

# Federal Duck Stamp Program

## *Put Your Stamp on Conservation... Buy Duck Stamps*

Among the easiest ways anyone can support conservation is by purchasing a Migratory Bird Hunting & Conservation Stamp. The "Duck Stamp" is one of the most successful conservation tools ever created to protect habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Duck Stamps are conservation revenue stamps produced annually by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Nearly all of the purchase price goes directly to help protect wetlands and associated habitats through fee acquisition, lease and conservation easements. The habitat acquired with Federal Duck Stamp dollars becomes part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, a network of U.S. lands and waters set aside specifically for wildlife conservation.

Wetland and associated grasslands provide habitat for ducks, geese, swans - and a myriad of other wildlife species. Habitat acquired with Duck Stamp dollars also benefits humans. Wetlands help purify water, aid in flood control, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, bird watching and outdoor photography. Local communities benefit economically by having wildlife areas nearby.

***The 2023 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest will be held on Sept 15 & 16 at Drake University, Des Moines, IA***

***[Learn More:](#)***

***<https://www.fws.gov/program/federal-duck-stamp/federal-duck-stamp-contest-event-information>***



*2023-2024 Federal Duck Stamp featuring Tundra Swans.*

*Art by Joseph Hautman, Minnesota USFWS*

### **One Stamp, Many Uses**

While all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older are required to purchase an annual stamp, anyone can participate in conservation by buying Duck Stamps. Each year, waterfowl hunters purchase approximately 1 million stamps.

A current Federal Duck Stamp is a free pass to any national wildlife refuge that charges an entry fee.

Because nearly all Duck Stamp proceeds are used to conserve habitat for birds and other wildlife, birders, nature photographers and other outdoor enthusiasts buy the stamps to help ensure that they can always see wildlife at their favorite outdoors spots.

As finely detailed, miniature works of art, Federal Duck Stamps are prized by stamp collectors and wildlife art enthusiasts around the world. The stamp image is featured on products such as t-shirts, calendars, mugs and blankets, through the Duck Stamp Licensing Program.

### **Where to Buy Duck Stamps**

Federal Duck Stamps are sold at many sporting goods stores and other retail locations - both large and small - that sell sporting and recreation equipment. You can also buy them at many national wildlife refuges and U.S. Post Offices, and online through Amplex.

As an added convenience, particularly for hunters, the E-Stamp Program allows you to buy a Duck Stamp online and instantly obtain a printable receipt that is valid as your Duck Stamp for 45 days. Within that time a physical Duck Stamp will be mailed to you, which you must begin carrying upon receipt. Twenty-eight states currently participate in the E-Stamp Program; you may buy a Federal Duck Stamp through any state's online system. You do not have to be a hunter and you do not have to live in that state or plan to hunt there.

### **Taking Action for Conservation**

At the turn of the 20th century, market shooting to supply food for restaurants;



Judges weigh in at the Federal Duck Stamp Contest, the nation's only federally sponsored, juried art competition. Credit: Garry Tucker/USFWS

bounty hunting and unregulated sport hunting; and collecting feathers for the fashion industry had contributed to the loss of millions of birds and other wildlife. Millions of acres of U.S. wetlands were drained to feed and house the ever-increasing population, greatly reducing waterfowl breeding and nesting habitat.

In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act (or "Duck Stamp Act"), and an increasingly concerned nation took firm action to stop the destruction of wetlands vital to the survival of migratory waterfowl.

The first Duck Stamp, depicting mallards in flight, was designed in 1934 by J.N. "Ding" Darling, then the director of the Bureau of Biological Survey (forerunner to today's U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service).

A permanent theme of "celebrating our waterfowl hunting heritage" acknowledges the contributions hunters make to habitat conservation.

#### Art for Wildlife's Sake

In addition to being the nation's only conservation revenue stamp, the Federal Duck Stamp is also unique in the way the stamp is created. Each fall, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service holds an art contest, the only juried art competition sponsored by the federal government.

One winning artist will see their work featured as the design on the following year's Federal Duck Stamp.

You can witness history in the making as a panel of five judges selects the winning art from among hundreds of entries.

If you can't make it to the contest, you can still see original Duck Stamp art; the top entries each year tour the nation to be exhibited at museums, refuges, festivals and other venues. Find the art tour schedule: <https://www.fws.gov/birds/get-involved/duck-stamp/federal-duck-stamp-art-exhibit-tour.php>

#### Beyond Federal Duck Stamps

The success of Federal Duck Stamps has led to similar conservation revenue stamps being issued in different nations and by several states. Some also hold contests to choose the art for their stamps.

#### Inspiring the Next Generation

The Junior Duck Stamp Program is the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's premier youth conservation education initiative. It is designed to encourage students in kindergarten through high school to explore wetlands and waterfowl. Students learn about conservation and demonstrate their artistic talents in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and several territories. An annual Junior Duck Stamp is produced and this collectors' item is sold to raise funds to raise our next generation of wildlife conservationists.

Learn more about the Junior Duck Stamp Program at <https://www.fws.gov/program/junior-duck-stamp>

## Buy Duck Stamps & Save Wetlands!

### How to Buy Duck Stamps:

Duck stamps are available to everyone and are simple to purchase either in person, by mail, or online.

U.S. Postal Service [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)  
1-800-782-6724

Many local Post Offices  
[usps.whitepages.com](http://usps.whitepages.com)

Amplex Corporation  
[www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com) 1-800-852-4897

Sporting good and equipment retailers, including BassPro Shops, Cabela's, WalMart and Kmart have them.

Some National Wildlife Refuges  
[www.fws.gov/program/national-wildlife-refuge-system](http://www.fws.gov/program/national-wildlife-refuge-system)

E-Stamps can be bought from any participating state:  
[www.fws.gov/service/buy-duck-stamp-or-e-stamp](http://www.fws.gov/service/buy-duck-stamp-or-e-stamp)

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Federal Duck Stamp Program  
5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: MB  
Falls Church, VA 22041

703/358-2145  
[duckstamps@fws.gov](mailto:duckstamps@fws.gov)

<https://www.fws.gov/program/federal-duck-stamp>

Facebook: USFWS\_Migratory Birds

Twitter: @USFWSBirds

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If you would like to sell Federal Duck Stamps and Junior Duck Stamps at your location, find out about our consignment program by emailing [duckstamps@amplex.com](mailto:duckstamps@amplex.com)