



# North Central Camera Club Council

N4C May 2025 News Bulletin

Volume 61 No. 73 [www.n4c.us](http://www.n4c.us)



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## N4C Members,

I am continually impressed by the images of the artists that are submitting and winning N4C contests. Yes, ARTISTS! That is what you are. Your paintbrush is your camera and editing tools. Hopefully your clubs are continuing to educate on the power of the digital darkroom. Lets share our secrets to help others elevate their craft.

Questions are still coming in on images for competition. It is suggested that you submit and judge with integrity that the maker has followed the rules and trust that the images are indeed made by the photographer in accordance with our rules. Please oh please be kind and positive in any comments given to artists. You may note any rule questions in your comments. There is no big prize money on the line for all of this so please lighten up a bit.

On April 30 we had our spring board meeting via Zoom. It was bittersweet to not have an in person Spring Mini-Convention, but great to see the faces and hear the voices via Zoom as a small consultation. Minutes coming soon, but here is a brief overview of some of our discussion:

- Sioux City Camera Club gave back to the N4C after being in the black for the Fall 2024 Convention. Great job Sioux City!
- No Fall Convention or Meet up for 2025, No AI competition, Virtual award ceremony being planned.

- Fall 2026 Convention is planned for October 8-11, 2026 in Medora, ND. Mark your calendars because you will not want to miss this one. It is promised to be a big one and you will want to be there. 2027 Convention host is needed.
- 2025-2026 Judging Matrix is complete- Thank you for all who worked with Tim Zetlinger on this.
- Board of Directors vote coming via email to N4C Representatives. Please reply as soon as possible when it is received.
- Next board meeting will be TBD in September/October 2025

**Jennifer L Tigges, President N4C 2024-2025**

563-590-9868 call or text

563-583-7128 voice only

*Dubuque Camera Club*



**Bulletin Editor**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Digital Images are still included in the N4C Bulletins. The N4C website <http://www.n4c.us> presents all the monthly Digital winners on page 1.

“Since prints are not shown on the website, I will present all the Print winners in each issue of the N4C Bulletin,” commented N4C Bulletin Editor Carl Hardy

**EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES ARE AT THE END OF THIS BULLETIN. LINKS ALSO ARE AT THE END OF THIS BULLETIN FOR EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS FROM N4C CLUBS WEBSITES**

**PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT THE REMARABLE PROFILE AND IMAGES FROM N4C DIRECTOR 3, STEPHONIE SCHMIDT. STEPHONIE HAS BEEN THE N4C PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS.**

*Where Names Become Faces and Faces Become Friends!* Carl Hardy, N4C Bulletin Editor



## Meet a N4C Board Member

**Stephonie Schmitz**

**N4C Director 3**

**Fine Art Photographer + Graphic Designer | Founder of SAO Dzynz, Inc. |  
Dubuque, IA**

A native of Moline, IL, and now rooted in Dubuque, IA, I've had a lifelong passion for the arts — especially photography and design. My creative journey began in childhood with a Kodak film camera gifted by my parents, sparking a love for capturing the world through a lens. Around the same time, my mom passed along her calligraphy set, which ignited my fascination with letterform and visual storytelling. This curiosity and drive to create have shaped my career as a photographer and graphic designer.

I studied Graphic Design at Clarke College in Dubuque, IA, and continued my education online at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, CA. In 2002, I founded my creative studio, SAO Dzynz, Inc., specializing in corporate branding, custom wedding invitations, and portrait photography. Today, my work centers on fine art landscape photography and graphic design for local and national clients, with occasional explorations into abstract painting and digital art. Over the years, I've had the honor of receiving awards and publication recognition for both my photography and design work.

As a dedicated community member, I volunteer and serve on several local boards, including the American Advertising Federation of Dubuque as the ADDY chair, executive board member of the Scenic Art Loop by ARRT, the Voices Studios team, and now the N4C. I also co-founded the Schmitz Foundation with my family, supporting individuals and communities locally and globally.

My husband Curtis and I met at Clarke College in 2002, married in magnificent Moorea, French Polynesia in 2012, and now share a life of adventure with our two daughters, Marley (10) and Ava (4). As a homeschooling family, we embrace extended travel, exploring the world together and nurturing our shared love for exciting experiences. Our Halloween family costumes are legendary (and yes — we're already brainstorming this year's theme!). We find joy in creativity and togetherness.

Through my photography, I aim not just to document the world, but to evoke emotion — to help viewers truly *feel* what they see through my lens. I'm excited to bring that same passion and perspective to my role on the N4C board, supporting its mission and helping shape a vibrant and sustainable future for the organization.

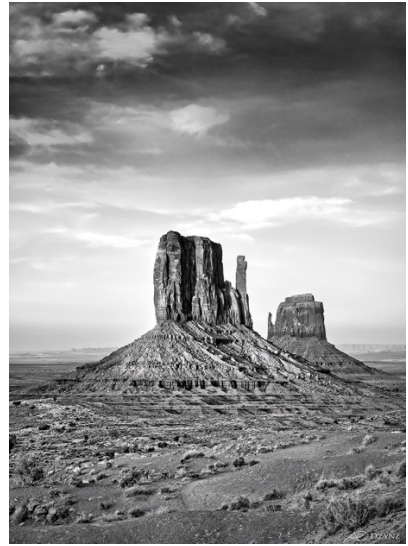
- **Connect with me:**  
Website: [www.saodzynz.com](http://www.saodzynz.com) (a never ending work in progress!)
- Email: [info@saodzynz.com](mailto:info@saodzynz.com)
- Social: FB: @saodzynz | IG: @sao\_dzynz

**Stephonie A Schmitz**  
SAO Dzynz, Inc  
[www.saodzynz.com](http://www.saodzynz.com)









## **This is the list of N4C Judging Clubs for May.**

### **☆☆ NEWS FLASH ☆☆ DIGITAL PANORAMA CONTEST - MAY ONLY**

#### **☆☆ NOTIFY YOUR MEMBERS**

This PANO contest is **entered directly by your Club Members.**

Let them know by email with these instructions and special rules:

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#### **Club Members:**

**N4C Digital Panorama Competition-** as voted at the Fall Convention 2024, Panorama competition will be changing to a digital category with regular digital submissions in May.

- (1) Panorama contest will be a digital contest happening once a year.
- (2) One image per person and one image per email, no limit per club
- (3) should be a minimum ratio of 2:1
- (4) the file size is to be a minimum of 5mb and a maximum of 25mb
- (5) CLUB MEMBER ENTRANTS ARE TO Email their own entry to Ed Siems by May 15  
[IF FILE IS TOO LARGE FOR EMAIL - USE DROPBOX]

#### **PANORAMA Digital**

"PANO" (Digital Panorama) is the contest ID that goes after your Member Number in your filename:

Ed Siems  
1251 Prairie Avenue  
Marshalltown, IA 50158  
641-751-4386  
[ed\\_siems@yahoo.com](mailto:ed_siems@yahoo.com) That is ed underscore siems@

#### **N4C Digital (& Print) Contacts,**

If I should contact someone different, please let me know.

**IF YOUR CLUB ENTERS PRINTS, SEE BELOW FOR WHERE TO SEND ENTRIES.**

**FOR DIGITAL ENTRIES,** they must be received by 5:00 pm May 15, however make every effort to send them by the 13th to allow time for confirmation.

- Judging may begin on the 16th - make sure you receive confirmation that entries were received.

The cutoff time will be 5:00pm on the 15th giving the judging chair time to organize them for judging starting on the 16th. The point is....don't wait until the last minute. There have been problems with occasionally missing entries when they are not received until late in the night on the 15th.

The 2023-2024 rules are on the N4C web at <http://n4c.us/competition.htm> by clicking the blue "N4C Contest Rules" button. Copy attached. Refer to those until the new N4C Handbook is available.

The the N4C Directory is available by email from Carl Hardy and his email is [torchenterprises72@gmail.com](mailto:torchenterprises72@gmail.com) The Handbook contains the contest rules and other general N4C Info. The Directory contains the list of judging clubs for all the contests along with contact info for all the affiliated clubs. The Handbook is available for download from the web <http://n4c.us/Supplies-Forms.htm> page.



**There are six Digital Image Contests each month - (see the definitions of each category in the Rules):**

Altered Reality (DA)  
Black & White (DB)  
Journalism (DJ)  
Nature (DN)  
Pictorial (DP)  
Travel (DT)

Maximum of 8 entries per club per contest, not more than one from a member in each contest

**Do not enter versions of the same image in multiple contests.** For example, do not enter both a color and B&W version in the same month. Likewise don't enter both Digital & print versions. If both win, one will be withdrawn. The rule is: "Any entry which receives a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or HM award in a monthly competition may not be re-entered in the same year or later years, in the same or any other category, regardless of variations or changes made."

Please check your entries before sending them on for judging. Look for three things:

1. File size 750KB max. (A requirement this year)
2. **Longest side 1,920 pixels max.**
3. File name should look like this example: 01,DE028,DP,Beautiful Sunset.jpg

Content of the Email Message when you send the entries:

- a. Subject Line of the Email should say "N4C Contest Entries from \_(your)\_ Camera Club".
- b. Specify which monthly contest and how many images are attached to the Email.
- c. List the Member Numbers and corresponding member names to ensure that the Judging Club has that information.
- d. Give the Club Name and your full name.
- e. Attach the image files

**ASK THE JUDGING CLUB IF YOU DO NOT GET A RECEIVED CONFIRMATION BACK FROM THEM**

Please send me updated member lists when you have added Member Numbers. I'm glad to see new members participating in N4C contests. Naturally I need to get them registered so they are properly identified for the judging clubs. For new members, that really should be done a month in advance of entering.

**(Entries must be received by 5:00 pm May 15, however make every effort to send them by the 13th to allow time for confirmation.**

**- Judging may begin on the 16th - make sure you receive confirmation that entries were received)**

**If you have any trouble reaching these judging clubs, let Ken Johnson know as soon as possible.**

## **May Digital Image Judging Clubs:**

**ALTERED REALITY** Digital "DA" (Digital Altered Reality) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number

Des Moines Camera Club

Janie Lawson

1381 NW 122nd St.

Clive, IA 50325

515-778-7277

[DMCC.N4C.Digital@gmail.com](mailto:DMCC.N4C.Digital@gmail.com)

**BLACK & WHITE** Digital "DB" (Digital B&W) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Saint Paul Camera Club

Terry Butler

1620 Wexford Way

Woodbury, MN 55125

612-270-1653

[terrymjbutler@gmail.com](mailto:terrymjbutler@gmail.com)

**JOURNALISM** Digital "DJ" (Digital Journalism) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

La Crosse Area Camera Club

Cyndy Thorn

32063 Co Road 11

Houston, MN 55943

507-450-4466

[cyndythornimagery@live.com](mailto:cyndythornimagery@live.com)

**NATURE** Digital "DN" (Digital Nature) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Dubuque Camera Club

Cara Pusateri

3420 Saint Catherine Rd.

Bellevue, IA 52031

563-542-0380

[cpusateri5@aol.com](mailto:cpusateri5@aol.com)

**PICTORIAL** (Color) Digital "DP" (Digital Pictorial) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

Wichita Area Camera Club

Dwight Corrin

1201 W. River Blvd. Apt. 108

Wichita, KS 67203

316-207-6581

[wacc.n4c.rep@gmail.com](mailto:wacc.n4c.rep@gmail.com)



**TRAVEL** Digital "DT" (Digital Travel) is the contest ID that goes after the Member Number:

**Be sure to include the STATE or COUNTRY of the image in the title.**

Sioux City Camera Club [Correction to Directory]

Carl Hardy

3236 Maplewood St.

Sioux City, IA 51104

712-281-3345

[torchenterprises72@gmail.com](mailto:torchenterprises72@gmail.com)

## **SEND NEW MEMBER NUMBERS AND NAMES TO KEN JOHNSON**

N4C Supplies & Forms - on the web.

Entry forms, Reports and more. Make your job easier - Check it out.

<http://n4c.us/Supplies-Forms.htm>

A club will normally have up to 8 entries for a contest. A typical image file name list might look like:

(USE YOUR CLUB NAME AND MEMBER NUMBER INSTEAD OF DA044 - zero "0" 44 not a letter "O")

(USE DA, DB, DJ, DN, DP, or DT for the Contest Code - This example is for the Digital Nature Contest)

(Notice commas separating the data in the file names) 01,DA044,DN,Deer.jpg

03,DA022,DN,Grand Arch.jpg

04,DA033,DN,Teton Reflection.jpg

05,DA037,DN,White Water.jpg

06,DA002,DN,Shadows.jpg

07,DA025,DN,Horsetail Falls.jpg

08,DA018,DN,Soaring Eagle.jpg

Members should submit entries with filenames similar to the above except for the sequence numbers. The club N4C Rep will rename the files to include the sequence numbers. The club N4C Rep may want to keep things simple for the club members and handle ALL the file naming - how this is done is left to the club. The sequence numbers will determine the sequencing of the image in the judging line-up. All the contest entries will be sorted in alpha-numeric sequence by filename so this will mix up club entries for judging. The 01's from all the clubs will be judged first and the 08's at the end.

Encourage your members to explore the N4C website where they will find a lot of photography to study, and photography links with an unlimited number of tutorials and educational videos to learn from. <http://n4c.us/>

## **PRINT ENTRIES - JUDGING CLUBS FOR May**

Print contest rules are in the attached N4C Contest Rules.

Entries must be received by these clubs by May 15.

**Because of experienced delays in mail and shipping, other clubs recommend that you also send an email to these judging clubs to expect your entries. Ideally, give them your tracking number.**

### **Send both Nature Prints and Black & White to:**

Fargo-Moorhead Camera Club

Bruce Bernstein

1505 - 8th St S

Fargo, ND 58103

701-235-5945

[brucepamfargo@yahoo.com](mailto:brucepamfargo@yahoo.com)

### **Send both Pictorial Color Prints and Altered Reality Prints to:**

Topeka Camera Club

Greg Hoglund

2230 SW Kingsrow Road

Topeka, KS 66614

785-633-2384

[greg.hoglund@sbcglobal.net](mailto:greg.hoglund@sbcglobal.net)

### **Send both Travel Prints and Journalism Prints to:**

Iowa City Camera Club [Correction to Directory]

Mark Gromko

72 White Oak Pl

Iowa City, IA 52245

319-471-3689

[mgromko@bgsu.edu](mailto:mgromko@bgsu.edu)

Ken Johnson [web@n4c.us](mailto:web@n4c.us),

A Digital Contest Chair

Enjoy photography whether or not it is yours!

## **Best of the N4C Winners Roundup for the 2025 Annual Best of the Best Contest**

First, Second, Third, and Honorable Mention winners in all categories of the 2024-2025 monthly contests are eligible to be judged in the Annual Best of N4C Contest.

Merit award winners are NOT eligible.

A preliminary list of all winners through April is being sent to clubs so they can begin rounding-up PRINTS. **Begin collecting prints.**

**Check this list of all entries for accuracy as it will be used to announce the final awards.**

A complete listing will be sent for September through May around June 8.



The Annual Best of the Best Contest will go on despite not having the annual Fall Convention this year.

Awards for the Best of the Best will be announced and presented in a video awards presentation being planned along with Photographer of the Year, Clubs of the Year, and other awards.

The Sioux City Camera Club is handling the judging of:  
Black & White Prints; Pictorial Colored Prints; Altered Reality Prints

The Omaha Camera Club is handling the judging of  
Nature Prints; Journalism Prints; Travel Prints

Digital Altered Reality by Image Makers; Digital Pictorial by Dubuque; Digital Black & White by Minot; Digital Journalism by Lincoln; Digital Nature by Black Hills; Digital Travel by Image Makers

PRINT Entries must be received in early July An exact date and location will be sent after the May entries are announced.

Eligible **DIGITAL entries (Gray Background)** have been saved each month and **do NOT need to be sent.** Photo Essays are not to be sent.

**All prints must be unmounted. No Mats or stiff backing allowed.**

**(NO DIGITAL images and NO PANORAMA PRINTS NEED TO BE COLLECTED)**

Contact Ken Johnson at email address [web@n4c.us](mailto:web@n4c.us), 515-822-8126 if someone in your Club has not seen a list and think you should have eligible entries.

Awards for the Best of the Best will be announced and presented in a video awards presentation being planned along with Photographer of the Year, Clubs of the Year, and other awards.

Thanks to all the entrants, clubs, judges, and contest chairs.

Let one of us know if any corrections need to be made

Ken Johnson [kandsjohnson@mchsi.com](mailto:kandsjohnson@mchsi.com)

Terry Butler [terrymjbutler@gmail.com](mailto:terrymjbutler@gmail.com)

# N4C April (2025-04) Contest Results

## *Digital Altered Reality*

- 1st Light\_Refraction\_Art - Doug Conrad, Sioux City
- 2nd Spring Cleaning - Deb Shoning, Des Moines
- 3rd BoyPortrait - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club
- HM Enchanted Forest - Markus Erk, Black Hills
- HM Super Charged Raptor - Sharon Watson, Fargo-Moorhead
- HM Bird on a Limb - Wilford Yoder, Iowa City

59 entries from 16 clubs. Judging Club: Omaha Camera Club. Chair: Nikki McDonald. Judges: Allen Kurth, Donna Gray, Margaret West. Comments: Judges provided comments on all entries. In the case of composites, they would encourage attention to the resolution of all components as well as to editing detail, especially when "cleaning up" around added elements and adding convincing touches such as shadows to make them "make sense".

## *Digital B&W*

- 1st Going After Them - Diana Borash, Iowa City
- 2nd Along the River Nore, - Dorothy Sansom, Omaha
- 3rd Full Gallop Leap - Allen Kurth, Omaha
- HM Repurposed - Steve Guns, Des Moines
- HM Flairing Mushrooms - Martha Farwell, Great River
- HM Grass roof church Iceland - John Corey, Minnesota Valley
- HM Into the Clouds - Margaret West, Omaha
- HM Patterns in the Sand - Margaret West, Omaha
- HM So Many Thoughts - Larry Syverud, Saint Paul
- HM Becalmed - Edgar Evans, Wichita Area

94 entries from 17 clubs. Judging Club: Fargo-Moorhead Camera Club. Chair: Bruce Bernstein. Judges: Sharon Watson, John Calvin, Gordon Court.

## *Digital Journalism*

- 1st Monterey Aquarium - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin
- 2nd On the way to winning State Class B BB - Tim Zeltinger, Minot
- 3rd Major League Pitch - Allen Kurth, Omaha
- HM CatchinTheBigWave - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
- HM Downtown Friends - Margaret West, Omaha
- HM Big\_Head\_Tom\_and\_the\_Monsters - Doug Conrad, Sioux City
- HM Team Work - Kimberly Vetterkind, Western Wisconsin

67 entries from 15 clubs. Judging Club: Saint Paul Camera Club. Chair: Terry Butler. Judges: Karen Leonard, David Gonzalez, Gene Scwope. Comments: There was a large variety of entries and quite a few of them were award worthy.

## *Digital Nature*

- 1st Violation of the nest - Jeff Westgard, Fargo-Moorhead
- 2nd White-Necked Jacobins - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin
- 3rd Miichigan Waterfall - Bob Rude, Iowa City
- HM Singing Prothonotary Warbler - Kenneth Kiss, Dubuque
- HM Junco - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
- HM Waters in heaven - Tim Beaulier, Duluth-Superior
- HM Shiprock Sunrise\_New Mexico - John Calvin, Fargo-Moorhead
- HM Wild Horses in Arizona - Diana Borash, Iowa City
- HM Fresh Catch - Steve Fleagle, Iowa City
- HM Red-eyed Tree Frog - Marianne Diericks, Western Wisconsin
- HM Northern Hawk Owl - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin



106 entries from 18 clubs. Judging Club: Black Hills Photography Club. Chair: Kevin Segrud. Judges: Deb Zimmerman, Brittany Kahl, Markus Erk. Comments: So wonderful entries. Very difficult to pick winners.

### ***Digital Pictorial***

- 1st Crane Lift - Marge Springett, Western Wisconsin
- 2nd Starving Starlings - Candy Erk Manthey, Black Hills
- 3rd Dunes #5 - John Calvin, Fargo-Moorhead
- HM Sunkissed Belvedere Mountain-Moorea French Polynesia - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
- HM Young Chipmunk - Destiny Goetzinger, Dubuque
- HM Helping One Another - Deb Teller, Omaha
- HM Great Bent NP Sunset - Jacqueline Evans, Wichita Area
- HM Storm Coming - Mary Johnson, Western Wisconsin
- HM Olympic Peninsula Sunset - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin
- HM Sunflower Show - Jennifer Rozmiarek, Western Wisconsin

92 entries from 17 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux City Camera Club. Chair: Carl Hardy. Judges: Carl Hardy, Kevin Smith, Jerry Wiershauser. Comments: These Digital Pictorial images were outstanding in all aspects from technique, to composition, and interest. Great colors, great subject matter. Very hard to judge.

### ***Digital Travel***

- 1st Maasai Jumping Dance - Tanzania - Jennifer Novack Haar, Omaha
- 2nd Balloons over Cappadocia Turkey - Marv Vikla, Saint Paul
- 3rd Fire Opal Skies Over Devil's Tower National Monument, Wyo - Deb Zimmerman, Black Hills
- HM Coming Home at the End of the Day - Donnelly D Spur Ranch in Arizona - Diana Borash, Iowa City
- HM Big waves on Lake Superior - Tim Zeltinger, Minot
- HM Early Morning at Bear Butte SD - Doug Conrad, Sioux City
- HM Sunset at Union Station Kansas City, Kansas - Elliott Lindgren, Saint Paul
- HM Dark Sky Reflections, MN - Marianne Diericks, Western Wisconsin
- HM A Night at Hollow Rock, MN - Terry Butler, Western Wisconsin
- HM Joshua Tree National Park at Dawn - Joseph Schufman, Western Wisconsin

97 entries from 19 clubs. Judging Club: Women's Color Photo Club. Chair: Linda Rutherford. Judges: Mary Johnson, Marilyn Lameroux, Judith Lathrop. Comments: Many images did not give a sense of place which is what is looked for in travel.

### ***Altered Reality Prints***

- 1st Flower Girl - Gordon Rath, Dubuque
- 2nd The Tourist - Kevin McTague, Dubuque
- 3rd Smoke - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club

10 entries from 5 clubs. Judging Club: Albert Lea Lens & Shutter. Chair: Linda Eisterhold. Judges: Carol Haroldson, Mitch Pederson, Debbie Linnes. Comments: Selection could be better.

### ***B & W Pictorial Prints***

- 1st Creeping Bobcat, Kim Walter, Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs
- 2nd Trekking an Alien World - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque
- 3rd Karras/Kaul Memorial - Larry Mendenhall, Des Moines
- HM Light Behind the Legacy - Gordon Rath, Dubuque
- HM Back in the Day - Chuck Stowe, Des Moines

22 entries from 7 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux City Camera Club. Chair: Carl Hardy. Judges: Shane Monahan, Gary Gilbert, Carl Hardy. Comments: Excellent Black & White Prints showing excellent technique, composition, and interest. Good blacks and whites and good capture.

## ***Journalism Prints***

1st Hazer and Bulldogger - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior

2nd Lions of Judah on Plymouth Avenue - Ronnie Hartman, Saint Paul

3rd HUG - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club

14 entries from 6 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux City Camera Club: Carl Hardy. Judges: Shane Monahan, Gary Gilbert, Carl Hardy. Comments: Low number of Journalism Prints. Excellent story telling combined with excellent technique, composition, and interest. Very sharp, good colors, and capture.

## ***Nature Prints***

1st Heron at Sunrise - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul

2nd Fungi on Log - Debbie Bates, Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs

3rd The Deep - Gordon Rath, Dubuque

HM Great Balance - Lori Ollendick, Dubuque

19 entries from 7 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux City Camera Club: Carl Hardy. Judges: Shane Monahan, Gary Gilbert, Carl Hardy. Comments: Low number of Nature Prints. Excellent showing a nature subjects using excellent technique, composition, and interest. Very sharp, good colors, and capture.

## ***Pictorial Prints***

1st Lighting Up an Ice Cave - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior Camera Club

2nd Ellen & Reflection - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul Camera Club

3rd Ice Dog - Eric Williamson, Des Moines Camera Club

HM Long Exposure Study at Scripps Pier - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque Camera Club

HM Fireworks at the Game - Carey Anderson, Sioux City Camera Club

HM Bronco rider 5 - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club

31 entries from 8 clubs. Judging Club: Albert Lea Lens & Shutter. Chair: Linda Eisterhold. Judges: Carol Haroldson, Mitch Pederson, Debbie Linnes. Comments: Overall quality has declined over the years..

## ***Travel Prints***

1st Napali Coast, Hawaii - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque

2nd Split Rock Lighthouse - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club

3rd Grand Entry - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior

15 entries from 7 clubs. Judging Club: Sioux City Camera Club: Carl Hardy. Judges: Shane Monahan, Gary Gilbert, Carl Hardy. Comments: Low number of Travel Prints. Excellent showing a travel locations using excellent technique, composition, and interest. Very sharp, good colors, and capture.

*Digital Altered Reality*

1st Light\_Refraction\_Art - Doug Conrad, Sioux City



*Digital Black & White*

1st Going After Them - Diana Borash, Iowa City



## *Digital Journalism*

1st Monterey Aquarium - Mariann Cyr, Western Wisconsin



## *Digital Nature*

1st Violation of the nest - Jeff Westgard, Fargo-Moorhead





## *Digital Pictorial*

1st Crane Lift - Marge Springett, Western Wisconsin



## *Digital Travel*

1st Maasai Jumping Dance - Tanzania - Jennifer Novack Haar, Omaha



## *Altered Reality Prints*

1st Flower Girl - Gordon Rath, Dubuque



2nd The Tourist - Kevin McTague, Dubuque





**3rd Smoke - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club**



***B & W Pictorial Prints***

**1st Creeping Bobcat, Kim Walter, Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs**



**2nd Trekking an Alien World - Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque**



**3rd Karras/Kaul Memorial - Larry Mendenhall, Des Moines**





**HM Light Behind the Legacy - Gordon Rath, Dubuque**



**HM Back in the Day - Chuck Stowe, Des Moines**





## *Journalism Prints*

**1st Hazer and Bulldogger - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior**



**2nd Lions of Judah on Plymouth Avenue - Ronnie Hartman, Saint Paul**





**3rd HUG - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club**



***Nature Prints***

**1st Heron at Sunrise - Ken Epstein, Saint Paul**





**2nd Fungi on Log - Debbie Bates, Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs**



**3rd The Deep - Gordon Rath, Dubuque**



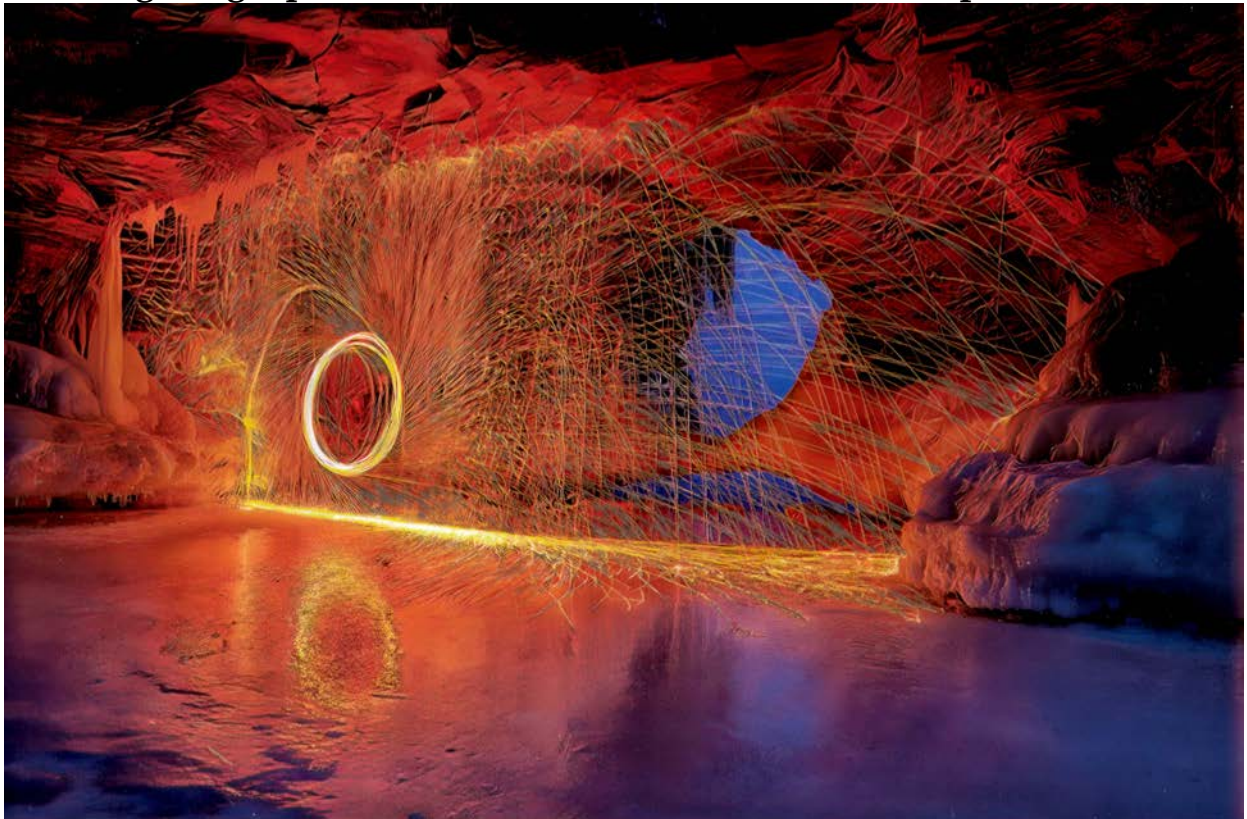


**HM Great Balance - Lori Ollendick, Dubuque**



***Pictorial Prints (Color)***

**1st Lighting Up an Ice Cave - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior Camera**





**2nd Ellen & Reflection - Peggy Boike, Saint Paul Camera Club**



**3rd Ice Dog - Eric Williamson, Des Moines Camera Club**





**HM Long Exposure Study at Scripps Pier - Stephonie Schmitz,  
Dubuque Camera Club**



**HM Fireworks at the Game - Carey Anderson, Sioux City Camera Club**





**HM Bronco rider 5 - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club**



***Travel Prints***

**1st Napali Coast, Kauai- Stephonie Schmitz, Dubuque**





**2nd Split Rock Lighthouse - Drago Nemec, Photoshooters Club**



**3rd Grand Entry - Robert Lahti, Duluth-Superior**



# How to Photograph Birds: Tips for Capturing Stunning Shots

February 5, 2025 Reprinted from HawkWatch International

Bird photography is an exciting challenge that combines the beauty of wildlife with the art of photography. With patience, practice, and a few key techniques, even beginners can capture breathtaking images of birds flying, perching on branches, or interacting with their natural environment. Whether you're a birdwatcher hoping to document your observations or a budding photographer eager to improve your wildlife photography skills, this guide will help you capture stunning shots of our feathered friends.

## Getting Started With Bird Photography

Bird photography requires understanding a few basics of wildlife photography. Birds are often unpredictable and elusive, making the process both thrilling and challenging. Here are some foundational tips:

**Be patient:** Birds don't pose or wait for the perfect light. Often, they will flit away at the slightest movement. Be prepared to wait quietly, blending into the environment to make birds feel at ease. Understand bird behavior: Observing bird behavior can significantly enhance your shots. Knowing when certain species are most active and understanding their habits can increase your chances of capturing them in action.

**Use the right light:** Early morning and late afternoon are ideal for bird photography. These times, known as the golden hours, provide soft, natural light that brings out detail without harsh shadows. Stay low and move slowly: Moving quietly and staying at eye level with the bird will help you achieve intimate, engaging shots. A low profile minimizes the chance of startling your subject.

## Choosing the Right Camera Equipment

Your choice of camera equipment can significantly impact your bird photography results. Here's what beginners need to know:

**Camera body:** DSLRs and mirrorless cameras with fast shutter speeds and high frames per second are ideal for bird photography, allowing you to capture sharp images of birds in motion. While smartphone cameras have improved, dedicated cameras offer better control over exposure and focus. That being said, if you don't own a camera, there are attachments for binoculars and scopes that allow you to take better phone camera photos through your optics.

**Lenses:** A telephoto lens (300mm or more) is essential for bird photography, as it lets you photograph birds from a distance without disturbing them. A zoom lens can also help frame birds that are closer or farther away without needing to move and risk startling them.

**Tripod or monopod:** A stable base can improve image clarity, especially if you're using a heavy telephoto lens. Tripods are great for stationary shooting, while monopods are more portable for tracking moving birds.





## 5 Camera Tips for Beginner Bird Photographers

Once you have your equipment ready, applying a few camera settings and techniques will enhance the quality of your shots. Here are some beginner-friendly tips:

### Use Fast Shutter Speeds

Birds are constantly in motion, so a fast shutter speed is essential to capture sharp images. Set your camera to a minimum of 1/1000th of a second for perched birds and 1/2000th or faster for birds in flight. Faster shutter speeds help freeze the action, especially when photographing birds in flight or moving quickly.

### Opt for Continuous Shooting Mode

Switching your camera to continuous or burst mode allows you to capture multiple frames per second. This feature is invaluable when photographing birds in action since it increases your chances of capturing the perfect shot. Remember to check your camera's buffer size, as a large burst of photos can fill the buffer, causing a temporary lag.

### Experiment With Autofocus Modes

For bird photography, continuous autofocus (AF-C or AI Servo) is helpful because the bird stays in focus even if it moves. Additionally, many cameras have multiple autofocus points; selecting a central point or group can improve focal accuracy on the bird. Practicing with your autofocus settings will help you track and lock onto a bird with ease.

### Adjust Your Exposure Compensation

Birds often stand out against bright skies or complex backgrounds, which can lead to overexposed or underexposed images. Adjusting your camera's exposure compensation can help you control this. For example, if the bird appears too dark, try increasing the exposure by +0.3 or +0.7 to make the bird's details pop.

### Use a High ISO in Low Light

If you're shooting in the early morning or late afternoon, you may need a higher ISO to capture enough light. Modern cameras handle ISO levels well, so don't be afraid to increase it to 800, 1,600, or even higher if necessary. However, be mindful of noise: random variations in brightness or color information in an image, often appearing as grainy or speckled textures, especially in low-light conditions or high ISO settings. If you do need to use high ISO levels, remember that you can always adjust for noise in post-processing.



## Essential Composition Tips for Bird Photography

**In photography, composition is the arrangement of visual elements within a frame to create a balanced, engaging, and aesthetically pleasing image. The right composition can transform a good photo into an outstanding one. Here are some compositional tips and ideas to implement on your next bird photography outing:**

**Get eye-level shots:** Capturing birds at eye level creates a sense of intimacy and connection. If possible, crouch or lie down to get closer to the bird's perspective.

**Leave room for movement:** If the bird is facing or moving in one direction, compose the shot to leave more space in front of it than behind. This technique provides context for the bird's motion.

**Capture the habitat:** Birds are often found in striking surroundings. Including branches, water reflections, or other natural elements can add depth and tell a richer story about the bird's habitat.

**Focus on the eyes:** Sharp, focused eyes make for captivating bird portraits. If you're close enough, prioritize focus on the bird's eyes, and see how it affects the results.

As you refine your bird photography skills and capture more amazing images, you'll find yourself with more appreciation and affection for these creatures.





## Resizing Images

Have you ever received an email message with a huge photo attached that was so big that you had to scroll back and forth to see it? Have you waited and waited for your email messages to download because of a huge photo file that was attached to one of the messages? Have you tried to view a web page that takes forever to load some of the images? It is likely in all of these cases that the images were not resized to a smaller size before adding to the email message or the web page.

I have recorded three short 6-7 minute videos on resizing photos. These are the same presentations that I did at the March club meeting in a condensed form. I show how to resize photos for email or the web using Photoshop Elements, Lightroom 4 and Microsoft Paint for those who don't have either of the previous two applications. You can find the videos on the **Resources** page.

The short version of the story is to resize your images for email or for the club monthly photo contests to no bigger than 800 pixels wide at 72 DPI. Usually for email 500-600 Px in the longest dimension will work fine. If you are not sure, send an email message to yourself with the photo and see what it looks like in your email.

- Bruce McKee



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