



Protect. Educate. Inspire. 

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton
239-699-4754
ChelleKWalton@gmail.com

DDWS announces 2022 photo contest winners

Captions:

1. Frank Brinker's "Speedy" took first place.
2. Scott Becque won second place with "Azure Eye Ring."
3. Third-place winner was Scott Davidow's "The Whimsical River Otter."

Note to Editors: Please contact me if you wish to receive images of any Honorable Mention winners.

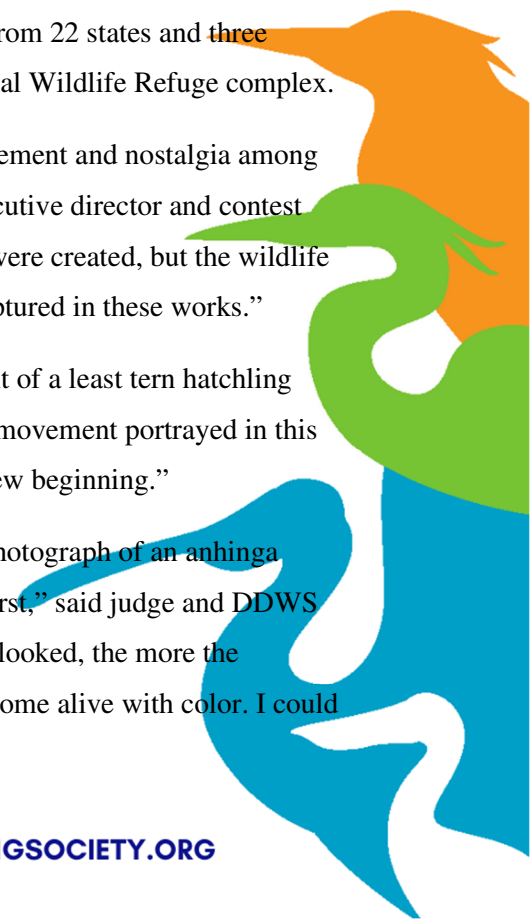
On Feb. 6, "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) held an official judging for its 30th annual "Ding" Darling Amateur Nature Photography Contest. The 2022 winners were to be announced in October at the refuge's inaugural Art in the Wild festival, but Hurricane Ian in September canceled the event and judging.

Judges selected three winners and 10 honorable mentions out of 140 entries from 22 states and three countries. All photograph entries were shot at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge complex.

"Despite the disruption from Hurricane Ian, the contest generated much excitement and nostalgia among photographers and our judges," said Sierra Hoisington, DDWS associate executive director and contest coordinator. "Our refuge may not look the same as it did when these photos were created, but the wildlife is still here, and nature's resilience promises to return to its former beauty captured in these works."

First place went to Frank Brinker from Oberageri, Switzerland, for his portrait of a least tern hatchling titled "Speedy." Contest judge Ranger Jessica Barry commented: "I love the movement portrayed in this photo. During a dark time of Sanibel, to me this photo signifies hope and a new beginning."

In second place was Scott Becque from Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, with a photograph of an anhinga titled "Azure Eye Ring." "The gleam of his striped feathers caught my eye first," said judge and DDWS Executive Development & Outreach Assistant Carrie Harmon. "The longer I looked, the more the bouquet of black and white feathers he was so carefully preening seemed to come alive with color. I could





see the rainbow in the small feathers atop his head. This photo spoke to me of the nuances of nature and what you can find when you look a little closer.”

Scott Davidow from Bayside, New York, took third place with “The Whimsical River Otter.” Judge and DDWS Business Office Manager Joy Robertson commented: “The otter is posing for the picture and does not seem afraid or wary of the photographer. I believe our animal friends will allow us into their environment if we show respect and patience.”

The three winners received cash awards from DDWS – \$300 for first place, \$225 for second, and \$175 for third. Each honorable mention winner, listed below, received a \$25 award, which reflects a refund of the contest entry fee.

Once the Visitor & Education Center reopens, the winning photographs and honorable mention award entries will be on display throughout the year.

To view all top-ranking entries, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/photo-contests. The page also contains information for entering the photo contest in 2023. The deadline for submissions will be Sept. 15, 2023.

HONORABLE MENTIONS (in alphabetical order):

- Calum Bruce, Glasgow, Scotland: “Mellow Yellow”
- Conrad Peloquin, Walnut Creek, California: “Tip Dip”
- Constance Bauer, Sanibel Island, Florida: “Sunshine on a Cloudy Day”
- Fred Ryckman, Sanibel Island, Florida: “Sipping in the Afternoon Sunshine”
- Heidi Dirkse, Wolverine, Michigan: “The Strike”
- Jeanne Tunnell Swope, Berwyn, Pennsylvania: “Struttin' My Stuff”
- Linda Normoyle, Fort Myers, Florida: “Silky”
- Paul Harmon, Sanibel Island, Florida: “Restful Pondering”
- Rebecca Clemens, Sanibel Island, Florida: “Spotted!”
- Tamara Barry-Peebles, Vancouver, Washington: “Turtle Trio”





Protect. Educate. Inspire. 

ABOUT DDWS

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, DDWS works to support J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge’s mission of conservation, wildlife and habitat protection, research, and public education through charitable donations and Refuge Nature Shop profits. To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

###





Protect. Educate. Inspire. 

