



Nature/Wildlife Rules

Leah Gray, FCAPA, PPSA, SPSA, EFIAP



CAPA Nature Rules for Competitions

(from the CAPA website)

- **Botanical** – wild plants in their natural environment. No hybrids or cultivated plants.
- **Landscape** – no hand of man (cut trees, power lines, roads etc.)



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CAPA Nature Rules for Competitions

(from the CAPA website)

- **Nature** such as living animals (including arthropods, spiders and crustaceans), birds and marine subjects, which are living under the unobvious control and feeding of humans in situations such as zoos, game farms, animal reserves, and/or aquariums, etc.



CAPA Nature Rules for Competitions

(from the CAPA website)

- **No domestic or feral** animals/birds are permitted in this theme. Domestic and feral animals include, but are not limited to camels, cats, chickens, dogs, donkeys, goats, horses, rabbits, pigs, rock doves, sheep, starlings, and water buffalo.



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CAPA Nature Rules for Competitions

(from the CAPA website)

- **NATURE:** “Hand-of-man” elements must not appear in the image unless they are essential to the nature story. When present, these human elements must occupy no more than 10% of the image area.

NOTE: Exceeding the 10% limit is grounds for disqualification.



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FIAP clarification

- **Human-made elements** shall be permitted under the following circumstances:
 - When they are an integral part of the nature story, such as a songbird singing atop a fence post a manmade object used as nest material, or a weather phenomenon destroying a man-made structure.
 - When they are a small but unavoidable part of the scene, such as an unobtrusive footprint or track in the background.
- **Must convey the truth of the scene** (PSA and FIAP). A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that no unethical practices have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity threatening a living organism's life or welfare are not allowed.



CAPA Wildlife Rules

Wildlife – in addition to nature rules

- Living and untamed wildlife mammals, birds and marine subjects ONLY. Wildlife subjects for this theme must be living free and cannot be living in traditional zoos, open-range zoos, game farms or other areas where they are under the care of man, restrained and/or confined. For this theme, nature parks are considered natural environments because the animals are not in “controlled conditions”.
- Scientific bands, tags or radio collars, are permitted
- No domestic or feral animals/birds are permitted in this theme. Domestic and feral animals include, but are not limited to camels, cats, chickens, dogs, donkeys, goats, horses, rabbits, pigs, rock doves, sheep, starlings, and water buffalo.
- **No “Hand-of-Man”** elements is permitted in the Wildlife theme.
- Wildlife images can also be entered into the Nature theme.

CAPA Wildlife Rules – Ethics

- **Ethics:**

- To promote responsible photographing of species, entrants:
- Must not do anything to injure or distress any animals or destroy their habitat in an attempt to secure an image.
- Must maintain an appropriate distance from an active nest, and in most cases, avoid them entirely.
- Must not bait. The baiting of wildlife should be avoided as it may have long-term impacts.
- Must not intentionally spook or frighten any form of wildlife. Must not cause stress to wildlife by getting too close.
- Should learn about the species' behaviour and the ecology of the area.
- Use appropriate lenses and techniques that minimize stress.
- Should be a naturalist as well as a nature photographer
- Should be especially careful and respectful when photographing “species-at-risk” and threatened species consider avoiding the photography of “species-at-risk”.
- The Canadian federal Species At Risk Act – Schedule 1 provides a listing of “species-at-risk”. The Act also outlines that it is an offence to kill, harm or harass a “species-at-risk”. Reference material: Audubon’s Guide to Ethical Bird Photography.



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Nature/Wildlife Processing

- <https://capacanada.ca/2026-nature-wildlife-competition-individual/>
- Cropping, HDR, focus stacking, dodging and burning (lightening and darkening), removal of dust, noise, film scratches, panoramas (confirmed via email).
- No adding/deleting
- Cannot dramatically changed the image's mood or perception (*do not black out the background – Leah*)
- No frames/borders etc.
- No A.I. see the “Safe and Flagged Tools” on the CAPA website
<https://capacanada.ca/ai-summary-safe-flagged-tools/>
- No vignettes (not natural)
- Cannot blur background
- *Can* convert to greyscale
- No partial toning

Short Rules for Nature/Wildlife

- Must look natural
- Generally, no “hand of man” – definitely not in Wildlife
- Zoo shots are permitted in Nature ***not*** Wildlife
- Be Ethical (no baiting or stressing subjects)
- Keep original RAW files for scrutiny
- NO A.I., no adding/subtracting





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RAW

Rules for *other* CAPA competitions

- All elements must belong to you, captured by you, created by you.
- No A.I. (see the CAPA website)
- Generally, “open” competitions allow addition and removal of elements as long as they are yours.
- Read the rules



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