Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2024 winners

Selected from a record-breaking 59,228 entries from 117 countries and territories, the winners of the Natural History Museum's prestigious wildlife photographer of the year competition have been announced, with an exhibition opening on Friday 11 October.

The Canadian marine conservation photojournalist Shane Gross was awarded wildlife photographer of the year 2024 for his image of tadpoles, The Swarm of Life, captured while snorkelling through lily pads in Cedar Lake on Vancouver Island, British Columbia

Our photography exhibition is back for its sixtieth year to reveal more of nature's stories.

It'll take you on a visual adventure through different environments and give you a window into the wildlife that calls them home.

See first-hand how our activities, both good and bad, are shaping the natural world

Explore breathtaking images, from majestic predators on the hunt to stunning compositions

Witness powerful stories of survival, fragility and the delicate balance of life

Every photograph is a reminder of the wonder of the natural world.

WPY2024 link

Winner, Wetlands

The Swarm of Life by Shane Gross, Canada



Shane Gross looks under the surface layer of lily pads as a mass of western toad tadpoles swim past.

He snorkelled in the lake for several hours, through carpets of lily pads. This prevented any disturbance of the fine layers of silt and algae covering the lake bottom, which would have reduced visibility.

Western toad tadpoles swim up from the safer depths of the lake, dodging predators and trying to reach the shallows, where they can feed. The tadpoles start becoming toads between four and 12 weeks after hatching. An estimated 99% will not survive to adulthood.

Location: Cedar Lake, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada

Nikon D500 + Tokina fisheye 10–17mm f3.5–4.5 lens at 11mm; 1/200 at f13; ISO 640; 2x Sea & Sea strobes; Aquatica housing

Winner, Underwater

Under the Waterline by Matthew Smith, UK/Australia



Matthew Smith carefully photographs a curious leopard seal beneath the Antarctic ice.

He used a specially made extension he designed for the front of his underwater housing to get this split image. It was his first encounter with a leopard seal. The young seal made several close, curious passes. 'When it looked straight into the lens barrel, I knew I had something good.'

Though leopard seals are widespread and abundant, overfishing, retreating sea ice and warming waters mean that krill and penguins – their main food sources – are both in decline.

Location: Paradise Harbour, Antarctica

Nikon Z 7 II + 14–30mm f4 lens; 1/200 at f11; ISO 640; neutral density graduated filter; Aquatica AZ6/7 housing + Matty Smith 12" split shot dome port; Sea & Sea YS-D3 MKII strobes