



© Lukasz Sokol

Fascinating Bird Photography

We at the Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach hope to inspire public interest in birds and raise awareness for their protection. Widespread understanding and appreciation of our native birdlife are key factors to the success of our efforts. The more people care about birds and enjoy watching them, the better our chances of implementing effective conservation measures for threatened species.

Stunning photographs perfectly convey the fascination that birds evoke in us: images that display the striking colours of a bird's plumage, introduce us to a wide range of behaviours, showcase the many shapes and sizes of birds from the Swan to the tiny Firecrest, and allow us to witness their aerobatic feats.

The photo competition is organized by the Swiss Ornithological Institute Sempach with the support of our main partner Canon (Switzerland) AG, the category partners Nikon Europe B.V., OM Digital Solutions GmbH and Sony Europe B.V. as well as other partners.

We also extend our warmest thanks to all our other partners who support the competition by sponsoring the prizes.



Photo Competition 2024 of the Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach

Organiser

The photo competition is organized by the Swiss Ornithological Institute Sempach with the support of our main partner Canon (Switzerland) AG, the category partners Nikon Europe B.V., OM Digital Solutions GmbH and Sony Europe B.V. as well as other partners.

Goal

The goal of the competition is to showcase the beauty and fascination of our native birdlife and encourage involvement in nature and bird conservation by means of unique images.

Procedure

Participants can submit in each category a maximum of 10 photos online in a preview format during the month of May 2024. In June, the expert panel will make a preselection and request the selected images in RAW format or as the original JPG files. Based on this shortlist, the panel will choose the overall winner as well as three winning images per category in September 2024.

Categories

- » Category 1 «General»
This category is open to bird photos of all kinds.
- » Category 2 «Emotion»
Photos that highlight the beauty of birds. Photos that evoke emotions through a focus on mood.
- » Category 3 «Action»
Photos that display impressive bird behaviour or that show birds in motion.
- » Category 4 «Youth»
Photographers aged 20 or under on 31st May 2024 can choose whether they wish to participate in the category «Youth» and/or in the three main categories.

Image File Requirements

- » Preview images: At least 1400 pixels on the longest side
- » High-resolution images: The chosen section of the original file must be at least 4000 pixels on the longest side, or 3000 pixels for square images. This is without recalculating the data.
- » Image processing: Image processing is allowed in accordance with the conditions of entry.

Dates

- » 1st to 31st May 2024: Online submission of preview images at: <https://photo.vogelwarte.ch>
- » 15th July 2024: Request for RAW files or original JPG files (only preselected images)
- » 15th August 2024: Submission deadline for RAW files or original JPG files (only preselected images)
- » October 2024: Notification of the winners

Intellectual Property Rights

The author must hold the copyright of the submitted images. By entering the competition, participants confirm that they are the sole author of the images and that no rights of third parties are involved.

Expert Panel

- » Marcel Burkhardt, ornithologist and project manager, Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach
- » Flurin Leugger, Nature photographer
- » Marc Zahnd, board member of Naturfotografen Schweiz
- » Martin Wieser, Segment Development Manager DACH, Canon Deutschland GmbH
- » Pierre-André Perrin, board member of Association suisse des photographes et cinéastes naturalistes



Prizes

Overall winner, main partner: Canon (Switzerland) AG

Canon EOS R6 Mark II and RF 100–500mm F4,5–7,1 L IS USM worth CHF 5498.– (Sponsor: Canon (Schweiz) AG)

Category «General», category partner: Sony Europe B.V.

1st Prize Sony A6700 and E 70–350 mm F4,5–6,3 G OSS worth CHF 2600.– (Sponsor: Sony Europe B.V.)

2nd Prize Photo backpack Lowepro Pro Trekker BP 650 worth CHF 490.– (Sponsor: Lowepro)
Shopping voucher P&M PHOTO MEDIA Luzern worth CHF 200.– (Sponsor: P&M PHOTO MEDIA)

3rd Prize Manfrotto Befree GT XPRO Alu worth CHF 320.– (Sponsor: Light + Byte AG)
Shopping voucher Foto Video Zumstein worth CHF 100.– (Sponsor: Foto Video Zumstein)

Category «Emotion», category partner: OM Digital Solutions GmbH

1st Prize OM-1 Mark II and M.Zuiko Digital ED 150–600mm F5,0–6,3 IS worth CHF 5097.– (Sponsor: OM Digital Solutions GmbH)

2nd Prize Spektiv Celestron Trailseeker 100 mm worth CHF 650.– (Sponsor: Celestron)
Shopping voucher P&M PHOTO MEDIA Luzern worth CHF 200.– (Sponsor: P&M PHOTO MEDIA)

3rd Prize Photo backpack Wandrd PRVKE 31 litre, Photo Bundle, Blue worth CHF 389.– (Sponsor: Light + Byte AG)
Shopping voucher Foto Video Zumstein worth CHF 100.– (Sponsor: Foto Video Zumstein)

Category «Action», category partner: Canon (Switzerland) AG

1st Prize Canon EOS R7 and RF 100–400mm F5,6–8 IS USM worth CHF 2018.– (Sponsor: Canon (Schweiz) AG)

2nd Prize Binoculars Canon 10x30 IS II worth CHF 499.– (Sponsor: Lowepro)
Shopping voucher Foto Video Zumstein worth CHF 100.– (Sponsor: Foto Video Zumstein)

3rd Prize Memory card Angelbird AVpro SD Card 512 GB, V60 UHS-II, double pack worth CHF 289.– (Sponsor: Light + Byte AG)

Category «Youth», category partner: Nikon Europe B.V.

1st Prize Nikon – photographic equipment worth CHF 3500.– (Sponsor: Nikon Europe B.V.)

2nd Prize Binoculars Nikon Monarch HG 10x42 worth CHF 1149.– (Sponsor: Nikon Europe B.V.)

3rd Prize Shopping voucher P&M PHOTO MEDIA Luzern im Wert von CHF 200.– (Sponsor: P&M PHOTO MEDIA)

Prizes as of March 2024. We reserve the right to substitute models and prizes.

Contact

- » Please send any enquiries by email to: photo@vogelwarte.ch. Participants will also be contacted via this address. Participants are responsible for ensuring that the address is not blocked by security barriers or spam filters.
- » We are unable to receive queries by telephone.



Conditions of Entry

Participation

- » Participants can enter the competition via <https://photo.vogelwarte.ch>. Pictures must be submitted online using a personal account.
- » The Ornithological Institute's 2024 photo competition is open to European residents. Amateur enthusiasts will have the chance to compete with professional photographers. Employees of the Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach, Canon Switzerland and other sponsors are excluded from the competition.

Entries

- » We only accept images from digital cameras.
- » Photos must be submitted online via <https://photo.vogelwarte.ch>.
- » Entrants can upload a maximum of 10 photos per category.
- » Each image may be entered only once in any vogelwarte contest.
- » The original image may be cropped. The resulting image file must be at least 4000 pixels on the longest side, or at least 3000 pixels if it is a square image. This is without recalculating the data.
- » Minimum size for preview images: at least 1400 pixels on the longest side
- » The aspect ratio may not deviate from the usual 3:2, 4:3, 1:1 or 16:9 formats.
- » File format for preview images: Files must be submitted as JPEGs, saved at the highest quality setting and Adobe RGB or sRGB colour space.
- » Photos of birds in captivity (pets, farm animals, zoo animals) are not permitted.
- » Images must feature species that occur as wild birds in Switzerland. The list of species at <http://photo.vogelwarte.ch> is final.
- » Participants pledge to adhere to any applicable conservation laws for the respective areas and the animals living in them. The protection of birds and their habitats has absolute priority. Special care must be taken not to disturb breeding or feeding birds. The directions given on the fact sheet «Responsible Bird Photography» are part of the conditions of entry. Photos taken with obvious disregard of these rules will be disqualified. The Swiss Ornithological Institute reserves the right to exclude fallible photographers from the competition.
- » The IPTC data (in Adobe Photoshop: File – File Information) must contain the full contact details of the photographer.
- » The files must be marked with a category number (K1, K2, K3) and labelled as follows:
categorynumber_lastname_firstname_species_country in which the picture was taken
Example: K1_Smith_John_Housesparrow_Switzerland
- » For proof of authenticity, we request the processed data in full resolution as well as the unprocessed original files of all images preselected by the expert panel. For these images, we also request a short paragraph detailing the shooting conditions.
- » If the requested data is not provided on time, the photo in question will be disqualified.

Image Processing

The jury looks forward to authentic photographs that are as natural as possible. Heavily edited images are discouraged. Images generated by artificial intelligence are excluded from the competition.

- » Moderate adjustments of tonal value, contrast, sharpness, colour temperature, white balance and colour balance as well as removal of image noise and dust spotting are permitted as long as they do not alter the overall message of the image.
- » Black and white conversion is permitted.
- » Adding and removing elements from the picture and the use of colour filters or artistic filters is not permitted.
- » HDR photography, panoramic photos, focus stacking, multiple exposure and photomontage are not permitted.



Intellectual Property Rights and Rights of Use

The photographer must hold the intellectual property rights of the submitted images. By entering the competition, participants confirm that they are the sole author of the images and that there is no third-party copyright infringement. Participants are liable for any damages incurred through copyright infringement or the failure to obtain rights of use.

The award-winning images and the images of the preselection may be used free of charge by the Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach for any activity related to the Institute's photo competitions. In particular, these rights include the publication of the photos on the Internet, in print publications, exhibitions, media coverage of the competition as well as promotional activities. The Swiss Ornithological Institute may transfer these rights of use to third parties.

Final Provisions

Photos that do not meet the conditions of entry will be excluded. In case of doubt, the expert panel will make the final decision.

The contact information of the photographers whose pictures passed the preselection stage may be disclosed to Canon (Switzerland) AG and to the category sponsors.

By entering the competition, participants acknowledge the conditions of entry without the possibility of recourse to legal action. Decisions made by the expert panel are incontestable. There will be no correspondence regarding the competition.

Main partner and category partner:



Category partners:



Partners:



Media partners:

