

Contact:

Christy Muse, Executive Director
Hill Country Alliance
christy@hillcountryalliance.org
512.560.3135

For Immediate Release

Four Hill Country Photographers Awarded Prizes

2014 HCA Calendar brings Hill Country beauty all year long

Thirteen exceptional photos of the Texas Hill Country grace the Hill Country Alliance's much anticipated 2014 calendar. Among the photos chosen from HCA's annual photo contest, four stunning shots were selected for special recognition by an HCA committee of local artists and Hill Country conservationists.

"Each year when we issue the call for photos for our next calendar we are impressed, but not surprised, by the exceptionally lovely examples of natural beauty that are entered in our contest," said HCA Executive Director Christy Muse. "It's no wonder that the calendar is prized not only by Texans, but nature lovers everywhere who appreciate the unique qualities of the Texas Hill Country."

HCA's Texas Hill Country Calendar serves as a year-round reminder of the need to nurture this growing region in ways that protect its beauty and valuable natural resources. Along with spectacular photography, the calendar promotes land conservation, groundwater protection, habitat preservation and land stewardship strategies.

The winners of the 2014 Photo Contest:

Bluebonnet Railroad (Grand Prize) by Tim Huchton. This stunning photo of bluebonnets crowding a railroad track was taken in April 2013 in Kingsland. Tim, who lives in Ingram, says he enjoys taking photos of all kinds. "Nature, landscape and people are all favorite subjects of mine." More of Tim's work – he also teaches photography – can be seen at www.timhuchtonphotography.com.

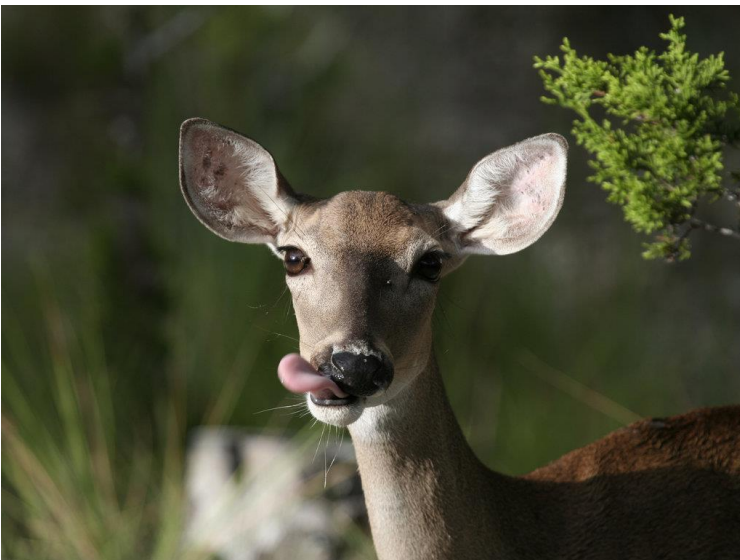




Batman (First Prize) by Marvin Gohlke, Jr. Marvin took the photo of his son at the Frio Bat Cave near Concan last summer. “It was our first trip to the cave and my son was extremely fascinated with the emergence of the bats in evening ... he put his hands up as if he were flying with the bats, which were darting all around very near him,” Marvin said. “We have recently purchased land on the Guadalupe River between Kerrville and Ingram, which now not just makes me a lover of the beauty of the Guadalupe, but

also a steward of helping to preserve that beauty,” Another photo Marvin took on the North Fork of the Guadalupe River near Hunt is also featured in the calendar.

Grotto at Westcave Preserve (Second Prize) by Mike Murphy. “I made the grotto image in about 2005 ... the weather that afternoon alternated between sun and gentle rain, giving the grotto an other-worldly character,” Mike said. He’s a former photography editor for *Texas Highways* magazine and has taken photos all over Texas, both for the magazine and as a freelance photographer. He and his family live on Los Madrones Ranch, near Dripping Springs, which he now operates for nature tourism.



Urban Deer (Third Prize) by Cynthia Burgin. Cynthia caught this doe finishing off a potted plant and licking her lips as if to say, ‘what’s next?’ on her property which backs up to natural land owned by Schreiner University and overlooks downtown Kerrville. Cynthia also noted that she had no idea the deer population was so large and friendly when she moved in and it took a while to realize that most potted plants weren’t going to survive. Cynthia is also very active in her local Master Naturalists group and says she takes

photographs wherever she goes, some of which the group uses on its website and in displays.

The photographs were judged by an impressive panel including; Colleen Gardner of Selah, Bamberger Ranch Preserve, Scott Gardner of the C.L. Browning Ranch, professional Artist Lynda Young Kaffie and professional author and photographer Brian Loflin.

Calendars are available through the HCA website, www.hillcountryalliance.org. Wholesale prices for Hill Country retailers and special bulk order prices for businesses and organizations are available.

The Hill Country Alliance is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to raise public awareness and build community support around the need to preserve the natural resources and heritage of the Central Texas Hill Country.