



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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MALLARDS TAKE OFF IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE AS FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE KICKS OFF NEW DUCK STAMP SALES

The Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service will host special First Day of Sale ceremonies in Washington, DC, on June 30 and in Bloomington, Minnesota, on July 1 to launch the new 1995-96 Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp and mark its availability for purchase nationwide.

The new Federal Duck Stamp featuring a pair of mallards may have more significance than the stamp's artist, Jim Hautman of Plymouth, Minnesota, originally envisioned. And while the first Duck Stamp ever created was called, "Mallards Dropping In," this year's stamp could be aptly titled, "Mallards Heading Up."

As dignitaries and other guests gather to honor the stamp that represents the world's premier waterfowl conservation program, the latest news is that mallard numbers are up sharply for the second consecutive year.

"It is especially appropriate to laud the Federal Duck Stamp Program now, as early estimates indicate some of our duck numbers are reaching levels we haven't seen in two decades," said Service Director Mollie Beattie. "And Duck Stamps have undoubtedly played a vital role in securing wetlands habitat for waterfowl and hundreds of other wildlife species."

The new Duck Stamp will go on sale for \$15 at most U.S. post offices, national wildlife refuges, sporting goods stores, and various K-Mart and Wal-Mart stores starting July 1.

Artist Hautman won the 1994 Federal Duck Stamp Contest last November when his painting of a pair of mallards in flight was chosen over 584 other art entries. Hautman also won the 1989 contest and his brother, Joe, won in 1991. Another brother, Robert, has been a finalist for the last few years.

While waterfowl hunters age 16 and older are required to purchase a Federal Duck Stamp each year, more and more conservationists, stamp collectors, and wildlife art enthusiasts also are buying Duck Stamps. Of the \$15 purchase, \$14.70 goes directly into a

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fund used for wetlands acquisition for the National Wildlife Refuge System, the world's most extensive and diverse collection of lands and waters dedicated to wildlife.

Duck Stamps have raised nearly half-a-billion dollars since the inception of the program in 1934, which has been used to acquire more than 4 million acres of wetlands for the refuge system.

The June 30 ceremony will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Interior Department auditorium, 1849 C Street, NW., and hosted by Service Director Beattie; Postmaster of Washington, DC, David Clark; Director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum Jim Bruns; and Paul Blackmer, associate director of the U.S. Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Hautman will attend the June 30 ceremony as well as the special honorary celebration July 1 at Mall of America's Event Center in Bloomington. Minnesota Governor Arne Carlson will proclaim July 1 "Minnesota Federal Duck Stamp Day" to honor Hautman and recognize Minnesota's contributions to the Duck Stamp program and vice versa.

To highlight other wetlands conservation efforts at the First Day of Sale ceremonies, the Service also presents its National Wetlands Conservation Awards to honor individuals and organizations in the private sector for special efforts. The award will be presented at the June 30 event to Joe Carter of Charleston, South Carolina, a retired coastal resort developer, and to Wildlife Forever, a nonprofit conservation group, at the July 1 ceremony.

Carter will receive the award for his efforts coordinating a partnership of public and private interests in conserving the diverse resources of South Carolina's Winyah Bay, while Wildlife Forever is being recognized for its vital role in many wetlands conservation efforts by providing matching grant funding for a broad array of projects.

In addition, judges from the 1994 Federal Duck Stamp Contest will be on hand at the June 30 event to judge the Federal Junior Duck Stamp "Best of Show" winning designs from the 50 states participating in that program this past school year. Three national winners will be selected, each of whom will win a free trip to Washington, DC, this November to be honored at the 1995 Federal Duck Stamp Contest.

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The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program is a unique conservation education curriculum, including an art competition modeled after the Federal Duck Stamp Contest, designed to teach youngsters about waterfowl and wetlands conservation.

For more information about Duck Stamps, the 1995 Federal Duck Stamp Contest, the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program, or the Duck Stamp Licensing Program, contact the Service's Federal Duck Stamp Office at 202-208-4354, or write 1849 C Street, NW., Room 2058, Washington, DC 20240.

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