

September 16, 2013



WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

A Stamp Success Story: Camas NWR

In our August 12th issue of Wingtips, we wrote that we would start an occasional series of refuge profiles to showcase some of those individual refuge properties - NWRs and WMDs - where Stamp/MBCF dollars have gone to build the National Wildlife Refuge System. Here is the first in that series.



Photo: USFWS

Our tour of National Wildlife Refuges begins in Idaho's [Camas National Wildlife Refuge](#), in U.S. Fish & Wildlife Region 1. Situated near the hamlet of Hamer on a high plain (elev. 4800 feet) between the dramatic Grand Tetons to the east and the Lemhi range to the west, Camas comprises more than 10,000 acres of mostly lakes and marshlands, along with drier grass and sagebrush habitat in the uplands. 98.7% of its land was purchased via the MBCF.

It's an important stopover point for migrating Tundra and Trumpeter Swans and Snow Geese; a bird [checklist](#) for the refuge lists White-faced Ibis and Sandhill Crane as summer breeders. During spring and especially fall migration, hundreds of Wilson's Warblers can be seen. Camas Creek flows through the property; both take their name from the [Camas Lily](#), a

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Did You Know?

- 1) Having a valid Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp is a legal requirement - for those 16 years of age or older - while hunting for waterfowl (geese, swans, ducks) but according to current law not for other migratory waterbirds (e.g., cranes, coots, and snipe).
- 2) Stanley Sterns, an accomplished wildlife artist, won the Federal Duck Stamp contest three times (1955-6, "Blue Goose," 1964-5, Nene Goose, and 1966-7, Tundra/Whistling Swan). He also won the Maryland Duck Stamp contest twice. Sterns passed away 13 July 2013 at the age of 87.
- 3) The 1969-70 Stamp, the only

beautiful blue bloomer of May that has provided food and medicine to Native Americans.

Before the refuge was established in 1937, the marshes were used to raise muskrats for the fur trade; the name of today's Rat Farm Pond suggests that past. Some of the refuge's buildings and water control facilities were constructed by the Works Progress Administration. Water supply remains a concern; as the water table has declined, due to agricultural development and natural drought cycles, managers have resorted to wells and pumps to maintain surface water levels.

The refuge's [friends organization](#) has released a charming and short YouTube [tour](#) featuring some of the avian sounds to be heard in Camas NWR. Among the many recreational opportunities, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are encouraged, in the appropriate seasons.

one yet to portray a White-winged Scoter, was the first to raise more than \$6 million.

4) Some Stamp sales over the years:

In 1970-71, 2.42 million stamps were sold.

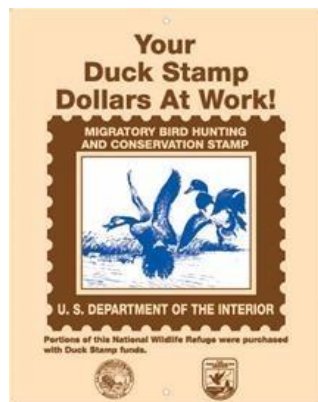
In 2008-09, 1.38 million stamps were sold.

5) The official name of the stamp changed from the "Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp" to the "Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp" in 1977 to better reflect the full impact of the program and to encourage non-hunters to buy the stamp.

MBCC Meeting Results: Three Refuges Grow

On September 13, the [Migratory Bird Conservation Commission](#) (MBCC) officially approved the addition of more than 2,600 acres in fee-title (direct purchase) property to three units of the National Wildlife Refuge System:

- San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge (Texas - 2,072 acres)
- Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge (Washington - 405 acres)
 - Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (Maryland - 201 acres)



All these properties, of course, depend upon willing sellers, and the money for these acquisitions comes from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, commonly understood as the account where Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp funds are deposited.

The property at San Bernard NWR, located about 50 miles south of Houston, provides habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, Neotropical songbird migrants, and other wildlife. The Turnbull NWR acquisition, about 20 miles SW of Spokane, preserves wetlands and uplands to benefit waterfowl. The Blackwater NWR acquisition, on the DelMarVa peninsula, is a long-time high priority inholding which is about 80% forested, 10% brackish/impounded marsh, and 10% freshwater ponds/impoundments. This acquisition is not cheap (over \$1 million),

but it is much desired.

The September 13 meeting of the MBCC is the third and final meeting of the year. Next year, the Commission will be shifting to two meetings per year (March and September) for economy and practicality. The responsibilities will not change, but they will be concentrated over two meetings instead of three.

A report to the MBCC on collections to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund to August 20 indicated that Stamp sales were about \$23.5 million, which represents about 42% of the MBCF, most of the rest coming from increasing import duties on arms and ammunition.

The MBCC also approved 21 impressive [North American Wetlands Conservation Act](#) (NAWCA) projects in 16 states. Acres involved were almost 115,500; the total expended was \$21.5 million, and the match of non-federal dollars was 2.3:1 - for \$50 million in leveraged funds.

The MBCC will meet next on March 12, 2014.

Stamp Art Contest in Northwest Ohio



Photo: P. J. Baicich

We are very close to the Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest, to be held on September 27-28. It will be located at the [Maumee Bay State Park Conference Center](#) in Oregon, Ohio. The public is invited to view the art and to witness the competition itself.

The eligible waterfowl for this year's art competition are Mallard, Canvasback, Gadwall, Cinnamon Teal, and Blue-winged Teal. All of this year's 201 art entries can be viewed [here](#). See images of the art for yourself, and pick out your own favorites!

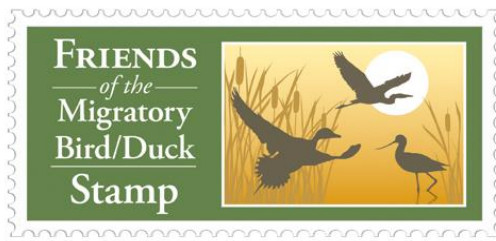
The selection of the contest site in northwest Ohio is no accident. It pays homage to long-time Fish and Wildlife Service employee and acclaimed wildlife artist Bob Hines (1912-1994), who spent his formative youth outdoors in the area around nearby Fremont, Ohio. Hines was also dedicated to the development of the Stamp. His work led to the contest as we know it today, with a formal selection process, judges, submission standards, and clear rules, beginning in the early 1950s.

The Maumee Bay State Park is also close to Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, just 15 miles away on the shore of Lake Erie. Ottawa NWR is an exciting refuge, home to waterfowl, other waterbirds, songbirds, and other wildlife. On the afternoon before the start of the contest, Thursday, September 26, there will be a dedication ceremony at the refuge for the new Bob Hines Refuge Ranger Station, where hundreds of students each school year connect to art and nature through environmental education programs.

It is comforting to know that the existence of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge is in no small part due to the Migratory Bird Stamp. The refuge lands have been acquired through Stamp/MBCF dollars, accounting for 86% of the property.

A lot more on the upcoming art competition, including the livestreaming opportunity, can be found [here](#).

About the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp



Our Friends Group is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to two basic goals:

1. To increase promotional and educational efforts among various target audiences concerning the stamp and the National Wildlife Refuge system.
2. To increase the regular, voluntary purchase of the stamp among hunters and non-hunters alike.

The purchase of a stamp is, perhaps, *the easiest thing you can* do to protect crucial wetland and grassland habitat in the U.S.

Moreover, buying a stamp is not something that will just benefit ducks. Among the many other bird species, there are shorebirds, long-legged waders, rails, raptors, and wetland and grassland songbirds that are dependent on habitats derived from Stamp purchases.

And it's not only birds that benefit from the stamp! Reptiles, amphibians, fish, butterflies, all flourish through Stamp investments. Water quality is also strengthened.

A 15-dollar purchase of a stamp goes a very long way!

Our "Regular Friend" fee is modest, equal to the cost of one current Stamp (\$15), but all Friends are also asked to pledge to buy *two* stamps per year, joining with other individuals and organizations across the country with that promotional effort. Our "Friend's Year" also corresponds with the "year" of a valid Stamp - from July to July.

You can also become a "Supporting Friend" by contributing \$100 or more.

[Become a Friend Today!](#)