



GRAND PRIZE WILDLIFE IN NORTH CAROLINA 2013 PHOTO COMPETITION

"I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree." "Trees," Joyce Kilmer.

It may not be a poem, but Paul Malcolm's picture of a tree was deemed most lovely in the 2013 Wildlife in North Carolina Photo Competition. It beat out over 1,300 other entries to take top prize. Malcolm also proved that one doesn't have to be a grizzled photography veteran to win.

"I fell in love with photography in 2005 when I got my first digital camera," said Malcolm, a Garner resident. "I read everything I could on the subject because I wanted to improve my skills. Over the years I have gone from one camera to the next until I finally have the camera of my dreams. Well, almost."

Malcolm plays viola in the North Carolina Symphony, and his wife, Lisa, is also a musician. "We travel around North Carolina playing concerts from Manteo to Murphy," he said. "I see a lot of this state, and I usually take my camera when we have a little free time between concerts. North Carolina is a beautiful state and I never fail to find something to photograph."

Malcolm, 58, said that he has four adult daughters who are more interested in music than photography, but they do appreciate his pictures. Previously, Malcolm won the Wild Landscapes category in 2010. "I think a good photographer has to be creative," Malcolm said. "When I take a picture, I am not documenting a scene; I am capturing a mood or feeling. I am looking for some creative way to express what I see and feel about the subject. Music and photography are both creative passions. In a concert I get involved emotionally. In photography, I get involved simply because I enjoy taking pictures!"

Marsha Tillett, art director for *Wildlife in North Carolina* and a judge for the contest, weighed in on the winner. "Each year the *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine staff really enjoys going through all the images that people submit for the competition," said Tillett. "We have so many great photographers and I love looking at our wonderful state through their lenses. This year's grand prize winner used such an interesting perspective to photograph the oak trees. The colors and angle really caught all of the judges' attentions, and the sunburst peaking through the tree canopy provides a great focal point."

This was the second year the competition was open only to subscribers (for adults), and we had 1,235 submissions in the following categories: Animal Behavior, 176; Birds, 223; Invertebrates, 179; Mammals, 140; Outdoor Recreation, 102; Reptiles & Amphibians, 125; Wild Landscapes, 160; Wild Plants, 126; Youth 12 & Under, 31; and Youth 13–17, 51. It should be noted that two entries with a chance to place in their categories were disqualified for obvious electronic manipulation.

The four other judges for the contest were staff graphic designers Katie Parland and Bryant Cole and staff photographer Melissa McGaw. Mike Dunn, retired senior manager of outreach at the N.C. Museum of Natural History, rounded out the judging crew. All winning photographs may be seen on exhibit through March at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh.

–Mike Zlotnicki



Paul Malcolm, Garner
Oak trees, Fort Fisher

This photo was taken under the live oak trees at the Fort Fisher historic site near Wilmington. It took me several attempts to line up the sun partially behind the tree limbs so as to get the sunburst. Also, trying to do anything on a tripod with the camera pointing straight up is always difficult without an articulating LCD screen. I think it adds an additional element of interest in a photograph to get a sunburst in the shot, so in the future I will forget the tripod and just lie on the ground with the camera up to my eye and line things up that way.

(Canon 5D Mark III, Canon f/2.8L II 16–35mm at 16mm, ISO 100, f/22, 1/13 of a second)



BIRDS FIRST PLACE

Charles English, Wilmington
Belted kingfisher, Wrightsville Beach

The kingfisher was taken at a creek close to Wrightsville Beach. I have been here many times photographing the kingfisher but today it was raining and overcast and the light was constant. I got in the blind out of the rain about 8 a.m. I knew it would land on the stick around 8:30, as it does about the same time every day. Sure enough, he landed on the stick. I looked at my watch and said to myself, "you're a little late today, bud." It was 8:35 a.m.

(Canon 1D IV, 500mm f/4 with a 1.4 teleconverter, ISO 400, f/6.3, 1/400 of a second, manual mode)

BIRDS SECOND PLACE

Monte Combs, Wilkesboro
Ruby-throated hummingbird, Wilkesboro

This young male ruby-throated hummingbird flew into one of our windows in our log house while chasing and/or fighting another hummer. I picked it up and placed it on one of our logs on a corner. Fortunately it was only dazed and flew off in about 15 minutes. I just wish that my friend, Dwayne Martin from Riverbend Park in Catawba County (one of two official hummingbird banders in North Carolina) could have banded the little fellow so I might have been able to see if he made it back this year.

(Canon 5D, Canon 100mm Macro, ISO 400, f/2.8, 1/60 of a second)



BIRDS THIRD PLACE

Mickey Moten, Kings Mountain
Ruby-throated hummingbird, Kings Mountain

Hummingbirds are such amazing creatures and among my favorite subjects to photograph. For this photo, I was staying as motionless as possible near one of my feeders. As the female ruby-throated hummingbird approached and hovered, I got this shot from roughly 4 to 5 feet away. The background in the photo was my driveway.

(Panasonic FZ-100, 108mm (600mm equivalent), ISO 100, f/5.2, 1/320 of a second, handheld in natural light)





MAMMALS FIRST PLACE

Tyler Bailey, Raleigh

Squirrel close-up, Grandfather Mountain

Whilst photographing birds from the viewing platform above the Grandfather Mountain Nature Museum, this squirrel climbed onto the railing nearby to munch on some sunflower kernels. Completely indifferent to everything but his food, I was able to get close to him and capture this image.

(Nikon D5100, Nikon 55–200mm at 200mm, ISO 400, f/5.6, 1/125 of a second)



MAMMALS SECOND PLACE

Jim Ruff, Blowing Rock

White-tailed deer, near Blowing Rock

Four bucks and two does are silhouetted in the early morning glow of a foggy September morning on the Blue Ridge Parkway near Blowing Rock. There were actually five bucks in the field but the shy fifth one didn't want to be included in the photo.

(Canon 7D, 500mm f/4 lens, ISO 400, f/4.5, 1/125 of a second, Gitzo tripod with Wimberley Gimbal head)

MAMMALS THIRD PLACE

Gene Furr, Raleigh

Gray fox, Brunswick County

I was traveling in Brunswick County during early spring when I crossed a bridge and noticed a gray fox in a tree to my right. He was so focused on searching for prey and he didn't notice me. It gave me enough time to capture his image. He still had his beautiful winter coat of gray and red. The lighting was a soft, diffused day which gave me beautiful soft colors.

(Nikon D300, 300mm with a 1.4 extender at 420mm, ISO 440, f/5.6, 1/250 of a second)





REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS FIRST PLACE

Joe Congleton, Clayton
Anole, Clayton

I just happened to be near the hose on the side of the house and saw this little green "lizard" (I did not know it was technically called an anole until later). I thought he was interesting to look at, and since he did not seem too shy I thought I had a chance at getting a picture of him for fun. At the time I never thought it might turn out to be a winning photo!

(Nikon Coolpix 500, 6.7mm, ISO 180, f/4, 1/320, Scene Mode: Close Up)

**REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS
SECOND PLACE**

Charles English, Wilmington
Yellowbelly slider, Wilmington

The image was taken at Airlie Gardens. While I was waiting for some flight shots I looked down and saw this turtle stick his head up out of the water. The water was milk glass and I noticed how the beautiful color was being reflected from the turtle and the sky.

(Canon 1D IV, 300mm/2.8 with a 1.4 tele-converter, ISO 800, f/5, 1/2,000 of a second)



**REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS
THIRD PLACE**

Catherine McEntee, Hampstead
Anole, Hampstead

I took this photo on a balmy day in early April. I had just put some mealworms in a dish for some Carolina wrens and set the container of worms on a table on the porch while I did some gardening. I noticed this very hungry green anole poking the clear container trying unsuccessfully to get a worm. I let a couple worms out of the container, and I got the shot.

(Nikon D7100, Sigma 150mm macro lens, ISO 1000, f/8, 1/1,000 of a second)





INVERTEBRATES FIRST PLACE

Stephen Atkins, Weaverville

Virginia tiger moth, Weaverville

My kids were asking me a lot about moths and butterflies this summer. We left the porch lights on overnight a few nights in a row to see what kinds would appear and we would take pictures in the morning and try and identify them with a field guide. I was able to answer most of the typical questions you would expect from a 4- and 7- year old: “What do the caterpillars eat?” “What’s the difference between moths and butterflies?” Then my daughter stumped me. “Daddy,” she asked, “if moths like to fly around lights so much why don’t they just come out in the daytime?”

(Nikon D800 Sigma 150mm 2.8 macro lens, ISO 800, f/22, 1/60 of a second, manual exposure, manual focus)

INVERTEBRATES SECOND PLACE

Karen Doody, Morehead City

Halloween pennant on reed, Morehead City

I love it when I go out to shoot something specific and nature offers up something entirely unexpected. My goal that morning was to photograph some flowering plants I had seen blooming in a storm water retention pond nearby. When I approached the edge of the bank I was amazed at the sheer number and variety of dragonflies all around me. I quickly ran back to the car, switched lenses and started shooting. The light was soft and the pond vegetation offered a perfect backdrop to these jeweled beauties.

(Nikon D600, Nikkor 70–200mm f/2.8 +2.0 teleconverter (shot at 400mm), ISO 200, f/5.6, 1/160 of a second)



INVERTEBRATES THIRD PLACE

Wick Smith, Fayetteville

Starfish and skate egg cases, Cape Hatteras

This image was taken at Cape Point—Cape Hatteras. These starfish and skate egg cases were washed up in the surf. It made for a great foreground with the incoming tide. Being January, it was very cold on the beach. Getting the shot as the waves rolled in was tough. Just after the shutter closed on each attempted shot, I had to snatch the camera and tripod away before getting wet. I wanted to get the wave action washing in to give the image a surreal appearance.

(Canon 5D II, Canon 24mm T/SE lens, ISO 160, f/11, 1.3 second exposure, variable neutral density filter to slow down the shutter speed)





WILD PLANTS FIRST PLACE

Jim Ruff, Blowing Rock

Rhododendron, Blue Ridge Parkway

This image was taken late May on the Craggy Pinnacle Trail on the Blue Ridge Parkway. I wanted to capture the beauty of that trail when the Catawba rhododendrons were actually near or past peak. On my third visit, I arrived in late afternoon just as a major thunderstorm was passing through the mountains. After a three-hour wait and as it was nearing darkness, I went back up the trail: blooms on the bushes, fallen petals on the path, fog and a reflecting pool as a bonus. In nature photography, patience is a plus.

(Canon 7D, 24-105 mm f/4 lens at 47 mm, ISO 100, f/16, 10 second exposure, Gitzo tripod)

**WILD PLANTS
SECOND PLACE**

John Althouse, Jacksonville

Toad flax, Swansboro

This scene was taken in Swansboro. I enjoy photographing flowers in this manner for the shallow depth of field which enhances the subject.

(Canon 5D Mark III, Canon EF 300mm/2.8, ISO 200, f/2.8, 1/1,000 of a second)



**WILD PLANTS
THIRD PLACE**

Sharon Canter, High Point

Bald cypress trees, Lake Mattamuskeet

Early morning light accentuates the bald cypress trees and especially their “knees” along the shore of Lake Mattamuskeet near Fairfield. I shot this image in December while standing in the mud in about one foot of water. I was hoping to “smooth the water a bit” with the longer exposure.

(Nikon D300s, Nikkor 18–200mm, ISO 100, f/22, 1/6 of a second)





OUTDOOR RECREATION FIRST PLACE

Ed Ziegler, Raleigh

Beach at sunrise, Emerald Isle

When at the beach, I make it a point to get out around 45 minutes before sunrise to greet the day, and attempt to document what I see with a camera, usually from the deck of the beach house. This particular morning produced some glorious colors and offered a unique opportunity. Three features make this photo special to me. The person fishing was using a lantern on the beach. She somehow managed to stay still for 15 seconds. Lastly, no one else entered the frame. All quite rare. The result was exactly what I hoped to achieve.

(Canon 1D Mark III, Canon EF 70–200mm f/2.8L at 200mm, ISO 50, f/20, 1/15 of a second)

**OUTDOOR RECREATION
SECOND PLACE**

Ashley McNeely, Winston-Salem

Blue Ridge campsite, Rich Mountain

The balds along the Blue Ridge Mountains are very special places. I took this photo on a short overnight camping trip this past spring to the Rich Mountain bald outside of Boone. I had scouted out a camp spot down below the bald a couple of days earlier, but when I got to the top and the winds were unusually calm I decided to camp out on the exposed field. I was able to set up camp just before the sun set and capture some great shots of the sun's colorful descent.

(Canon EOS Rebel T3i, Tokina 11–16mm 4/2.8 at 11mm, ISO: 100, f/5.6, 1/125 of a second)



**OUTDOOR RECREATION
THIRD PLACE**

Kirk Pullen, Warsaw

Surf photographers, Buxton

I took this shot on Thanksgiving weekend of 2012 when I went to watch the massive 15-foot waves at the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse in Buxton. I stood there for about half an hour just mesmerized by how big the waves really were and that surfers were taking them on. I then realized the sun was setting and was amazed at how many people watching on the beach were taking pictures. It is rare to see surf this size and this many people with 300–400mm lenses taking pictures of the surf. I found a great angle and composed the shot so the lighthouse was between them.

(Nikon D700, 70–200mm VR II lens at 135mm, ISO 250, f/20, 1/640 of a second)





WILD LANDSCAPES FIRST PLACE

Jim Ruff, Blowing Rock

Price Lake, Blue Ridge Parkway

A mid-October sunrise on Price Lake located at MP 297 on the Blue Ridge Parkway near Blowing Rock. The brilliant colors of fall, a misty fog blanketing the lake and a colorful and mystic sky all produce a beautiful blend.

(Canon 5DIII mm 17–40 mm f/4 lens at 21mm, ISO 100, f/16, 1 second exposure, Gitzo tripod with Kirk bullhead)

WILD LANDSCAPES SECOND PLACE

Sharon Canter, High Point

Atlantic Ocean, Cape Hatteras

On a blustery January morning with winds gusting between 23 and 33 miles per hour, my husband and I drove to The Point at Hatteras on the Outer Banks. Two major Atlantic Ocean currents (Labrador and Florida currents) collide just off Cape Hatteras, and the mixing of the warm and cold currents along with the winter winds often create turbulent water. I enjoyed anticipating and photographing the collision of the waves for quite a while on that morning.

(Nikon D300s, Nikkor 18–200mm lens, ISO 500, f/16, 1/400 of a second)



WILD LANDSCAPES THIRD PLACE

Cindy Yount, Morehead City

Barden Inlet, Shackleford Banks

This unique perspective of the east end of Shackleford Banks was shot during an airplane excursion; courtesy of my husband for an anniversary gift. The Banks, lovingly known as “Shack” to the locals, is home to a herd of feral horses. The wild horses, along with the beautiful water and white sand are local attractions that attract tourists from all over our state. Shackleford Banks is part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore.

(Nikon D7000; 35mm lens, ISO 100, f/5.6, 1/125 of a second)





ANIMAL BEHAVIOR FIRST PLACE

Kim Hawks, Chapel Hill

Turtle tracks, Bald Head Island

I've always wanted to see baby turtles hatching and running to the sea. I was at Bald Head Island doing a weekend photography workshop with David Blevins. It was summer solstice. The Bald Head Island Conservancy folks were monitoring turtle activity. I was hopeful. We showed up at the beach in the dark, shortly before sunrise. David found the tracks. I was in amazement. What big feet they have! I never saw a turtle, but this made my day.

(Canon EOS 50D, 16mm focal length, ISO 400, f/19, 1 second exposure)



**ANIMAL BEHAVIOR
SECOND PLACE**

Stephen Atkins, Weaverville

Tail of timber rattlesnake, Dupont State Forest

When going to visit friend and naturalist Steve O'Neil from Earthshine Nature Programs in Brevard to track two timber rattlesnakes he has been studying and monitoring with radio transmitters for the past few years, he called me before I made it to Earthshine. "Hey, I just got a call from a neighbor who found a black rattlesnake in his barn, do you want to help me rescue it before someone cuts its head off?" "Of course!" I replied. Some rattlesnakes, I would even say most that I have met, are very calm, docile creatures that thankfully are equipped with a nice alarm system to let you know if they feel you have gotten too close. (I wish bees had rattles!) This guy was no exception, he didn't even buzz his rattle until we disturbed him with the snake hook to get him into the locking bucket.

(Nikon D800, Sigma 150 2.8 macro lens, ISO 200, f/6.3, 1/400 of a second, manual exposure, manual focus)

**ANIMAL BEHAVIOR
THIRD PLACE**

Christopher Chao, Raleigh

Red-tailed hawk, Raleigh

On a winter morning, I went to Schenck Forest to photograph birds. I was totally surprised by this red-tailed hawk which flew in out of nowhere to grab its prey, all within 20 feet of where I was standing. It then flew to a fence post which allowed me a brief window of time to set up and capture this photo.

(Canon 5D Mark III, Canon 800mm L, ISO 1250, f/5.6, 1/800 of a second, Manfrotto monopod)





**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 13-17
FIRST PLACE**

Lucas Bobay, Holly Springs
Jumping spider, Holly Springs

Jumping spiders are one of my favorite photography subjects, but they are also among the most challenging. I decided to try my luck in my backyard and after a few minutes' search I found a spider. A slight breeze and its nonstop activity made focusing difficult, but eventually I managed to get a sharp image.

(Canon EOS 7D, Canon 100mm f/2.8 Macro Lens, ISO 320, f/9, 1/160 of a second, Manual Mode, built-in flash)

**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 13-17
SECOND PLACE**

Jacob Thomas, Waxhaw
Honeybee, Waxhaw

I am always in search of images that reflect the day-to-day things we take for granted. At the time I came across this bee I was struck by the irony of how the bee was focused on working, and how I was only enjoying a favorite past time of mine while trying to get out of my own work. After snapping this photograph I was amazed by the clarity of the image and the vividness of the color.

(Nikon D5200, Nikon VR 55-300mm at 170mm, ISO 200, f/6.3, 1/640 of a second)



**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 13-17
THIRD PLACE**

Morgan Latham, Apex
Great spangled fritillary, Surry County

"This picture was taken on our family's farm in Surry County," said Lee Latham, father of Morgan. Every August the field thistle bushes bloom and attract thousands of butterflies. Morgan, 14, spent the morning taking hundreds of pictures but this is the only one she was able to capture with this unique orange butterfly. Morgan says she "really likes the color contrast between the orange butterfly, the purple flower and the green background."

(Nikon D7100, Nikon AF-S 70-200 f/2.8 ED VR II at 200mm, ISO 400, f/8, 1/250 of a second)





YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 13–17
HONORABLE MENTION

Stefan Romeo, Statesville
Cape Hatteras Fishing Pier, Frisco

While walking along the Frisco beach from Cape Hatteras, the sun was just starting to set over the horizon. By the time I got to the pier, the sun was just over the horizon so I quickly set up my tripod and captured this three-second exposure of the abandoned and dilapidated Frisco pier with the sun just over the horizon on the notoriously windy and sandy Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

(Nikon D3100, Nikkor 18–55mm at 18mm, ISO 200, f/9, three-second exposure)



YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 13–17
HONORABLE MENTION

Kendall Wiggins, Gibsonville
Eastern screech owl, Huntersville

Last April, I had the chance to photograph raptors at the Carolina Raptor Center in Huntersville. Throughout my day there, I saw eagles, falcons and hawks up-close, but owls quickly became my favorite subjects. This is Akai, an Eastern screech owl under the permanent care of the Carolina Raptor Center. Despite his small size, he can screech loudly, making the name of his species accurate. As I crept closer to Akai, he stared back at me inquisitively. In this photograph, his squinted eyes make him appear skeptical. Animals can seemingly show emotion through their facial expressions just as humans can!

(Olympus SP600UZ, 75mm, ISO 400, F/5.4, 1/125 of a second)



YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 13–17
HONORABLE MENTION

Lucas Bobay, Holly Springs
Red-tailed hawk, Raleigh

Early one morning in December, I drove out to Schenck Forest for some birding. I had just stepped out of my car when this red-tailed hawk landed in a tree above me. I pulled out my camera, figuring I would snap a few quick shots and move on. Much to my surprise, this hawk flew down onto a fencepost just feet from where I was standing. It was so close I had to step back to get the entire bird in the frame!

(Canon EOS 7D, Canon 400mm f/5.6 lens, ISO 500, f/5.6, 1/1,600 of a second, Manual Mode)



YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 12 & UNDER
FIRST PLACE

Darci Burger, Macon
Fowler's toad, Lake Gaston

One morning, I went out on the boardwalk that leads to the lake. It had just rained that night. As I was looking down I saw a tiny frog sitting on the wet boardwalk. I went back inside to get my sister to take a picture, but she was too tired and so she let me use her camera. I went back out and got to the frog's ground level and took a picture.

(Canon EOS RebelT2i, Canon 55–250mm lens, ISO: 2000, f/6.3, 1/400 of a second)



**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 12 & UNDER
SECOND PLACE**

Brooke Schaffer, Clemmons
Mushroom, Clemmons

Most people would not want mushrooms in their yard but it actually made for a great photo opportunity for me. Before I got my camera under the mushroom I was just taking pictures of the top of the mushroom. Then I thought to get on my hands and knees and turn my lens upward inside the mushroom. That day was really sunny so I am guessing that is the reason for my picture being bright and also my camera is blue so the blue in my picture I believe was a reflection from on my camera.

(Canon Power Shot A2300, 5mm, ISO 400, f/2.8, 1/50 of a second, No flash, Auto)



**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 12 & UNDER
THIRD PLACE**

Gavin Mortenson, Summerfield
Praying mantis, Greensboro

I got the picture of the praying mantis at the Greensboro Grasshoppers stadium (Newbridge Bank Park) on the net behind the fence. We have season tickets and I often sit waiting for home-run balls. I sometimes turn around to take in the surroundings or take pictures of the Marriott or something flying in the sky. I walked over to the net and looked up. The praying mantis scared me a little bit because I looked up expecting to see a bird of some sort: there was the praying mantis about 5 feet away. I already had my camera out and I snapped the picture.

(Canon SX50 HS, 46mm, ISO 1,600, f/15.6, 1/15 of a second)



**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 12 & UNDER
HONORABLE MENTION**

Emma Halstead, Walkertown
Honeybee, Walkertown

I enjoy photographing wildlife around our house and entering photography competitions. It is a honeybee that was collecting a lot of pollen in the flowerbeds. I took this photo with my mother's Nikon D3100.

(Nikon D3100, Nikkor 85mm, ISO 800, f/7.1, 1/800 of a second)



**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 12 & UNDER
HONORABLE MENTION**

Kristen Forney, Raleigh
Cope's gray tree frog, Raleigh

This frog I found one bright and sunny day in one of our outbuildings on a lid. Because the lighting in the building was not good enough for a picture, I picked up the lid and brought it outside. He posed for me staring right at the camera for about five minutes. I love how he had his toes spread out in front of him and in back so I could capture the whole body. I ended up getting several good pictures of him before he hopped off. I am so happy that it won honorable mention!

(Canon PowerShot SX130 IS, 5–60 mm zoom at 6.4mm, ISO: 80, f/3.5, 1/60 of a second)



**YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHER 12 & UNDER
HONORABLE MENTION**

Addison Latham, Apex
American robin, Apex

This robin family built a nest outside a window on the second floor of our home. Addison's dad built a makeshift blind using a bed sheet with a small hole to stick the lens through so as not to disturb the nest. Over the course of several weeks, Addison took literally thousands of images as she learned how to use her dad's camera. Feeding times were Addison's favorite, and she was fortunate to capture this picture of an adult arriving with a big meal for its hungry babies.

(Nikon D7000, Nikon AF-S 70–200mm f/2.8 ED VR II with TC-17E at 240mm, ISO 200, f/5, 1/160 of a second)