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## **Information Bulletin – Judging Guidelines**

**This Bulletin offers information to Clubs and Judges about CAPA/ACAP recommendations for Judging. Following these guidelines will help to standardize judging across Canada.**

CAPA/ACAP's judging is a point system, from 1 to 10 points each by three judges (maximum total score=30). This system provides a wide scope for honest and accurate evaluation of each photo. Scores should follow these guidelines.

- 1,2,3 - Extremely poor to poor, with serious faults
- 4,5 - Fair, possibly minor faults
- 6,7 - Good
- 8 - Excellent
- 9,10 - Exceptional

1, 2 and 3 should be rarely used. When assigning a score to an image, remember that one of the objectives of competition is to encourage the members who are competing and not to discourage their efforts. The score of an average image should be 6 or 7 out of 10.

### **Selecting Judges**

Three experienced judges are selected from a blend of people such as professional or advanced photographers, or art and photography teachers. Nature judges should be familiar with natural history subjects. Judges should be fully aware of CAPA/ACAP's scoring method and judging philosophy. (Clubs may elect to use only one judge for in-house club competitions).

### **Advice to Judges**

#### **Respect for Photographers**

There must be no discussion or comments made until all three silent scores are entered. If comments must be written down as part of the evaluation, those should be kept to a minimum, but in all cases these must be constructive. Many of you have had the experience of having your images criticized in a clumsy or insensitive manner. How did that make you feel? Whether the photograph is a less than excellent image by a very experienced photographer, or an attempt by a beginner, respect their efforts and try to understand and appreciate what they are trying to say.

#### **Bias avoidance**

Your personal feelings should not be part of your point scoring nor comments. It is not helpful to the photographer that you like the colour blue, hate spiders, don't see the point of abstracts or are offended by nudes.

The "rules" are included here too. No ultimate authority dictated that moving objects must always have room in front of them in the frame, noses must never break the cheek line, eyes must always have a catch light and the horizon must never, never be dead centre. Use them as guidelines; adhere to them on your own photography if you must -- but where would creativity be if everyone stayed within restrictive boundaries?

#### **Educate**

Call upon your experience and pass it on. Suggest a polarizer (or not), a tripod, fill flash, a reflector, colour correcting filter, cropping and so on where it might help the photographer produce a better image next time.

#### **Encourage**

Your enthusiasm and encouragement mean a lot. Spread it around. You don't have to praise to heaven for every image you see; but they all have some strengths or good points, and commenting on them will encourage the photographer and keep the session positive.