

Be A Responsible Wildlife Photographer



Mountain goats above Ketchikan, Alaska in the Tongass National Forest. Photo by USDA-FS, Buck Willoughby

Wildlife Watchers Code of Ethics

- ☞ Respect wildlife
- ☞ Respect other wildlife viewers and property
- ☞ Respect wildlife habitat
- ☞ Respect the “wildness” of wildlife

Observe animals from a safe distance for us and for them:

- Use binoculars, spotting scopes and viewing blinds for a close look.
- Photograph from a vehicle. A truck makes a great blind and is often less disruptive than getting out of your rig.
- Move slowly and quietly.
- Avoid nests and dens. Leave baby birds and other animals where they are found.
- Learn to recognize and respect wildlife alarm signals.
- When an animal changes behavior as a result of our presence, we are too close.
- Allow wild animals to forage for their natural foods.
- Put the safety and health of wildlife first by resisting the impulse to offer a handout.
- Reserve feeding of wildlife to backyard birds.

Film and photograph wildlife responsibly:

- Use a telephoto lens from a viewing blind or a vehicle.
- Never chase, herd, flush or make deliberate noise that stresses wildlife.
- Leave plants, trees and other natural feature as they are found.
- Depict wildlife as part of a natural environment and identify photos of captured wildlife.

Always be considerate:

- Ask permission to watch or photograph wildlife on private land.
- Observe all rules and regulations.
- Wait your turn to view or photograph animals when sharing a viewing area.
- Leave pets at home or in the car.
- Tread lightly, staying on trails and roads.
- Pack garbage in. Pack garbage out. Do not litter; pack your garbage with you and dispose of it properly when you leave a natural area.