal to cause it to change position or area. Thoughtless conduct could force a creature to leave its accustomed surroundings because it finds the photographer an unbearable nuisance. If the animal in question is forced to move into territory occupied by another animal, friction is bound to arise. The dislodged animal may find unfavorable conditions in regard to food and water.

Nature programs or articles, which suggest or describe methods of nature photography contrary to this Code, are unacceptable for presentation at PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA national or regional conventions, or for use in the PSA Journal . Program directors should send copies of this Code to makers of programs being considered, emphasizing this fact. PSA-Affiliated clubs, councils and chapters should also adopt this practice.

PSA Nature Definitions 2012

Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict observations from all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archeology, in such a fashion that a well informed person will be able to identify the subject material and to certify as to its honest presentation. The story telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality while maintaining high technical quality. Human elements shall not be present, except where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals is permissible. Photographs of artificially produced hybrid plants or animals, mounted specimens, or obviously set arrangements, are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement. No techniques that add to, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping are permitted. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content are permitted. All adjustments must appear natural. Color images may be converted to grayscale monochrome. Infrared images are not allowed.

All images used in PSA Nature Division competitions and PSA-recognized Exhibitions for Wildlife images must meet the above definition as well as the PSA Definition for Nature Wildlife Photography as follows:

Authentic wildlife is defined as one or more organisms living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Therefore, landscapes, photographs of zoo or game farm animals, or any living subject taken under controlled conditions are not eligible for Wildlife competitions. Authentic wildlife is not limited to uncontrolled zoological subjects. Land and marine botanical subjects in the wild (including fungi and algae) are also eligible subjects, as are animal carcasses.

Note: Wildlife images may be entered in Open Sections of Nature International Exhibitions. Images that do not have living organisms as the primary subject matter or images taken with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens or setups may be entered in Open Sections, but may not be entered in Wildlife Sections. Insects, marine subjects, and botanical subjects taken in the field are suitable wildlife subjects. Wildlife subjects are not limited to animals or birds.

CAPA definition of Nature

Nature photography depicts living, untamed animals and uncultivated plants in a natural habitat, geology and the wide diversity of natural phenomena, from insects to icebergs. Photographs of animals which are domesticated, caged or under any form of restraint, as well as photographs of cultivated plants are ineligible.

Minimal evidence of humans is acceptable for nature subjects, such as barn owls or storks, adapting to an environment modified by humans, or natural forces, like hurricanes or tidal waves, reclaiming it.

The original image must have been taken by the photographer, whatever photographic medium is used.

Any manipulation or modification to the original image is limited to minor retouching of blemishes and must not alter the content of the original scene.

After satisfying the above requirements, every effort should be made to use the highest level of artistic skill in all nature photographs.

Nature Photographer's Code of Ethics*

- 1- Always put the welfare of the animal and plants ahead of your desire to photograph them.
- 2- Study the species' behavior, needs and ecosystem. Learn how things interrelate and how easily you can break their links.
- 3- The rarer the species, the greater the care you must take.
- 4- The more that seasonal circumstances make a species vulnerable, the wider the berth you must give your subject. Breeding season, winter and migration are especially stressful times for wildlife.
- 5- Leave nesting birds and nursing mammals alone unless you have proper training and guidance. Stay away from hibernators.
- 6- Do not stalk, chase or badger wildlife, repeatedly causing a bird to flush or a mammal to run.
- 7- Do not handle birds, wildlife or their young, or muck about with nests or dens. Never separate babies from their mothers. Avoid removing reptiles, amphibians or insects from their natural habitat.

- 8- Always move slowly, letting birds and other wildlife get accustomed to you.
- 9- If you see any signs of stress you are too close. Back off immediately.
- 10- Never permanently alter any habitat to improve your view. Gardening, cutting and clearing away branches, reeds, grasses and other protective cover is unacceptable. Removing a stray leaf or tying back a branch is acceptable, but return everything to its original position before you leave.
- 11- Avoid trampling plants and vegetation in any way.
- 12- Make your visit as brief and quiet as possible to minimize disturbance in the field. Avoid repeated trips. Avoid creating a trail to your subject's refuge.
- 13- Do not trespass or litter. Respect landlords' and public terms for land use.
- 14- If you witness any unethical practice in the field, speak up.
- 15- Consider the collective of nature viewers. If the area or subject is over visited, could you look for another, less stressful opportunity?

**From Catherine Collins article, Seasons 1992 Summer edition.*