



**NEW ENGLAND CAMERA CLUB COUNCIL, INCORPORATED**

## **PSA Nature Definition**

### **Image Creation and Authorship**

Images must originate as photographs made by the entrant. Entrants may not incorporate images or image elements authored by anyone else (for example Photoshop replacement skies or textures, clipart or stock images), **and there is zero tolerance for plagiarism**. Editing or alteration of images is only permitted within the limits specified in the Nature Division Definition.

### **Statement on Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Images created by image creation software (frequently called 'AI' images) are not allowed. Editing or alteration of images is permitted within the limits specified in the relevant section definitions that are available in the NECCC rules document for digital and prints. **Any person submitting or attempting to submit an image in violation of this rule for any NECCC competition, social media, event, or publication other than for editorial purposes, SHALL BE SUSPENDED FROM COMPETITION FOR A PERIOD OF 3 YEARS.**

### **Statement on Subject Matter**

The fundamental rule that must be observed at all times, is that the welfare of living creatures is more important than any photograph. This means that practices such as baiting of subjects with a living creature and removal of birds from nests, for the purpose of obtaining a photograph, are highly unethical, and such photographs are not allowed in any NECCC competition. Under no circumstances may a living creature be placed in a situation where it will be killed, injured or stressed for the purpose of obtaining a photograph. Images that show live creatures being fed to captive animals, birds or reptiles are not permitted under any circumstances.

There are also concerns about the use of aerial photography, drones, helicopters, low flying aircraft. These should not cause any interference with other individuals or animals which causes a disturbance in their normal activity or disrupt the way any individuals or animals interact with their environment.

### **Editing Guidelines for Nature :**

Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible, except that conversion to grayscale monochrome is allowed.

### **Allowed editing techniques:**

- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
- Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.
- Complete conversion of color images to grayscale monochrome.
- Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending or focus stacking)

- Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas)

### **Editing techniques that are not allowed:**

- Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
- Adding a vignette during processing.
- Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome.
- Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of color

## **PSA/FIAP Nature Division Definition**

### **Content Guidelines**

Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both over water and underwater. Nature images must convey the **truth of the scene**. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that **no unethical practices** have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity threatening a living organism's life or welfare are not allowed.

**The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells.** Technical standards are expected and the image must look natural.

1. Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
2. Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals, and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
3. Photographs made where the scene is natural and the animal is unharmed in a carefully managed environment, such as Zoo, rescue centers, and ethically managed natural environment farms are permitted.
4. Attracting or controlling subjects through the use of food or sound for the purpose of photographing them is not allowed. Maintained situations such as provided supplemental food due to hardship caused by weather conditions or other conditions beyond the animals' control, where photography is incidental to the feeding of the animal does not fall under this provision.
5. Controlling live subjects by chilling, anesthetic, or any other method of restricting natural movement for a photograph is not allowed.
6. Human-made elements shall be permitted under the following circumstances:
  - a) When they are an integral part of the nature story, such as a songbird singing atop a fence post, a manmade object used as nest material, or a weather phenomenon destroying a man-made structure.
  - b) When they are a small but unavoidable part of the scene, such as an unobtrusive footprint or track in the background.
  - c) Scientific tags, collars, and bands are specifically allowed.

When photographing at a zoo, sanctuary, or rehabilitation center, it would be construed that the photographer ensured that it's properly accredited and conforms to best practices.

### **WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY (for your info only-NECCC does not have a wildlife section)**

In addition to the restrictions on Nature photography, to be eligible for any Wildlife award images must meet the following conditions:

- (a) Zoological organisms must be living free and unrestrained in a natural habitat of their own choosing
- (b) Images of zoological organisms that have been removed from their natural habitat, are in any form of

captivity, or are being controlled by humans for the purpose of photography are not allowed.

**(c)** Botanical organisms may not be removed from their natural environment for the purpose of photography.

**(d)** Images that have been staged for the purpose of photography are not allowed.