



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steve Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

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[View the winning photographs here](#)

Energy and Environment Cabinet announces winner of annual 'Capture the Earth' photography contest for middle school students *Takes home gift certificate from Kentucky Department of Parks*

Frankfort, Ky. (April 22, 2015) – Beaumont Middle School sixth-grader Griffin Shively, 11, is the winner of the fifth-annual "Capture the Earth" photography contest, sponsored by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet in celebration of Earth Day.

Griffin photographed a tufted titmouse in his backyard in March. The close-up photo of the bird shows the detail of its head crest, which looks like the pattern of a tweed jacket.

"This picture makes me feel happy for many reasons," wrote Griffin in his submission. "It is a beautiful creature that happens to be my mom's favorite bird -- the tufted titmouse. Most of all, it is in my own backyard. How awesome is it that each and every day I can stop and watch these beautiful birds, and many more, as they enjoy life?"

Griffin said his family keeps feeders on their property to help birds make it through what can be tough Kentucky winters.

"Conservation isn't just limited to the lakes and streams or the land we live on," he said. "It includes all the beautiful creatures around, including birds.. Winter can be hard for these little guys. Finding food can become an issue with snow like we have had in 2015. So, we make it a point to keep feeders all over our property. I think it is our duty to care for the environment and its inhabitants."

He also has advice to those who would like to do their part in environmental protection. He advises people to start small like he did.

“Find one thing to get passionate about. Caring for the birds in my backyard has led to making changes about how my family treats other living things. When we are at the lake we throw fish back in to reproduce, instead of keeping them. We are more aware of joining in to keep our lakes clean and participate in efforts to clean it up. There is so much more we can do. Recycle, reuse, conserve and care. By the way, we love to feed the birds, but selfishly, I love getting shots like this,” said Griffin.

The annual “Capture the Earth” contest was initiated in 2011 with 27 entries and has attracted an increasing number of submissions each year. Ninety-two photographs were entered into this year’s contest.

“Competition was extremely stiff; we had many wonderful photos entered in this year’s competition,” said Energy and Environment Cabinet Secretary Len Peters. “So many quality photos were entered that we have decided to name two honorable mentions so these middle school students would get the recognition that they deserve and to share their love of our natural world with others.”

Noah Lyles, 13, an eighth-grader at Elkhorn Middle School in Frankfort, is being recognized with an honorable mention. His photo of a forested trail covered in snow was taken at Frankfort’s Cove Spring Park.

“Some things you simply cannot easily explain through words,” he wrote. “My photograph captured the exquisiteness of the stark white winters in Frankfort.”

Also recognized with an honorable mention is Olivia Ray, 13, an eighth-grader at Anchorage Public School. Her winter photograph captures a barred owl perched in a tree, looking straight into the camera. “I never dreamed of an opportunity to photograph a barred owl. This cold day in January on the Anchorage Trail was worth it,” she said.

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Editors: The three award-winning photographs are attached. Larger formats for print are available by emailing Ricki.gardenhire@ky.gov.

Griffin Shively, a sixth-grader at Lexington’s Beaumont Middle School, captured this photo of a tufted titmouse at his home. Griffin is the winner of the 2015 Capture the Earth Photography Contest for middle school students, which is sponsored each year by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.

Olivia Ray, 13, an eighth-grader at Anchorage Public School, captured a barred owl perched in a tree. Olivia received an honorable mention in the 2015 Capture the Earth Photography Contest for middle school students, which is sponsored each year by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.

Noah Lyles, 13, an eighth-grader at Frankfort's Elkhorn Middle School, took a shot of a forested trail covered in snow at Cove Spring Park in Frankfort. Noah received an honorable mention in the 2015 Capture the Earth Photography Contest for middle school students, which is sponsored each year by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.