

## **Announcing DBC's Winter 2023 Photography Contest Winners!**

The DBC's Winter 2023 photo contest winners are official! The 42 entries were judged by John Hebert, Andie Duffy, Steve Constantelos, Natalie McFaul, and Mike Warner. Because of the quality of all the submissions, the committee had a very tough time deciding on which pictures to recognize. The committee wants to thank all the photographers for their entries.

Below are the DBC Winter 2023 Photography Contest Winners:



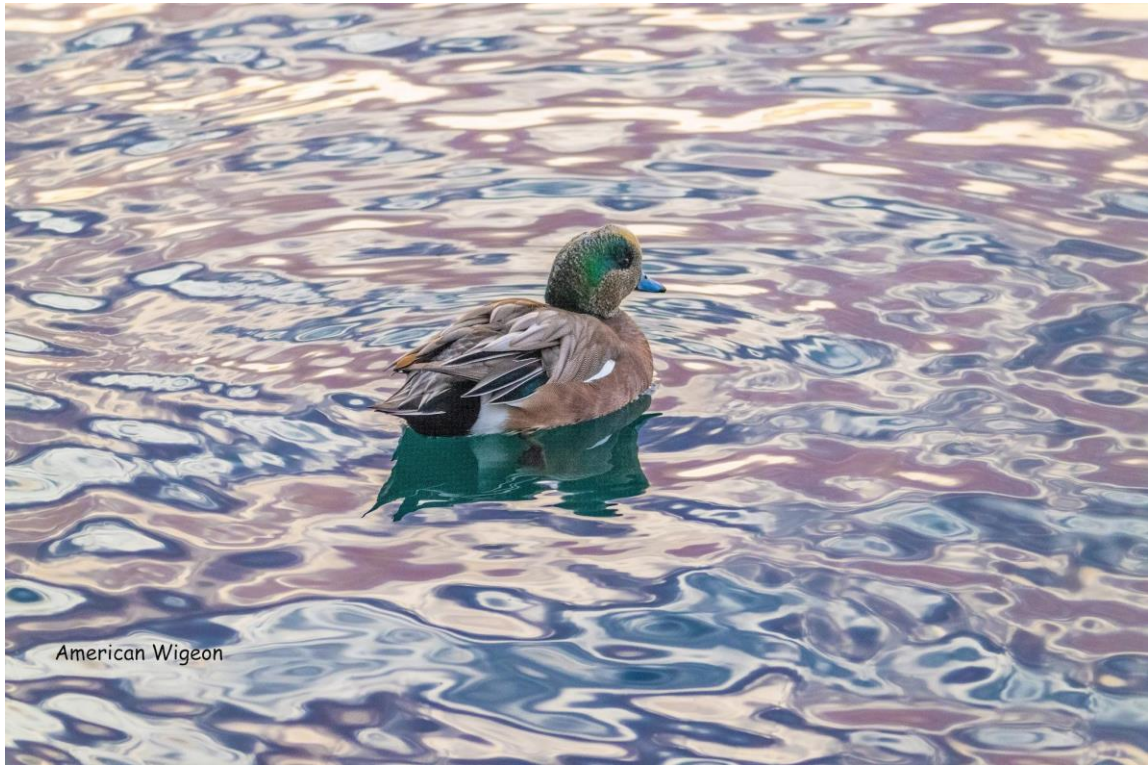
## **Best of Show - Bohemian Rhapsody**

**Photographer:** Emil Baumbach

**Species of Bird:** Bohemian Waxwing

**Where was the picture taken?** Orono, Maine

**Narrative** - This bird was one of about 100 that had a feeding frenzy in a clump of crabapple trees. I was looking to get a shot of a bird either flipping a berry in the air or holding one in its beak. Luckily this bird seemed to savor holding the berry. The exposed branch with three empty stems indicates the feast this bird was having. Is the bird tasting the berry with its tongue for ripeness before eating it? You be the judge.



## Award For Most Artistic

**Photographer:** Mike Davern

**Species of Bird:** American Wigeon

**Where was the picture taken?** Riparian Preserve, Gilbert, Arizona

**Narrative** - I went to Arizona for work and brought along my long lens thinking I would look for some desert species. Little did I know I would end up at the Riparian Preserve in Gilbert where I was able to get 28 species on camera, many of them waterfowl, enjoying the wetlands. The Preserve is using a natural method to recycle 100% of the city of Gilbert's effluent water over 110 areas in 7 water recharge basins. It was an amazing area and 298 species of birds have been identified at the site. Definitely going to be a repeat visitor on my future trips to the Phoenix area.





## Best Foreign Portrait

**Photographer:** Daryl Kellenberger

**Species of Bird:** Grey-headed Kingfisher

**Where was the picture taken?** Amboseli National Park in Kenya

**Narrative** - My wife Jane and I were fortunate to be able to go on an African Safari in December and were able to visit a number of National Parks or protected areas in both Kenya and Tanzania. This bird was one of the first flashy birds that I saw during a walk at the first lodge we stayed at on our trip. I was very excited and tried to get a photo of one; I got some photos but it was late in the day and the lighting was not very good. I took many photos of this bird during our trip that were OK, but it took me a while to finally get a decent photo. This photo was taken while we were out on a game drive and it was later in the day so the light was better. I finally got fairly close to this bird and he stayed on the branch long enough to let me take his picture. I would have liked to get one in flight as their wings are a vibrant and flashy blue color, but I had to settle for a still photo. That being said, I was very happy and appreciative that I was able to get a decent photo of this beautiful bird.



## Look Into My Eyes Award

**Name:** Bonnie Graham

**Species of Bird:** Barred Owl

**Where was the picture taken?** Fullersburg Forest Preserve

**Narrative** - One Sunday morning, I decided to get a bit of birding in before church. I heard and saw a Belted Kingfisher, so I waited along the creek to try and get a photo of the Kingfisher. As I was standing there, this Barred Owl swooped down from somewhere and perched on a tree across the creek. He looked at me and I took my shot. This was one of my dream shots of an owl.





## Best Backyard Birds

**Photographer:** Cindy Duranceau

**Species:** Northern Cardinals

**Location:** My Backyard in Naperville, IL

**Narrative:** The snow started and 12 Cardinals (6 male and 6 female) came into our yard at the same time. A few of them are pictured here in the Serviceberry bush next to our patio. The others were checking out a ground feeder on the patio. This was a new record for our yard! Then the next night, 16 showed up together. Delightful!



## **Best Action Shot Award**

**Photographer:** Mark Levesque

**Species of Bird:** House sparrow

**Where was the picture taken?** My backyard in Naperville

**Narrative** - A house sparrow is a fairly plain looking bird when it is roosting somewhere. In flight, they are a thing of beauty!



## Lunch Award

**Photographer:** John Cebula

**Species of Bird:** Little Blue Heron

**Where was the picture taken?** Collier County, Florida

**Narrative** - The three species of waders I see most often are Snowy Egrets, Tricolored Herons, and Little Blue Herons. Of the three, the Little Blues are the ones I've been able to photograph most often with a prey item. Here it's a sunfish: I've also taken a photograph of an adult with a crayfish and an immature with a Brown Anole.





## Rock Solid Award

**Photographer:** Emil Baumbach

**Species of Bird:** Snow Bunting

**Where was the picture taken?** North Point Marina, Winthrop Harbor, IL.

**Narrative** - I watched a small flock of Snow Buntings feed along the rocks and weeds near the water's edge. I was wondering if I'd ever get a bird to perch when all of a sudden this very small bird decided to land on this very large rock. The bird gave me a nice look. I liked the composition without really cropping very much. Everything felt right with the picture and I decided it was time to leave.



## A Great Great Egret Shot

**Photographer:** Cindy Duranceau

**Species:** Great Egret

**Location:** Port Richey, Fla

**Narrative:** While visiting Florida, my cousin took us to look at some birds. Turns out it was a "rookery" for several species, next to a pond, complete with a swimming Alligator. The birds were nest building, mating, and just trying to attract attention, like this particular Great Egret.





## Best Family Shot

**Photographer:** John Cebula

**Species of Bird:** Limpkin

**Where was the picture taken?** Freedom Park, Naples, Florida

**Narrative** - Because most of my birding has always taken place in the cracks and crevices of my daily life, I have not had the chance to explore this park in the past five years I've spent time in Naples. However, I recently took advantage of an opportunity to explore parts of this park I had not seen before. I was glad to see shrikes show up in an open area along a drainage canal--then I spotted a pair of wading birds. Experience suggested they were a small heron, but when I approached, I realized they were Limpkins, a relatively uncommon bird. I began photographing the pair; it was only after I took a few shots that I realized they were accompanied by five juveniles! While I watched, the birds caught and fed on apple snails.





## **Worth The (Frigid) Wait Award**

**Photographer:** Henry Meade

**Species of Bird:** American Three-toed Woodpecker

**Where was the picture taken?** Near Cook, Minnesota

**Narrative** - The looks we got of this American Three-toed Woodpecker was way beyond anything I was expecting. Completely made up for the fact that we had to stand on the side of a random county road for 2 hours in -28 degree weather waiting for him to make an appearance. We first heard him peeling bark, but deep in a spruce thicket on private property. After a while I spotted him flying across the road; the long wait was rewarded with looks of him foraging at eye level!



## Best In Flight Award

**Photographer:** Laurel Ahlenius

**Species:** Short-eared Owl

**Location:** Brunner Family Forest Preserve, Dundee, IL

**Narrative:** This is a lifer for me! These Short-eared Owls (about 4-5) were amazing: flying high, flying low, swooping down, wheeling around in flight, catching their prey, landing on the ground or on a stump, and a few in-flight discussions with each other. Birders and photographers respectfully observed from around the perimeter of a large fenced field which gave ample space and distance for the owls to hunt and be successful. I would love to say that I was this close to the owl, but I wasn't. Thanks to the APS-C sensor and the telephoto lens, I was able to grab this shot as the owl was mid-field. What an afternoon!