

# The Next Generation

THIS YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHER IS AN ASPIRING PRO AND A WPY FINALIST!



**JOSIAH LAUNSTEIN**

AGE 10

Home  
PINCHER CREEK, ALBERTA

Career Goal  
WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

Alternate Career  
HOCKEY PLAYER FOR THE CALGARY FLAMES



**What advice would you give to aspiring amateur photographers who are just starting out?**

One thing I've learned from my father is to photograph what you love, because it shows in your pictures. I love wildlife and especially Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep, owls, elk, and foxes. Those are the subjects I most love to photograph and I think I end up taking my best pictures of them. Also, get out as much as you can with your camera! I have also learned how important it is to learn how to use your camera and how you get a good exposure and what settings you need for different types of pictures. When I was seven and I was just starting to take pictures, I asked my dad if we could go photograph some eagles he knew

had a nest near our home. I got some really cool pictures, but my very favourite one wasn't quite perfect because the eagle was suddenly going faster than my shutter speed could freeze. I decided I wanted to learn how to get that kind of picture to turn out perfectly.

**Do you photograph other subjects than wildlife?**

I'm focused on wildlife, but sometimes the mountains or sunset or other things in nature just look too cool to not photograph! I also take pictures of the big windmills around our home near Pincher Creek. I also take pictures of dogs with my dad, and assist him when he photographs working and hunting dogs.

\*Contest is open to residents of Ontario only, 18 and over.

**What advice has your sister given you about nature photography?**

We love taking pictures of wildlife together, but we can get a little competitive. I was seeing all the great pictures she was getting of wildlife and that made me want to start photographing animals too. When we are in the field together, I will sometimes ask her questions, or she will mention a new technique I should try.

**Can you tell us a little bit about your favourite camera?**

My dad, my sister, and I all use Nikon cameras and lenses. I use a camera that has a crop sensor, and I also have one that has a full-frame sensor. My favourite lens used to be a 300mm f/4 lens, but I've been using my dad's 300mm f/2.8 lens for the elk rut this year and think it might be my new favourite (it's a little heavy for hiking though!). I sometimes use a teleconverter with my lens, and I almost always use a tripod or monopod to get better pictures.

**Do you ever find yourself in precarious or even dangerous situations when taking photos?**

Well, I take lots of pictures of bears, bull elk, and bighorn rams, so I guess there's always a little danger. My dad has helped me learn how to photograph wildlife safely and not get too close or do anything to make them anxious or upset with me being there. One of the rules we use when we take pictures is "do no harm," so we never put an animal in a bad situation.

**What is your favourite place in Canada to photograph, and why?**

I have always said Waterton, Alberta because we are there a couple times a week photographing wildlife, but I just spent 10 days in Jasper photographing the elk rut and I think it might be a new favourite! I also really like photographing owls in BC. I'm hoping to photograph moose and caribou in the Yukon one day soon and would love to photograph puffins in the Atlantic Provinces! My dad tells me I need to experience Algonquin too, so I guess I have a lot of places on my list to get to!

**What's it like having your photos on the same wall and in the same exhibition as some of the best wildlife photographers in the world?**

It's awesome! I can't believe my pictures will be on exhibit in museums around the world! I've met a few of the other awarded photographers online and one in person, and it's really cool to have my pictures shown with theirs. It's definitely a huge honour and I'm really grateful.

**What has been your favourite photography moment so far?**

It's hard to pick just one, but I think photographing bighorns in Waterton Lakes National Park last spring. My dad and sister and I spotted a group of rams up on one of the slopes and as we started heading up there I noticed a few of the younger



Photographer Josiah Launstein loves taking pictures of wildlife, especially Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep, birds, elk, and foxes.



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rams were getting really active. My dad went up for some of the big rams that were bedded down but my sister and I decided we should photograph the younger ones just in case. I picked a good angle for some pictures and all of the sudden they reared up and crashed together in an awesome headbutt! I had changed my settings to freeze the action just in case they did something and managed to get a shot right as they hit each other. You can even see the hair and dander flying from the impact! That picture ended up winning the 2014 Young Outdoor Photographer of the Year competition, so it's for sure one of my favourites.

**Do you expect to become a full-time photographer when you finish school? Or do you have a second career choice?**

Yes, I really want nature photography to be my career when I grow up. Well, I wouldn't mind playing for the Calgary Flames in the NHL either, but I think I'll stick with photography! ■