

Announcing DBC's Summer Of '24 Photo Contest Winners!

The winners of DBC's Summer 2024 photo contest have been finalized! The entries were judged by Andie Duffy, Steve Constantelos, Natalie McFaul, Thelma Hulka 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.

Best of Show

Photographer: Julie Wettermann

Species of Bird: House Wren

Location: Holland, MI - Outdoor Discovery Center

Narrative: This summer I had several hours of leisurely wandering in the delightful Outdoor Discovery Center. On one trail, a wooden railing dividing the boardwalk from the surrounding underbrush, was just enough protection to embolden this plucky little wren to come out and scold me face to face. It had been telling me off for several minutes as I consulted Merlin to find out what bird was so upset by my presence.



“I have called you here today...” Award

Photographer: Tom Kubica

Species: Great Blue Heron, Red Breasted Mergansers

Location: Bensenville Ditch

Narrative: The Bensenville ditch is a pretty hot birding spot for both land and water birds. This reservoir fills up with many different species throughout the Spring Migration. The spillway into the reservoir often has a high water output resulting in a very turbulent area. The mergansers were diving into this turbulence coming up with fish. The heron, I believe, was supervising their work!



Summer Romance Story Award

Photographer: John Obenland

Species: Cedar Waxwing

Location: Berrien County, MI

Narrative: It was early summer, love was in the air and the event was planned to perfection. Both birds were positioned just right on the swaying branch, the lighting was perfect, and a photographer was present to record the moment! When all seemed ready, he turned to her and communicated in his special Cedar Waxwing way, "Will you accept this cottonwood seed as a token of ... ?" (You know the rest of the line). As you can see by her response, she was not impressed. Her reply in waxwing body language was, "What I really wanted was something a little more fashionable and current - like one of those nice fresh cicadas everyone is raving about." Sometimes you just gotta go the extra mile.



Baby Bird Award

Photographer: Elena Nelson

Species: Green Heron

Location: Mallard Lake

Narrative: Three Green Heron babies were hanging out on a log next to the trail with mom keeping watch from the shade of a nearby tree. I took several shots as we headed toward our target trail, but they were all backlit with all the light reflecting off the water. The shots that came were taken on the way back to the parking lot an hour later with the help of a cloud.



Best Artistic Portrait Award

Photographer: Henry Meade

Species: Cedar Waxwing

Location: Fullersburg Woods Forest Preserve

Narrative: This summer I've really gotten into wandering around a local forest preserve with no birding expectations, no target species, and with an open mind and my camera. This "style" of birding is relatively new but it's grown on me. Thus far I've spent many hours in the evening wandering the trails of Fullersburg Woods, trying to tap into the creative part of my brain in attempts to create images that are different and unique from what you typically see. I feel like I met my goals with this shot of a Cedar Waxwing, one of my personal favorite photos I've ever taken. Enjoy.



Peek-A-Boo Award

Photographer: Kathy Burns

Species: Green Heron (immature)

Location: Carriage Way Park, Burr Ridge

Narrative: I was walking along the path and this guy was flushed out so I walked around the pond to where he settled in and took a few photos with my 400mm telephoto lens. Notice the cute fluff of hair on his crown. He thought I did not see him. He was a bit hard to ID.



Backyard Bird Award

Photographer: Cindy Duranceau

Species: Great Horned Owl

Location: My backyard in Naperville, IL

Narrative: We had not seen any of the neighborhood resident Great Horned Owl family all winter, spring, or summer until August 24th when "who" should appear in the Locust tree overhanging our back patio. One of our cats saw it fly in and went ballistic. A chipmunk on the patio was being observed by the owl. I am guessing it was a younger Great Horned. I have since found 2 small Owl feather "calling cards" it has left behind in our side yard



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