



01 - Bullet Ant (Paraponera clavata) Costa Rica.

jpg

Carol Silveira

A nice study of the ant with just enough background detail to give the shot some context.



02 - Windswept, Kos, Greece (Drimys maritima).

jpg

Carole Gan

Seeing and stopping to take this picture is a start, but is there any way we can help the stems and flowers stand out a bit more, separate them from the background? Maybe backing up the composition (if it's been cropped) to show the precarious life these flowers have staked out on the steep hillside.



03 - GHO with lunch.jpg

Jerry Loomis

'Go ahead and try and take my dinner' is a great story here. Kudos to you for getting this shot in the first place. I think a pass with the Topaz Photo AI app can get those eyes to snap ever further.



04 - Grant Lake.jpg

Jeff Hobbs

This is a great landscape: Full of color and composition; autumn colors reflected in the water that cuts across the scene, with the deer in the open meadow. The only tweaks might be upping the exposure in post and seeing if there's a way to cool down the detail noise a tiny bit.



05 - Harris Beach - Oregon.jpg

Bill Brown

OK... This is the kind of picture we all want to have in our portfolio. Bold composition, lighting perfection, smooth water, managed sky. This is what happens when you make a picture, and not just take a picture.



06 - Juvenile White-tailed Kite(Elanus leucurus).jpg

John Drum

Nailed it. Wings out, offset composition, detail where it's needed, softness and texture elsewhere, balanced background color, highlights on the top of the wings and face. There's nothing else to do here, so share it with the world.



07 - Lazuli Bunting.jpg

Jeff Hobbs

This is a fun composition with the Bunting perched just below the purple thistle, with the bird's face and the thistle both in sharp focus.



08 - Light on Pelican.jpg

Jerry Loomis

Here's where waiting for the light pays off. The composition forces us to see what you see. Here's everything you need to know about this animal in a compact square. No wasted space, and in this case, no distracting background. Sometimes you need some background for context. No need for further context; we all know what a pelican is and the bold composition and lighting makes for a fresh study of a common animal.



09 - Long-billed Curlew on the beach.jpg

Chris Johnson

Great catch. You were patient, or maybe real fast and ready when this guy looked right at you. I'd like to see just a tiny bit more contrast or color to make the feathers pop a bit. This would make a great, huge poster greeting you as you walked into a natural history museum somewhere....



10 - Monarch Butterflies, Pacific Grove, CA_.jpg

Frank Penner

I like this image; it's off to a good start with the subject matter and lighting. Is there something that can be done with the composition to force a little boldness? Not sure those guys at the top left are necessary; I want to drill into the story of the image a bit more, but it's a tough call.



11 - Moose Cow and Calf.jpeg

Julie Chen

Nailed it; your work is done here. The mom with the mini sidekick both looking back at us is superb.



12 - Morning Mist.jpg

Frank Penner

As I've written before, landscapes can be tough. But here you've taken three horizontal themes of water, land and sky and created a landscape that evokes a mood. I'm reminded of one of those Ken Burns opening Civil War sequences.



13 - Past Peak Aspen Leaf.jpg

Denice Loria Woyski

Excellent study with absolutely the right amount of background bokeh.



14 - Receding Storm Clouds El Capitan.jpg

Denice Loria Woyski

You've managed to get a bold take on one of the most photographed locations on earth. The contrast of the rugged granite faces revealed for a few seconds by the soft clouds gives a sense of motion to a still life study. You were ready when the clouds parted.



15 - Snowy Egret Lands on Pacific Grove Shoreline.jpg

Bill Brown

When I rate an image a 5 it's because there's nothing else to do here. Soft, white Egret landing into the late afternoon light, against the blue background, flaps down, with the yellow foot a microsecond from landing on the hard brown rock coming into the frame from the left. Composition, color, action, story and detail; it all comes together in this image.



16 - Snowy Egret with catch.jpg

Chris Johnson

This image was good enough with just the tiny catch in the beak, but with the water frozen in the air, as if it's a chunk of ice curling back to the hunter. This makes for a composition that tells a story in detail that only a photograph can do.



17 - Taiwan Barwing in wild cherries-2.jpeg

Julie Chen

Again, it doesn't get any better than this. The Barwing in the bush would have been enough, given the detail, red colors and separation of the background. But with the red berry in its mouth looking away from the bush in the open space to the right, the picture raises to a level of perfection seldom seen. You were patient and ready, and it paid off.



18 - Very Rare Broad-billed Hummingbird(Cynanthus latirostris).jpg

John Drum

Excellent study of a pretty elusive critter. Perched on a branch that happens to wrap back around the subject, giving it a tidy frame. The background, both soft-focused with muted colors, gives the image some context without challenging the viewer's attention to the beautiful bird.



**19 - Yellow-pine Chipmunk (*Neotamias amoenus*)
Montana.jpg**

Carol Silveira

Super nice study with just the right amount background detail. This colorful little guy is perched on the dark log that aligns with his size and width, which makes for an outstanding pedestal or perch for the composition. And you left the branches and twigs on the right side of the image, which adds interest and helps frame and direct the viewer's eye to the main subject.



20 - Canyonlands View at Dusk.jpg

Karen Schofield

You've checked all the right buttons with this landscape; composition with an excellent small rock formation in the foreground juxtaposed against the massive rocks in the distance; lighting that just brings the foreground formation into play and helps highlight the plant life; just enough of the finger-like cuts into the flat land on the right. There are so many stories here to take in. I'm sure you walked around and suddenly, there it was; a shot where it all falls into place.



21 - Harvest Moon Rising on Fisher Towers.jpg

Karen Schofield

Planning for perfection, and you (and the viewers) have been rewarded. Very well done.



22 - Coyote (*canis latrans*) in Yellowstone winter.jpg

Joni Zabala

Beautiful shot with the animal contrasted against the white background. This is a textbook case for a pass through Topaz Photo AI, which would restore some detail and raise this image to the level it deserves.



23 - Great Horned Owlets (genus *Bubo*) keep watch.

Joni Zabala

Every now and then you look up and there's magic staring you in the face. Beautiful moment which is so much better with two of these guys staring back at you with their patented, yellow-eyed stare, framed by their perch crossing the image and with the truck of the tree as a background.

Winning Images:

Honorable Mentions:

Snowy Egret Lands on Pacific Grove Shoreline

Bill Brown



Taiwan Barwing

Julie Chen



Snowy Egret with Catch
Christine Johnson



Third Place

**Canyonland view at
Dusk**
Karen Schofield



2nd Place:



Juvenile White-tailed Kite
(*Elanus leucurus*)

John Drum

First Place:

Harris Beach, Oregon
Bill Brown

