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WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

NEW FEDERAL DUCK STAMP



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NEW STAMPS DEBUT

Last Friday, June 29th, the Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World store in Hanover, Maryland, became the setting for the "First Day of Sale Ceremony" and the debut of the 2018-2019 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp and the Junior Duck Stamp. The event was free and open to the public. Participants were able to meet the new artists, buy the first stamps, and witness a bit of history as the new stamps were unveiled. The event continued a proud conservation tradition going back decades.

The new Duck Stamp (valid from July 2018 through June 2019) costs \$25, and it contains an image by Bob Hautman of a pair of Mallards about to land in water. See the stamp reproduced above. This is the third time that Bob Hautman's wonderful artwork has graced the Federal Duck Stamp. The other two times were on the stamps for 2001-2001 (Northern Pintail) and 1997-1999 (Canada Goose).

The stamp, of course, a federal license to hunt waterfowl, is also a valuable free pass to all National Wildlife Refuges that charge for entry. Sales throughout the next 12 months should raise close to \$40 million for bird habitat acquisition in the National Wildlife Refuge System. There is no more simple, cost-effective, and direct way to ensure that wetland, bottomland, and grassland habitats are secured than to buy a Duck Stamp.

The new Junior Duck Stamp - costing \$5 - boasts an image (shown here) of an Emperor Goose by Rayen Kang of Johns Creek, Georgia.



Proceeds from the JDS program go to keep the Junior Duck Stamp effort thriving, engendering partnerships among federal and state government agencies, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and volunteers. This helps recognize and honor thousands of teachers and students throughout the county for their participation in wetland and waterfowl conservation-related activities.

You can get the stamps at many locations, including a number of National Wildlife Refuges, most large Post Offices, and through [Amplex Corporation](#).

If you want another quick and easy way to get the Federal Duck Stamp, send a check for \$25 made out to Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope (to us at P.O. Box 2143, Columbia MD 21045), and a note with your phone number and your e-mail address if there are any problems.

MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT UNDER ASSAULT

This July, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of one of the first environmental laws of the United States, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918. Exactly 100 years ago, Congress enacted this legislation, implementing the convention for the protection of migratory birds between the United States and Great Britain (acting on behalf of Canada). The statute makes it unlawful without a waiver to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill or sell birds listed therein as Migratory birds. This act has served as a safety net for migratory birds of North America while allowing necessary development activities.

All other subsequent laws impacting our birds fundamentally rest on the foundation of the MBTA. They start with the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 and the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act of 1934, through the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and beyond. These Acts have been thoughtfully amended by Congress, but never undermined. So, when you seriously tamper with the foundational MBTA, you are potentially destabilizing a lot!



The balance between protection and development in the MBTA has now been upset by a December 2017 [Department of the Interior Solicitor's opinion](#). With this recent opinion, decades of cooperation that benefit our migratory birds and our societal needs has been seriously upset. With this opinion, any lawful activity that impacts migratory birds or their habitat is considered incidental and does not require actions to avoid, minimize, or mitigate for impacts to migratory birds. This is a major challenge to the underpinning of bird conservation laws in the U.S.

This recent Solicitor's opinion essentially eliminates the protections provided by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and hastens the decline of numerous migratory birds throughout North and South America, many of which are being considered for listing as Threatened or Endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Does this make any sense? What can be done to change this recent interpretation of a law that has been in place for 100 years, enforcing international treaties that protect migratory birds?

In the last two months, a number of conservation and environmental organizations have filed litigation challenging this fundamental change. Support for this litigation along with letters written to Members of Congress would be the most logical path designed to return to a more appropriate balance between protection and the many needs of society. Such action should raise awareness of the serious stakes involved.

Support the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to two fundamental 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.



Our membership is annual, corresponding to the year of validity for the Federal Duck Stamp, namely from the beginning of July to the end of the following June. Our "Regular Friend" fee is modest, only \$15, but all Friends are also asked to *pledge to buy TWO stamps per year*, joining with other organizations across the country in that effort.

You can access a secure online form to join the Friends - or to make a contribution - [via Razoo](#). Or you can access our simple mail-in [membership form](#).

We encourage you to commit yourself to the promotion of the Stamp program, the Friends, and smart conservation through the sales and promotion of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp.

And don't forget support for the Jr. Duck Stamp Program which reaches tens of thousands of youngsters. One way to help is described here, on the right, through AmazonSmile.

Shop at AmazonSmile

and Amazon will make a donation to:

The Junior Duck Stamp Program
through our Friends

Get started



HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY!



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