

DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE®
USA 250: Shaped by the Wild Photo Contest
OFFICIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. ABOUT THE CONTEST

The Defenders of Wildlife® USA 250: Shaped by the Wild Photo Contest (“Contest”) celebrates the beauty, resilience and conservation of America’s imperiled wildlife and wild lands. The Contest supports Defenders of Wildlife’s mission to protect and restore imperiled species and their habitats.

By entering this Contest, participants agree to be bound by these Official Terms and Conditions (“Rules”).

Defenders of Wildlife (“Defenders”) is a nonprofit organization organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, with its principal place of business in Washington, D.C.

2. ENTRY PERIOD

The Contest begins at 12:01 a.m. Eastern Time on April 1, 2026, and ends at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 4, 2026 (“Entry Period”).

Defenders reserves the right to modify, suspend or terminate the Entry Period at its sole discretion.

3. ELIGIBILITY

The Contest is open to individuals who are at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of entry.

Employees, board members, contractors and agents of Defenders of Wildlife, and members of their immediate families or households, are encouraged to participate but will not be eligible to win.

Defenders reserves the right to verify eligibility at any time and to disqualify any entrant who does not meet eligibility requirements.

4. CATEGORIES

All wildlife and habitat images are encouraged but here are some options to consider:

- North American Wildlife
- North American Landscapes
- International Wildlife
- Local and Backyard Wildlife
- Phone photography

5. HOW TO ENTER

All entries must be submitted electronically through the official Contest platform. No mailed or physical submissions will be accepted.

Entries must include required identifying and descriptive information as outlined in the submission platform. Incomplete entries may be disqualified.

6. ELIGIBLE PHOTOGRAPHS

Eligible photographs must accurately reflect the natural scene as it appeared.

Ineligible submissions include pets, domestic animals, animals photographed at game farms or under handler control, images obtained through harassment or habitat disturbance and heavily manipulated composites. Submissions that have been manipulated, with or without AI tools will be disqualified. Defenders will not accept submissions created using generative AI.

Defenders reserves sole discretion to determine eligibility.

7. ETHICAL PHOTOGRAPHY REQUIREMENTS

Entrants must prioritize wildlife welfare and comply with all applicable laws. Images obtained through illegal or unethical conduct will result in disqualification.

Defenders may request additional information about the circumstances under which a photograph was taken.

8. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Images must be under 50 MB and submitted in JPG, JPEG, PNG, GIF, AVI OR WEBP format.

Permissible edits include cropping and basic tonal adjustments. Prohibited edits include composites, adding/removing objects or applying artistic filters that alter the natural scene.

9. JUDGING

Entries will be reviewed by a panel selected by Defenders

All judging decisions are final and binding.

10. GRAND PRIZE

The judging panel will select one (1) image to be featured in the 2028 Defenders of Wildlife Calendar.

To be considered for the grand prize, your submission must be at minimum 3300x2550 pixels and 300 dpi. Submissions that do not meet the grand prize requirements are still encouraged and eligible to be featured by Defenders throughout the contest.

11. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Entrants retain full copyright ownership of submitted images.

By entering, entrants grant Defenders a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license to reproduce, publish, distribute, display, archive and create derivative works for promotional, editorial, educational, and mission-related purposes

Photographer credit will be provided whenever reasonably practicable.

12. WARRANTIES AND REPRESENTATIONS

Entrants warrant that submissions are original, do not infringe third-party rights, and that all necessary permissions and releases have been obtained.

Defenders may request proof of such permissions at any time.

13. INDEMNIFICATION

Entrants agree to indemnify and hold harmless Defenders and its affiliates from any claims, liabilities, damages, or expenses arising from breach of these Rules or violation of law.

14. RELEASE AND LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

Entrants release Defenders from claims related to participation, use of submissions, technical failures, or errors in administration.

Defenders shall not be liable for indirect, incidental, consequential, or punitive damages.

15. DISQUALIFICATION

Defenders reserves the right to disqualify any entrant who violates these Rules or engages in fraudulent or disruptive conduct.

16. FORCE MAJEURE

Defenders may cancel, modify or suspend the Contest if circumstances beyond its control compromise the integrity or administration of the Contest.

17. GOVERNING LAW AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

These Rules are governed by the laws of the United States and the District of Columbia.

Disputes shall be resolved individually in courts located in Washington, D.C. Class actions and claims for punitive damages are waived.

18. PRIVACY

Personal information collected will be used to administer the Contest and handled in accordance with Defenders of Wildlife's [Privacy Policy](#).

By submitting a photo, you are opting in to communications with Defenders and your information will be added to our constituent database, and you may be contacted about other Defenders activities, news, action alerts and/or fundraising campaigns. Defenders may share our donor list (mailing addresses, only) with like-minded organizations. This provides you with the opportunity to learn about related activities of other nonprofit organizations.

If you do not wish to have your information shared in this manner, please contact us at memberservices@defenders.org.

19. DISCLAIMER

This Contest is not sponsored, endorsed, or administered by Facebook, Instagram or any other social media platform. This Contest is also not affiliated with any other photography contest being conducted outside of Defenders of Wildlife.

20. CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding these Rules may be directed to memberservices@defenders.org.