

Nature: Natural Environment and Wildlife NPSNZ Honours Submissions: Instructions and Categories

The aim of nature photography is to sensitise the viewer to the natural world, to be thought provoking, and to elicit an emotional response from the viewer. Nature photography should reveal and champion the diversity of life on earth. NPSNZ challenges its Honours applicants to produce a set of images that meets these goals.

A set of images submitted for NPSNZ Honours must contain images of an appropriate standard for each level of Honours (L, A, F). However, the images must work together to form a portfolio of work in which the set as a whole has greater value than that of the sum of the individual images.

Sets of images may be submitted as either prints or digital images in one of three categories (see below).

Prints must be matted, with a maximum size of 20 × 16 inches. Please include a diagram of the layout you wish to be used to display your prints.

Digital projected images must be JPEGs, preferably using sRGB colour space, with the long side 16200 pixels on the horizontal and 1080 pixels on the vertical side.

Subjects must be photographed out-of-doors, with the sole exception of microscopic photography.

Sets of images must represent nature, or a natural process or activity.

(1) Nature: Natural Environment and Wildlife

- Subjects may include wild flora (plants) and/or fauna (animals) in their natural (but not necessarily native) environment, inanimate natural subjects such as rocks and shells, and all natural landscapes including geological features and weather phenomenon.
- Cultivated plants and domestic or captive animals are not acceptable. (see notes)
- The NPSNZ code of ethics must be followed.
- Baiting is allowed under ethical conditions, but photographers should inform the Honours Board Secretary on submission when baiting is used to obtain an image.
- Images in this category should avoid evidence of humans.
- Except for cropping, no manipulations, either in or out of camera, are allowed, which change the original content of the image.
- Techniques allowed are limited to those that enhance the original capture to make it more accurately reflect what the photographer saw at the time.

Ethics of obtaining the Image

Extreme care should be taken not to disturb wildlife subjects by approaching too closely, making undue noise, or by any other activity likely to adversely affect the subject. If any method of baiting or manipulation of the subject is used, this should not harm the subject, and full details should be given on submission of the image(s). Excessive trampling and 'gardening' should be avoided in obtaining images of plants and fungi, especially if they are rare in the wild.

Integrity of Images

In order to verify the integrity of any image submitted in any category, the original (out of camera) image should be made available if requested by the Chairman of the Honours Board.

Titles

Titles must include the subject's correct common and/or scientific name, as appropriate. 'Cute' names, with anthropomorphic connotations, are not acceptable.

NPSNZ Honours: Supplementary Information for Applicants, Notes and Examples

For each of the three levels of Honours (L, A and F) a set of images is required. From the submitted set, the Honours Board must be able to assess the applicant's level of skill in using the camera, in post-processing, and in the presentation of the images.

The emphasis is on the set, rather than on the individual images, so it may be better to leave out an excellent image if it does not fit well with other images in the set. A set of prints must be arranged symmetrically, and in a pleasing way so that the eye moves smoothly from one to the next, and rests comfortably on the final image. A set of projected images must also flow well from one to the next, and rest comfortably on the final image. The completed set must provide a pleasing demonstration of both technical skill and artistry.

Subject matter

- 'Plants' includes algae, fungi etc, and 'animals' includes birds, reptiles, insects, worms, etc.
- Plants and animals need not be in their native habitat. So in New Zealand, rowan trees and deer, which have been naturalised, are acceptable if growing/living wild.
- Plants must not have been planted (except as part of a restoration project) by humans and should be self-sustaining/self-sown. (eg lupins or poppies in riverbeds, bluebells in Hagley Park, gardens that have gone wild in Christchurch's red zone).
- Landscapes includes earth, sea/water and sky.
- Animals must be free living, and self-sustaining; i.e. not being artificially fed or housed. Predator fencing is acceptable, as are some wildlife parks (in Africa for example, where fencing is to prevent poaching). Banding on birds is acceptable.
- Baiting includes offering food or other inducement, such as playing tapes

to attract birds.

- Evidence of humans is difficult to define, and will be left to the discretion of the Honours Board.
- It is expected that natural landscapes will engender in the viewer a sense of wildness or a sense of awe. Human influenced landscapes such as vineyards and pastures are not acceptable.
- Examples of **natural processes** might include erosion and fire. Examples of **natural activities** might include a ladybird feeding on an aphid, birds building a nest, and polar bears fishing.

Techniques

- We have resisted specifying a list of acceptable techniques because photography is changing so rapidly that anything we specify is likely to become out of date in a relatively short time.
- It is expected that an A or L set will show a diversity of techniques and subjects.
- Accurate depiction of the subject is paramount, and therefore manipulation must be limited. Besides cropping, techniques to correct colour, contrast, etc., are acceptable, provided they serve to more accurately reflect what the photographer saw at the time. These manipulations may be carried out in the camera or in post-production.
- Sets must flow and have cohesion. A theme is only required for a fellowship.
- Monochrome is acceptable in all categories.

Application Form

Declaration of any instance in which 'baiting' has been used

In this section, please give details of any means you have used to attract or manipulate your subject. These might include feeding nuts to a squirrel, or moving a dead rabbit to a more photogenic site to attract a hawk.

Description or Interpretation of Set of Images

The Honours Board appreciates knowing how the applicant expects his or her work to be interpreted, and invites all applicants to submit a brief (maximum 150 words) description of the concept or story behind the set of images. This is **compulsory for those submitting a set for their Fellowship**, and optional for those applying for an L or an A.