

MMS 2026 Photo Contest Rules

Eligibility:

- Open to MMS members only.

Categories & Limits:

- **Pictorial (P):** Up to 5 entries – judged on composition, lighting, and artistic quality. Only one photo is permitted per submission.
- **Scientific (S):** Up to 5 entries – judged on features confirming an accurate ID (ideally genus & species) or highlight features or comparison of various species. Multiple photos per entry are permitted, enabling you to show different views of the specimen as well as a spore print and any other identifying characteristics. Up to three collages per entry are permitted.
- **Activity/Humor/Other (O):** Up to 3 entries – mycological events, humor, oddities, or special interest. Multiple photos are permitted per entry if displayed on one collage/ jpeg.

Awards:

- 1st–4th place in each category; at least one award per category is reserved for someone who has not won more than twice in that category over the past ten years.
- Additional Awards:
 - **Blewit Award** (highest vote average across the Pictorial and Activity/Humor/Other categories)
 - **Whetstone Award** (highest vote-getter in the Scientific Category), and
 - **Tiger's Eye Award** (highest vote-getter among submitters under age 18)
 - **Earthstar Award** (Director's Choice)

Submission Rules:

1. Submit entries through MMS' PollUnit site - a link will be emailed to members around October 1, 2026.
2. Use jpeg format only, not to exceed 25MP per jpeg.
3. A collage is allowed for Scientific and Activity/Humor/Activity submissions if saved as a jpeg. The Contest Director has a formatted PowerPoint slide should you wish to build a collage in PowerPoint (and submit it as a jpeg).
4. Basic editing is allowed. No AI-generated photos.
5. Any photos taken in any year (not just 2026) during which the submitter has been a member are eligible provided the submitter is a member in 2026.
6. There are no geographic limitations on where the photos may be taken.
7. Each photo may be entered in only one category.
8. Captions are optional for Scientific and Activity/Humor/Other categories and should not be placed on the image. The PollUnit submission site provides a place to include either the mushroom name or a caption.
9. For Pictorial and Scientific entries, do your best to ID specimens before asking for help. MMS educators can assist if needed. Reach out to the Photo Contest Director if you

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need assistance. There is no penalty for an inaccurate or incomplete genus/species if you have sought help *before* the contest deadline.

10. Extra credit is given in the Scientific category's scoring for an unusual species and/or submission of a field slip. Submit a photo of your field slip as a separate jpeg in your submission. MMS field slips can be downloaded at the bottom of our [How to use the MMS Field Data Slip](#) website page.
11. MMS may use submitted photos for MMS purposes; photographers retain ownership.
12. Previously published or copyrighted photos are not allowed.
13. Be sure to log back into PollUnit to verify that your submissions have been effectively submitted by the deadline.
14. Deadline for submissions: 11:59 p.m. October 31, 2026.

Questions? Need help?

Contact Photo Contest Director, Nan Etzwiler
photos@minnesotamushrooms.org
651-367-4813