

Announcing DBC's Summer 2023

Photography Contest Winners!

The DBC's Summer '23 photo contest was a great success! The 19 entries were judged by John Hebert, Andie Duffy, Steve Constantelos, Natalie McFaul, and Mike Warner. The committee would like to thank all the photographers for their entries. All photos were very interesting and every one deserved recognition; these nine were award worthy. Below are the DBC Summer '23 Photography Contest Winners:

Best of Show – Cedar Waxwing

Photographer: John Obenland

Species of Bird: Cedar Waxwing

Where was the picture taken: Batavia

Narrative - On a recent hike along the Fox River, I observed group of Cedar Waxwings having a great time grabbing insects off, and or out, of the scum on the river surface. My first thought was swallows, but at times they would rest for a little while on the branches of trees. That's when I made my positive ID! I normally thought of waxwings as berry pickers, but this lively group of dive bombers convinced me that they like a little fun and variety in their lives at the water park!



Family Portrait Award

Photographer: Cindy Duranceau

Species of Bird: Northern Cardinal

Where was the picture taken: Naperville, backyard

Narrative - This is the sequel to my Spring photo entry. Apparently the courting Northern Cardinal pair had a successful nesting season. Dad is pictured here in July feeding two of their hungry offspring, which cannot get enough safflower seeds. He fed them for quite awhile, on two consecutive days. (Giving Mom a break?)



Home Sweet Home Award

Photographer: Franz Burnier

Species of Bird: Barn Swallow

Where was the picture taken: Danada Farm

Narrative: A barn swallow lives up to its name, as it sits in its nest in a barn.



Feather Boa Award

Photographer: Fallon McDowell

Species of Bird: Green Heron

Where was the picture taken: Everglades National Park

Narrative: This was a very friendly Green Heron that posed as we finished our walk at the Everglades.



Best Travel Award

Photographer: Rick Roche

Species of Bird: Rufous Hummingbird

Where was the picture taken: Big Lake, Texas

Narrative - Wherever we have traveled to the western US in 2023 we found Rufous Hummingbirds: in southern Arizona in March, in Alaska in early June, and in Texas in the middle of July. For three mornings in a row, this Rufous Hummingbird visited the feeder in my sister's backyard in Big Lake, Texas. On the third day, it finally posed for a photo.



Mock Me, Will You? Award

Photographer: Laurel Ahlenius

Species of bird: Northern Mockingbird

Where was the picture taken: Morton Arboretum

Narrative: This spring and summer, some of the visitors to the Arboretum came to see nature/art sculptures throughout the East Side. One such sculpture was at Parking Lot #4. Visitors would walk over to the sculpture, while birders, including myself, would stand on the other side of the road, ignoring the sculpture and looked in the opposite direction. The Northern Mockingbirds flew in and out among the short bushes, a close-by tree, in the grass and much further back. Suddenly, one birder looked and pointed, "He's chasing a squirrel!" Up went the camera and I was able to capture the scene as a Northern Mockingbird chased the squirrel away from the bush in which they were nesting! Somehow, the squirrel got the message and did not return to the bush while we were there.



Hovering Hummer in Summer Award

Photographer: Jackie Tilles

Species of Bird: Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Where was the picture taken: Lemont, IL

Narrative: In August I attended the Sagawau Hummingbird Festival with 3 other DuPage Birding Club friends. We learned about the characteristics and migration of these extraordinary birds and then watched them flit around the gardens. I photographed this hummer on her way to one of the garden feeders. We also witnessed several hummingbirds being banded. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are truly one of the delights of summer.



Shades of Gray Award

Photographer: Laurel Ahlenius

Species of Bird: Ring-billed Gull

Where was the picture taken: Wheaton, IL

Narrative - While waiting for another Caspian Tern to fly by and dive for a fish, I couldn't resist snapping this Ring-billed Gull as he flew around the end of the pond where I was sitting. He was lined up so perfectly as he headed back down to the other end. He must have heard the camera shutter clicking as he looked back at me with a fish in his mouth. I am sure that fish was swallowed before he reached the other end of the pond. Remember the severe effects of the Canadian wildfires earlier this summer? As a result the sky color was gray, which perfectly matched and augmented this gull's feather coloring.



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