

PSA Nature Definition  
(Revised 2009.)

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 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. (However when present, the human elements should be included only to minimum extent necessary to complete the 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.

No elements may be moved, cloned, added, deleted, rearranged or combined. No manipulation or modification is permitted except resizing, sharpening, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, and restoration of original color to the scene. No special effects filters can be applied. Any adjustments must appear natural. (See Basic digital guidelines below.)

This definition does not limit nature photography to Wildlife subjects. Scenics, zoo shots and game farm shots are fair game for the Nature Photographer.

Authentic wildlife is defined as one or more organism, living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Therefore, photographs of zoo and game farm animals, as well as images taken in aquariums and water parks of any sort, are not eligible for Wildlife competitions.

Baiting (providing food) for any Nature subject is a generally acceptance practice, to a limited degree. However, the use of live creatures or carcasses for the purpose of capturing images is considered unacceptable and may be the cause for disqualification.

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Basic digital guidelines applicable to Nature images: No elements may be moved, cloned, added, deleted, rearranged, combined or changed in any way that affects the integrity of the image content. No manipulation or modification is permitted except resizing, cropping, horizontal flipping (equivalent to reversing a slide), selective lightening or darkening, and restoration of original color of the scene. No special effect filters can be added or applied, and any sharpening must appear natural. The use of multiple images is permitted.

Image adjustments allowed in Nature competitions are as follows:

- 1) Exposure adjustment.
- 2) White balance/color correction.
- 3) Adjust highlight and shadow detail.
- 4) Adjust contrast.
- 5) Adjust saturation.
- 6) Dust spot removal.
- 7) Noise removal.
- 8) Flare removal.
- 9) Cropping.
- 10) Resizing.
- 11) Straightening.
- 12) Reversing (flipping horizontal).

All adjustments must look natural to be successful.