



FINDING UNEXPECTED BEAUTY

A GUIDE TO SUBMISSIONS – ILLUMINA

Thank you for contributing to *ILLUMINA*, a global artistic project exploring creation, beauty, relationship, wonder, and hope through birds, birdsong, and the natural world. We hope to gather contributions from every continent, creating a mosaic of voices, habitats, landscapes, and birdsongs that reflect the extraordinary diversity of life on Earth.

We are seeking birds, habitats, and birdsongs that reveal unexpected beauty, resilience, hope, or wonder – especially in places experiencing challenge, change, or recovery.

Some of the most meaningful submissions will reveal not only a bird, but also something about the place, community, or landscape it calls home.

Together, these contributions will help tell a larger story about our shared world – revealing moments of beauty, tenderness, and life in places where we might have forgotten to look.

WHAT CAN I SUBMIT?

We welcome:

- Birdsong recordings
- Bird photographs
- Bird videos
- Photographs or videos of bird habitats
- Photographs or videos of nests
- Photographs of feathers found naturally in the environment
- Extreme close-ups and microscopic imagery
- Natural textures and patterns
- Written reflections explaining why you chose the material

We are interested not only in birds themselves, but also in the habitats, landscapes, and communities in which they live. A close-up photograph of a feather, a nest, or a habitat may be just as valuable as a photograph of the bird itself.

Contributions may ultimately appear in large-scale performance projections, educational resources, exhibitions, publications, and digital presentations associated with the project.



RECORDING QUALITY

Professional equipment is not required. Mobile phones are completely acceptable. Raw or minimally processed material is preferred.

Videos can be very short. Even one or two seconds may contain material that is useful to us. Most clips need not exceed 30–60 seconds.

Thoughtful observation is far more important than technical perfection. A simple photograph accompanied by a meaningful story is more valuable than a professionally produced image with no explanation.

Common birds are welcome. Rare species are not required. We are just as interested in sparrows, pigeons, seagulls, crows, starlings, robins, and other familiar birds as we are in unusual or exotic species.

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION:

Why did you choose this?

The explanation accompanying your submission is often just as important as the image, video, or recording itself.

Please tell us:

- Why did this bird catch your attention?
- What is special about this place?
- What does this bird tell us about its environment?
- Is there a story connected to this location?
- Why does this image or sound matter to you?
- What do you hope others might notice?

The strongest submissions often reveal something meaningful about the relationship between a bird and the place where it lives.

FINDING BEAUTY IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

We are seeking moments that reveal beauty, tenderness, and life in unexpected places.

Many of the most meaningful submissions may come from places experiencing challenge, change, or recovery – whether through urbanization, natural disasters, habitat loss, conflict, displacement, industrial activity, abandonment, fragility, neglect, or other forces that shape the places where people and wildlife live. Yet even in such places, birds continue to sing, build nests, migrate, and adapt.

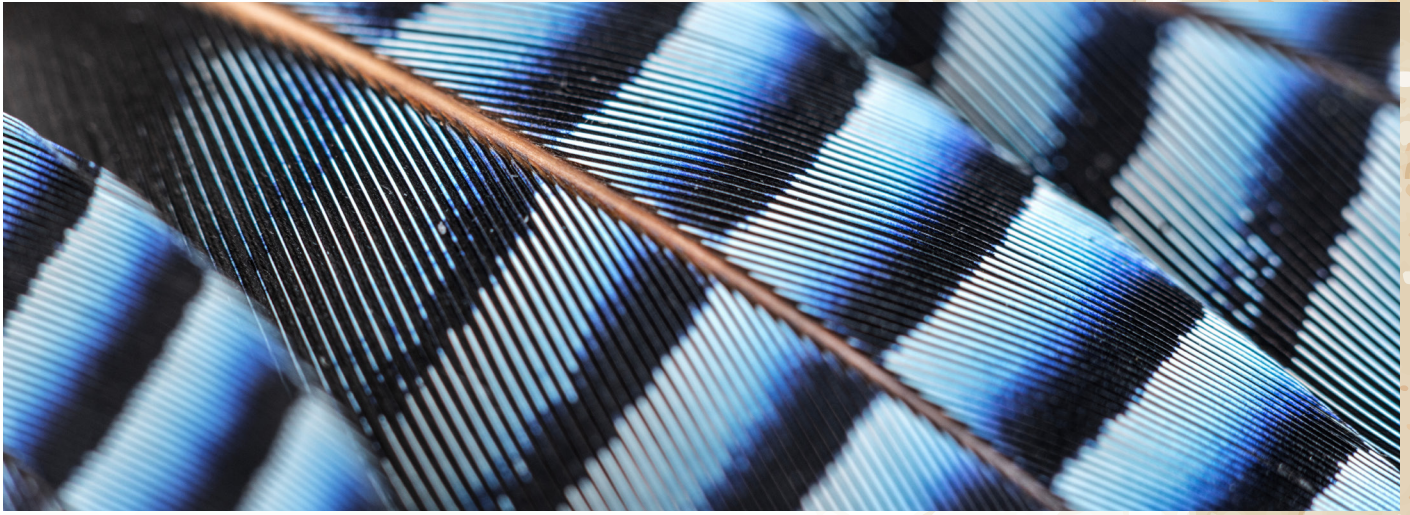
We invite contributors to look for these signs of resilience, hope, relationship, and wonder. The goal is not simply to document problems. Rather, we hope to discover moments that reveal life, beauty, and hope where they might be least expected.

ESPECIALLY WELCOME

We are particularly interested in:

- Birds thriving in unexpected urban spaces
- Places where people and nature coexist in creative ways
- Habitat details that reveal the character of a place
- Habitats recovering after storms, floods, wildfire, or other disturbances
- Birds living amid landscapes shaped by conflict, displacement, or recovery
- Birds interacting with human-built environments
- Common birds that have become symbols of hope, resilience, or belonging
- Nest architecture
- Close-up photographs of feathers
- Migratory movements
- Murmurations and other large-scale flocking behavior
- High-resolution imagery that reveals details not normally visible to the eye





We are especially interested in submissions that reveal something meaningful about the relationship between birds and the places they call home.

CLOSE-UPS AND FINE DETAIL

Some imagery may be projected at monumental scale, allowing audiences to encounter details that are normally overlooked.

Because of this, close-up imagery is especially welcome.

Examples include:

- Feathers
- Nests and nest materials
- Eyes
- Wings
- Bark, reeds, grasses, and other habitat elements
- Patterns, textures, and structures found within the natural world

WHAT TO INCLUDE WITH YOUR SUBMISSION

Please include, if possible:

- Your name
- For students: age and academic level (if applicable)
- Location and date
- Species (if known)
- A brief reflection on what drew you to that particular moment

One or two sentences is often enough. The story behind a submission is just as valuable as the image, video, or recording itself.

A SPECIAL INVITATION TO YOUNG PEOPLE

We are especially eager to receive submissions from children and young adults.

What did you notice?

What made this bird interesting to you?

Why did you stop to document this particular scene?

WHAT DO YOU WANT OTHERS TO SEE?

We especially want to hear what you noticed and why it mattered to you.

Respect for Birds and Their Environments

The well-being of birds, their habitats, and the people participating in this project is more important than any photograph, video, or recording.

Please do not:

- Disturb nests
- Approach nesting birds too closely
- Alter habitats to obtain a better image
- Use playback recordings that may disrupt natural behavior
- Handle birds, eggs, feathers, or nests
- Enter unsafe environments or place yourself or others at risk

We are seeking genuine encounters with the living world – approached with attentiveness, wonder, and respect.



HOW CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE USED

All submitted material will be thoughtfully reviewed by the artistic team. We will endeavor to incorporate as many contributions as possible into the project and its associated educational, exhibition, and digital components. All contributors will be acknowledged in project materials, including online resources and the freely available recording and documentation associated with the project.

TIMELINE

The primary submission deadline is **October 1, 2026**.

Submissions received after this date may still be considered as the project develops.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about potential submissions, technical requirements, educational participation, or anything else related to the project, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Email: submissions@spiritus.art

Website: www.spiritus.art

We welcome submissions from individuals, families, schools, universities, community organizations, conservation groups, faith communities, and anyone with an interest in birds and the natural world.

Every contribution – whether a photograph, a short video, a birdsong recording, a written reflection, or a simple observation – helps us build a richer and more diverse picture of our shared world.

Thank you for helping us discover and share unexpected beauty, resilience, hope, and wonder through birds, habitats, and birdsong.

