

Sept. 17, 2019



WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

National Wildlife Visitor Center



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THE UPCOMING STAMP ART CONTEST

The very next contest, the 2019 Federal Duck Stamp Contest, will be held at the end of next week, on Friday and Saturday, September 27 and 28, at the Patuxent Research Refuge (10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop, off Powder Mill Road) in Laurel, Maryland, outside of Washington DC.

The five waterfowl species that are eligible for artwork illustration in the contest are the following:

- Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
- Emperor Goose
- American Black Duck
- Northern Shoveler
- Bufflehead

The public is invited to view the contest entries beginning at 9 a.m. (Eastern), September 27 and 28, and witness the judging, which will begin at 10 a.m. (Eastern). The event, of course, is free and open to the public.

On Saturday, in particular, there are a number of wildlife-related and refuge-related activities scheduled. You can explore wildlife habitats at Patuxent via walking and guided tram and nature tours, learn about several species up close, watch decoy carving, and stop by the display tables of a number of partner groups - including our own Friends of the Stamp! A schedule of all the related activities will be available on the website concerning the contest.

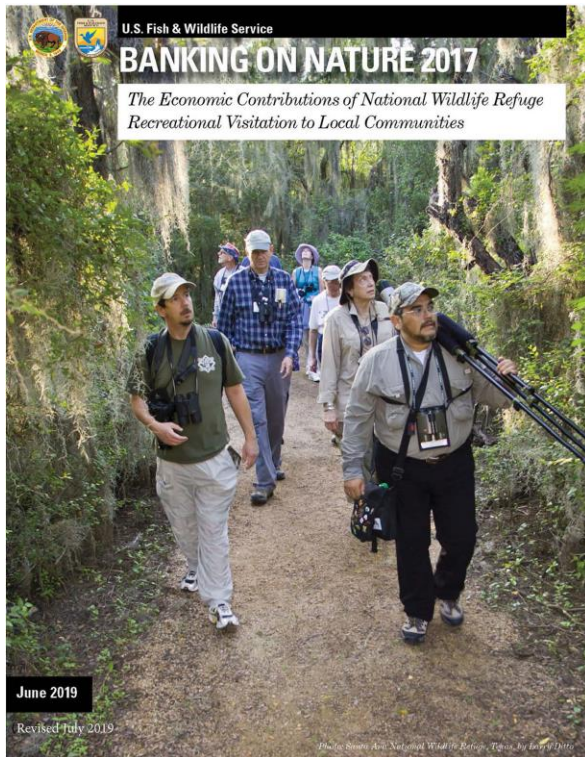
If you cannot be at the Visitors Center at the Patuxent Research Refuge to review the artwork and watch the contest, you can always [take a look at all 191 entries online](#). (Please note: These images were not color-corrected or otherwise edited online.) There are certainly some real beauties in the running this year! And, for those unable to attend the contest in person, there *might* be a livestream of the event (Friday and Saturday), beginning at 10 a.m. (Eastern). (If it can be arranged, the livestream link will also appear on the website concerning the contest.)

The winning artwork in the contest, of course, will grace the 2020-2021 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, aka the Duck Stamp.

For more information contact Patuxent at 301-497-5763 or visit the Fish and Wildlife Service's list of [events for the contest](#).

THE LATEST "BANKING ON NATURE"

ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF REFUGES



Every five years, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service releases a very useful report on the economic impact of visitation to our National Wildlife Refuges. The report is called "Banking on Nature," and the most recent report, released this past summer, documents the findings for fiscal year 2017. The report is the sixth in a series of studies since 1997. This research was conducted on 162 National Wildlife Refuges across the country to estimate economic impacts.

According to the report, 53.6 million people visited refuges in the period October 1, 2016-September 30, 2017. The "Banking on Nature"

study also revealed that:

- 1) National Wildlife Refuges are seen widely as travel-worthy destinations: 83 percent of refuge spending was done by visitors from outside their local areas - an increase of 9 percent from the 2011 study.
- 2) Trip-related spending generated \$3.2 billion of economic output in regional economies - an increase of 20 percent from the 2011 report.
- 3) More than 41,000 jobs (up 18 percent from 2011) and \$1.1 billion in employment income (up 22 percent) were generated.
- 4) The combined economic contribution to communities nationwide is more than six times the \$483.9 million appropriated by Congress to the Refuge System in FY 2017.
- 5) About 86 percent of total recreation-related expenditures are generated by non-consumptive activities on refuges (e.g., birding, wildlife photography, hiking, paddling, auto-touring, bicycling, and educational experiences).

6) And 81 percent of all visits themselves are attributable to these same non-consumptive activities on refuges.

In a real sense, this edition of "Banking on Nature" is the broadest to date, representing a 70 percent increase in the number of refuges sampled, compared to the 2011 report. On the other hand, previous reports - covering fewer refuges - have been much longer, going into more page-by-page detail when it comes to the individual refuge profiles. The useful individual NWR reports do exist, but they are combined as a separate downloadable document.

Unfortunately, however, the important non-consumptive activities stipulated in the 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Public Law 105-57) of wildlife watching, wildlife photography, environmental education and interpretation - are virtually lost in these summaries. It would have been far more useful if the activities on these refuges had been broken down and evaluated via the original "big six" categories under the Act: hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, wildlife photography, environmental education and interpretation.

You can access the new 32-page summary study online, with expanded details on individual refuges available through the same page:

<https://tinyurl.com/BankingOnNature2019>

ORDER A STAMP THROUGH US

You can get your current - 2019-2020 - Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp at most large Post Offices, at many National Wildlife Refuges, and through a number of vendors.

If you want another easy way to get a current 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 in case there are any problems.

We'll send you the stamp ASAP.

Support the Friends and Renew your Membership!

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 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

amazon smile

Sharing and Adapting *Wingtips* Content



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