



## Host Club Guidelines Nature

In Interclub, the judging of one Group is by a Host Club that belongs to another Group to avoid conflicts of interest. The designated Host Club is responsible for downloading the entered images and aligned scoresheet and running the competition in a controlled manner. The Host Club's Primary Representative is to choose a Judging Chair to run the competition.

### Judging OVERVIEW

**Host Club:** A Host Club is defined as the club Judging one group of the designated competitions. (Host clubs usually are participants of the Division Competition. The END OF THE YEAR COMPETITION Merit images are judged by experienced PSA judges) Each club is judged by a club from a different group. Clubs from the same group will not be allowed to judge each other. If a club does not have enough experienced judges, outside judges can be invited, however these judges may not be part of the club they will be judging or related to any of the club members they will be judging.

**Scoring :** All images including Makeup images shall be scored from 1 to 5, with the maximum total score of 15 possible. 20% of the scores, excluding make-up images, will be eligible for awards (Merit and HM), based on highest scores and judges' discussion. Top scoring images (excluding Makeup Images) should form an eligible score group and images in excess of the needed number of 20% shall be dropped using the standard "IN" and "OUT" method by the judges. Judges will select approximately one half for Honorable Mention Awards, and one half for Merit Awards based on scores and discussion. Scores are not to be readjusted, based on the award level received. *Therefore, it is possible that a higher scoring image may be selected for a Honorable Mention Award.* However, if a judge feels they made an error in their scoring, their score may be readjusted with the judge's request and consent.

**Scoresheet:** The Scoresheet will be sent in the CSV format. No additional columns or Rows can be added. You may wish to use another format for judging like Numbers or Excel, but the scoresheet must be re-formatted back to the CSV format.

Please fill in the information at the top of the scoresheet, the total scores for each, Merit and Honorable Mention awards, and any necessary comments. The scoresheet is sorted by filename to align with the images. The scoresheet can be resorted after judging to determine high scores.

**Support:** For questions before or during judging please feel free to contact the Specific Division Interclub Director or the PSA Interclub Director Nancy Speaker at [nspeaker1@gmail.com](mailto:nspeaker1@gmail.com). Please put **Judging Question** in the Subject line for a quick response.

- **If there is a doubt on an image's score the decision should favor the maker.**
- **All judging scores are considered final and PSA Interclub, much like exhibitions, does not accept Challenges to the scores.**

## **Materials :**

All images and scoresheet for judging will be sent to the Host club via WeTransfer or Dropbox (or similar program that allows the Director to send large files) and will be ready for judging. Such transfer does not require the software to be on the Host Club's computer. The Host Club simply downloads the files to their computer's Hard Drive. The Host club is to disperse the materials to the Judges as defined by Club procedures. After the Competition round, the Host Club and all judges are asked to remove the images from their computer using their computer's trash system .

Images and Scoresheet are in the CSV format and are aligned by filename.

**Judging Chair:** This person should have a good understanding of judging, how to use Excel and be able to follow directions to download the images from the internet or choose a club member knowledgeable on managing the technical and software needs of the competition. In addition, they are responsible to be sure the judging offers a fair scoring for the club members being judged and that judges understand the judging process and the definition of the Division they are judging. It is up to the Host Club as to the preferred software to use for viewing and scoring the images.

- Select three qualified judges. The Judging Chair may invite judges that are not members of the host club, as long as the invited outside judge is not a participant of the club being judged. No judge or relative of the Host Club may have images submitted into the competition.
- Select a Tabulator
- Notify all members of the judging Team of the date, place, and time of the event.
- Before Judging, share the Judging Packet with the judges which includes the Specific Division Scoring Guide, and Division handouts. Each Division has a unique division scoring guide based on their definition.
- Review the included definition, and the scoring guide values of 1-5 with the judges before beginning the judging.
- Send the images with the scoresheet to all judges. (If doing on-line Judging)
- Monitor the judging and remind judges the scoring guide should be followed.
- If using a projected method, it is recommended that Images not be previewed, to avoid positioning images relative to each other, rather than by absolute merit. Previewing a set or group of non-competition images to the judges may be useful so that judges understand the projected quality before judging.
- Coordinate the discussion for awards after the judging
  - The Tabulator identifies all images that received a score of 1 by any judge and brings these specific image/s up for discussion. The judge marking a score of 1 must share the reason and have a discussion with the other judges. If it is agreed that the image has an infraction all judges should mark the images with a score of 1. However if the image is not found to be an infraction, the judges are free to change their score or leave it and if the score of 1 remains the reason must be written in the Comment Column.
  - If there is a doubt on an image's score the final decision should favor the maker.

- Guide judges in discussion for selecting awards. The Tabulator identifies approximately 20% of the top scores, excluding non-eligible make-ups, as images eligible for awards. Based on points and judge’s comments, image entries in excess of the needed number shall be dropped using the standard “IN” and “OUT” voting method. (At least two judges must vote an image IN.) Once the 20% have been selected, the judges will select approximately one half for Honorable Mention Awards , and one half for Merit Awards. Then Judges need to use points and discussion to place images in the two award categories of Honorable Mention and Merit.
  - Potential problems that can create many misunderstandings from the receiving clubs include the following:
    - When an image receives a high total score and yet does not get an award. The Judging Chair should ask judges for a clear reason for this discrepancy. The Judging Chair may ask judges to re-score the image or reevaluate their decision for that image.
    - When an image receives a low total score, but the judges feel the image warrants a Merit Award. The Judging chair may wish to ask the judges to re-score the image.
- Reviews the tabulator’s scoresheet for accuracy.
- Sends the Completed Score sheet, and Judging Report to the Division Interclub Director.
- No Judges scores can be changed after the scoresheet is submitted to the Director unless the Director and the Judging Chair both agree to the changes.

**The Tabulator:** Identifies the top scoring range of eligible images for judges to use to choose the top 20% for Awards. This list excludes non-eligible make- ups images. *(The percentage may vary slightly if needed. For example, avoiding reviewing a large number of images just to drop or pick up one image. The Tabulator should try to achieve 20% if possible, though.)*

- 1) Scores **may not** be readjusted, based on the Merit or HM level earned. However, a judge may request that their score be changed. A Judging Chair may ask a judge to change their score or re-score an image based on the discussion of possible infractions. The Tabulator records the new score.

**The Judges:**

- 1) Review the definition prior to the Division Competition. This definition must be understood by the judges. This is especially important for the reality-based divisions of Photo Travel, Photojournalism and Nature.
- 2) Read and familiarize themselves with the judging process to be used. The Process can be Face to Face or Online Judging.
- 3) Read and understand the scoring guide, especially with respect to infractions found in score 1 of the scoring guide. The judge must have a clear understanding for any score of 1 and be able to can share the reason when asked.
- 4) If there is a doubt on an image’s score the final decision should favor the maker.
- 5) Will be aware that 20% of all images are to be Merit and HM images and therefore needs to keep this in mind when giving 4s and 5s for the images.
- 6) Reads and understands all Division materials for judging found in the Judging packet.

- 7) Judges the images when directed by the Judging Chair.
- 8) Participate in the discussion for choosing the Merit and HM Award Images.
- 9) It is recommended that Images should not be previewed, to avoid positioning images relative to each other, rather than by absolute merit. Previewing non-competition images to the judges may be useful so that judges understand the projected quality before judging. *However, with individual judges using their own computer for On-line judging there is a conflict with this request and judges are requested to not compare one image with another during the initial judging round. Comparing images is more appropriate in determining Awards.*

**Director:**

- 1) Insure there are 20% awards recorded, and that the scoresheet is in CSV format.
- 2) Upload the completed scoresheet into the new website's software.

The Standings, the total score points for each club, headquarter file and rewriting of files names for posting on the PSA Web Site will be completed by the new software.

*No Judges' scores can be changed after the scoresheet is submitted to the Director unless the Director and the Judging Chair agree on a change.*

**Face to Face Judging:**

The Host Club is to use a suitable means of viewing the images for the judging. If a digital projector is used, the resolution must be at least 1400 pixels wide with enough brightness, contrast, and sharpness to display the images properly. Individual monitors may be used, as long as the judges can comfortably view the image. Extreme care must be taken to show the images on a calibrated device. There are many hardware/software solutions. Verifying the accuracy with a grayscale and an image with flesh tones is highly recommended.

**Calibrated Public Domain Image:**

A calibrated public domain image for projection and monitors is available at the PSA Interclub Site <https://psa-photo.org/index.php?interclub-comparison-chart> listed under Guidelines.

For optimum viewing using a projector, the judges should be viewing from 2 to 2 1/2 times the distance of the width of a horizontally projected image.

**Online Judging:** There are several Software programs available for clubs. To see an easy method using only Zoom and Lightroom, please see the PSA Interclub Site at <https://psa-photo.org/index.php?interclub-comparison-chart> listed under Guidelines.

**Defintion:**

**This definition is effective for Internal Nature Division activities with immediate effect and all PSA recognized International Exhibitions beginning in Jan. 1, 2022 and for PSA Interclub beginning Nov. 1, 2021.**

- Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both animate and inanimate, that have not been made or modified by humans.
- Nature images must convey the truth of the scene that was photographed. 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 that threatens the life or welfare of a living organism are not allowed.
- The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells.
- High technical standards are expected and the image must look natural.
- Adding a vignette or blurring the background during processing is not allowed.
- Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
- Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
- Images taken with subjects under controlled conditions, such as zoos, are allowed. Controlling live subjects by chilling, anaesthetic or any other method of restricting natural movement for the purpose of a photograph is not allowed.
- No modification that changes the truth of a Nature image is allowed. Images may be cropped but no other technique that removes, adds or moves any part of the image is allowed.
- Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise and lens flare are allowed.
- Complete conversion of colour images to greyscale monochrome is allowed. Partial conversion, toning and infrared captures or conversions are not allowed.
- Images of the same subject that are combined in-camera or with software by focus stacking or exposure blending are allowed.
- Multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively and combined in-camera or with software (image stitching) are allowed.

## PSA Statement on Subject Matter applicable to all Divisions

### The welfare of living creatures is more important than any photograph.

- This means that practices such as baiting of subjects with a living creature and removal of birds from nests, for the purpose of obtaining a photograph, are highly unethical, and such photographs are not allowed in any exhibition with FIAP patronage or PSA recognition. Under no circumstances may a living creature be placed in a situation where it will be killed, injured or stressed for the purpose of obtaining a photograph. This rule applies regardless of whether or not the creature being killed, injured or stressed is visible in the captured image.
- There are also concerns about the use of aerial photography, drones, helicopters, low flying aircraft. These should not cause any interference with other individuals or animals which causes a disturbance in their normal activity or disrupt the way any individuals or animals interact with their environment.
- The content of images must comply with these General Conditions. Images that - in the sole opinion of the do not comply, may be disqualified so the entrant may be aware of the problem when considering entry into exhibitions with FIAP patronage/PSA recognition.

### Aerial Photography Policies (ethical):

One of the tenets of photography, is that the safety and well-being of the subject, photographer and surroundings is of paramount importance over the capturing of the photograph. The purpose of this section is to prevent any interference with other individuals or animals which will or may cause a disturbance in their normal activity or disrupt the way an individual or animal interacts with its environment.

1. PSA members and persons participating in PSA recognized activities may not fly drones above people for the purpose of photographing them or their activity, unless permission is granted in writing before any photographs are taken from the drone.
  2. PSA Members and persons participating in PSA recognized activities may not fly drones for the purpose of photographing animals or birds in any circumstances
  3. PSA members and persons participating in PSA recognized activities may not fly a drone in any designated wilderness area.
  4. While complying with the restrictions listed above, PSA Members and persons participating in PSA recognized activities **may** photograph scenery/landscapes from a drone provided no laws or regulations are broken in the country where the drone is used.
- Current PSA definition changes available at <https://psa-photo.org/index.php?division-definitions>

- For more detailed information please review “A Guide for Nature Photography Judges”, which is included in this Judging packet.

## SCORING

Makeup Images with score of 0: Please note, the Interclub Director often does not have time to view all images for these four (4) oversights below and will score them zero when discovered. If this action reduces the number of allowed images in the Round, the club can submit a makeup image in the next Round as long as the maker of the makeup image does not have an image in the Round it is replacing. If discovered in Round 3 this makeup cannot be honored since there are no more Rounds in the competition.

- The maker has more than one images in the competition.
- has been entered previously in Nature Interclub.
- The image is too pixilated to be viewed.
- Maker’s name is on the image.

Nature General (Wildlife images are entered in INTERCLUB as General and the specific “WILDLIFE” restriction guidelines are not part of interclub Judging)

***The term DQ for disqualified is not used in Interclub Competitions and an image falling in that category is scored either 0 for makeup or Score of 1.***

**SCORE 0** The following images are scored 0. Write MU for Makeup along with the specific reason (name on image etc. ) in the comment section and write Zero (0) for the Score:

- The maker has more than one images in the competition. If this is not caught by the Director, Judging Chair is to score the lowest scoring image 0.
- The image has been entered previously in Nature Interclub.
- The image is too pixilated to be viewed.
- Maker’s name is on the image.

### **SCORE 1**

- Human elements are present, (Only human elements that are integral parts of the nature story are allowed)
- Images of natural objects reshaped by humans are not allowed.

- Image is of hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals, or mounted specimens
- The image does not look natural.
- Evidence that the image is an Infrared image and thus not allowed.
- A closeup and the image is not identifiable
- Drone photography is not allowed to capture wildlife. (*Drone photography is acceptable for Landscape or Country where such photography is allowed, and no laws or regulations broken*).
- Image postprocessing adjustments do not appear natural including over or under saturation. (*Burning dodging and color adjustment are acceptable but must look natural*).
- Evidence that the image was modified by pictorial elements added, relocated, replaced, or removed (such as the Sky). (*Cropping is permitted including removal of dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches*).
- Evidence of Cloning.
- Evidence of blurring the background to obscure elements in the original scene.
- Evidence of darkening the background to remove elements in the original scene.
- Evidence of adding a vignette not originally produced by the camera.
- Evidence that textures or artistic filters were added.
- Evidence that the image is a combination of stitched images.
- Image has many flaws such as unintentional blur or has major parts out of focus. Image is cluttered to the point of distraction, or distracting elements are overwhelming. (*Please note if the image is just a weak image without extreme flaws it should receive a score of 2*)

## SCORE 2

- Very limited nature story in the image.
- Image provides little more than descriptive information about the creature - shape, color, size or landscape.
- Weak technical quality.
- Weak Composition where point of view or cropping might improve the image.
- If image is a close up, there is limited identifiable information. Image is an aftermath of natural forces (such as a cyclone) and depicts just the aftermath of the scene and not the actual weather forces

## SCORE 3:

- Typical life behavior Nature story (flying, gathering nesting material.
- This is an average but solid image where the elements work well together, and the image is technically correct.
- Average story regarding the effects of nature on the landscape or nature scene. These are images that illustrate typical behavior of the creature or tell a story about part of its life cycle

## SCORE 4:

- The Judge feels this image should receive a HM award



- A strong story regarding the effects of nature on the landscape or nature scene.
- Often with wildlife, stronger stories show some of the environment.
- This image illustrates how creatures of the same species (mates, parents/offspring, group members) interact.
- This image illustrates how creatures of different species interact in various ways.
- Good to excellent technical qualities

**SCORE 5:**

- The Judge feels this image should receive a Merit Award.
- Image displays an excellent story regarding the effects of nature on the landscape or nature scene.
- This image superiorly illustrates how creatures of the same species (mates, parents/offspring, group members) interact.
- This image superiorly illustrates how creatures of different species interact in various ways.
- Excellent to superior technical qualities.
- **Makers should not be made to feel 5 is impossible to achieve.**