

SOUTHERN EXPOSURES PHOTO CONTEST INFORMATION AND RULES

Please read carefully!

The *Southern Exposures* Photo Contest ("SEPC") is sponsored and administered by the Valley Land Fund ("VLF"), a 501(c)(3) organization with a charitable mission to preserve, expand, and enhance the native wildlife habitat of South Texas through education, land ownership, and the creation of economic incentives.

BY ENTERING THIS COMPETITION, YOU AGREE TO THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

A. FOR ENTRANTS

1. WHO IS ELIGIBLE: SEPC is open to youth photographers who are between the ages 8 to 18 years old as of the beginning date of the Photo Contest and who have the consent of a parent or legal guardian. Photos must be the original art of the entrant. VLF reserves the right to verify, in its sole judgment, entrant eligibility.

2. HOW TO ENTER: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY, it's FREE! All entrants must complete a registration form, providing contact information. Entrants must agree to these rules by checking the appropriate box. Entrants can then begin uploading their images. Each photo must be entered into one of the eight categories (see below). Photographers may enter all images in a single category or select different categories for different photos. You do not need to upload all photos at once. You may return to your account page at any time by logging in with your user name and password.

3. CONTEST ENTRY PERIOD: SEPC opens at 12:01 am Central Standard Time (CST) on June 1, 2020 and the final date for submitting photos is September 30, 2020, at 11:59 pm Central Standard Time. To avoid uploading delays, do not wait until the final days of the contest to enter. In past years, the large number of entrants trying to upload their photos just prior to the final deadline caused technical problems that left them unable to enter. VLF anticipates notifying winners by mid-October 2020 and will be posted on the VLF website. VLF may modify the contest entry period at its sole discretion.

4. PHOTO ENTRY INFORMATION: All photos must have complete information attached, including their subjects, dates, locations and any digital adjustments made to the image. The judges use this information to help them select the winners. Not providing full information may disqualify your entry by the judges.

5. ELIGIBILITY OF PHOTOS: All photographs must have been taken by entrant between the dates of August 1, 2019 and the time of entry. Photographers are allowed to submit up to eight (8) photos in total and allowed to submit more than one photo in any category. Pictures may be of any aspect of nature within the eight (8) counties of South Texas: Brooks, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Kenedy, Starr, Willacy and Zapata. Respect for animal habitat must be observed. No photos of domestic, restrained, or caged animals will be accepted.

6. WHAT PHOTOS TO ENTER: We are looking for striking color images of nature—on land or in the air—from anywhere in South Texas. These images may show animal behavior, portraits of wildlife in natural habitats, plant life, natural landscapes, or patterns in nature. DO NOT include photographs of pets, domestic animals, captive animals at game farms or roadside zoos, or animals from such facilities photographed elsewhere with handler's control. Such images will be disqualified.

7. ETHICS: Valley Land Fund requires all participants to use extreme caution to protect the survival of the subject being photographed. Photographers should make every effort to avoid any action that might interfere with natural wildlife behavior. Contest entrants must not submit images that involve the willful harassment of wildlife or damage to the environment.

8. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: Only digitally uploaded images can be entered. Mailed or shipped entries will not be accepted. Entrants encountering technical problems while uploading may contact (956) 686-6429 or email debralee@valleylandfund.com.

Camera-made digital images must be uploaded as jpg files. Photos must be at least 2,400 pixels on the long side. Larger images are acceptable and may improve your photos' quality. There is a maximum file size of 10 megabytes per image.

Photos should be sized approximately 10" x 15" at 300 dpi, or set on the camera's highest resolution. All photographs should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appeared. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization will be disqualified. Acceptable alterations include adjustments to color, contrast, brightness and sharpness; removal of dust and scratches; cropping (DO NOT CROP SQUARE).

9. CATEGORIES: Photographers must enter each image in one of the following categories. The same photo cannot be entered in more than one category. Judges reserve the right to switch images to other categories.

i. **Mammals:** Rabbits and Bobcats and Deer, oh my! We want to see mammals found in the wild throughout South Texas looking their best.

ii. **Birds:** Flying, perching, standing, swimming or hunting – send us your best bird shots!

iii. **All Other Wildlife:** Reptiles, Amphibians, Insects, Arachnids and more that have their niches in our unique ecosystem of South Texas.

iv. **Scapes:** Scenic views (water and/or land) highlighting the beauty of the outdoors.

v. **Botanical:** Anything plant – trees, shrubs, plants flowers, cacti and more; find something unusual.

vi. **Patterns in Nature:** Find patterns by walking around your yard, a park, a garden or anywhere else. Patterns can be seen in trees, plants and flowers, as well as spirals, cracks, stripes and many more.

vii. **Farm & Ranch:** Drive down county roads to find ranches that show the best of our land. Look for ways that people use the land: raising crops, raising cattle, working the land, and so much more.

viii. **Mobile (NEW CATEGORY):** Anything natural works here, and anyone can do this! Take photos of natural subjects with your cell phone! Wildlife does not need to be present in this category.

10. LABELING/PHOTO DESCRIPTION: Each photograph will need to be clearly labeled with the division, category, last name, and first name. File names should look as followed. **Example: John Smith, age 11, took picture in Hidalgo county, entering the Mammals category would label file as: D1_Mammal_Smith_John.jpg**

Please use the following labels for the categories:

CATEGORY	FILE LABEL NAME	CATEGORY	FILE LABEL NAME
MAMMALS	Mammals	BOTANICAL	Botanical
BIRDS	Birds	FARM & RANCH	Land
ALL OTHER WILDLIFE	Other	PATTERNS IN NATURE	Patterns
SCAPES	Scapes	MOBILE	Mobile

11. JUDGING: Photographs will be judged on originality, technical excellence, composition, overall impact and artistic merit. Judges include professional nature photographers, photo editors, photography consultants and other experienced in photo selection. All decisions by the judges will be final and binding.

12. AWARDS AND PRIZES: One Grand Prize, two Best Portfolio, sixteen First Place prizes, sixteen Second Place prizes and sixteen Third Place prizes will be awarded as listed below. All amounts are in U.S. dollars. VLF will also award Honorable Mentions from the finalists as the judges deem appropriate. All Winners and Honorable Mentions will appear on VLF's website. The winners will be notified by email.

- i. **Grand Prize: One winner: Cash Prize of \$250.**
- ii. **Best Portfolio: Two winners (one for each division): Cash Prize of \$100.**
- iii. **First Place: One for each category (eight total): Cash Prize of \$50.**
- iv. **Second Place: One for each category (eight total): Cash Prize of \$25.**
- v. **Third Place: One for each category (eight total): Cash Prize of \$10.**

Honorable Mentions: Each will receive a *Valley Land Fund coffee table book showcasing the incredible wildlife of the Rio Grande Valley.*

13. BINDING AGREEMENT: In order to enter the SEPC, Entrant must agree to these Official Rules ("Rules"). Because these Rules form a legally binding agreement with respect to this Contest, please read them carefully. If Entrant does not agree to the Rules, Entrant is not eligible to participate in the SEPC or to win any of the prizes. Entrant agrees that his/her registration as an individual participant under the SEPC constitutes his/her agreement to these Rules.

14. OWNERSHIP & USE OF IMGES: Entrants retain ownership and all other rights to future use of the photographs they enter. In addition, entry to the contest constitutes your agreement to all your entered photographs to be used for promotion by the VLF for their purposes, including, but not limited to, production of brochures, promotion of future contests, public relations, advertising, education, books, traveling photo gallery and other media, without compensation.

15. DISQUALIFICATION: Violation of any of these rules or federal, state or local laws by any photographer will result in disqualification and forfeiture of all prize money.

- Entry does not follow rules or category guidelines
- Extremely poor quality (resolution)
- Photography too small in size to be evaluated
- Inappropriate or unsuitable
- Manipulation of photo beyond what is allowed
- Photo is not the work of the child
- Broken content rule and/or broken copyright rule

16. HOW TO CONTACT US: Questions and inquiries regarding contest rules or technical matters, including problems uploading photos contact (956) 686-6429 or debralee@valleylandfund.com