



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Why Creativity Matters More Than Ever for Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife Artist of the Year 2026. Entries Now Open

LONDON, UK (20 JAN 2026). At a time when global conservation funding is under increasing pressure, creativity is playing a vital role in sustaining frontline action. **Entries are now open for Wildlife Artist of the Year 2026 (WAY)**, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation's international art competition inviting artists and visual storytellers worldwide to use creativity to help protect wildlife.

WAY is an internationally recognised art competition and exhibition that brings creativity and conservation together. Often described as the "Oscars of international wildlife art", the competition celebrates artistic excellence while raising vital funds to support conservation projects across Africa and Asia.

Founded by artist and conservationist **David Shepherd CBE**, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation has championed art as a force for change for over 40 years. Since its launch in 2008, WAY has raised more than **£2 million**, demonstrating how creative action can deliver real, measurable impact at moments of global pressure.

Creativity as Action

As traditional funding streams become increasingly fragile, initiatives like WAY are helping to fill critical gaps - supporting rangers on the ground, protecting endangered species, and working alongside communities living with wildlife. Proceeds from the competition directly fund DSWF's frontline conservation work, ensuring protection continues where it is needed most.

"At a time when conservation funding is under pressure, Wildlife Artist of the Year shows how creativity can step forward and deliver real impact for wildlife," says Georgina Lamb, CEO of David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation.

A Creative Platform with Purpose

The 2026 competition features **eight open categories**, welcoming submissions across fine art, illustration, sculpture, mixed media, photography, and contemporary, concept-led visual storytelling. Artists are encouraged to explore wildlife, environmental themes, and the evolving relationship between people and nature.

Winning and shortlisted works will be exhibited at **Mall Galleries, London**, one of the most anticipated events in the wildlife art calendar. All exhibited works will be available for sale in gallery and online at davidsshepherd.org, with proceeds supporting DSWF's conservation work.

Art, Activism, and the Moment We're In

Art and activism have long intersected as tools for cultural change. Today, as conservation funding faces increasing pressure, creative practice is no longer peripheral, it is part of the solution. WAY brings together a global creative community united by the belief that art can still move people, shape culture, and protect what matters.

The Art of Survival: FIGHT • PROTECT • ENGAGE

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Founder: David Shepherd CBE FRSA 1931 – 2017

DSWF is a Registered Charity (No. 1106893) and a Company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales (No. 4918382)
Registered office: One Bartholomew Close, London, EC1A 7BL | VAT Reg No. 414001815



Entries close: 24 March 2026

Exhibition: 8–12 September 2026, Mall Galleries, London

For full submission details, visit davidsshepherd.org

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Notes to editors

- **Wildlife Artist of the Year** is an international art competition and exhibition run by David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, raising funds for wildlife conservation across Africa and Asia.
- Founded in 2008, the competition has raised over **£2 million** to support frontline conservation projects.
- The competition is open to artists aged 15 and over and welcomes submissions across wide range of artistic styles and media.

Key dates

- Entries open: 7 January 2026
- Entries close: 24 March 2026
- Exhibition: 8–12 September 2026
- Location: Mall Galleries, London

Media enquiries

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Images & media assets

High-resolution images, logos, and media assets are available to download via the **Wildlife Artist of the Year** press page: <https://davidsshepherd.org/wildlife-art/competitions/wildlife-artist-of-the-year/media/>

About David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation

David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation is an international conservation charity dedicated to protecting endangered species and fighting wildlife crime across Africa and Asia. Founded by artist and conservationist David Shepherd CBE, the Foundation combines conservation action, community engagement, education, and art-led fundraising to deliver lasting impact for wildlife.

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