

Announcing DBC's Summer/Fall '25 Photo Contest Winners!

The winners of DBC's Summer/Fall '25 photo contest have been finalized! The entries were judged by Andie Duffy, Robert Perez, Steve Constantelos, and Mike Warner. The committee would like to thank all the photographers for their entries. It was very difficult to narrow it down from 29 entries to these award winners.

Best of Show

Photographer: James J. Goldsmith

Species: Rufous Hummingbird

Location: Baker, Nevada

Narrative: In September, my wife Kristina and I stayed overnight at the Hidden Canyon Ranch in Baker, Nevada in preparation for a visit to nearby Great Basin National Park. As we were getting ready to leave, I noticed a Rufous Hummingbird darting quickly around a nearby cluster of Russian Sage. The Hummingbird was in a hurry, but stayed long enough for me to get this photo before racing into the canyon.



“The Call of Summer” Award

Photographer: Kent Jager

Species: Orchard Oriole

Location: Morton Arboretum

Narrative: I heard this Orchard Oriole calling but couldn't locate him. After some time, he flew down a lot closer to me and I was able to get this shot.



Namaste

Photographer: Sherry Courtney

Species: Great Blue Heron

Location: The pond next to my home, Naperville, IL

Narrative: I had been admiring this Great Blue Heron for months, fishing in the pond next to my home. One day, he and a Great White Egret seemed to be facing off in the pond. I took my little, antique, Nikon P100 outside to see if I could get a nice shot. After the egret slowly walked away, the heron turned, dipped his head upside-down, in what seemed like a contortionist move, straightened himself up, and opened his wings in a way I had never seen, nor did I ever think was possible. I watched and took pictures for almost 7 minutes. Then, he began to make strange sounds with his mouth open, as the muscles in his neck visibly vibrated. I thought it may have been a mating dance/call, until I looked it up and read about the delta wing formation and Gular fluttering. What a privilege to see this outside my back door. Only in DuPage!



“Wading For A Lifer” Award

Photographer: Elena Nelson

Species: Louisiana Waterthrush

Location: Waterfall Glen

Narrative: It was hot, humid and overcast; an utterly awful day which led to the incredible circumstance of us having the Sawmill Creek trail all to ourselves (on summer weekends it's usually full of kids and dogs playing in the creek). Just as the trail turned uphill off the water's edge I spotted a waterthrush in the shadows under a shrub on the side of the creek bed. It was a bad look, but we all got to see it before it fluttered upstream. I really wanted a good picture and was hoping I could make it through the brush on the side of the cliff to the edge but it was all covered in poison ivy and I was, as usual in the heat, wearing my hiking dress. I then decided I was already soaked with sweat, wouldn't drown in 3 inches of water, and wet boots would be worth it. So I went into the water. I carefully stepped and slipped my way up the wet rocks on the side of the creek, falling on my @ss only once without harming the camera. I was rewarded with two photo shoots and one memorable photo! Lifer!



“Brazilian Beauty” Award

Photographer: Joe Nowak

Species: Scaled Ground-Cuckoo

Location: Cristalino Lodge, Brazil

Narrative: We were provided the opportunity to see this rare bird in a special hide from 1 to 3 pm during our last three days at the lodge - when most people are resting during the heat of the day. The ground-cuckoo did not make an appearance until we had less than 45 minutes to go on the last day.



“Lockport Luminosity” Award

Photographer: Laurie Lasseter

Species: Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Location: Lockport Prairie, Lockport IL

Narrative: This hummingbird was loving these orange flowers and in this photo it looks like it is inhaling the flower.



“Seeing Double” Award

Photographer: Julie Wettermann

Species: Hooded Merganser (female)

Location: Rio Grande Nature Center and SP, Albuquerque

Narrative: When life gives you a huge snowstorm in Chicago and delays your vacation return flight, go birding! In my found time the Saturday after Thanksgiving, I checked out this nature center and State Park near Albuquerque and found a large group of waterfowl in the pond. This lovely lady was of course accompanied by her mate, but since everyone always fawns over him, I thought I'd give her some attention for a change. She was kind enough to give me good looks and I love the reflection in the calm water and how the water droplets are still clinging to her feathers.



“Florida Animal Act” Award

Photographer: John Obenland

Species: Tri-colored Heron

Location: Lake Buena Vista, FL

Narrative: It's mid November and what do birders do to see some new birds - migrate to Florida, as well as to see grandkids! At our resort which has a pond of course, and is partially wooded, it is not unusual to see various shore birds. Also it is not uncommon to see an example of the infamous alligator. It is rather rare though to get both in the same shot a few feet away from each other. The gator is doing its "relaxed sun bathing" thing. The heron is doing its "keeping busy" routine, pecking away at the vegetation and shallow water. What's going on here - is this just another Florida "animal act" to entertain the tourists? It worked!



“In Your Face” Award

Photographer: Laurie Lasseter

Species: Northern Harrier (female)

Location: Lockport Prairie

Narrative: It was the first time a female Northern Harrier showed up this fall and she flew right by me. I was able to capture her intensity as she flew by.



Our Winter/Spring 2026 Photo Contest starts January 1st. See the January Drummings for details.

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