

Vít Lukáš's "Tadpoles" is the Photo of the Year in the Sixth Annual Czech Nature Photo Competition

Facing off against nearly 2,300 photographs sent in by 250 participants, Vít Lukáš's "Tadpoles" has become Photo of the Year for 2022. Its author is no newcomer in this competition—he's already won several awards in previous years. The photo won first place in the Best Photo of Czech Nature category, as well as the award granted by readers of *Lidé a Země* (People and Earth) Magazine. This is the second year in which students have been competing in addition to professionals; 272 students signed up this year and sent in nearly 1,500 photos. The competition results were announced at a gala ceremony in the Czech Photo Centre Gallery on May 3rd, 2022. The Czech Nature Photo exhibition will be open to the public on May 4th through September 4th.

"The photograph entitled "Tadpoles" blends several important attributes of every engaging nature photograph. This is an exceptional look into the development cycle of the common frog, recording a fleeting and little-seen moment in Czech nature. This is also underscored by its technical execution and composition, which utilize the play of the individual tadpoles' colors. The result is an artistic photograph that can engage the audience's attention at first sight, and yet can also awaken interest in the depicted animal species and thereby aid in its conservation", The International Jury's statement.

*"Freshly hatched tadpoles of the common frog (*Rana temporaria*). I spent several years striving for this photo. The tadpoles in a clutch tend to be brown-to-black, but occasionally you can find beautifully colorful ones like these that echo the colors of the adults. Tadpoles feed on egg wrappings just after hatching and head out in all directions shortly afterwards, so it takes quite some luck just to catch them all together. These tadpoles here were about a meter from the shore, just under the surface. To keep from damaging the neighboring clutches, I had to photograph them basically blind using the live preview, extended above the water's surface,"* the author describes the origin of photography.

Vít Lukáš

Vít has a degree in zoology and has worked for nearly twenty years to preserve and photograph nature. He lived for ten years in Chile, where he worked for two zoos, founded one thriving nature station, taught at two universities, and led several research projects. His participation in several international projects has enabled him to travel throughout nearly all of Latin America. He has over 150 expeditions behind him, one third of which went into tropical rainforests. In 1997 he surrendered to the magic of macro photography, to which he is devoted to this day. In his photos he tries to capture animals in their natural environment while also documenting details that are invisible to the naked eye. His macro photographs have been presented in a number of magazines, books, and exhibitions both in the Czech Republic and abroad—for example in Chile and Columbia. In recent years, besides macro photography, he has also focused on photographing the larger animals, including humans. Just as with macro photography, when photographing people, he zeroes in on details that one might easily overlook. He looks at people with the eyes of an observing zoologist, and he enjoys capturing situations from new and unusual angles. He currently works as a primate curator at the Prague Zoo. His animal photographs regularly appear not only in the media and magazines, but also on traditional and urban billboards.

The Czech Nature Photo 2022 competition and exhibition are organized by Czech Photo Centre


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Contacts and more information: www.czechphoto.org

Public relations: Anna Vacková, +420 777 093 690, vackova@czechphoto.org