

Announcing DBC's Spring 2023 Photography Contest Winners!

The DBC's Spring '23 photo contest was a great success! The 20 entries were judged by John Hebert, Andie Duffy, Steve Constantelos, Natalie McFaul, and Mike Warner. Because of the variety and quality of the submissions, the committee had a very tough time deciding on which pictures to recognize; the committee would like to thank all the photographers for their entries.

Below are the DBC Spring '23 Photography Contest Winners:

Best of Show - Caspian Tern

Photographer: Mark Levesque

Species of Bird: Caspian Tern

Where was the picture taken: Lincoln Marsh, Wheaton

Narrative - I was surprised to see a Caspian Tern fishing at Lincoln Marsh. I'd never seen one there before. I was even more surprised when I noticed the fish he caught seems for all the world to be a goldfish or a koi! Who knew they were in the marsh?



Love Is In The Air Award

Photographer: Tammy Caltagirone

Species of Bird: Great Blue Heron

Where was the picture taken: North Aurora, IL

Narrative - After weeks of looking at a rookery of large nests southeast of the Kirk/Butterfield intersection, I finally saw a Great Blue flying back. I called my husband to get his binoculars and my camera equipment and ran back to catch the last of the day's light. We were lucky to capture this couple through the mass of branches just as a shaft of sunlight broke through the clouds illuminating them.



Salton Sea Serenity Award

Photographer: Michael Davern

Species of Bird: Black-necked Stilt

Where was the picture taken: Salton Sea, California

Narrative - Always a treat to see these active birds with their strange backwards hinged knees go about their business.



Rowdy Birds Award

Photographer: Rick Roche

Species of Bird: Gila Woodpecker

Where was the picture taken: Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum

Narrative: Before our trip to Southern Arizona, I put the Gila Woodpecker at the top of my want-to-see list. I hadn't counted on it being on nearly every eBird report I made in the six days I was there. The three rowdy Gilas in this photo were part of a gang flying around the trails at the Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum outside Tucson.



Japanese Print Look-Alike Award

Photographer: Tammy Caltagirone

Species of Bird: Long-Billed Dowitcher

Where was the picture taken: San Antonio, Texas

Narrative - A guided tour during our visit to Mitchell Lake found this little guy putzing along the shoreline of a pond. The reeds and his reflection had the unmistakable likeness to a serene Japanese print.



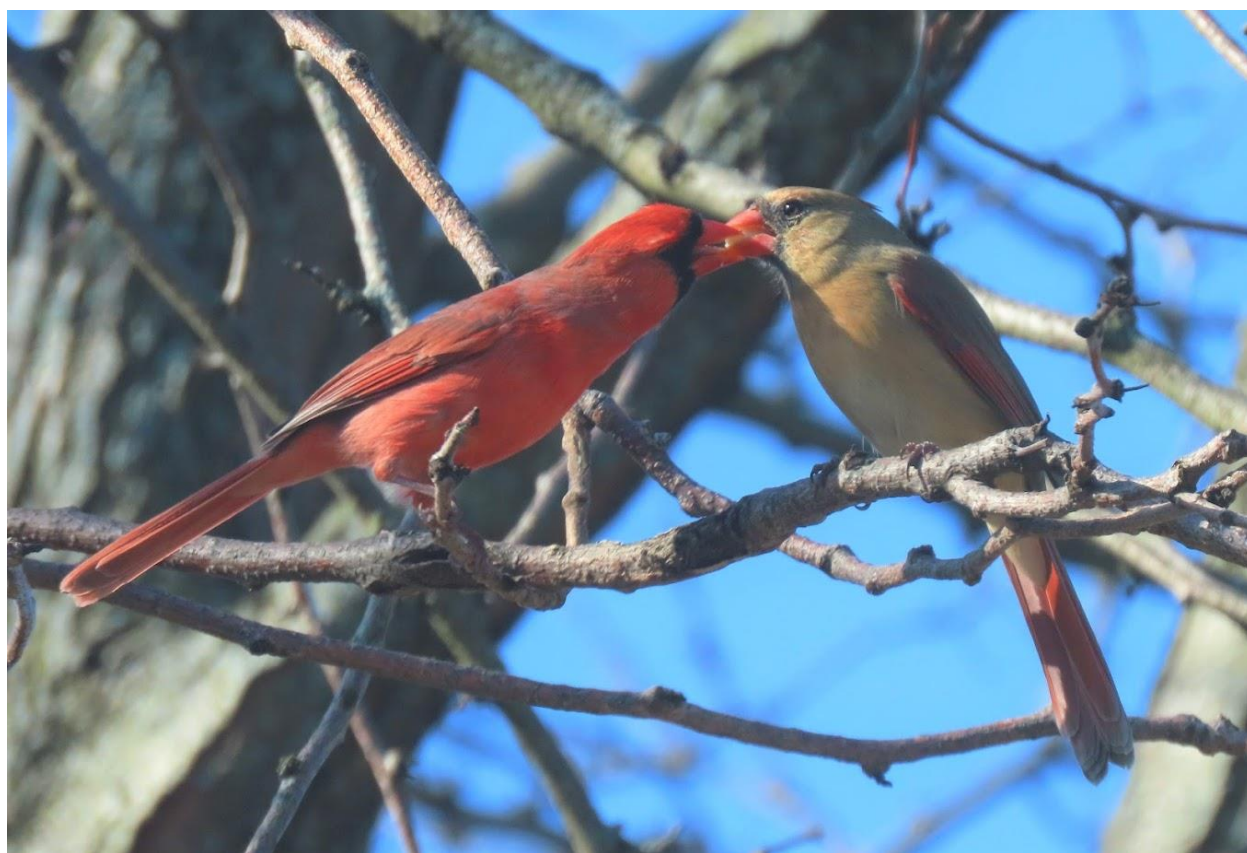
Best Backyard Bird Shot

Photographer: Cindy Duranceau

Species of bird: Northern Cardinals

Where was the picture taken: Naperville, IL

Narrative: Easter Sunday morning I looked out our kitchen window to see a Northern Cardinal pair. I grabbed my camera but the female was playing "hard to get" and flew into another tree. The male followed her and my camera caught their "courting" seed handoff. Nice start to the day!



Award for Best Portrait

Photographer: Jackie Tilles

Species of Bird: Common Yellowthroat

Where was the picture taken: Montrose Point Bird Sanctuary

Narrative: It is always a thrill to see the warblers when they arrive in the spring and this Common Yellowthroat did not disappoint. He emerged from the low-lying vegetation, not expecting to see an admirer nearby.



Outstanding In Its Field Award

Photographer: Sirimon Reutrakul

Species of Bird: Eastern Meadowlark

Where was the picture taken: Dixon Waterfowl Refuge

Narrative - We went to bird at a new place for us as a family during a spring break. It was a nice fresh spring morning. We walked on the path cutting through a grassland/ prairie - with no one in sight as far as the eye could see. All of a sudden we heard a very sweet song - and were able to spot this Eastern Meadowlark on the ground where the grass had not grown yet. He briefly posed very nicely, and then flew away. Spring is really here!



Best Spring Warbler Award

Photographer: Laurel Ahlenius

Caption: Another Tennessee

Bird Species: Tennessee Warbler

Location: Elsen's Hill

Narrative: Another Tennessee? It seems that I saw a lot of them this spring, but WAIT! I had a close-up encounter with one in a low shrub in the early morning sunshine at Elsen's Hill. This little guy was loudly singing in a three foot shrub, foraging for breakfast close to the back pond. He was hard to find, but when he came to the edges, the sunlight changed his whole appearance - the feather edges shown like gold tipped and reflected brilliance. No longer was this bird - just another Tennessee Warbler, but sheer beauty in motion, singing to boot!



Award For Best Action Shot

Photographer: Laurel Ahlenius

Bird Species: Bald Eagle

Location: Rt. 52, Iowa - Scenic Overlook - Savanna-Sabula Bridge, Iowa.
(Mississippi River)

Narrative: Ahhhhh - the end to a beautiful day for the DBC Mississippi birding trip, so expertly led by Jeff Chapman. We saw so many species along multiple stops and great company. I was secretly hoping to get a few good shots of Bald Eagles. For the last stop of the day: it had warmed up, the wind died down, the sun was low in the sky highlighting the eagles! Being on the scenic overlook on the bridge gave a distinct advantage to all of us. We were so close to the eagles, more like eye level with them as they perched in the trees and then dove down along the slough to fish. I like this shot as one can see the power in the eagle's take-off as small pieces of the dead limb fly through the air. Thanks again, Jeff! Looking forward to next year!



You can see all pictures posted to the DBC Website, including past Photo Contest Winners, by [CLICKING HERE](#).