



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release June 4, 1985

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JULY 1 MARKS OPENING OF DUCK STAMP CONTEST AND AVAILABILITY OF THIS YEAR'S STAMP

July 1 will mark a double-barreled day for waterfowl artists, hunters, and conservationists. That is the day the annual Duck Stamp contest opens and the 1985-86 Duck Stamp goes on sale in post offices and other locations across the country.

The upcoming contest will select the winning design to be used on the 1986-87 Duck Stamp (formally known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp). An announcement, published in the March 7, 1985, Federal Register, outlines the procedures and specifications artists should follow in entering the annual competition.

Also on July 1, the 1985-86 Duck Stamp featuring the cinnamon teal design of Gerald Mobley from Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, will go on sale. Duck Stamps are a required purchase for anyone 16 years of age or older who hunts waterfowl. Waterfowlers are not the only ones who contribute to wetlands conservation through purchase of the stamp. An ever-increasing number of birdwatchers, anglers, nature photographers, and others who enjoy the outdoors also contribute to the cause by purchasing Duck Stamps.

During the 50 years since the program began, nearly 90 million Duck Stamps have been sold, providing \$285 million for the conservation of 3.5 million acres as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System which includes waterfowl production areas. While most refuge lands are vitally important to waterfowl, these areas also provide habitat for a number of other species such as deer, songbirds, and a number of endangered species.

The Duck Stamp contest is the only art competition regularly sponsored by the federal government. Each year the contest attracts thousands of entries depicting North American ducks, geese or swans in their natural habitat.

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In general, the contest rules remain much the same as in previous years, but this year the entry fee has been increased to \$35 to help cover costs of administering the contest. The dominant feature of the design must be the portrayal of live, non-extinct, North American migratory ducks, geese, or swans of the family Anatidae. Beginning this year, a listing of all eligible species will be included in the rules. Species featured on the Duck Stamp during the previous 5 years are prohibited. For this year's contest, prohibited species include the American wigeon, pintail, cinnamon teal, canvasback, and ruddy duck.

Entries for the upcoming contest will be accepted by the Service beginning July 1, and must be postmarked no later than October 1. The judging will take place November 5 and 6 in the Department of the Interior auditorium, 18th and C Streets, N.W., in Washington, D.C., beginning at 9 a.m. each day.

Copies of the complete rules and regulations for the 1985 Duck Stamp contest and the reproduction rights agreement (which must be signed by the entering artist) are available from: Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Contest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This year's Duck Stamp may be purchased for \$7.50 at most post offices and a number of national wildlife refuges, or ordered by mail for \$8.00 (includes 50 cents for postage and handling) from the U.S. Postal Service, Philatelic Sales Division, Washington, D.C. 20265-9997.

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