

For Immediate Release

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2021 Hill Country photo contest winners announced & 2022 Calendar for sale!

The Texas Hill Country is a unique region filled with diverse wildlife, clear springs, sprawling rural landscapes, historic towns, and some of the starriest night skies in the country. With a rapidly growing population and increasing development coming into the region, many of these special qualities are at risk of being lost forever. Each year the Hill Country Alliance (HCA) holds a photo contest encouraging photographers to capture images of the Texas Hill Country they would like to protect forever. Winning photo contest entries are then selected and displayed in the Hill Country Calendar, [now available for purchase on the Hill Country Alliance website.](#)

This past year has continued to challenge us as a region, a state, and a country in ways that no one could have anticipated, from once-in-a-lifetime snowstorms to an unusually rainy summer. Through it all the Texas Hill Country has given us a steady stream of comfort, resilience, and inspiration. Those of us who have the privilege of calling this place home found that in moments of great difficulty, our spirits could find peace beside a spring-fed creek, if only for a moment. In tumultuous times, the reliable and unwavering night sky was there to comfort us at the end of each day.



Between March and May, HCA received over 400 entries in the 2021 Hill Country Photo Contest from amateur and professional photographers alike. Submissions, ranging from the sprawling wildflowers to persistent flowing rivers, truly captured this year's theme – Solace and Strength: Portraits of Resilience in the Texas Hill Country.

The four winning photographs were selected by a panel of judges and will be featured in HCA's popular 2022 Texas Hill Country Calendar, [available now on the](#)

[HCA website.](#) For the fourth year, the public had the opportunity to view the photo contest entries and vote for their favorites. The People's Choice recipient, William Shelton, received a cash prize and a photo feature in the 2022 calendar for his image titled *Bluebonnet Back Road*.

Andy Heatwole captured the grand prize-winning shot, *Winter Soul*, in San Marcos, Texas. "The crystal-clear water of the San Marcos River is a gem of Central Texas



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that offers a cool and much-needed respite from the heat of summer, but winter has always been my favorite time of year to explore and photograph it,” Heatwole remarks. “Unlike the busy summer months, cold mornings on the river are peaceful and solitary. From the headwaters at Spring Lake, and all along the river as it winds through town, steam rising from the constant 72-degree water creates an ethereal world, full of beauty and mystery,” Heatwole said, adding, “For those willing to get out early and brave the winter chill, scenes like this one at Rio Vista are waiting to be experienced and photographed.”



Alicia R. Paparo earned first place with the photo *Red Longhorn* – photographed in Blanco County, the Texas Longhorn has long been a symbol of strength and resilience for Texas. A breed of cattle originating from Texas, the famous wide horns and strong stature of the longhorn is a living representative of the perseverance that has always been at the heart of our home.

Taking second place, Jeffrey Gladden’s *Trough Visitor* captures a familiar face stopping by for a quick drink. Often preferring the quieter regions of Texas to forage and hunt, the shy gray fox is one of the many common wildlife sightings you may find at a trough or watering hole. Did you know that the gray fox is arboreal and can climb trees? It’s only one of two canines that have adapted to be able to do so, with cat-like retractable claws and a long tail for balance!



The third-place photo, *Calleta Silkmoth Caterpillar*, was captured by David Winchester. This blue-speckled caterpillar is munching away on a Cenizo, or Texas rain sage, which is a popular native host plant for these creatures. After it merges from its cocoon, it will become a gorgeous black and red silkmoth with an impressive 3- to 4-inch-wide wingspan. The Calleta Silkmoth is just one of many magnificent insects that thrive alongside us in the Texas Hill Country.

In addition to these photo contest winners, the Hill Country Alliance would like to recognize the following contestants whose photography is featured in the 2022 Hill Country Calendar:

Airon Mothershed
Albert Garcia
Allen Li
Bobby Norris
Brad Fields
Carol Serur
Carolyn Whiteside
Charles Carlson
David Archer
David Satterwhite
Frank Farese
Gary Sertich

Hannah Evans
Jerry Sargent
Jorge Lane
Kai Joaquin
Karl Ulrich
Karrie King
Katherine Carvajal
Khanh Le
Kim Clendenen
Kim Smith
Lucy Spade
Madelyn Cimaglia

Mike Jones
Mike Lundy
Mike Zarella
Northern Hendricks
Patricia Lucas
Paul Collins
Rey Coronado
Roland Jimenez
William Campbell
William Shelton



You can enjoy all these photos and much more in the [2022 Hill Country Calendar](#), available for purchase now on the Hill Country Alliance website. HCA's annual Texas Hill Country Calendar features stunning photography from the prior year's photo contest, highlights the beauty of the region, and provides an informative resource on Hill Country conservation. Now in its 14th year, the Hill Country Alliance hopes their annual photo contest and calendar will inspire residents to learn more about the environment and biology of the Texas Hill Country and to become involved in protecting the natural resources of this special region.

The Hill Country Alliance is a nonprofit 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. Visit us at www.hillcountryalliance.org.

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