



Photographic Society of America

Nature Division

Digital Interclub Competition Entry Rules

2011-2012

Each Nature Division DIGITAL COMPETITION season consists of three contests. **The Closing Dates for each contest will be October 15, January 15 and April 15. If the scheduled closing date falls on a Sunday, the actual closing date will be Monday.**

1. Contest #1 Images received NLT **October 15** will be judged in **November** by the **Photo Adventures Camera Club (Class A entries)**
Carolinas Nature Photographers (Class B entries).
2. Contest #2 Images received NLT **January 15** will be judged in **February** by the **Hoylake Photographic Society (Class A entries)**
West Cumbria Photo Group (Class B entries)
3. Contest #3 Images received NLT **April 15** will be judged in **May** by the **Lancaster Photography Association (Class A entries)**
Merrimack Valley Camera Club (Class B entries)

Each Club can enter **six (6) different images by at least 4 different club members** in each contest, for a total of 18 different images for the season.

1. CONDITIONS OF ENTRY:

The Nature Division Digital Club Competitions are open to all Camera Clubs that are members of PSA. Individual club members submitting images for the Interclub competitions are not required to be PSA members. Each individual member must be the full owner of all rights for the submitted works. Entry is not limited to images created digitally. Images may also be acquired on film and then scanned. All images must be the work of the individual club member with the exception of scanning. Slides may be scanned by a third party but the member should examine and approve of the scan prior to its being used by the club. The images must be submitted as Electronic Files by email.

It is preferred that each image in the six-image entry to a given contest be by a different maker to give more club members a chance to participate. **A club's entry must use at least 4 different club members.** Allowable submittal combinations are:

- Six images each by a different maker, for a total of 6 makers...
- Four images each by a different maker and two images by a single maker, for a total of 5 makers...
- Two images each by a different maker and two images each by two makers, for a total of 4 makers.

If a club can only come up with three makers for any given contest, then that club may only submit 5 images instead of 6. They will not be allowed to make up the missing image.

Individuals belonging to more than one club must determine in advance which club will be able to submit their images. Only one club is allowed to use that individual's images in a **single season**.

By virtue of submitting an entry, the club certifies the work is that of the club member and that the member has given permission to the PSA Organization to reproduce all or part of the entered material free of charge for displaying on the Internet or in the PSA Journal.

2. ELIGIBILITY

All images must meet the PSA Nature Definition of Nature Photography below:

"Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict observations from all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archeology, in such a fashion that a well informed person will be able to identify the subject material and to certify as to its honest presentation. The **story telling** value of a photograph **must** be weighed more than the pictorial quality while maintaining a high technical quality. Human elements shall not be present, except where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals is permissible. Photographs of artificially produced hybrid plants or animals, mounted specimens, or obviously set arrangements, are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement. **No techniques that add to, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping are permitted. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content are permitted. All adjustments must appear natural.**"

A photographer may perform any enhancements and modifications that improve the presentation of the image to make it more closely represent the original scene photographed but that does not change the truth of the original nature story. Cropping and horizontal flipping (equivalent to reversing a slide) are acceptable modifications. Flipping well know scenics can be risky. Removing spots due to dust on your sensors is allowed. Removing rounded slide mount corners on scanned images is allowed. Adding elements to your images, removing pictorial elements from your image other than by cropping, combining pictorial elements from separate images or rearranging and/or cloning and/or copying elements in your image are not acceptable and can lead to disqualification of your image in the competition. HDR techniques and focus stacking techniques such as Helicon Focus techniques are techniques that enhance the presentation without changing the pictorial content and considered allowable techniques. Please note that all adjustments must still look natural. Just because a technique is legitimate does not guarantee the image it was used on will get a good score.

Please note that "pictorial quality" is not the same a technical quality. Technical quality is still an important criteria for evaluation and judging of images.

Images are not required to meet the requirements of the PSA Definition of Wildlife. Zoo shots and Game Farm shots are eligible provided the artificial habitat is not apparent in the image. Since titles will be read, I recommend you do not advertise the fact something was taken at a zoo or other controlled situation as part of the title. For informational purposes only, here is the revised Wildlife Definition:

“Authentic wildlife is defined as one or more organisms, living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Therefore landscapes, photographs of zoo animals, game farm animals, or any living subject taken under controlled conditions are **not** eligible for Wildlife competitions.”

The revisions here were more of a clarification nature and not a change in what was allowed or not allowed in Wildlife categories.

Images that have been awarded ribbons (AWARD or HM) in prior Nature Division Digital Interclub Competitions or in prior Nature Division Interclub Slide Competitions are no longer eligible for entry in future Nature Division Interclub Digital Competitions even if submitted through a different club. Images that have not earned awards may be resubmitted in future Interclub Competitions but not during the same competition season as previously submitted.

No images by any family member of one of the three judges, may be entered in that contest. If the individual is a guest judge at another club, it is the judge’s responsibility to notify his or her own club so the club does not inadvertently select images from that maker.

3. IMAGE FILE NAMING CONVENTION:

The image filenames must use the following convention:

Class A Club

NA-#####-a1.jpg
NA-#####-a2.jpg
NA-#####-a3.jpg
NA-#####-b1.jpg
NA-#####-b2.jpg
NA-#####-b3.jpg

Class B Club

NB-#####-a1.jpg
NB-#####-a2.jpg
NB-#####-a3.jpg
NB-#####-b1.jpg
NB-#####-b2.jpg
NB-#####-b3.jpg

where:

is the Membership Number given by PSA when your club joined as a club member. It can be found on the mailing label of the club’s copy of the PSA Journal.

This naming convention is necessary to assure that files from different clubs will have unique names and permits the use of the Muskovac Digital Exhibition Software for 6 images. **The hyphen between the club membership number and the sequence number is required.** No spaces are allowed. It is the responsibility of the Club’s Interclub Chairman to rename their Member’s image files as necessary to conform to this naming convention prior to submitting them.

4. ENTRY FORM:

At this time, entry forms are not required by the Clubs for submitting entries. Each club must submit the entries to the Digital Interclub Director, Michael McNeill, via email and the Director will generate the Entry Forms for each contest required by the competition software from the information provided by the Clubs in their emails. Information on clubs that participated last season will be used to generate the forms so please notify Michael McNeill (mikemcneill53@yahoo.com) of any changes in the Club representative responsible for the competitions.

New participating clubs must provide the following information in the email with the attached images for the first contest to permit generating the necessary Entry Form:

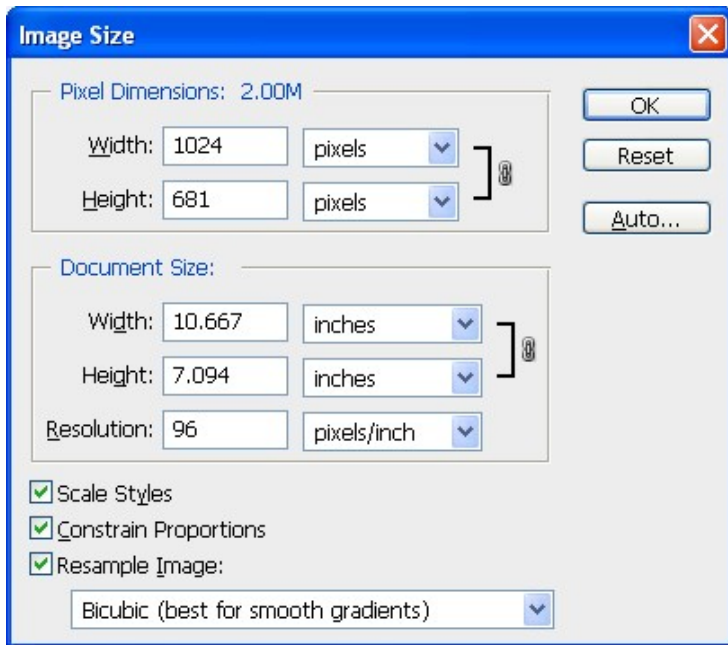
Name of Club, PSA club membership number, email and snail mail addresses of club interclub chairman, image filenames, club member names, and image titles. (Your PSA membership number can be found in the upper left corner of the club's PSA Journal mailing label.)

NOTE: I am debugging an on-line entry form similar to what is used in the PSA International that should simplify your entry process. I will notify you when it is finally ready and let you know what the proper link to use is. Work on the PSA International has taken more time than I figured so my debugging is not yet complete.

5. IMAGE DIMENSIONS

The maximum allowed dimensions are 1024 pixels wide (**horizontal**) or 768 pixels high (**vertical**). Smaller images are acceptable but could hurt your score because of reduced impact. The stronger your nature story, the less chances of a small image hurting your score. Please note: This is **not** a requirement to crop or pad your image to a 1024 x 768 format.

Using the normal 35mm digital format, this size criterion would result in an uncropped horizontal image 1024 pixels wide by 683 pixels high and an uncropped vertical image 512 pixels wide by 768 pixels high. Since images will be viewed by projection the ppi resolution does not affect image quality. It is recommended you resize your images before final sharpening.



Change the width to 1024 **or** the height to 768 pixels. With Constrain Proportions checked, the other dimension will change automatically.

There are no special requirements for Resolution. Resolution will not effect projection quality or file size

Be sure both Constrain Proportions and Resample image are checked.

The most common mistake made in sizing images is to interpret the dimensions as a maximum long dimension of 1024 pixels and a maximum short dimension of 768 pixels. **This is not correct.**

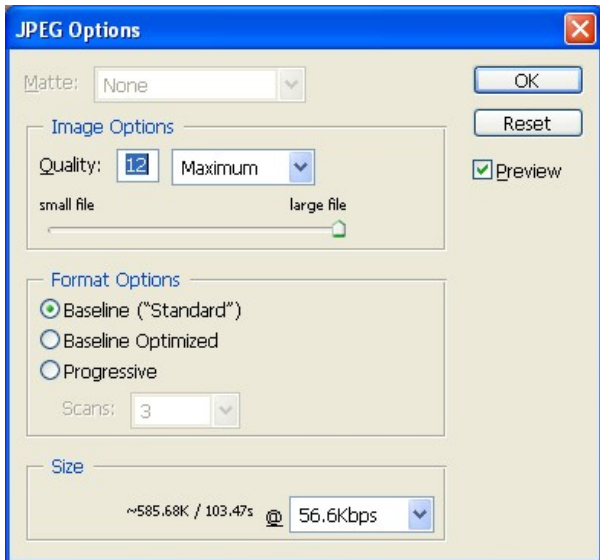
You can use smaller pixel dimensions but image sizes will not be changed so showing an image smaller than necessary can hurt your score due to reduced impact on images with weak nature stories. This is especially true for clubs that use the 768 pixel max format either horizontal or vertical instead of just vertical.

All images must use an RGB color mode. They can be either Adobe (1998) or sRGB. Generally the sRGB is better for images viewed by projection and Adobe RGB is better for printing or publishing. It is true that the Adobe RGB has a wider tonal range but this can sometimes make a projected image look flatter than the sRGB version when projected.

There is no restriction on image Resolution (ppi). Any images winning awards will be changed to 96 pixels/inch before posting on the Web Site. This sizing is used so the image appears good on the monitor but is not sufficient quality to render a quality print larger than 2" x 3".

6. ENTRY IMAGE FILES:

Each image must be in jpg format and no larger than 1.7 Mb after compression to jpg format. In most cases an image saved at the maximum quality setting will still meet this requirement. Smaller file sizes are acceptable but using less than a Quality setting of 8 is not recommended. All images should be flattened to a single layer. This is automatic with most software when saving as a JPEG file.



(The sample is from Photoshop – The JPEG save options of other software may look different but should have similar features)

◀ Click and drag the Image Options slider here...

◀ ...until Size is the highest it can go below 1,700k here (585.68k is shown here)

Email your images to:

Michael McNeill (mikemcneill53@yahoo.com)

Each Club may submit a maximum of 6 images. The images must be sent on-line as email attachments. All six images should be attached to one email but you can break it up with two emails. Just let me know if there are two emails. Your email should include a message stating your full name and your Club's name. Emails should carry "ND Interclub Entry" on the subject line. Emails received without subject lines may be deleted or blocked by virus protection and/or spam-blocking software. The Entry Forms I will be creating for use with the Muskovac software do not have provisions for identifying the maker of each image. To provide this information, the message text of the email MUST include the Filename, Title and Maker of each image.

Sample:

The message for the Stony Brook Camera Club email to submit their four images for competition in Class A listed the images like this:

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| NA-065458-a1.jpg | Ant on Marsh Marigold | Daniel Charbonnet, FPSA |
| NA-065458-a2.jpg | Emperor Penguin Chick | John Fuller, FPSA |
| NA-065458-a3.jpg | Red Fox #5 | Donna Leonardo |
| NA-065458-b1.jpg | Katahdin Sunset | Ray Guillette |
| NA-065458-b2.jpg | Osprey #33 | Shiv Verma |
| NA-065458-b3.jpg | Northern Gannet Pair | Monica Verma |

Double check your file names for typos. The biggest offenders are using an _ instead of a -; using a . instead of a -; and adding a second .jpg to the file name when renaming it in accordance with the naming convention. Many people have their directories set up so the extension is not shown so it is easy to forget the .jpg extension is already there.

A reminder: Images that have won ribbons (Award or Honor) in previous Nature Division Interclub Competitions, whether Digital or Slides, are ineligible and may not be entered.

7. JUDGING:

A different club will judge each contest in a single season. Judging will be done by projecting images on a screen with an Electronic Projector at a resolution of 1024 X 768 set to 16.7 million colors. The club's six images will be distributed over six rounds of judging in each contest but not necessarily in the same order in each round.

Each club will be judging images submitted by clubs in the other class to eliminate the problem of limiting judges to no more than one in-club judge and finding two qualified outside judges.

Three judges will be used. Each judge will be allowed a scoring range of 2 to 5 points. Each image will receive a score between a minimum of 6 and maximum of 15. The judges will also have the option to declare an image out of category if the image does not meet the PSA definition of Nature Photography in the consensus opinion of the judges. I will generally contact an offending club as images come in if I see one I do not feel meets the definition so that should not happen often if at all. Clubs will not be allowed to makeup disqualified images.

Titles will be read during judging so try to make the titles descriptive and stay away from "cute" titles unless they are also descriptive. Try to identify your subject. The title "**Micronesian Kingfisher**" sounds a lot better than "**Orange & Blue Bird**".

8. MAKE-UP

Make-up entries will not be allowed. No host club will be put in the position of judging images from its own members which prevents the host club from having an advantage because the judges know the work of their fellow club members. Even though all clubs will be using a 1-5 point range for each judge, giving a total of 15 points maximum, the range of scores actually awarded during a contest can vary greatly. This can result in one club actually winning each of the three contests for the season but not winning the season mathematically based on the sum of the three contest scores.

9. ENTRY FEE:

The Entry Fee for participating in these contests is waived for the 2011-2012 season.

10. AWARDS:

Individual blue "AWARD" ribbons will be awarded for the five highest individual scores in each class of each contest. Ties will be broken if more than 5 images have the highest score. Approximately 10% of the individuals will be awarded with red "HONOR" ribbons.

First, second and third place ribbons will be presented to the clubs in each class based on the total points for the six images in each of the three contests.

First, second and third place awards will be presented to the clubs in each class at the end of the season based on the total accumulated points for the three contests.

All individual club members earning an "AWARD" ribbon in one of the season's contests will be eligible for an annual Image of the Year competition. The Nature Division Digital Interclub Director will maintain folders for all eligible images. Entry forms and image submittals will not be required for Image of the Year competitions.

11. CLASSES

Clubs have been divided into Class A and Class B. Class assignment will depend on the club totals from the previous season. New clubs will automatically be placed in Class B for their first full year of competition.

For this season, the two Class B Clubs with the highest season total for all three contests will be moved up to Class A for the following season's competition. The two Class A Clubs with the lowest season total for all three contests will be moved down to Class B for the following season's competition. As we grow, the number of clubs to be moved will be increased. The Nature Division Digital Interclub Director has the discretion to move additional clubs up or down depending on the total scores and maintaining a reasonable balance between Class A and Class B Clubs.

The Class assignments for the 2011-2012 season are listed below. If your club did not compete in the any prior season you will in Class B. 2010-2011 season Class B clubs Fotoferia Club, Paisley Colour Photographic Club and West Cumbria Photo Group were moved up to Class A and Class A based upon their overall performance last season. No club was moved down to Class B.

CLASS A (Filenames start with NA)

Boston West Photographic Society
Camera Naturalist Camera Club
Cape Cod Viewfinders
Carolinas Nature Photographers Assn.
Exploring Light
Fotoferia Club
Garden State Six Shooters
Greater Lynn Photographic Association
Loveland Photographic Society
Merrimack Valley Camera Club
Mount Baker Camera Club
Naples Camera Club
Paisley Colour Photographic Club
Ridgewood Camera Club
Saguaro Camera Club
West Cumbria Photo Group

CLASS B (Filenames start with NB)

Atlantic Lighthouse Photo Group
Camera Club of Oak Ridge
Candlewood Camera Club
Charlotte Camera Club
Costa Contra Camera Club
F/67 Camera Club
Fort Myers Camera Club
Foto Club Quilmes
Grupo Fotografico Parque
Hillcrest Camera Club
Hockomock Digital Photographers
Houston Camera Club
Hoylake Photographic Society
Huntington Camera Club
Image Makers Camera Club
Lake County Camera Club

Lancaster Photographic Association
Lincoln Camera Club
London Camera Club
Lowcountry Photography Club
Manchester Camera Club
Mayslake Nature Study & Photography
Oklahoma Camera Club
Peoria Camera Club
Photo Guild of Nova Scotia
Photo Pictorialists of Milwaukee
Photographic Society of Chattanooga
Pikes Peak Camera Club
Reno Camera Club
Schenectady Photographic Society
South Jersey Camera Club
Tri-County Camera Club
Tri-State Photographic Society
Unlimited Visions Photo Club
Wasatch Camera Club
Western Reserve Photographic Society