



# 23rd Annual Student Bird Art Contest Results (2026)



This year, 679 pieces of art were submitted from Humboldt County students in grades K through 12. Some 42 cash prizes totaling \$660, plus 33 honorable mentions, were awarded in a ceremony at the Arcata Community Center in mid-April. All entries were displayed during the Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival.— *Sue Leskiw, Contest Organizer*

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*(Top) Kindergarten & Grade 1 cash award winners. (Bottom) Kindergarten & Grade 1 Honorable Mentions.  
Photos by Paul Johnson.*

## ***Kindergarten & Grade 1***

First Place: Lily Varzгах, Homeschooled, American Goldfinch; Lily Borque, Jacoby Creek, Common Loon

Second Place: Lorelei Schenkelberg, Blue Lake Elementary, Anna's Hummingbird; Misa Gambrel-Mikolai, Union Street Charter, Spotted Owl

Third Place: Harlow Fillmore, Union Street Charter, Western Grebe; Josie Hays, Northern United Charters, Black Oystercatcher

**Honorable Mentions:** Caleb Redner, Blue Lake Elementary, Marsh Wren; Arrow Quinlan, Union Street Charter, Bald Eagle; Douglas Bruner, Blue Lake Elementary, Western Meadowlark; Sophia Torres, Garfield Elementary, Anna's Hummingbird; Nolan Benzinger, Garfield Elementary, Osprey



(Left, from top) Lily Varzгах; Lily Bourque; Lorelei Schenkelberg; Caleb Redner. (Right, from top) Misa Gambrel-Mikolai; Harlow Fillmore; Josie Hays.



*(Left, from top) Sophia Torres; Arrow Quinlan.  
(Right, from top) Nolan Benzinger;  
Douglas Bruner.*



*(Top) Grade 2 cash award winners. (Bottom) Grade 2 Honorable Mentions. Photos by Paul Johnson.*

**Grade 2**

First Place: Asher Stein, Northern United Charters-Briceland, Brown Pelican

Second Place: Mason Atherton Friend, Redwood Coast Montessori, Anna's Hummingbird

Third Place: Roman Zaragoza, Garfield Elementary, Spotted Owl; Eimilei Byrne, Fuente Nueva Charter, Red-breasted Nuthatch

**Honorable Mentions:** Ember Freedlund, Mattole Elementary, White-tailed Kite; Dart Poitier, Northern United Charters, Bufflehead; Isaac Cookman, Freshwater Elementary, Mallard



*(From top) Mason Atherton Friend;  
Roman Zaragoza.*

*(From top) Asher Stein; Eimilei Byrne;  
Isaac Cookman.*



*Dart Poitier.*



*Ember Freedlund.*



*(Left) Grade 3 cash award winners. (Right) Grade 3 Honorable Mention. Photos by Paul Johnson.*

### **Grade 3**

First Place: Helena Yang, Northern United Charters, Great-horned Owl; Skye Forest Queener, Mattole Elementary, Pileated Woodpecker

Second Place: Sage Farrell, Garfield Elementary, California Gull; Oscar Smith, Fuente Nueva Charter, Bald Eagle

Third Place: Alder Antonio, Coastal Grove Charter, Spotted Owl; Avery Herrera, Fuente Nueva Charter, House Sparrow

**Honorable Mentions:** Lyra Drake, Alder Grove Charter, Western Tanager; Solvei Arnold, Redwood Coast Montessori, Snowy Plover; Fiona Varzгах, Home Schooled, Great Egret; Hazel Sperry, Northern United Charters, Black-capped Chickadee



*Helena Yang.*



*Skye Forest Queener.*



*(Left, from top) Sage Farrell; Alder Antonio; Oscar Smith. (Right, from top) Avery Herrera; Fiona Varzгах; Lyra Drake.*



*Solvei Arnold.*



*Hazel Sperry.*



*(Top) Grade 4 cash award winners. (Bottom) Grade 4 Honorable Mentions. Photos by Paul Johnson.*

### **Grade 4**

First Place: Sylvia Tout, Garfield Elementary, Spotted Owl; Vasili Tokarev, Arcata Christian, Belted Kingfisher

Second Place: Olive Zevine, Union Street Charter, Anna's Hummingbird; Naiya Trees, Northern United Charters, Black-capped Chickadee

Third Place: Nevaeh Ortega, Arcata Elementary, Barn Owl; Emory Thoreson-Veeh, Garfield Elementary, American Avocet

**Honorable Mentions:** Etta Ray, Fuente Nueva Charter, Bald Eagle; Rowan Dunn, Union Street Charter, California Quail; Indy Wirthman, Union Street Charter, Anna's Hummingbird; Evelyn Kauffman, Garfield Elementary, Western Grebes; Lexi Roth, Union Street Charter, Steller's Jay; River Ott, Freshwater Elementary, Steller's Jay



(Left, from top) Sylvia Tout; Naiya Trees;  
Nevaeh Ortega. (Right, from top) Vasili Tokarev;  
Olive Zevine; Etta Ray.



(Left, from top) Emory Thoreson-Veeh; Evelyn Kauffman; Indy Wirthman; Lexi Roth.  
(Right, from top) Rowan Dunn; River Ott.



(Left) Grade 5 cash award winners. (Right) Grade 5 Honorable Mention. Photos by Paul Johnson.

### Grade 5

First Place: Jack Werner, Pacific View Charter, Peregrine Falcon; Lyon Williams, Northern United Charters-Briceland, Great Blue Heron

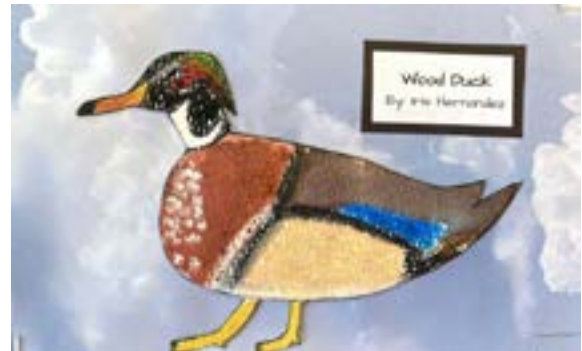
Second Place: Shaina Bateman, Garfield Elementary, Mallard; Esa McGowan, Homeschooled, Bald Eagle

Third Place: Brynn Thrash, Garfield Elementary, Snowy Plover; Eric Graybill, Fuente Nueva Charter, Western Bluebird

**Honorable Mentions:** Iris Hernandez, Arcata Elementary, Wood Duck; Persephone Gradine, Arcata Elementary, Belted Kingfisher; Priscilla Bumphus, Arcata Elementary, American Goldfinch; Maliya Boudreaux, Arcata Elementary, Red-breasted Nuthatch; Sarafinn Clemans, Freshwater Elementary, Steller's Jay



(Left, from top) Jack Werner; Esa McGowan.  
(Right, from top) Lyon Williams; Shaina Bateman.



*(Left, from top) Eric Graybill; Brynn Thrash; Sarafinn Clemans. (Right, from top) Priscilla Bumphus; Iris Hernandez; Persephone Gradine; Maliya Boudreaux.*



*Grades 6&7 award winners. Photo by Paul Johnson.*

**Grades 6&7**

First Place: Adelaide Elkins, Freshwater Elementary, Great Blue Heron; Lorelai Garcia, Zane Middle School, Western Meadowlark

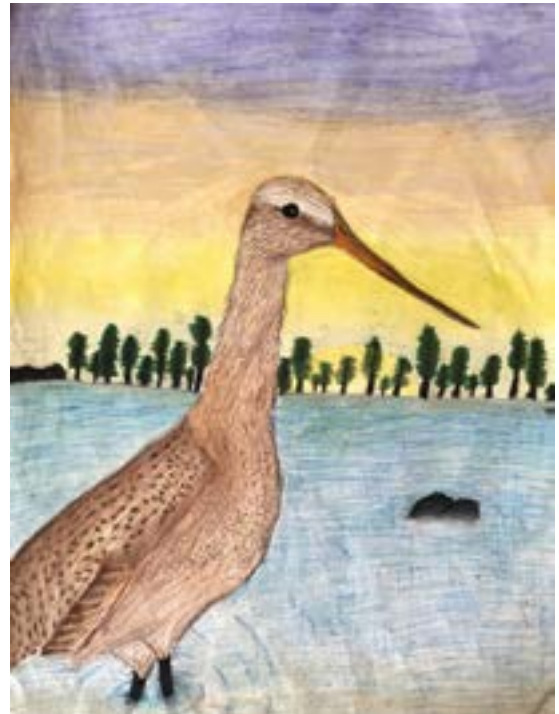
Second Place: Mia Hong-Novotney, Sunny Brae Middle School, Varied Thrush; Ivan Tokarev, Arcata Christian, American Kestrel

Third Place: Margot Nims, Garfield Elementary, Northern Flicker; Penn Kerhoulas, Garfield Elementary, Marbled Godwit

**Honorable Mentions:** Heidi Tout, Garfield Elementary, Belted Kingfisher; Mira Iversen, Winship Middle School, Wood Duck; Berna Queener, Mattole Elementary, Western Tanagers; Davida Bumphus, Sunny Brae Middle School, Tufted Puffin



*(Left) Lorelai Garcia. (Right, from top) Adelaide Elkins; Mia Hong-Novotney.*



*(Left, from top) Ivan Tokarev; Heidi Tout; Mira Iversen. (Right, from top) Margot Nims; Penn Kerhoulas; Davida Bumphus.*



*Berna Queener.*



*Grades 8-12 award winners. Photo by Paul Johnson.*

### ***Grades 8-12***

First Place: Jolie Micheal, Winship Middle School, American Kestrel

Second Place: Evie Herrera, Arcata High, Marsh Wren

Third Place: Aleah Allender, Casterlin School, Red-tailed Hawk

**Honorable Mentions:** Cruz Girsback, Fortuna Middle School, Western Grebes; Irena Fugate, Northern United Charters, Snowy Plover; Dannika Bessett, Zane Middle School, Spotted Owl; Haylee Scotti, Academy of the Redwoods, Wood Duck; Alysiana Fouquette, Academy of the Redwoods, Least Sandpipers; October Mintey, Eureka High, California Quail.



*Jolie Micheal.*



*Evie Herrera.*



(Left, from top) Alysianna Fouquette; October Mintey; Cruz Girsback; Haylee Scotti. (Right, from top) Aleah Allender; Irena Fugate; Dannika Bessett

### ***Best Bird in Habitat Awards***

Tristen Welsh (Grade 1), Union Street Charter, Pileated Woodpecker; Halo Lamb (Grade 5), Morris Elementary, Great Blue Heron; Madden McCall (Grade 6), Northern United Charters, Cinnamon Teal; Elena Cudahy (Grade 6), Jacoby Creek Elementary, Belted Kingfisher; Mahala Broussard (Grade 11), Academy of the Redwoods, Red-tailed Hawk



*(Left, from top) Madden McCall; Halo Lamb; Elena Cudahy. (Right, from top) Mahala Broussard; Tristen Welsh.*