



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

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CINNAMON TEAL TAKES TOP HONORS IN THE 1985-86 DUCK STAMP COMPETITION

An Oklahoma artist's watercolor design of a lone male cinnamon teal won the prestigious 1985-86 Federal Duck Stamp Contest November 7. The painting, by Gerald Mobley of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, will serve as the design for the 1985-86 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. Mobley's design was selected from over 1500 entries during a two-day judging event held at the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C.

Mobley, 46, was in the audience when the judges' decision was announced by G. Ray Arnett, Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. It was only the second time in the history of the nationwide competition that the winning artist has been present when the final selection was made.

"I just sat there and couldn't believe it, until people around me started congratulating me," Mobley said later. Mobley, who owns his own graphics design business in Tulsa, said this is the fifth year he has entered the national contest. Mobley was a runner-up for two years in the Oklahoma State duck stamp contest before finally winning it in 1983.

Mobley, a native of Arkansas, has spent most of his life in Oklahoma. He has had no formal art training other than classes as a teenager, but says he has been fortunate to work as an apprentice with many talented professionals. He says for years the demands of his own commercial art studio kept him busy, but he enjoys waterfowl art. "I like to be outdoors and I use photography extensively for reference materials. I try to blend the various elements of photographs into the design -- using one photo for reference on the sky, another for how the cattails should look, and so on," said Mobley. A member of Muskogee Chapter of Ducks Unlimited, he says he doesn't get to hunt and fish as much as he would like to, but now he might take some time off to travel and do more outdoor photography, as well as art.

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The Federal Duck Stamp contest has been sponsored annually since 1949 by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to choose the design for the annual Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, popularly known as the Duck Stamp. These stamps must be purchased yearly by all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older. Funds from stamp sales are used by the Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire wetlands and other wildlife habitats for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Nearly 2 million of the stamps are sold each year to hunters, stamp collectors, and a growing number of non-hunters who want to contribute to the Nation's wildlife conservation efforts.

Before 1949, wildlife artists were commissioned to produce a design for the annual stamp. Since then, the design has been chosen through a contest open to all artists who are residents or citizens of the United States. Contestants are limited to one entry apiece each year and the competition is intense because of the growing popularity of the contest.

A total of 1,515 paintings of North American ducks, geese, or swans were entered in this year's contest. Contestants from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands were represented.

Second place this year went to Paul F. Bridgford of Altoona, Iowa, who entered an acrylic design of blue-winged teal. Mario F. Fernandez of Orono, Minnesota, won third place with an acrylic design of Canada geese.

Judges of this year's contest were Dr. Paul A. Johnsgard, a professor of zoology at the University of Nebraska, of Lincoln, Nebraska; Patrick J. Gilligan of San Francisco, California, a wildlife art collector and past president of the California Waterfowl Association; Dr. Donald T. Lewers of Easton, Maryland, president of the American Wildlife Heritage, a national waterfowl conservation organization; professional decoy carver Grayson Chesser of Jenkins Bridge, Virginia; David Wagner of Wausau, Wisconsin, director of the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum which sponsors its own international art competition; Stephen L. Schuetz, wildlife art collector and a regional vice president of Ducks Unlimited; and Richard Davis of Pebble Beach, California, a founding director of the International Wildlife Foundation and wildlife art collector.

Judges place importance on the anatomical accuracy of the birds and the suitability of the design for reproduction as a stamp. They also consider the visual impact, overall design, style, and distinctiveness of the entry in the selection process.

The Federal Government offers no prize or award to the winner other than a sheet of the following year's Duck Stamp autographed by the Secretary of the Interior. However, commercial wildlife art dealers are usually eager to market limited edition reprints of the winning design under private agreements with the winner. Through this contest, the reputations of previously unknown wildlife artists have been established, and those of professionals considerably enhanced.

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Since 1934, when Duck Stamps first went on sale, the program has raised approximately \$285 million for the acquisition of about 3.5 million acres of vital wildlife habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Interior Department encourages everyone who enjoys wildlife and the outdoors to help preserve wildlife habitat by purchasing the annual Duck Stamp. Duck Stamps may be purchased for \$7.50 at most post offices, U.S. Postal Service philatelic sales units, and many national wildlife refuges.



Note to Editors: Single black-and-white glossies of this year's design are available on a loan basis from 202/343-8770.

