

Wingtips

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp



12 October 2021



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Federal Duck Stamp Contest Winner

This year's Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest was held COVID-style, viewable on the web, with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hosts and judges at the FWS Headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia.

This year's winner was James Hautman of Chaska, Minnesota, with his acrylic painting of a pair of Redheads floating in the water (pictured above). He has now won a record-breaking six times -- starting with his first win as a 25-year-old with his entry in 1989 that became the 1990-1991 Stamp. At that time, he was the youngest ever to win and he had entered 5 times before his win. His painting will be made into the 2022-2023 Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, or "Duck Stamp," which will go on sale in late June 2022.

Robert Hautman of Delano, Minnesota, placed second with his acrylic painting of Snow Geese (pictured at right). Joshua Spies of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, took third place with his acrylic painting of a flying drake Redhead (pictured below).



The judges for this year's Federal Duck Stamp Contest were: Paul Rhymer, artist; Dave Goyer, philatelist; Wayne Hubbard, conservation partner; Larry Richardson, artist; and Dixie Sommers, conservation partner.



The in-person gathering also celebrated Richard Clifton's 2020 stamp and included a presentation of a pane of stamps in recognition for his win.

Since 1934, sales of the stamp have raised over \$1.1 billion that has conserved over 6 million acres of wetland habitat for birds and other wildlife. The Stamp sells for \$25 and raises approximately \$40 million in sales each year.

Additional information about the 2021 Duck Stamp Art Contest, including a link to each day's proceedings, as well as the gallery of the 137 entries, can be found [here](#).

[The 2022 contest rules](#) will be posted no later than the end of January.

Rules as far as size, media, orientation, acceptance dates and location, etc., will remain the same. There will be no special theme next year so hunting accessories will be optional. Species will be:

- Tundra Swan
- Mottled Duck
- Green-winged Teal
- American Wigeon
- Barrow's Goldeneye

To be competitive, the North American races/subspecies of Tundra (Whistling) Swan and (American) Green-winged Teal should be depicted. Although Bewick's (Whooper) Swans and Common/Eurasian Teal may be submitted, they will most likely not be chosen for the stamp.

Thank you to all entrants, judges, and the staff of FWS, especially Duck Stamp Program Director Suzanne Fellows, for the success and celebratory conclusion of the 2021 Art Contest.

Congratulations to the winners!

And remember to buy your Duck Stamp!

Images courtesy of USFWS.

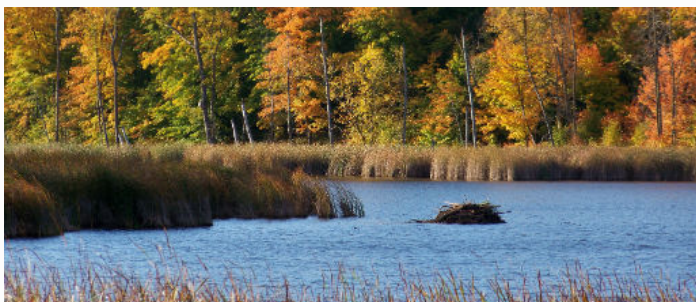
In the Media

A welcome addition of this year's art contest was some attention in the media.

One new young artist, Kira Fennell, chronicled their art composition and painting journey on TikTok. This story went on to be [featured on CBS Sunday Morning](#). The young artist "now has millions of views, watching their every brushstroke, as they embark on the quest of a lifetime" according to reporter Nancy Chen. Fennell notes the contest "hasn't been tapped by my generation" and "I'll be just as excited for next year." With background information on the Stamp and the Art Contest, [this story has reached new audiences](#).

Many of our readers already know of satirist John Oliver's bawdy salute to the Art Contest and the five unconventional works his team submitted. We appreciate the effort to raise awareness of the program, in what may be a different quarter -- and which we must take as sincere insofar as the paintings were auctioned off and the proceeds (nearly \$100,000) promised to the Duck Stamp program. [In the end](#), the Service had the wittier response.

Stamp Success Story Encore: Tamarac NWR



This Stamp Success Story is revised from its original appearance in the 2 December 2013 issue of Wingtips.

As autumn washes over the country, our tour of the refuges brings us to [Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge](#). Situated 18 miles northeast of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, at an elevation of about 1,400 feet, the

refuge comprises rolling forested hills interspersed with 28 lakes and numerous marshes, bogs, wooded potholes, and shrub swamps. Although spelled differently, its name recognizes our only deciduous cone-bearing tree, the Tamarack, or Larch (*Larix laricina*). [A stop on the Pine to Prairie Birding Trail](#), Tamarac is the nexus of one of the most diverse vegetative transition zones in North America, a convergence of northern hardwood forests, coniferous forests, and the tallgrass prairie.

All but 0.1% of Tamarac's 35,197 acres were purchased with Migratory Bird Conservation Fund dollars, per FWS data tables. One of our early refuges, it was established in 1938.

Located close to Lake Itasca and the headwaters of the Mississippi River, Tamarac is in "near pristine" condition. Its three river systems provide significant wild rice production. Some water management is performed to maintain stands of this important source of food and cover for wildlife. Prescribed burns, plantings, and occasional timber harvests maintain a diverse and well-structured forest.

Tamarac's big success story in birdlife restoration is Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*), which was extirpated in Minnesota in the 1880s. Beginning with the introduction of several birds in Jim's Marsh in 1987, the swan's population has grown to 30 nesting pairs in the refuge and 5,500 birds statewide.

Efforts to conserve Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) are more of a work in progress. Minnesota provides 42% of the breeding habitat for the global population of this songster, and Tamarac's habitat is ideal for this species. Unfortunately, populations are crashing throughout the warbler's range, and current numbers are one-fourth what they were 40 years ago. Researchers working at Tamarac [are studying](#) habitat preferences, nesting success, and other factors affecting this declining species.

An educational Discovery Center for the refuge opened in 2015, with fundraising help from the [Friends of Tamarac](#). You can visit Tamarac virtually via this [brief video](#) of a day on the property. Or experience it in person at next year's [Detroit Lakes Festival of Birds](#).

Photo: Courtesy of USFWS

Contest Rule Changes for 2022

On August 24, 2021, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published final regulations governing the annual Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Contest. These revisions provide artists more flexibility when designing their art and broaden the appeal of the Duck Stamp to a more diverse audience. They take effect beginning with the 2022 contest.

This final rule removes the "celebrating our waterfowl hunting heritage" theme and the mandatory inclusion of an appropriate hunting element. It changes the judging requirement to consider that the entries reflect this theme. It also revises the qualifications for selection as a judge.

The 2020 final regulations made the hunting theme a permanent requirement, and since then many stakeholders and artists expressed their dissatisfaction with this change.

Waterfowl hunters have been the major contributors to the program. They are required to purchase Duck Stamps to hunt waterfowl. Many collectors, birders and other non-hunters also purchase Duck Stamps to contribute to conservation or for the Stamp's artistic value.

This change will position the contest to engage new artists and more entries by allowing artists more freedom of expression when creating their entries, and to generate increased Stamp revenue through expanded sales to non-hunters.

The live portrayal of one of the eligible species, announced early each year, must be the dominant feature of each entry. Hunting accessories and scenes, such as dogs, decoys and blinds are optional components and can be included at the artist's discretion.

According to USFWS, "We're proud that the Duck Stamp continues funding migratory bird and habitat conservation across the U.S., while also bringing together diverse communities through art and a shared connection to wildlife, nature, and a healthy planet."

The Service [announced the changes](#) by press release.

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