

# PHOTOGRAPHY GROUPS GUIDE TO COMPETITION SUBJECTS

## *SUGGESTED DEFINITIONS*

Compiled for Photography Groups by



**SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL  
EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

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The **SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHY** has compiled the following Competition suggested Subjects and Definitions referring to the following publications “Competition Subjects” prepared by L.G. Clark for the Federation of Camera Clubs NSW and from “Photographers Guide to Competition Subjects” prepared by Ken Herring for the South Australian Photographic Federation.

Covers the new MONOCHROME definition as changed by the **Fédération Internationale de l’Art Photographique** in their document **INFO 2003 / 383** dated **18 January 2003**.

Covers the NATURE definition as laid down by the **Fédération Internationale de l’Art Photographique** and also the NATURE & WILDLIFE definitions as laid down by the **Photographic Society of America**.

At the end of this document is the CODE of CONDUCT for NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY from the **Photographic Society of America**, **Australian Photographic Society** and the **Royal Photographic Society**.

*“We realize that this document will be of value to Photography Groups – Competition Secretary, it is equally important for these Groups to have rules governing the Set Subject. The Set Subject competitions should have a definition to avoid problems, which can arise concerning subject content because no guidelines have been laid down. Often the usual solution is to “leave it to the discretion of the Judge”.*

*In fairness to competitors, we feel it is essential that rules are defined and published on the Syllabus, or at least 3 months notice on the Groups Newsletter, or by reference to this document.*

*We feel that we should not lay down the law regarding subject definitions – surely Competition Secretaries and Committees can make their own decisions. We stress that this document is only suggestions for them to bend and twist as they think fit. “*

*“An unfortunate aspect of local photography is the emphasis on styles that are distinctly dated. The Committee can render a real service to Australian photography by encouraging a more modern approach. The trend at the moment is away from the carefully posed photograph towards the more spontaneous photograph that is true to life. Much of this comes into the category of Documentary, similar to Cartier-Bresson’s work”.*

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**ABSTRACT** – a pictorial and pleasing arrangement of colors and shapes which are not recognisable as known objects, although they may suggest any object or scene.

**ABUSE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT** – an image showing abuse by destruction, pollution or improper use of our surroundings.

**ACTION** – an image depicting a person or people doing something in a non-leisurely manner, eg sport, an emergency, at play or work.

- Could be defined as “must display impression of movement”.

**ADVERTISING ILLUMINATIONS** – the source may be any form of illumination, eg neon, tungsten or fireworks and the message of the advertiser should be clearly shown.

**AGAINST THE LIGHT** – an image in which the main source of illumination lies behind the subject as opposed to the front or sides. Such lighting does not preclude the use of a fill in light or available light from the camera side of the subject.

- Light source to be substantially facing the camera to capture the effect of back lighting but not to produce a silhouette.

**ALL CREATURES GREAT OR SMALL** – an image of any animal, reptile, bird, fish, insect, spider or crustacean.

**ANGLE SHOT** – an image taken from an angle markedly above or below the horizontal and indicative of the abnormal viewpoint. A photograph taken to accentuate the perspective of the subject.

**ANIMAL, BIRD OR INSECT** – an image of living animals, birds or insects confined or in their natural environment. A close up of a dead insect posed so as to appear living – if so decided by the Committee.

**ARCHITECTURE** – an image of buildings or structures, (ancient or modern, interior or exterior), monuments, columns, bridges or parts thereof.

**ARCHITECTURE (MODERN)** – an image of a modern building or structure or of a significant architectural feature, with emphasis on modern design.

**ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING** – an image in which the main source of light falling on the subject is artificial, eg gas, tungsten, fluorescent, quartz-halogen or sodium. Firelight is not artificial. Flashlight could, by definition, be included but may be specifically excluded.

**AUSTRALIANA** – an image featuring one or more items associated with the pioneering history of Australian early settlement.

**AUTUMN** – an image in which the dominant content is associated with Autumn.

**AVAILABLE LIGHT** – a subject lit by light not provided by or under the control of the photographer, or set up specifically for photographic purposes. Although by definition this includes normal daylight, it could be specifically excluded with the exception of low-level daylight, eg early morning, late evening or moonlight.

**\*\*\* OR \*\*\***

An image taken in low-level ambient light in which the photographer adds no supplementary light.

**AVANT GARDE** – this is defined as “pioneers or innovators, especially in any art or a particular period”. As this definition can only be applied to people, it is best avoided as a competition subject.

**AVANT GARDE #2** – is the extension of conventional photography into creative art. The main image should be photographically produced and can include a mixed media of any kind. These images should go beyond the so called Experimental Technique. They can be 2 or 3 dimensional, collages and/or montages.

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The purpose is to stimulate creative thoughts and engender the confidence to try new ideas beyond the simple photograph.

With Avant Garde images there should be a size restriction

1. Size 50.7 cm x 40.5 cm and thickness 50mm to 75mm.
2. Size 50.7 cm x 40.5 cm and no thicker than 3 thicknesses of mounting cardboard.

**BACK LIT or BACK LIGHT** – an image in which the main source of illumination lies behind the subject as opposed to the front or sides. Such lighting does not preclude the use of a fill in light or available light from the camera side of the subject.

**BAS-RELIEF** – an image made of a montage of a positive and negative placed together slightly out of register.

**BEACH (ON THE)** – an image in which the main subject(s) is on the beach with sufficient visual evidence to show the nature of the location. The subject may be human or otherwise, but things normally found on a beach would have stronger appeal, eg star fish, drift wood or seaweed. The Oxford Dictionary defines “beach” as ‘sandy or pebbly shore of the sea’. Featured rocks are therefore excluded.

**BEACH SCENE** – an image in which a view of the beach predominates or nearly so. An exception would include a sky giving atmosphere to the image. Some sea may be included, but not to the extent that it becomes a seascape.

**BEFORE and AFTER** – Two images clearly depicting ‘before’ and ‘after’, eg image 1: muddy boots and image 2: boots after being cleaned. Maybe restrict the competition to 2 sets of images.

**BIRD (S) STATIC OR IN FLIGHT** – an image featuring a live bird or birds.

**BOYS AND GIRLS COME OUT TO PLAY** – an image depicting children at play. The object is to capture the spontaneity of the event, without the subjects showing awareness of the camera.

**CANDID CAMERA** – an image of a person or people who are obviously unaware of the image being taken. It should stimulate at least one of the emotions.

**CAUGHT IN THE ACT** – an image showing a featured subject doing something surreptitiously. It may be spontaneous or contrived but will obviously fare better if it looks natural.

**CHARACTER STUDY** – a portrait in which the character of the subject or the character being portrayed by the subject is made evident by suitable lighting, pose or expression. Costume, props or scenery are acceptable aids. Suggestive of a recognised occupation; person depicting a character from history, literature or the theatre, a study in costume.

**CHILD STUDY** – a portrait of a child (children) which may range from a formal head and shoulder shot to the whole child (children) – either passive or engaged in some form of activity.

**CHILDREN AT PLAY** - an image depicting children at play. The object is to capture the spontaneity of the event, without the subjects showing awareness of the camera.

**CHILD’S WORLD** – a child or children engaged in activities, interests, or relationships typical of childhood. A child surrounded by toys and grinning at the camera would not get very far. The child must be seen to be wrapped up in the activity or surrounds.

**CHURCH TOWER, SPIRE OR DOME** – an image featuring a church tower, spire or dome or main part thereof. The whole church should not be shown.

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**CIRCLES** – an image featuring an object (s), which, as seen by the camera, are circular or contain circles. The arrangement should have some pictorial merit.

**CITY AT NIGHT** – a scene out-of-doors in a large town or city taken at night. It may consist of illuminations, buildings or people, but there must be evidence to show that the location conforms to the title. An image of a neon sign with no surrounding detail would not be acceptable.

**CITY NIGHT LIFE** – an image taken either indoors or out-of-doors, depicting a person or people indulging in some aspect of city nightlife – theatre, dance halls, sporting events, beer gardens.

**CITY SCENE** – this is not easy to define because the word “city” has different meanings in different countries, but to be on common ground, it may be defined as an image showing an area of high density buildings, or an aspect of life associated with such an area.

**CLOSER THAN ONE METRE** – any photograph taken when the camera lens is less than one metre from the main subject. This title could be used as an alternative to “Macro Photography” or “Close Up”, to encourage beginners who may not have sufficient technical knowledge to use more sophisticated equipment.

**CLOSE UPS (MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY)** – If “Close-Up” and “Macro Photography” are synonymous they are difficult to define, because no two text books agree. Photography involving extension bellows or tubes or diopter lenses is an inadequate definition because of macro lenses which make their use unnecessary. Also it is not possible to lay down a maximum camera to subject distance, because of the use of lenses of different focal length. This leaves magnification as the only yard stick and this must be arbitrary. A suggestion is one tenth to ten times magnification. Photographs taken through a microscope are excluded.

**CLOUD STUDY** – an image in which the sky and clouds predominate. Sunrise and sunset could be excluded.

**CONTEMPORARY** – this is defined as “belonging to the same time; equal in age; (ultra) modern”. The first two definitions are comparative and therefore cannot refer to a single image. This leaves “modern”, (of this day), or “ultra modern” in which the future is inferred.

One would be ill advised to use the word “contemporary” without defining it and a suggestion is – “an image showing a modern subject or an event or happening which can be seen to be in the modern style”.

**CONTRASTS** - an image depicting two or more subjects which are intrinsically in contrast to each other, eg by virtue of type, shape or color. This has nothing to do with contrasts in the photographic sense.

**CONTRE JOUR** - an image in which the main source of illumination lies behind the subject as opposed to the front or sides. Such lighting does not preclude the use of a fill in light or available light from the camera side of the subject.

**CREATIVE DARKROOM TECHNIQUE** – an image that has been created by either a non-standard form of processing or a normally developed film, which has subsequently been modified. Such processes may be, for example, Bas Relief, Texture Screens, Montages, Reticulation, Solarization, Sabbatier Effect, Posterisation, Agfa Contour, Tonal Separation, Tonal Drop Outs, etc.

**CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHING** – the presentation of a subject in a pictorial and/or pleasing manner in which it is not normally observed by the human eye.

**CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY** – a combination of creative darkroom techniques and creative photographing.

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**DAYS END** – an image depicting the end of the day from a human involvement point of view, eg a child going to bed or a man putting away his tools of work.

**DEPICTING OUR AFFLUENT SOCIETY** – an image depicting mans involvement or dependency on a high (comparatively), standard of living.

**DIFFERENTIAL FOCUSING** – an image in which the centre of interest is either sharp or unsharp in relationship to its surroundings.

**DIFFUSION** – an image in which (a) the subject is lit by directional diffused light, eg a battery of lights, light reflected from a large white surface or filtering through clouds; (b) the image of the subject is diffused by placing a diffusing attachment or screen between the lens and the subject.

Although not recommended, if diffusing during enlarging is attempted, it must not appear as a texture.

**DISPLAY THROUGH A SHOP WINDOW** – an image taken from the outside of a display window using available display lighting.

**DOCK SCENE** – an image showing docks including wharfs which may include shipping in close relation to them, or a close up of any item which could reasonably be expected to be found in such an area. The item must however, show a bond between the ship and the docks, eg crane or a bollard is acceptable – a ships compass is not acceptable.

**DOCUMENTARY** – a style of photography portraying people, their activities and their environment. Such photographs show how other people live, or form a record of social conditions. They do not necessarily deal with subjects of a sordid nature.

**EFFECTS OF THE WEATHER** – an image in which the main subject is a person reacting to the conditions caused by the weather.

**ENTRANCE (THE)** – an image of the entrance to a building or enclosure. The inclusion of a closing device is optional. The presence of a person may be included but must not be the dominant feature.

**FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY** – an image featuring a display of fashions in wearing apparel.

**FIGURE STUDY** – a study of a part or the whole of the male or female figure. The subject may be nude or lightly draped. The object is to show the femininity or masculinity of the subject by suitable posing and lighting.

**FIRE, SMOKE OR STEAM** – an image in which fire and/or smoke and/or steam is the dominant feature.

**FLASH-LIT SUBJECT** – any image in which the subject is lit by one or more flashlights. Fill in flash is not acceptable; the total light falling on the subject must originate from a flash gun (s).

**FLORA OR FAUNA** – an image of any flower, plant, tree, fungus, animal, bird, fish, reptile, insect, spider or crustacean.

**FLOWER(S) IN CLOSE UP** – an image of any flower(s) between magnifications of one tenth and ten. There is no restriction on arrangement, lighting or habitat, but a holding device should not be shown.

**FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN THE SPRING** – an image of a flower(s) that traditionally blooms in the spring.

**FOG OR MIST** – an image depicting fog or mist.



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**FORMAL FLOWER ARRANGEMENT** – an image of an arrangement of flowers with or without a container. The success of the image will depend to some extent on the pictorial arrangement of the subject and background.

**FOUR SLIDES TELLING A STORY** – four slides showing a sequence which is self explanatory in telling a story. Titles should be read out prior to or during the judging.

**GARDEN** – an image of any subject taken within the confines of a garden. If the location is not clearly shown in the image, the subject must, by common knowledge, be expected to be found in a garden.

**GENRE** – an image that depicts people in their normal environment of work or leisure. Its essence is its unaffected portrayal of the everyday life of average men and women. The subject must be natural and unposed, ideally, unaware of the camera.

**GLAMOUR** – a portrait of a girl showing the characteristics of enchantment, alluring beauty or charm.

**GLASS OR GLASSWARE** – an image in which all featured subjects are made of glass. The surroundings may be other than glass, provided they are not intrusive.

**HANDS** – an image featuring one or more hands preferably in a story telling pose and lit to show good skin texture or to convey the mood of the story. Graceful, strength, are some of the qualities that can be suggested in such images.

**HIGH KEY** – an image which consists of light tones only – with the exception that some small area may be black or near black. The photograph should be planned as a high key shot from the beginning and not produced by under exposing the print.

**HIGH KEY #2** – a subject which is inherently light in tone (or in which the tones are softened by haze), taken under flat or diffused lighting conditions. Such images should have delicate tones and detail. Small areas only of dark tones may be included as an accent. Curtailing the development of a print with normal tones does not constitute high key.

**HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS** – an image featuring a freeway or highway or a narrow road, lane or track. If they are shown passing through a built up area, the buildings must be secondary to the road.

**HISTORICAL** – photographs of buildings and objects belonging to a past age. Photographs of present day events which can be expected to have historical interest in time to come.

**HOME CHORES** – an image featuring someone in the act of carrying out a recognised house hold chore.

**HORSE(S)** – any photograph which features one or more horses.

**HORSE(S) IN ACTION** – any photograph featuring one or more horses in action eg racing, trotting, exercising or just enjoying itself / themselves.

**HUMAN EMOTIONS** – an image of a person or people experiencing one of the human emotions eg love, hate, despair, fear, sorrow, joy, greed, envy, etc. If the cause of the emotion can be included, it would be an advantage.

**HUMOROUS** – an image with a humorous or whimsical appeal to the viewer. It need not have been funny from the subject's point of view. The humour should lie in the photograph and not merely in the title.

**INDOOR PORTRAIT LIT BY DAYLIGHT** – a portrait taken indoors in which the sole source of light is daylight, either direct or reflected or a combination of both.

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**INDUSTRY** – an image depicting any form of industry eg shots of machines or buildings or the products of industry, such as smoke or steam. The object is to portray the functional side rather than the human.

**INTERIOR OF A BUILDING** – an image showing some part of the interior of a building. Using either the existing illumination or light under the control of the photographer.

**JOY OF CHRISTMAS** – an image showing the human pleasurable experiences associated with Christmas, eg the singing of carols, receiving gifts, partaking of good food or drink or other seasonal festivities.

**LANDSCAPE** – an image featuring the natural scenery of the terrain. A tree or trees, people or buildings may be included but should not dominate the photograph.

**LAW (THE)** – an image depicting some aspect of the law of the land or its enforcement.

**LIFE WASN'T MEANT TO BE EASY** – an image of a person or people under undue physical stress or in a state of mental perplexity. The situation may be serious or humorous.

**LOCAL DISTRICT** – an image showing any feature, aspect or activity within a local area. (The area should be defined).

**LOCAL DISTRICT PUBLICITY** – an image of a scene, activity or event occurring locally, (area to be defined), which could be used for tourist promotion.

**LOOKING UP** – any photograph of a terrestrial object taken with the camera looking upwards.

**LOVE AND AFFECTION** – any photograph which depicts love or affection between human beings or other creatures, or between both, illustrating companionship, dependence, trust or any facet of a loving or affectionate relationship.

**LOVERS** – a pleasing image of teenage or adult male and female humans portraying a bond of love, affection or tenderness towards each other, either by facial expression or their pose relative to each other.

Love between children and non humans are excluded.

**LOW KEY** – an image in which the dark tones predominate but not necessarily excluding the lighter tones. The image should be planned as a low key shot from the beginning and not produced by over exposing the print. Low key is usually employed for dramatic effect or to evoke a certain mood.

**MACHINERY** – a photograph of an apparatus or part thereof, designed to apply mechanical power or to carry out some mechanical function. It must consist of several parts, each with its own function.

**MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY** - If “Close-Up” and “Macro Photography” are synonymous they are difficult to define, because no two text books agree. Photography involving extension bellows or tubes or diopter lenses is an inadequate definition because of macro lenses which make their use unnecessary. Also it is not possible to lay down a maximum camera to subject distance, because of the use of lenses of different focal length. This leaves magnification as the only yard stick and this must be arbitrary. A suggestion is one tenth to ten times magnification. Photographs taken through a microscope are excluded.

**MAN'S ENVIRONEMENT** – an image depicting the conditions or surroundings in which a man lives or experiences.

**MAN'S FAITH** – an image depicting man's faith. It matters not what he has faith in – be it religion, one's parents, a machine or an animal.

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**MAN'S FAITH #2** – the spiritual belief of people as shown in photographs of them attending church, in religious ceremonies, or engrossed in worship. In addition, any photographs of a religious nature which suggests an inner faith.

**MARINE** – an image of any scene, object or event which can be associated with the sea. The sea itself must not be the dominant part of the image. This is to avoid confusing “Marine” with “Seascape” or “Wave Study”.

**MARKET SCENE** – an image showing any scene taken in or at a market. Scenes in glass fronted shops are not acceptable.

**MONOCHROME – FIAP definition 2004**

- Black and white = from very dark grey to a very clear grey = monochrome work.
- Black and white toned entirely in a single color = remains monochrome work.
- Black & white modified by a partial toning or by the addition of one color = color work. To stand in the color print section.

**MONTAGE** – an image produced by the combination of two or more transparencies or negatives. “Bas Relief” is excluded. They can be produced by multiple exposures or by printing adjacent to one another on the same print. Together the images portray a single theme. The definition can be extended by the Committee to include various prints pasted on the same mount, this is strictly called Collage.

**MOOD OF THE WEATHER** – an image depicting some aspects of the weather eg storm, (actual or impending), rain, hail, snow, fog or wind. Normal sunny conditions or the aftermath are not acceptable.

**MOOD SHOT (HUMAN)** – mood is defined as; “frame of mind or state of feelings”. From the competition point of view, it may be defined as “a portrait of a person whose expression or attitude signifies their frame of mind or feelings”.

**MOTHERHOOD** – an image showing the accepted bond or relationship between mother and offspring. It may depend on facial expressions or in the posing of two subjects, or a combination of both. It is suggested that expressions of love and tenderness should be the basic theme rather than the dramatic approach of sacrifice and protection. This subject could be varied by restricting it to either humans or animals or a combination of both.

**MOTHERHOOD #2** – the spiritual quality of motherhood as suggested in images of women caring for children, the tenderness and affection shown towards them, the sacrifices made.

**MOTION / MOVEMENT** –

- Of people – confined to dancing, ballet, callisthenics or gymnasium.
- Of things – an image in which our visual senses tell us that the subject must have been moving when the photograph was taken.

**NATURE** – an image of flora or fauna excluding domesticated animals, cultivated plants or flowers, or evidence of the hand of man.

**If a more precise definition is required;**

**FIAP – 2001 definition**

Nature photography depicts living, untamed animals and uncultivated plants in a natural habitat, geology and the wide diversity of natural phenomena, from insects to icebergs.

Photographs of animals which are domesticated, caged or under any form of restraint, as well as photographs of cultivated plants are ineligible.

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Minimal evidence of humans is acceptable for nature subjects, such as barn owls or storks, adapting to an environment modified by humans, or natural forces, like hurricanes or tidal waves, reclaiming it.

The original image must have been taken by the photographer, whatever photographic medium is used. Any manipulation or modification to the original image is limited to minor retouching of blemishes and must not alter the content of the original scene.

After satisfying the above requirements, every effort should be made to use the highest level of artistic skill in all nature photographs.

### **PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA – 1990 definition**

The Nature Photography section is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict observations from all branches of Natural History except Anthropology & Archaeology, 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. Human elements shall not be present, except on the rare occasion where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable.

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.

#### **AUTHENTIC WILDLIFE**

- “Authentic Wildlife” is defined as one or more organisms living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat.
- Therefore photographs of zoo or game farm animals are **NOT** eligible as Authentic Wildlife.

**NEON SIGNS** – an image in which neon signs or lights predominate. Surrounding localities – lit by ambient light – may be included but should not detract from the neon sign.

**NIGHT SCENE OUT OF DOORS** – any photograph taken out of doors at night, providing that flash is not used.

**NIGHT STUDY** – an image of buildings or scenery taken outdoors at night with the existing illumination, or with flashlight contributing no more than supplementary illumination.

**NOCTURNAL** – an image depicting a person(s), animal(s), or thing(s) either in, of, done by or active in, the night.

**NUDE STUDY (FEMALE)** – an image depicting a part or the full length of one or more female figures, which may be unclothed or lightly draped. The object is to portray the femininity of the subject by suitable posing and lighting.

**NUDE STUDY (MALE)** – a study of the male figure, either whole or in part, which is designed to show man’s masculinity by reason of pose and / or suitable lighting.

**OLD AGE (PEOPLE)** – an image of the whole or part of an aged person. It may, for example, be a portrait of a face or hands, or a whole figure showing a stance, event or surroundings associated with old age. Portrayal of character or personal thoughts or emotions would probably gain bonus points.

**OLD AGE (PEOPLE) #2** - Portraits of the elderly showing the dignity, experience, loneliness or other aspects of old age.

**OLD & NEW** – an image showing something old and its modern counterpart in natural surroundings, eg old building sandwiched between two skyscrapers or a bus passing a stage coach, etc.

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**ON MY HOME BLOCK** – an image taken on your own home or within the limits of your own block, eg the piece of land on which your home is sited.

**OPEN** – any subject, but to be successful it should contain one or more of the following qualities; pictorial (composition), impact, appeal, story telling or interest.

**OPEN (PICTORIAL)** – an image of any subject which has strong pictorial appeal, eg good composition and lighting.

**PART SONG OR POEM** – a pictorial illustration of an extract not exceeding two lines of a published song or poem. To assist the judge, it will be necessary to read the lines depicted and give the title of the song or poem.

**PATTERN OR TEXTURE** – this gives the competitor a choice;

- **Pattern** – an arrangement of subjects, shapes or color which is interesting or aesthetically pleasing to the eye.
- **Texture** – a photograph of a subject, the surface of which is shown to good advantage by a light source coming from a shallow angle to the surface.

**PEOPLE** –

- Strictly, a study of two or more people.
- A study of a person or people covering a very wide range, eg crowd scenes, head and shoulder portraits, child studies, etc.

Although for Agricultural & Horticultural shows and School competitions, “People” is an accepted subject title, Photography Groups should be more specific, eg Portrait, Child Study, People at Work or Play, etc.

**PEOPLE AT PLAY** – an image depicting a person or people engaged in some form of play, recreation or pastime. Organised sport might well be excluded.

**PEOPLE AT WORK** – an image showing a person or people engaged in an occupation which cannot be classed as a hobby, pastime, recreation, sport or play. It is thought that judges will be more favourably impressed if the subject(s) is / are intent on the work they are doing, rather than smiling at the camera.

**PEOPLE INDOORS** – a person or people doing something indoors. Any form of lighting is acceptable, but a formal portrait is not.

**PEOPLE IN INTERESTING OR UNUSAL ATTIRE** – depicting a person or people dressed in interesting or unusual clothing which may be historical, exotic, protective, incongruous when related to the location, or humorous.

**PETS** – any living thing, (humans excluded), which has been tamed and kept as a favourite or treated with fondness.

**PHOTOGRAM** – a photographic print in which the image is formed by the interruption of light rays by an object placed between the light source and the printing paper.

**PHOTOGRAM #2** – an image made without the aid of a camera by exposing sensitive paper or film to light, using masks or various objects in contact with the emulsion to form the images. It is suggested that tones of grey, as well as black & white, will add to the effectiveness of the result.

**PHOTOJOURNALISM** – a record of any event which tells a story of what has happened, is happening, or is about to happen, the visual sight of which excites or stimulates one of the many human emotions.

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**PLACES** – a photograph showing a building, or a place set aside for some specific purpose. An incident occurring in a street is not acceptable.

**POLLUTION** – whilst this word can have many meanings, from the competition point of view, it is best defined as “contamination or defilement of man’s environment”.

**PORTRAITURE** – an image of a person(s) which may range from a head to a full-length study and which may include accessories and backgrounds in character with the subject. Ideally, a portrait should show some aspect of the character or personality of the subject. For some competitions, the Committee could restrict portraits to head and shoulders only.

**POSTCARD** – an image depicting an item of interest suitable for use as a postcard.

**POSTERISATION** –

1. **Monochrome (Black & White)** an image containing a limited number of tones, usually three or four.
2. **Monochrome (Color)** an image containing a limited number of tones, usually three or four, of tints or shades on one color.
3. **Color (Prints or Slides)** a photograph consisting of two or more colors of which the shades and tints are limited to three or four.

**PRIMARY PRODUCTION (AN ASPECT OF)** – a photograph showing some stage in the application of agriculture, horticulture, fishing, forestry, mining, quarrying, animal husbandry, poultry or dairy farming.

**RAILWAY STUDY** – an image which may feature an engine, carriages, trucks, signals or rails on the permanent way, or a combination of such, or any part of such, provided it is easily recognisable as belonging to a railway.

**RAINY DAY** – an outdoor or indoor shot in which it can be seen that it is or has just been raining.

**RECORD SHOT** – a photograph of any subject, which could be accepted as being of some interest to the viewer. Whilst it need not be judged on a pictorial basis, it should have some other quality such as being very good technically; have a centre of interest, simplicity or impact.

**RECREATION** – an image showing humans experiencing any form of recreation, eg sport, holidays, pastimes, refreshments, hobbies, entertainment, amusement, exercise or play. It may be an advantage to exclude the participation of, (as opposed to watching), organised games or athletics.

**REFLECTIONS** – an image in which the reflections of a subject provide the centre of interest. They may be produced by water, windows, metal, etc. mirror reflections may be excluded.

**RELIQS FROM THE PAST** – an image showing old buildings, articles, implements, etc, which from general knowledge or by visual impact, are known or seen to be old. A photograph in which the main subject is living is not acceptable.

**RELIGIOUS** – any person or thing, which can be associated with religion.

**RETICULATION** – a photograph (monochrome or color print or transparency), showing the effect produced by extreme changes of temperature during development of the negative or transparency. The use of a texture screen is not permitted.

**ROAD, TRACK OR STREET** - an image featuring a narrow road, lane or track. If they are shown passing through a built up area, the buildings must be secondary to the road.

**ROCK FORMATION** – a photograph showing a recognisable rock formation, (eg strata), as opposed to a collection of rocks at random.

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**ROCKS** – an image featuring rocks in any shape or form or location.

**ROCKS (ON THE)** – a photograph in which the main subject is on rocks with sufficient visual evidence to show the nature of the location. The subject may be human or otherwise, but things normally found on the rocks or in rock pools would have a stronger appeal.

**RURAL STUDY** – an image showing a person or people in a rural setting whereby the relation between the two can be seen. This can be achieved by dress, or action, eg shepherd with sheep, the village blacksmith, jackeroo with cattle.

**SABATTIER EFFECT** – a photograph produced by exposing either the negative or the print to unsafe light at some stage during the development.

**SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE** – a photograph featuring a person or people in the act of studying or engaging in an activity, which will increase their knowledge.

**SEASCAPE** – an image in which the sea or waves predominate. Coastal features or the shoreline may be included to a lesser degree.

**SEASCAPE #2** – an image of natural coastal scenery, a wave study or the open sea. Boats or other items of marine interest may be included.

**SEASON OF THE YEAR** – the image should contain visual evidence to show the season in which it was taken, eg a function of nature, or of man's making. The season chosen should be related to the time of the competition.

**SELECTIVE FOCUSING** – an image in which the principle subject is in sharp focus and which is emphasised by the unsharpness of nearer or further subject matter.

**SELF PORTRAIT** – a portrait of the photographer in which they have arranged the lighting and posed themselves within the photograph. The shutter release must be under their control, eg remote, electric, pneumatic or delayed action.

**SHADOW(S)** – an image in which shadow(s) is featured. The cause of the shadow(s) may be included but must not be dominant.

**SIDE LIGHTING** – an image in which the main subject is lit primarily by side lighting. It may be natural or artificial.

**SIGNS OF SPRING** – a photograph of any subject, event or situation associated with the arrival of spring. It may be related to plant growth, fauna or humans. The presentation should give a feeling of freshness, emergence or new life.

**SILHOUETTE** –

1. Monochrome – a photograph in which the featured subject(s) consists of a single tone, which is devoid of nearly all detail. The background may consist of one or more tones.
2. Color print or transparency – a photograph in which the featured subject(s) consists of a single color and is devoid of nearly all detail. The background may be multicoloured.

**SOLARISATION** – true solarisation is produced by considerably over exposing the negative during initial exposure. It is unlikely that worthwhile photographs can be produced by this method, which is not recommended as a competition subject. The “Sabattier Effect” has greater possibilities.

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**SOLARISED** – an image made using a negative which has been subjected to a process of partial reversal during development. Such photographs are often characterised by a dark line around the subject. Since the results are somewhat unpredictable it would be advisable to use a copy negative.

**SOMETHING DIFFERENT** –

1. a photograph in which the most commonly employed photographic techniques, methods of lighting, etc, have not been used and which creates in the viewer the impression of being different in some significant respect.
2. A photograph containing an unusual subject matter, or a common subject viewed from an unusual angle, or a person doing something or being in a situation, which is not normal.

**SOMETHING OLD** – any subject, (including people), whom's origin occurred more than a few years ago. The subject must be seen to be old virtue of appearance, style or use.

**SOMETHING WITH GLASS** – a “Still Life” photograph, in which glass in any form is shown with another subject of a “non-glass” material.

**SONG, BOOK OR FILM TITLE** – an image illustrating the title of a recorded song or published book or commercially released film. It is thought that a well known title would have more appeal than an obscure one. To assist in the judging, titles would have to be announced.

**SOUND OF MUSIC** – an image capturing the pleasure or excitement that can be obtained by listening to the sound of music. Although the source of the music may be included, the emphasis should be on the reaction of the listener.

**SPEED** – speed is the rate of movement against time and may be high or low, therefore, speed does not necessarily mean fast, although it is more often associated with high speed.

“Speed”, if chosen as a competition subject, might be best defined as something giving a visual impression of travelling at high speed.

**SPEED OR ACTION** – a photograph that conveys an impression of movement. In most such images actual movement will have been substantially arrested. In another type of image movement photographed with a slow shutter speed creates rhythmic lines.

**SPIRIT OF JAZZ** – an image capturing the excitement, rhythm, exhilaration or other qualities of either jazz or modern music. Also images of instruments & musicians, which is symbolic of jazz or modern music.

**SPIRIT OF SCIENCE** – an image of scientific apparatus, equipment or techniques which by their novel appearance seem to symbolize the spirit of research or progress in science.

**SPORT** – an image featuring a person or people participating in some form of sporting event.

**SPORTING ACTIVITY** – a photograph that can include sports in action; sports people or fans before, during or after events.

**STAGE SHOT** – an image taken in a place of public entertainment showing actresses or actors performing on a stage. Close ups of single people are acceptable providing that it can be seen that they are acting a part. Normal stage lighting should be used.

**STEPS OR STAIRS** – an image featuring steps or stairs either indoors or outdoors.

**STILL LIFE** – a photograph of a pictorial arrangement of inanimate objects whether natural or man made or a combination of both. Synthetic scenes made up from models are described as “Table Top” and are excluded.



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**STONE WORK** – a photograph of stone work which may be featured on the whole or part of a building, statuary, headstone, abutment, wall, cairn, etc. advisably, it should be lit to show the texture of the stone, the colors in sandstone. Any brickwork or concrete included should be unobtrusive.

**STREET SCENE** – an image taken within the confines of a street or road in a built up area. Could show a busker(s) with audience, town square showing sculpture(s) with person or people viewing them.

**SUBURBIA** – “suburb” is defined as “residential parts lying on or near the outskirts of a city” and “suburbia” embraces the suburbs and their inhabitants. Competition definition:- a photograph depicting the residential area of a town or city or the people who live there. If the latter are featured, evidence of the suburban location must be included.

**SUMMER** – an image, the contents of which are associated with the summer months or man’s reaction to it. Could be person or people at the beach, surf board riders, person(s) at an outdoor café enjoying the sun.

**SUNRISE / SUNSET** – a photograph taken during the period of sunrise or sunset, in which the sky area is dominant. Although it may be possible for the merit of the photograph to lie entirely within the sky itself, it usually requires the support of an interesting foreground, either partly lit or in full silhouette. The foreground should contribute to the pictorial composition of the photograph.

**SURVIVAL IN NATURE** – a photograph depicting Nature’s means of survival. This could include deceptive markings or camouflage, or a predator in action. Normal methods of reproduction are excluded.

**TABLE TOP** – a photograph of an arrangement of a small object(s) in a contrived or natural setting, depicting something in real life or fantasy.

**TABLE TOP #2** – an arrangement of abstract or unusual shapes or objects arranged as a still life or table top. The result may be abstract, surrealist or symbolic in nature.

**TEENAGE STUDY** – an image featuring one or more teenagers, doing a typical teenage “thing”. A formal portrait is not acceptable.

**TEXTURE** - a photograph conveying an impression of the physical nature of the surface of the material being portrayed. The subject would be best portrayed by a light source coming from a shallow angle to the surface.

**THREE OF A KIND** – a photograph featuring three subjects of a kind, which can be readily identified by the average viewer. (Three Grevilleas or Hakeas could be so different that only a botanist could recognise them as being “three of a kind”.)

**THROUGH A TEXTURE SCREEN** – an image on which a texture screen has been superimposed, either in the darkroom or digitally. It may be produced by placing the texture screen at the negative stage of the enlarger, or in contact with the printing paper or transparency. The texture screen may be obtained commercially, or made by the competitor. Whilst the screen may be made by reticulation, the subject negative or transparency is not to be reticulated.

**THROUGH A WINDOW** – a window is defined as an opening for the purpose of admitting light and air. “Through a Window” is therefore defined as a photograph taken through an opening designed to admit light and air into a building or form of transport. It may be taken through glass, but in all cases, some evidence of the opening surround, or a reflection, must be included in the photograph. Views through shop windows could be excluded.

**TONAL DROP OUT (SEPARATION)** – an image of any subject in which all the half tones have been eliminated. The photograph may consist of one or more colors.

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**TOUCH OF ELEGANCE** – elegant is defined as “tastefully ornate in dress or design; graceful; tasteful; refined, of refined luxury”. Whilst from the competition point of view a definition of a subject portraying one or more of the above qualities may be accepted, they are so subjective, that this is not thought to be a suitable competition subject.

**TOUCH OF RED (OR ANY OTHER COLOR)** – a scene in which a single item of red occupies a small, but pictorially important part of the photograph. Any other color may be substituted.

**TRANSPORT (OF PEOPLE)** – a photograph of any vehicle(s), device(s), or creature(s), either commonly known to be a method of transport or shown to be a form of transport. If desired, “of people” may be deleted so as to include, eg conveyor belts, pipelines, etc.

**TREE STUDY** – a photograph in which a part of a tree, or one or two trees form the main subject, which should be isolated from the surrounds. A large group of trees is not acceptable.

**TREE STUDY #2** – a landscape in which one or more trees are the important feature.

**UNUSUAL SHADOW(S)** – a photograph featuring shadow(s), which form an unusual or humorous shape or pattern. The cause of the shadow(s) or part thereof, may be included but not featured.

**URBAN SCENE** – the dictionary defines “urban” as “of, living or situated in a city or town”. It may therefore be defined as a photograph showing an area of high or medium building density or an aspect of life associated with such an area.

**WATER IN MOTION** – a photograph featuring water, (fresh or salt), which gives the impression that it is moving. Water in any form or location is acceptable.

**WATER STUDY** – a photograph showing water as the main theme. It may be lake, river, stream, billabong, gutter, reticulated or in any other form of use by man. Seawater is excluded to avoid confusion with other marine related subjects.

**WAVE STUDY** – a photograph showing a single or a series of waves. Rocks or the coastline or any other feature may be included but must appear secondary to the wave(s).

**WEATHER AFTERMATH** – an image showing the results of a phenomenon of the weather, eg floods, gale damage, bush fire, etc.

**WEATHERED** – a photograph featuring an object or a face, which shows obvious signs of having been exposed to the elements over a long period.

**WHARVES & SHIPPING** – images taken of either ship/s or wharf/s (part or complete). Either separately or together, eg ship in the middle of the harbour, ship under a bridge, ship tied to a wharf, bollard/s on a wharf, coiled ropes on the wharf.

**WHEEL(S)** – a photograph featuring a wheel(s), or part thereof. Normally the whole vehicle or other device would not be included – an exception being a wide-angle shot taken with the camera close to one wheel.

**WILDLIFE (AUTHENTIC)** -

- “Authentic Wildlife” is defined as one or more organisms living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat.
- Animals, birds, reptiles, fish, spiders, insects, or crustaceans, photographed living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat.
- Therefore photographs of zoo or game farm animals are **NOT** eligible as Authentic Wildlife.
- The submission of a print or transparency in this category should certify that the photograph was taken under the above conditions.

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**WIND, RAIN OR MIST** – a photograph depicting windy, rainy, or misty conditions.

**WINDOW(S)** – a photograph featuring a window(s), open, closed, partly open.

**WINTER** – a photograph, the content of which is associated with the winter months, eg snow skiers, snow & / or ice on trees, snow & / or ice on roofs.

**WONDERS OF AUSTRALIA** – difficult to define because a “wonder” can only be subjectively assessed. A suggestion is a photograph of something, which is peculiar to Australia and is of outstanding interest. It may be a geographical feature, flora or fauna.

**YOUNG LIFE** – a photograph featuring the non-human early stage of development or growth, eg a flower bud, or a chick breaking out of an egg.



## NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER'S CODE OF PRACTICE

### INTRODUCTION

The Nature Division of the Photographic Society of America, in order to help protect all nature subjects and the environment, has adopted a Code of practice as a guide-line for all photographers to follow.

### GENERAL

Always be considerate of your subjects, be they animal, vegetable or mineral. Killing or injuring any living thing is not a proper part of our nature photography.

- Be courteous to your fellow photographer.
- For the good name of nature photography, observe normal courtesies.
- Permission should be obtained before trespassing on land on which there is not customarily free access.

Be familiar with the life history and the geographic or geologic setting of your subject. The more complex the life form and rarer the species, the greater your knowledge, care and respect should be. Abide by all requests of rangers and wardens in national and State Parks and wildlife refuges.

### BIRDS AND OTHER SMALL ANIMALS

Try to observe birds and other small animals so they are unaware of your presence. Thus, you are provided an opportunity to learn their interesting everyday habits. When photographing a nest, don't keep it unduly exposed to the sun, cold, rain or snow, which may cause death to the eggs or young and/or desertion by the parents. This protocol also applies to the burrows or dens of small animals, reptiles and life forms as well.

Instead of cutting off branches or grasses near a nest or den, tie the branches back or lay the grass down with rocks or sticks. Before tying back branches, provide temporary shade, if needed. When you have finished photographing, place everything back properly, the way you found it, as a protection for the inhabitants.

Generally, do not keep a blind set up on a nest or burrow if the parents do not return within a half hour especially on extremely hot or cold days.

Do not frighten birds from a nest to get a picture of them returning. You may cause the eggs or young to die. The normal intervals on the nest will not be too long. It is preferable not to take longer than 15 minutes to set up a blind at a nest or burrow. It will be that much longer before the parents return. It is better to set your blind up at the car and carry it in.

Do not approach a blind by car or foot if it is occupied. You may frighten the animal subject from the other photographer's spot and spoil his/her picture.

Beware of approaching a nest, den or burrow too closely. This could cause abandonment of the young by some parents, and expose the area to predation. Careful judgment is necessary.

Do not handle young birds or other small animals. Some parents may abandon them.

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Tracks to and from a nest, den or burrow should be very inconspicuous. As far as possible, the area should be restored to its natural state after you are through photographing.

Blinds should not be positioned along a regularly used approach line to the nest, den or burrow and should not be allowed to flap in the wind.

For cold-blooded animals and invertebrates, temporary removal from the wild to a studio or aquarium for photography should be undertaken with caution, as some states and countries have laws against this practice without a permit. Subsequent release in any case, should be to the original habitat as soon as possible.

### **BOTANY**

A competent photographer never needs to pick wildflowers. In many states and all national Parks and Monuments it is not only illegal to pick flowers, but a true nature photographer should be the first to protect them.

If rocks or logs or other objects natural to the area are brought in to provide scientifically correct but a more photogenic background, these should be returned to their original place.

While “gardening” is often desirable to simplify the immediate environment, this should not include pulling up, cutting or otherwise destroying other plants in the picture area. Knee-holes, heel or toe scuffing etc, should be prevented.

Avoid trampling fragile habitats, especially grasslands, marshes and wildflower patches. Remember, damage to the habitat affects all species in the ecosystems.

### **INSECTS**

Insects or spiders, captured for photographic purposes should be released at the point of capture within a reasonably short time.

Day flying insects, particularly butterflies and wasps, are most suitably controlled by working in a darkened room at night, focusing by means of a weak flash light.

Chilling is suitable for such insects as beetles and grasshoppers only. Butterflies, many moths and almost all insect larvae, may be irreparably damaged by such treatment.

Freezing should not be attempted. The photographer should not endanger the lives of the insects. Bear in mind that they also play a part in the balance of nature.

Photographing insects and arachnids in the field would probably tell a more accurate story.

### **TIDEPOL SUBJECTS**

Tide pool animals have a definite ecological niche. Animals that live on top of rocks and those that live underneath, will die if rocks turned over for photographic purposes are not replaced the way they were found. All marine life moved for any purpose should be returned to its original location. Certain tide pool creatures such as ‘Brittle Stars’ are extremely fragile. Handle them with great care.

Marine animals require large amounts of frequently replaced oxygen, and may die rather quickly if placed in aquaria without artificial oxygenation and temperature control.

### **NEWTS, SALAMANDERS & OTHER AMPHIBIANS**

While this group of animals makes delightful aquaria subjects, they should not be held for more than a few hours while being photographed, unless they are provided with proper food, and kept in well simulated nature conditions.

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If chilling is used for partial control it should be used carefully and for brief periods only. This practice applies to all animal subjects.

### **REPTILES**

It is preferable that lizards and snakes be held for no more than very brief periods, since artificial feeding is usually not successful with a number of these species. If held over night for photography next morning, they should be given protection roughly equivalent to that which they would find for themselves in the wild.

Snakes should never be picked up by the neck alone, as this may permanently injure their spinal column. Similarly, they should never be controlled by lifting them by their tail end.

### **GEOLOGY**

Pictographs and petroglyphs should never be altered for photographic reasons by applying any substance, even though they are not eligible in NATURE exhibitions.

When photographing fragile cave formations or crystals, or similar material, do not move or break these features. Others may follow and want to see them. Remember a damaged plant may well recover in a few days, but a damaged crystal or cave formation took tens of thousands of years to grow, and present geologic conditions may make repair impossible on any time scale. Delicate erosional features must also be left untouched. Let nature do the rearranging.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

It is unethical to throw rocks at an animal to cause it to change position or area. Thoughtless conduct could force a creature to leave its accustomed surroundings because it finds the photographer an unbearable nuisance. If the animal in question is forced to move into territory occupied by another animal, friction is bound to arise. The dislodged animal may find unfavorable conditions in regard to food and water.

Nature programs or articles which suggest or describe methods of nature photography contrary to this Code are unacceptable for presentation at **PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA** National or Regional Conventions, or for use in the PSA Journal. Program Directors should send copies of this Code to makers of programs being considered, emphasizing this fact. PSA affiliated Clubs, Councils and Chapters should also adopt this practice.

### **NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY DEFINITION**

Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict observations from all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archaeology, 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 storytelling value of a photograph **MUST** be weighed more than the pictorial quality. Human elements shall not be present, except on the rare occasion where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable. 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.

("Authentic Wildlife" is defined as one or more organisms living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Therefore photographs of zoo or game farm animals are **not** eligible for the PSA Wildlife medal.)

### **9/98-1999 CES**

Published by the nature Division of the Photographic Society of America as a guideline to assist the photographer in obtaining a true nature picture without injuring the subject or destroying the environment.



**AUSTRALIAN  
PHOTOGRAPHIC  
SOCIETY**  
**NATURE Division**



**CODE of CONDUCT for NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

When photographing nature subjects there is always a certain amount of stress put on the subjects by the photographer. Nature Division therefore has put together a series of principles for all members when they are photographing or even observing nature subjects, so that any stress is minimized.

**2. BASIC CONDUCT**

The welfare of the subject is more important than the photograph. This applies to geological as well as biological subjects.

Any local or national conservation requirements must be obeyed. This includes getting appropriate permits and observing restricted areas.

Permission should be sought from private landholders before venturing on to their land. There should be minimal disturbance to the surroundings.

It is most important that the photographer has a reasonable knowledge of the subject before attempting to take any pictures. For uncommon subjects this knowledge needs to be extensive.

It is important that the photographer has a general knowledge of other associated subjects so that the process of photographing causes no risk or stress to them. This in particular refers to small life forms.

**3. SPECIFIC CONDUCT**

**3.1 BIRDS AT NEST & ANY ANIMAL BREEDING, FEEDING, OR RETURNING TO ITS LAIR**

It is most important to remember that any animal or bird photographed under these conditions may be put at risk by the presence of the photographer, his/her equipment and/or a hide.

Photography under these conditions should only be undertaken by those with a detailed knowledge of the animal or bird's behavior and after careful observation of the specific individual in order to ensure the animal or bird is not placed under stress.

The following conditions refer equally to photographing from a hide or setting up a camera and equipment close to the subject area and operating the camera with a remote release. Where it reads "hide" it should be read to include cameras and equipment set up in this manner.

Any need to move vegetation should be minimal and at most only to tie back intruding foliage. Foliage is often a protection against predators, sun, rain and wind. Removing foliage reduces the protection and so chance of survival. Any foliage tied back must be returned immediately at the end of each photographic session.

The use of a hide should only be in areas where they are out of the general public's view. No hide should be left unattended in a place with any potential public access.

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It is important to check out the normal tracks taken by the subject before erecting a hide so as not to position it in the normal path of the animal.

It takes time for animals and birds to get used to hides. Hides therefore, should either be built over a period of time or erected some distance away and moved closer each day. After each change to the hide the photographer should retire to a safe distance and watch with binoculars. If any stage of the hide construction or its movement creates stress in the subject then the procedure should be reversed one stage or the hide should be removed completely.

Erecting hides close to nests that are being constructed, or when there are eggs in a nest should be avoided, as the chance of the bird abandoning its nest is greater than when there are chicks present. The time for acceptance of a hide is usually about one week.

Approaches to the hide should be devious and varied. It is important to minimize the chance of creating a track or scent trail to the hide. Not only does this encourage other people, but human scent may attract feral animals such as cats and foxes.

The nest, nesting hollow, eggs, chicks or other young should never be touched. The use of electronic flash needs careful consideration. The flash heads usually need to be well camouflaged and if when used the flash causes distraction to the animals, their use must be abandoned.

The use of recorded tapes, stuffed predators or other animals as baits of any kind is not acceptable. The use of any other bait is undesirable & should be restricted to situations where it does not put the subject at any risk. The capture of free animals & birds is in most cases illegal & should never be done for nature photography, unless it is for a particular documented scientific study & the relevant permits have been obtained.

### **3.2 INSECTS**

Insects should be photographed where they are found. Under no circumstances is it acceptable to restrict their movements by chilling in a refrigerator or using any chemical that has the same effect.

### **3.3 PLANTS**

Flowers should not be picked or plants dug up for nature photography in a studio set up. It is unacceptable to prune plants to improve the composition of the picture. The surrounds to the plant must be kept as close as possible to the original condition. Any repositioning of leaf or other litter should be kept to a minimum & replaced as soon as possible. Removing other living specimens to improve the resulting picture is not acceptable.

### **3.4 OTHER NATURAL FEATURES**

Damage to, moving or removal of any natural feature is not acceptable.

## **4. THE FINAL IMAGE**

Any nature picture should record the truth of what the photographer saw at the time the picture was taken. Subsequent manipulation in the darkroom or on a computer must ensure no radical changes. Additions or subtractions to the picture. It is however permissible to remove minor blemishes or distractions.

## **5. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The aim of this code of conduct is to prevent any damage to the environment and subjects being photographed, and so members of the Australian Photographic Society are expected to comply with it. Compliance will be assisted by taking time to study the subject to be photographed so as to ensure that it is not inadvertently placed at risk.

Where evidence of a serious and deliberate violation of this Code by an APS member is drawn to the attention of the Nature Division Council, it will refer the matter to the APS Management Committee.



## THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY PROMOTING THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

### THE NATURE GROUP CODE OF CONDUCT

Shortly after the Groups' formation it took over responsibility for 'The Nature Photographers' Code of Practice' which it revised in 1997 in conjunction with the RSPB and the three Statutory Nature Conservation Councils of England, Scotland and Wales.

### INTRODUCTION

Produced by The Nature Group of The Royal Photographic Society and revised 1997 in consultation with the RSPB and the three Statutory Nature Conservation Councils.

**THERE IS ONE HARD AND FAST RULE, WHOSE SPIRIT MUST BE OBSERVED AT ALL TIMES. THE WELFARE OF THE SUBJECT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PHOTOGRAPH.**

This is not to say that photography should not be undertaken because of a slight risk to a common species. The amount of risk acceptable decreases with the scarceness of the species & the photographer should do his utmost to minimise it. Risk to the subject, in this context, means risk of physical damage, causing anxiety, consequential predation, or lessened reproductive success.

The Law as it affects nature photography must be observed. For Great Britain the main legislation is listed at the end of this leaflet. In other countries one should find out in advance any restrictions that apply. Apparently lax (or absence of) local legislation should not lead photographers to relax their own high standard.

### GENERAL

The photographer should be familiar with the natural history of the subject; the more complex the life form & the rarer the species, the greater their knowledge must be. The photographer should also be sufficiently familiar with other natural history subjects to be able to avoid damaging their interests accidentally. Photography of uncommon animals & plants by people who know nothing of the hazards to species & site is to be deplored.

For many subjects some 'gardening' (i.e. interference with the surrounding vegetation) may be necessary to tidy the habitat, or move obscuring vegetation. This should be kept to a minimum to avoid exposing the subject to predators, people, or weather. Plants or branches should be tied back rather than cut off, and the site should be restored to as natural condition as possible after each photographic session. The photographer should always aim to leave no obvious sign of his visit. If the photograph of a rarity is to be published or exhibited care should be taken that the site location is not accidentally given away. Sites of rarities should never deliberately be disclosed except for conservation purposes.

It is important for the good name of nature photography that its practitioners observe normal social courtesies. Permission should be obtained before working on private land and other naturalists should not be incommoded. Work at sites and colonies, which are subjects of special study, should be co-ordinated with the people concerned.

Photographs of dead, stuffed, homebred, captive, cultivated, or otherwise controlled specimens may be of genuine value but should never be passed off as wild and free. Users of such photographs (irrespective of the purpose it is thought that they will be used for) should always be informed, however unlikely it may seem that they care.

### BIRDS AT THE NEST

The terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act must be observed and licences obtained to photograph Schedule 1 species from the appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Agency - see addresses at end.

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It is particularly important that photography of birds at the nest should be undertaken only by those with a good knowledge of bird breeding behaviour. There are many otherwise competent photographers (and bird watchers) who lack this qualification.

It is highly desirable that a scarce species should be photographed only in an area where it is relatively frequent. Many British rarities should, for preference, be photographed in countries overseas where they are commoner. Photographers working abroad should of course act with the same care as they would at home.

A hide should always be used when there is a reasonable doubt that birds would continue normal breeding behaviour otherwise. No part of the occupant (e.g. hands adjusting lens-settings, or a silhouette through inadequate material) should be visible from the outside of the hide. Hides should not be erected at a nest site where the attention of the public or any predator is likely to be attracted. If there is any risk of this, an assistant should be in the vicinity to shepherd away potential intruders. No hide should be left unattended in daylight in a place with common public access.

Tracks to and from any nest should be devious and inconspicuous. As far as possible they (like the 'gardening') should be restored to naturalness between sessions.

Though reported nest failures attributable to nest photography are few, a high proportion of those that occur are due to undue haste. The maximum possible time should elapse between consecutive stages of hide movement (or erection), introduction of lens or flash-gear, gardening and occupation. There are many species, which need at least a week's preparation; this should be seen as the norm.

Each stage of preparation should be fully accepted by the bird (or both birds, where feeding or incubation is shared) before the next is initiated. If a stage is refused by the birds (which should be evident from their behaviour to a competent bird photographer) the procedure should be reversed at least one stage; if refusal is repeated the attempt at photography should be abandoned.

In some conditions it may be necessary to use a marker in the locality of the nest hole to indicate its occupancy. This type of disturbance should be kept to a minimum. The period of disturbance caused by each stage should be kept to a minimum. It is undesirable to initiate a stage in late evening, when the birds' activities are becoming less frequent.

Remote-control work where acceptance cannot be checked is rarely satisfactory. Where it involves resetting a shutter, or moving film on manually between exposures it is even less likely to be acceptable because of the frequency of disturbance.

While the best photographs are often obtained about the time of hatch this is not the time to start erecting a hide - nor when eggs are fresh. It is better to wait till parents' reactions to the situation are firmly established.

There are few species for which a 'putter-in' & 'getter-out' are not necessary. Two or more may be needed for some species.

The birds' first visits to the nest after the hide is occupied are best used for checking routes and behaviour rather than for exposures. The quieter the shutter the less the chance of birds objecting to it. The longer the focal length of the lens used the more distant the hide can be and the less risk of the birds not accepting it.

Changes of photographer in the hide (or any other disturbance) should be kept to a minimum & should not take place during bad weather (rain or exceptionally hot sun). Nestlings should never be removed from the nest for posed photography; when they are photographed in situ, care should be taken not to cause an 'explosion' of young from the nest. It is never permissible to artificially restrict the free movement of the young.

The trapping of breeding birds for studio-type photography is totally unacceptable in any circumstances.

The use of playback tape (to stimulate territorial reactions) and the use of stuffed predators (to stimulate alarm reactions) may need caution in the breeding season, and should not be undertaken near the nest. Additionally the use of bait or song tapes to attract birds to the camera, even though this is away from the nest, should not be undertaken in an occupied breeding territory.

### **MAMMALS AND BIRDS AWAY FROM THE NEST**

Predators should not be baited from a hide in an area where hides may later be used for photography of birds at the nest. Wait and see photography should not be undertaken in an area where a hide may show irresponsible shooters and trappers that targets exist; this is particularly important overseas.

The capture of even non-breeding birds for photography under controlled conditions is not an acceptable or legal practice. Incidental photography of birds taken under licence for some valid scientific purpose is acceptable provided it causes minimal delay in the bird's release. If any extra delay is involved it would need to be covered by the terms of the licence.

Taking small mammals for photographic purposes is acceptable provided they are not breeding (either sex) and are released with minimum delay in their original habitats, but the practice is not recommended. No attempt should be made to tame any animal so taken as it jeopardises their survival. Hibernating animals should never be awakened for photography.

Bats need special care. Disturbance at or near a breeding colony of any bat may cause desertion of an otherwise safe site; all bats are specially protected and none may be disturbed or photographed in a roost except with a licence from the appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Council (see addresses at end). Bats are acutely sensitive to disturbance and there is evidence that important hibernation sites have been permanently deserted as a result of disturbance caused by photography. Licences to photograph are normally issued only to experienced bat workers.

### **SPECIALLY PROTECTED ANIMALS**

Threatened species such as Otters and Red Squirrels are given full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The restrictions on photographing these species at their places of shelter, in these cases holts and dreys, are exactly the same as those for nesting birds. Not all protected species have regular places of shelter; these include two reptiles, two amphibians and several very rare butterflies and moths. The best rule is, "if in doubt, don't". For example do not move objects in the habitat in search of smooth snakes to photograph.

No fully protected species may be taken from the wild without a licence, and taking means any form of capture including the use of butterfly nets.

Some further animals, included on Schedule 6 of the Act, are protected from trapping, and these include shrews, hedgehogs and pine martens. If you wish to trap these species in order to photograph them, you must apply for a licence.

### **OTHER ANIMALS**

For cold-blooded animals and invertebrates, temporary removal from the wild to a studio or vivarium (or aquarium) for photography has been a widely accepted practice, but where practicable field photographs are to be preferred. If the subject is removed from the wild for photography, it should be released as soon as possible in the original habitat.

It is illegal to take from the wild species listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, or take by means such as live-traps, species on Schedule 6. Insect photographers should be familiar with those species which may not be taken without a licence.

Chilling or anaesthesia for quietening invertebrates is not recommended. When microhabitats (e.g. tree-bark, beach rocks, etc.) have been disturbed, they should be restored after the photography. There should be

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no damage to habitat; any that does occur may be illegal on nature reserves, or SSSI's, even if the landowner has given permission.

### **PLANTS**

The comments in the general section about 'gardening' are particularly important for rare plants within reach of the public.

Photographers should be clear about existing legislation. It is an offence to uproot any wild plant without the permission of the landowner or his tenant. For over a hundred very threatened plants, including the rarest orchids, the law extends to picking, so any damage to surrounding vegetation, which may include young plants, must be avoided. If photography comes to be seen as a threat, rather than an aid, to rare plant conservation, pressures may mount for more restrictive legislation such as giving protected plants at flowering time similar protection to that enjoyed by Schedule 1 birds at nesting time.

No rarity should be picked (still less dug up) for studio photography, or to facilitate the in situ photography of another specimen. Nor should any part of one be removed to facilitate the photography of another plant.

### **THE TRUTH OF THE FINAL IMAGE**

A nature photograph should convey the essential truth of what the photographer saw at the time it was taken.

No radical changes should be made to the original photograph, nor additions from any source, whether during processing in the darkroom, or through digital/electronic manipulation. The removal of minor blemishes or distractions is permissible.

### **LEGISLATION AND SCHEDULES**

Photographers should be aware of the appropriate sections of the following and any subsequent "updates".

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992.
- The Butterfly Society Conservation Code.
- Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) list of rare plants and Code of Conduct.
- The RSPB leaflet "Bird Photography and the Law".
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994.

### **ADDRESSES**

#### **THE NATURE GROUP OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY**

The Octagon, Milsom Street,  
Bath, BA1 1DN. Tel: 01225-462841

#### **THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS**

The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL

#### **ENGLISH NATURE**

Northminster House, Peterborough, PE1 1UA.

#### **SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE**

2 Anderson Place, Edinburgh, EH6 5NP.

#### **COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

Plas Penrhos, Penrhos Road, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2LQ.