

Virginia Master Naturalist 2019 Statewide Conference

Photography Contest: RULES AND INFORMATION

All Virginia Master Naturalist Chapters are invited to enter photographs. Chapters may choose any means they wish in order to select photos for submission by their chapter to the statewide conference competition.

I. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- A. Each chapter may enter *one* photograph in each category. (See **Categories and Codes** in next section.)
- B. An entry submission form **must** be completed for **EACH** photograph.
- C. All entries must be photographs that have been taken in Virginia by members or trainees in good standing with their Virginia Master Naturalists chapter.
- D. Any digital or film camera or mobile phone camera can be used. Photographers are responsible for image quality.
- E. All photographs must be .jpg format.
- F. For safety, photographs containing children cannot show children's faces or profiles or any information or image parts that can be used to identify the child.
- G. **CONTEST DEADLINE:** submit both images and entry submission forms by **11:59 pm on FRIDAY, August 9, 2019.**

II. CONTEST CATEGORIES

1. **Virginia Native Wildlife** [CATEGORY CODE: *Wildlife*]

This category includes photographs of birds, insects, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. A native Virginia animal, bird, reptile, etc. must be the main subject in the photographs in this category. Non-native species may be in the background only.

2. **Virginia Native Plant and Fungi World** [CATEGORY CODE: *Plant*]

This category includes photographs of plant and fungi in its environment. Native Virginia plants or fungi must be the main subject in the photographs in this category. Non-native species may be in the background only.

3. **Virginia Native Landscapes** [CATEGORY CODE: *Landscape*]

Photographs in this category feature Virginia landscapes as the main subject: natural landscapes, seascapes, the sky (sunsets, sunrises, clouds, etc.) or underwater images.

4. **Virginia Native Macro and Night Photography** [CATEGORY CODE: *M&N*]

Submissions to this category include the genres of macro and night photography. Macro photography is defined as creating extreme close-ups of subjects that are very small in real life and the resulting image allows the viewer to see details that are normally hidden from the human eye. Night photography is defined as capturing photographs outdoors after sunset and before sunrise.

5. **Virginia Master Naturalists in Action** [CATEGORY CODE: *VMN*]

Photographs that show activities of Virginia Master Naturalists like wildflower walks, training activities, volunteer work, citizen science, stewardship, etc. Photographs for this category must include the master naturalist as the main subject doing the activity.

III. CATEGORY EXAMPLES



Submit both photos to **Wildlife** category. The duck image is a portrait and also highlights the physical characteristics of the feathers. The dragonfly image is a closeup when the dragonfly is stationary. It is not a macro photograph.



You would not submit this to the **Plant/Fungi** category because the image is a macro photograph of moss. It should be submitted to the **Macro/Night Photography** category because the image is an extreme closeup that allows you to see details that are normally hidden from the human eye.



Submit Photograph A to **Virginia Master Naturalists in Action** category because master naturalists are the main subject. Photograph B should be submitted to **Wildlife** category because the main subject is the owl.



It should be submitted to **Landscapes** category because the image was captured as the sun lit the sky. If the image was taken after the sun has gone down and before the sun rises, it should be submitted to the **Macro/Night Photography** category.

Which image can be submitted to the contest?

Only Image B can be submitted because no parts of the face are in the image and there is no identifying information.



IV. PHOTO SIZE AND EDITING REQUIREMENTS

A. Size

1. Each photograph should be no less than 2200 pixels on its longest side at 72ppi resolution. All digital cameras and cellphones output images at 72ppi resolution. If the longest side is less than 2200 pixels, you will need to resize the photo to enter.
2. Checking and Editing image size:
 - a. **PC:** Right-click on image file, select *Properties* from the sub-menu and click on the *Details* tab in the Properties box. The longest side must be over 2200 pixels.
 - b. **Mac:** Right-click (or hold down the Control key and click) the image thumbnail and choose *Get Info*. The size will be under the *More Info - Dimensions* section. The longest side must be over 2200 pixels.
 - c. **Online Editing Software:** Pixlr is a free, powerful editing software. <https://pixlr.com/editor/>
 - d. **Editing Software:** Adobe PhotoShop, Lightroom, Paint (PC), and Preview (MAC)

B. Size too small?

Your images should be at least 2200 pixels on one side whether you took them with a digital camera or a fairly recent cellphone. Most cellphones have a 12 megapixel camera which will produce a 4000 pixels x 3000 pixels image. An 8 megapixel phone camera will produce a 3456 x 2304 image.

What typically causes small images? It is usually because they have been compressed when sharing them through email or other apps. Or if the image is downloaded from Facebook, it will be very compressed.

TIP 1: The *easiest* and most *foolproof* way of sharing full resolution photographs is to use either Dropbox or Google Photos. Both are free, easy to use, and incredibly powerful. Both in Google Photos and Dropbox, you can also share the full resolution photo with another person, and the other person can download the image full resolution. No compression! Google Photos is free. You just need to have a gmail account. Dropbox is also free. You only need to create an account.

TIP 2: If you try to resize your photo to make it comply with the 2200 pixel requirement, and image quality suffers, try this. The reason your image is pixelating is because it has been compressed (see above). The only step you can take to rectify this problem is find the original image, the one that came from your camera or mobile. Resize that one.

C. Photo Editing

Permitted modifications include:

- Cropping, resizing, and rotating/straightening photo
- Red-eye removal
- Corrective functions to improve the natural appearance of the image such as white balance, brightness, contrast, levels, color balance, saturation, sharpening, noise reduction.

Modifications **NOT** permitted include:

- Adding, removing, or replacing elements in the image
- Artistic filters (including apps on mobile, photo to art-type filters, etc)
- Added borders or frames

V. STEPS FOR SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRIES

<p>Step 1: Image Identification</p>	<p>Change each image filename using the following naming convention:</p> <p>Chapter Name_Category code_Photographer Last Name</p> <p><i>Example: Headwaters_M&N_Johnson</i></p>
<p>Step 2: Complete Entry Form</p>	<p>Five separate entry forms are included in the <u>2019 VMN Photo Contest Entry Form</u> document. If your chapter does not have five photographs to enter, just leave other forms blank. Don't delete blank pages. If submission of photographs is left to multiple people, continue to use the naming convention below. The Photo Contest Coordinator will rename to reflect multiple entries.</p> <p>When the entry form is completed, save document as "YOUR_CHAPTER_NAME" (<i>replace with your chapter name</i>).</p> <p><i>*** Please note that a failure to include the correct identification in the image filename and on the entry form will be returned to the submitter for completion.</i></p> <p><i>When images are resubmitted, they must be received before the deadline or will not be included in the competition.</i></p>
<p>Step 3: Email Entry Form</p>	<p>Email the completed <u>2019 VMN Photo Contest Entry Form</u> to VMNPhotoContest@gmail.com on the same day images are uploaded.</p> <p><i>***All entry forms will be acknowledged within 3 days of submission. If you do not receive acknowledgement, please send an email to VMNPhotoContest@gmail.com with "VERIFY RECEIPT" in the SUBJECT line.</i></p>
<p>Step 4: Upload Images</p>	<p>Upload your images by going to https://bit.ly/2CzbF27</p> <p>Once your images are uploaded, you will receive an immediate notification that the image was successfully uploaded.</p>

VI. OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

WINNERS

There will be First place, Second place, and Third place winners for all five categories. Honorable Mention(s) will be awarded as judges see fit.

EXHIBITION

All entered pictures will be shown in an electronic presentation format (PowerPoint/Google Slides) for the duration of the VMN Statewide Conference and Training in Harrisonburg, VA the weekend of September 20-22, 2019.

If you have any questions about this information or need help, please contact:

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