

the
Maryland
natural resource



2024 NATURE CALENDAR



A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY...

For two decades, the annual Maryland Department of Natural Resources photo contest has invited photographers and outdoor enthusiasts to combine nature and art to showcase the tremendous beauty and diverse flora and fauna of our state.

Judged by a team of experts in photography and natural sciences, thousands of photographs are reviewed and winners are selected based on technical skill, aesthetic merit, and representation of the natural world. The winning works are depicted in three photos for each season and one photo as the Grand Prize winner. Additionally, we engage our social media followers to choose their own “fan favorite” from among the runners-up. We are proud to present the winning entries of our 2023 photo contest, our 20th annual.

I want to congratulate all of the participants and winners, particularly our Grand Prize winner, Dallin Johnson of Huntingtown, for his incredibly detailed photograph of a gray tree frog. And thank you to everyone who voted for the fan favorite, Birds Eye of the Owl by Amy Dossett.

These winners and the other entries we selected for this year’s calendar truly emphasize the beauty of Maryland’s natural resources.

We hope you enjoy these photos and that they inspire you to explore Maryland’s expansive outdoor landscapes. Here’s wishing you a happy, healthy 2024!

Sincerely,

Josh Kurtz, Secretary

Congratulations

2023 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS!

GRAND PRIZE (COVER)

Gray Tree Frog · Dallin Johnson

WINTER

FIRST PLACE *Winter Raccoon* · Nathaniel Peck

SECOND PLACE *Lake in Winter* · Addison Likins

THIRD PLACE *Salt Marsh Shorty* · Scott Suriano

SPRING

FIRST PLACE *Fox in Woods* · Cynthia Herrick

SECOND PLACE *Zebra Spider* · Joshua Fisher

THIRD PLACE *Dinner* · Seth Spoenlein

SUMMER

FIRST PLACE *Gray Tree Frog* · Dallin Johnson

SECOND PLACE *Stars of Dorchester* · Robert Fawcett

THIRD PLACE *Masked Bandit Duo* · Andrea Conte

FALL

FIRST PLACE *All Eyes on Me* · Christopher Szumlanski

SECOND PLACE *Fall Framed* · Scott Suriano

THIRD PLACE *Fall at Croydon Creek* · Debby Berlyne

FAN FAVORITE (above)

Birds Eye of the Owl · Amy Dossett



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This calendar is a product of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Office of Communications. The photographs were selected from entries in the 2023 Natural Resource Photo Contest.





December 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
					1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29			

Lake in Winter • Addison Likins
SECOND PLACE WINTER - LAKE TILGHMAN PARK, CHARLES COUNTY

JANUARY

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 New Year's Day First Day Hikes	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 New Moon	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Full Moon Wolf Moon	26	27
28	29	30	31	<p>When I first saw the lake I realized that it was surrounded by conifers unlike the other lakes in the region. I made a mental note that it would be perfect for a snow photo because the conifers would hold the snow, unlike the deciduous trees around the other lakes which lose their leaves in the winter. Additionally, the park was easily accessed by car. After the first heavy snow of that year, I made a beeline for the lake to take the winter shot. The clouds were an added bonus. - Addison Likins</p>		



January 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

March 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Winter Raccoon • Nathaniel Peck
FIRST PLACE WINTER - ROCKY GAP STATE PARK, ALLEGANY COUNTY

FEBRUARY

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Over the winter a large snowstorm hit the mountains of Allegany County. I wanted to take advantage of the beautiful snow-covered forests, so I decided to head out to Rocky Gap State Park. Thinking I would just end up seeing a few birds or maybe a deer, I was very surprised to stumble across this raccoon who was out searching for food on the mountainside. He was willing to pose for a photo before scampering off into the snowy wilds. - <i>Nathaniel Peck</i></p>				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Groundhog Day
 World Wetlands Day

New Moon

Valentine's Day

Presidents' Day

Full Moon
 Snow Moon



February 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

April 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Salt Marsh Shorty • Scott Suriano
THIRD PLACE WINTER - BLACKWATER, DORCHESTER COUNTY

MARCH

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
<p>On a frigid February late afternoon I traveled down to the Salt Marsh Flats located in Blackwater Wildlife Nature Reserve in the hopes of photographing some wintering Short Eared Owls that had taken up temporary residence there. Once the sun began to set, the owls became very active, putting on an impressive aerial display by erratically flying low to the marsh in search of their next meal. I was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time and was able to capture this fast moving raptor while including some of the unique landscape of this treasured preserve. - <i>Scott Suriano</i></p>						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
World Wildlife Day						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Harriet Tubman Day Daylight Savings Time Starts New Moon						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
St. Patrick's Day		First Day of Spring		International Day of Forests	World Water Day	
24/31	 25	26	27	28	29	30
	Maryland Day Get your Maryland on! Full Moon Super Worm Moon					



March 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

May 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Fox in Woods • Cynthia Herrick
FIRST PLACE SPRING - SEVERN RUN ENVIRONMENT AREA, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

APRIL
2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Crabbing Season Opens		Maryland Arbor Day			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	New Moon					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Tax Day					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Earth Day	Full Moon Pink Moon			National Arbor Day	
28	29	30	<p>Her home is a den that lies beneath this mound, protected by woodlands that border the meadow I am standing in as I take this photo. We dwell together, but in our own separate worlds, in the same space. We coexist. And I love that. When I'm getting ready to go inside for the evening, she's just waking up from her nap. Just behind where she's lying is the door to her den. It's just a hole she dug out, but it will be good enough to give birth to her kits, which should be coming soon. This is her favorite spot, where she takes in the last of the sun's rays, before she begins her hunt for food. It's a rare moment when I am able to sneak up and not scare her off. We know each other, but she will never trust me. And, I want to keep it that way, because it will help protect her life. We live on both sides of the forest. She's on the inside, and I'm on the out. I love the brief moments when our paths cross; whether she sneaks into my world or I cross deep into the forest to find hers. But, my favorite moments are the rarest...when she's distracted and she doesn't even know I'm there. - Cynthia Herrick</p>			



MAY 2024

Dinner • Seth Spoenlein THIRD PLACE SPRING - HARFORD COUNTY

April 2024

June 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> <p>This shot was taken on a late afternoon mid-spring day. A fellow photographer and I happen to find a family of osprey fishing in the nearby park. One by one, these 'Fish Hawks' would dive head first with their talons stretched before them. After a few seconds bobbing around, each osprey would emerge with a fish in its talons shaking the water off of its wings - just like how a dog would shake the water off from its fur. They would then proceed to fly a loop around made - almost to show me what they had caught before they would enjoy their feast in a nearby tree. I have gone back many times since and have never had the experience like that day. - Seth Spoenlein</p> </div>						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Cinco de Mayo		New Moon				World Migratory Bird Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Mother's Day					National Endangered Species Day Bike to Work Day	Safe Boating Week Begins
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
				Full Moon Flower Moon		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Memorial Day					



JUNE 2024

Zebra Spider • Joshua Fisher

SECOND PLACE SPRING - MARSHY POINT NATURE CENTER, BALTIMORE COUNTY

May 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

July 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>I was just taking a walk through the Marshy Point Nature Center area and stopped to get some water from my bag. As I was reaching down, I saw the webs in a cluster of leaves. They sort of looked like waves crashing so I decided to take a photo. Once I got close, I noticed the little zebra spider sitting and curiously watching me. It looked to me like it was surfing through the bushes on webs. - Joshua Fisher</p>						1 Free Fishing Day National Trails Day
2	3	4	5	6 New Moon	7	8 Free Fishing Day World Oceans Day
9	10	11	12	13	14 Flag Day	15
16 Father's Day	17	18	19 Juneteenth	20 First Day of Summer	21 Full Moon Strawberry Moon	22 Great American Campout
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29



June 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

August 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Gray Tree Frog • Dallin Johnson
 GRAND PRIZE AND FIRST PLACE SUMMER - CALVERT COUNTY

JULY
 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Independence Day Free Fishing Day	5 New Moon	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Full Moon Buck Moon	28	29	30	31	<p>There's a creek behind my house with a few different species of frogs, but the gray tree frogs are always the boldest. After a rainy day, they often sit under my porch lights eating all the bugs and calling loudly to attract a mate. Their unique appearance and amazing camouflage makes them one of my favorite species to photograph. I'm hoping to study frogs like this in graduate school one day, so that I can help protect these beautiful animals from threats such as climate change, disease, and habitat loss. - <i>Dallin Johnson</i></p>	



July 2024

September 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Stars Of Dorchester • Robert Fawcett
SECOND PLACE SUMMER - BLACKWATER, DORCHESTER COUNTY

AUGUST

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
New Moon					Smokey Bear's Birthday	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Gifford Pinchot's Birthday						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Full Moon Strugeon Moon					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

This image is from one of my favorites locations, Key Wallace Drive just outside Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. This is one of my go to locations when instructing photographers with an interest in capturing the night sky. Additionally, my hope is to raise awareness of the increase in light pollution and the effect it has on all wildlife in this area. - Robert Fawcett



August 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

October 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Masked Bandit Duo • Andrea Conte
THIRD PLACE SUMMER - ASSATEAGUE ISLAND, WORCESTER COUNTY

SEPTEMBER

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Labor Day New Moon	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 Patriot Day	12	13	14
15	16	17 Full Moon Super Harvest Moon	18	19	20	21
22 First Day of Fall	23	24	25	26	27	28 National Public Lands Day National Hunting and Fishing Day

29

30

The "Masked bandit duo" image represents a moment of the courtship ritual of least terns. It looks like the two birds were staring at me, but this is not the case! In fact, they were synchronously rotating their heads left and right, as part of their nuptial dance, and I captured a frame in which both of them were facing my way for a split second. As you can see, in this case the nuptial gift, a fish, was particularly small, but it still worked, and the romantic dance of the masked bandits had a successful epilogue. Watching shore birds may be rewarding and fascinating, but it's crucial to keep in mind that these species are very vulnerable during the nesting season. Please do not bring dogs or use drones around their nesting grounds, and do not trespass the restricted areas that are established to protect the spots where the nests are located. - *Andrea Conte*



September 2024

November 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Fall Framed • Scott Suriano
 SECOND PLACE FALL - BALTIMORE COUNTY

OCTOBER

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>I found a beautiful adult barred owl roosting on this very interesting perch. I walked around the tree to find the best angle, and positioned myself to photograph him through the thick branches, framing him by the natural elements while including the orange, red, and yellow background colors of the season. I was delighted that he gave me a brief relaxed, accepting look before continuing to stare off into a distant field. The combination of the warm, soft, waning light, the rich fall colors, and the natural frame created by the tree gave me a truly special image. - <i>Scott Suriano</i></p>		1	2	3	4	5
		Oyster Season Begins	New Moon			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fire Prevention Week						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Columbus Day			Full Moon Super Hunter's Moon		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
				Halloween		



October 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

December 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Fall at Croydon Creek • Debby Berlyne
 THIRD PLACE FALL - CROYDON CREEK NATURE CENTER, MONTGOMERY COUNTY

NOVEMBER

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>One early morning last fall, when the fall colors were at their peak, I was still trying to wake up. But as soon as I realized that my street was covered in a thick fog, I grabbed my camera and rushed to Croydon Creek Nature Center, hoping to get some good images before the fog lifted. Luckily, the fog stuck around for a good hour, giving me lots of time to walk around and enjoy the lovely landscapes. Although I got several nice shots that morning, this one stuck out because of the lovely early morning light, atmospheric fog, and contrast between the deep reds of the leaves and the greys and browns of the trees and rocks. - <i>Debby Berlyne</i></p>					1	2
					New Moon	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Daylight Saving Time Ends		Election Day				
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Veterans Day				Full Moon Bever Moon	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
				Thanksgiving Day	Native American Heritage Day	New Moon



November 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

January 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

All Eyes on Me • Christopher Szumlanski
FIRST PLACE FALL - BALTIMORE COUNTY

DECEMBER

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <small>New Moon</small>	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 <small>Full Moon Cold Moon</small>	16	17	18	19	20	21 <small>First Day of Winter</small>
22	23	24	25 <small>Christmas</small>	26 <small>Hanukkah Kwanzaa</small>	27	28
29	30	31 <small>New Year's Eve</small>	<p>My nature photography is dedicated to the elderly, disabled, and unable. Maybe someone remembers a perfect time in their life, maybe it brings joy in the present moment and maybe someone gets to experience something joyful in a world that is, at times, hard to negotiate. - Christopher Szumlanski</p>			

