

BEST O

Fair Chase is proud to present the results of our first-ever trophy field photo competition. All trophies that were accepted in the 27th Big Game Awards Program and were taken in 2008 were eligible and automatically entered into the contest. Within these pages, you'll find the top 22 photographs selected by the *Fair Chase* editors and staff and additional guest judges from the Big Game Records Department.

From a list of finalists, each judge was asked to select their 20 favorite photographs as well as their top pick and provide feedback to share with the readers. Each pick received one point and the top picks received three points. As many of the judges noted, all of these images are fine examples of quality field photographs. Judging field photos is a subjective task as beauty is in the eye of the beholder. We hope you enjoy and pick up a few tips for the next time you're in the field.

Tim Parker
Stone's Sheep - 174 5/8
Anvil Range, Yukon Territory
August 2008



JUDGES COMMENTS

This has all the critical components that make an outstanding photograph. Lighting, backdrop, position of the hunter and the animal etc. Not to mention the magnificence of the animal itself. Harvesting a stone sheep is a rare privilege in and of itself. Photographing a trophy like this in a picture perfect field setting is almost unheard of. — T.S.

JUDGES COMMENTS

Besides the usual techniques of photography such as lighting, camera angle, and clarity, I feel the essence is how the animal is portrayed. One needs to have the picture convey a sense of where and how it was taken. The animal must look alive. The more I looked at this wonderful Ram the more I felt that I was there at that mountaintop feeling the cold wind and scenting the aroma of the flora that permeated the air. The hunter as portrayed is proud and respectful of his quarry. I am happy for him and envious of this splendid accomplishment! — H.M.

F 2008

Brian Hauck
Pronghorn - 82 6/8
Colfax County, New Mexico
September 2008



JUDGES COMMENTS

With all of the outstanding field photos to choose from, picking a favorite was a tough call. I chose this one because it is clear the hunter took the time to present the animal in a respectful manner – legs tucked under, no bullet holes, and minimal blood. He also positioned the unique horns of the pronghorn so viewers can get a full understanding of their structure. The composition, whether intentional or not, is pleasing to the eye considering where the horizon line intersects with the subject matter. Many hunters forget to take the background into account, which is often the reason a photo isn't published. – J.H.

Audria L. Dolan
Non-typical Coues' Whitetail - 120 3/8
Santa Cruz County, Arizona
December 2008



JUDGES COMMENTS

The composition of this photo is excellent. The person is obviously very happy to have taken a nice non-typical Coues' whitetail. The deer is very well displayed, and I like the color combination of all the browns contrasted with the blue sky. I also like the fact that there is no firearm in the photo. – J.R.

JUDGES COMMENTS

My favorite from a group of really terrific field photos comes as close to technical perfection as any "success shot" that I've ever seen. The exposure is exceedingly well calibrated, which is difficult when hunter orange is in play; there's great depth of field; and the subjects seem as absolutely crisp and in focus as the fall air. More importantly, the tool used to take the wonderful whitetail is in full and careful display. The rifle's bolt is in its relaxed, non-fire position, which is truly the professional's touch. Hunter and game without the bow or rifle used during the adventure simply aren't as interesting to me as those featuring the tools of the trade. Lastly, the angle of that whitetail's head, looking back, exposes the viewer to the grandness of the animal's antlers. Plus, the position of that buck's head is a very natural and inspiring pose that we just don't see often enough in the wild. —G.T.

Paul T. Brown
Typical Whitetail - 171 4/8
Holmes County, Mississippi
January 2008



Mike E. Broadwell
Mountain Caribou - 424 2/8
North Lakes, Yukon Territory
October 2008



JUDGES COMMENTS

This is a good quality photo of a typical hunt in North America culminating in the harvest of a fine buck. These are the conditions that most whitetail hunters live for, a dusting of snow and good chilly weather. The deer looks very sharp with the contrast of the muzzle and antlers against the body and background. While some of the trophies are more unique, or in more striking landscapes, the whitetail in this photo showcases wildlife success and a hunter who beat the odds to take a fine deer. — J.S.

Daniel L. Haney
Typical Whitetail Deer - 168 3/8
Ringgold County, Iowa
December 2008



Jerome F. Goburn
Dall's Sheep - 166 5/8
Arctic Red River, Northwest Territories
September 2008



Tamara K. Trail
Pron. Ghorn - 86
Hudspeth County, Texas
October 2008



William F. Ferguson
Typical Whitetail Deer - 178 3/8
Eagle Creek, Saskatchewan
November 2008



Matthew G. Baber
Whitetail Deer - 206 7/8
Lee County, Illinois
December 2008



Earl L. Morgan, Jr. (left)
Big Horn Sheep - 184 3/8
Big Horn County, Montana
September 2008



JUDGES COMMENTS

I picked this photograph because it shows two generations, as well as the fact that it's a quality image. — W.K.

D. Scott Jones
Typical Whitetail Deer - 170 1/8
Hidalgo County, Texas
January 2008



BEST OF 2008

JUDGES COMMENTS

This is a magnificent caribou trophy with a happy, tired, and proud hunter in a remote region. Looks like an example of the epitome of "fair chase" given all of the above. — S.W.

John R. Kerr
Black Bear - 21 3/16
Duck Mountain, Manitoba
November 2008



#6
TIE

JUDGES COMMENTS

These are all great trophies and excellent examples of field photography. I have to search the B&C field photo archives on a regular basis looking for print and television-quality photos. From what I have seen looking through hundreds of photos, bears are by far the hardest of all species to photograph well in the field, especially considering showing the true size of the animal in a respectful way. This photo, in my opinion, is one of the best I've seen at portraying both. Plus the hunter did not sit too far into the next county to make the bear look bigger, as is often the case. — K.B.

Jason O. Burns
Typical Mule Deer - 190 5/8
Johnson County, Wyoming
October 2008



#11
TIE

Joe L. Maslach (left) with son Wyatt
Desert Sheep - 182 2/8
Nye County, Nevada
November 2008



#11
TIE

Brad D. Johnson
Canada Moose - 191 3/8
Tachilita Lakes, British Columbia
September 2008



#13
TIE

A.C. Smith
Alaska/Yukon Moose - 234 1/8
Hart Lake, Yukon Territory
August 2008



#9
TIE

Warren D. Kennedy
Typical American Mule Deer - 161 3/8
Teton National Park, Wyoming
September 2008



#16
TIE

#16
TIE



Timothy S. Geppert
Mountain Caribou - 374 3/8
Spatsizi Wilderness, British Columbia
August 2008

Gino J. Aramini
Bighorn Sheep - 190 4/8
Elko County, Nevada
September 2008



#18
TIE

Kirk C. Clinkinbeard
Bighorn Sheep - 161 4/8
Park County, Colorado
October 2008



#18
TIE

Jason R. Pierson
Bighorn Sheep - 161 6/8
Taos County, New Mexico
September 2008



#18
TIE