



How to...

POPULAR SUBJECTS

There are more than 86,000 insect species and over 800 bird species in North America.



Take stunning pictures of nature

Explore the beauty all around you with photography.

Nature photography is about capturing the many natural wonders beyond your door. All you need is a camera—or a device with a camera—to document what you find. You won't have to look far for subjects to shoot. "Just stepping outside into nature—and seeing birds or insects or stars—will give you inspiration," professional nature photographer Angela Ledyard told *The Week Junior*. Here's how to get started.

Pick a setting

First, choose where you want to take nature photos. "You can start with a yard or a local park," says Ledyard. You could shoot local wildlife like squirrels, take close-ups of flowers, or zoom in on interesting details like raindrops on a leaf. As you get more experience, you can work up to larger settings, like a nature preserve or a state park.

Experiment with natural light

Try taking photos at different times of day and in various kinds of weather. Clouds can create a dramatic sky, while rain can give a glossy sheen to rocks and plants. Two of the best times to shoot are during the "golden hours" each day—just after the sun rises and right before it sets. This is when the sun casts a gentle, natural glow that's

ideal for photos. Any time you shoot outside, consider the sun's position over your subject. For example, if you want to get a shot of an animal in front of a landscape, you should have the sun to your back so the light is shining on your subject.

Frame your shots

When you're taking pictures, Ledyard advises thinking about the composition—what you see inside the frame of your shot. When you're about to take a photograph, look through the viewfinder of your camera or on your phone screen and turn the camera a little to the right, then left. Observe how this changes the shot. Experiment with different angles. Point your camera toward the ground or up to the sky to capture those vantage points as well.

Keep practicing

The best way to become a stronger nature photographer is to continue experimenting. If you want to learn more technical skills, you might consider taking a photography class. Your school might offer one, or ask an adult to help you check with local art centers. You can also enter our Nature Photo Contest! Get to know the judges at right, and see the entry form on the opposite page.



Try a close-up of a flower.

Meet the judges

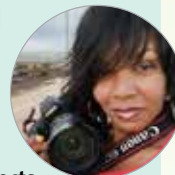
Jesse Burke

He enjoys documenting road trips and life on his farm with his kids. He also captures humans' relationship with nature. See his work at jesseburke.com.



Angela Ledyard

Thanks to her grandfather, she was drawn to photography as a child. Her subjects range from sunrises to the Milky Way. See her work at angelaledyard.com.



Ami Vitale

She is considered one of the most influential conservation photographers working in the profession today. See her work at amivitale.com.



GETTY IMAGES (2); COURTESY OF SUBJECT (2); BRYAN LISCINSKY



Enter our Nature Photo Contest!



Do you enjoy taking photographs of plants, flowers, trees, and wildlife? When you're outdoors, are you often trying to capture the amazing beauty of the natural world? If so, now is your chance to use your creativity, curiosity, and skills to enter *The Week Junior's* annual Nature Photo Contest.

The deadline to enter is July 28!

How to enter

- **Consider the judging criteria.** Submissions will be judged on quality (clear, well-composed photographs that aren't blurry), originality (the use of creativity and imagination through the camera lens), and how well they reflect the nature theme and *The Week Junior*. Entries must be original and not generated or altered by artificial intelligence.
- **Choose one photo to enter.** Only one photograph per entrant is allowed.
- **Fill out this form.** With a parent, complete an entry form and submit it by July 28, 2025.
- **Enter the correct age group category.** Children ages 8 to 10 will be judged in one category. Children ages 11 to 14 will be judged in another category. Winners will be selected from each category. The entry form for 8- to 10-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2025PhotoContest-8-10. The entry form for 11- to 14-year-olds is at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-2025PhotoContest-11-14.

NO PURCHASE OR SUBSCRIPTION NECESSARY. Open to legal residents of US, DC, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, 8–14 years. Professional artists are not eligible. Ends 11:59:59 p.m. ET 7/28/2025. Void where prohibited. See official rules at theweekjunior.com/photocontestrules. Sponsor: Future US LLC.

The judges

The Nature Photo Contest will be judged by Editorial Director Andrea Barbalich, Creative Director Dean Abatemarco, and Photo Editors Nataki Hewling and Lily Alt. The entries will also be judged by three award-winning professional photographers: Jesse Burke, Angela Ledyard, and Ami Vitale.

The prize

The winning entries may be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Week Junior*.