

## **Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area 5th Annual Nature Photo Contest Results. Nature Photo Contest Winners Announced**

The winners of the annual Goose Lake Prairie Nature Photo Contest were announced over the weekend.

- *Peggy Hanna of Godley Illinois won the coveted Best of Show Award, as well as Best Color Print, with her entry entitled "Flight of the Barred Owl".*
- *Gerald LeVault of Morris was judged to have submitted the Best Black and White Print with his entry "Tree in Winter Whiteout".*
- *Peggy Hanna of Godley Illinois also received the Prairie Partners' Pick Award for her entry "Cockfight".*
- *The People's Choice Award, as determined by balloting of the numerous visitors to the exhibit over the weekend, was awarded to Don Blecha of Coal City for his entry "Fighting Foxes".*

The amateur Photo Contest is held every August at the Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area on Pine Bluff Road at Jugtown Road in east Grundy County. It is orchestrated by the volunteer organization Goose Lake Prairie Partners, with a great deal of assistance from the Morris Camera Club. Photo entries are to depict the flora, fauna, and natural environment in the state of Illinois. One hundred fifty-seven entries were submitted on Sunday August 14 at the Goose Lake Prairie Visitors Center on Jugtown Road. The majority of participants were from Grundy and Will counties, although some entries were received from as far away as Chicago.

Judging was held Friday evening by a panel of experts assembled by the Morris Camera Club. The judges were Curtis Larsen of Marseilles, Wes Steward of Yorkville, and Bruce Van Pelt of Sandwich. Winners were announced Saturday morning, and all of the photos were on display at the Visitors Center through the weekend. "We are excited by the response to the contest this year", said Goose Lake Partners' President Susie Johnson. "Not only were the one hundred and fifty seven entries the most we have received in the five-year history of the competition, but the quality of the entries was outstanding."

The response by the public was also very positive, as the visitor count at the Center was up 75% over a normal August weekend. Most of our visitors were amazed at the professional quality produced by our local amateur photographers.