



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

The new "duck stamp" to be issued for the 1944-45 hunting season will be taken from a drawing by Walter A. Weber, well-known wildlife artist, Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes was advised today by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Eleventh in the series, the new migratory bird hunting stamp, universally called "duck stamp", is now in the hands of engravers and will be available to the public at all first and second class post offices on July 1.

Mr. Weber, who is assistant curator of birds in the National Museum, Washington, D.C., has chosen for his subject three white-fronted geese--part of a flock "coming in".

Selection of Mr. Weber's work, as pointed out by Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Service director, means a continuation of the artistic value of the duck-stamp series which was started in 1934 with a design by J. N. "Ding" Darling, famous cartoonist and noted conservationist. The new stamp will add another species to the series and also an example of the work of another prominent sportsman-artist.

The duck stamp inaugurated in 1934 has become familiar to all migratory waterfowl hunters and to philatelists and conservationists throughout the country. Nearly twice the size of a special delivery stamp, it costs \$1 and may be purchased singly, in blocks, or in complete sheets of 28 stamps. Everyone over 16 years of age who hunts migratory waterfowl is required to have a Federal hunting stamp in his possession, validated by his signature. The stamp, which is not transferable, remains valid for one year, from July 1 to June 30. It does not take the place of a hunting license.

The distinctive qualities of these stamps are stimulating their sales among stamp collectors as well as sportsmen and conservationists, according to Dr. Gabrielson who said, "No one is under any obligation to kill a duck just because he owns a Federal hunting stamp, nor is there any rule to prevent anyone who wants to help restore the migratory waterfowl from purchasing any number of these 'duck-saving' stamps."

The money realized from duck stamps is used by the Fish and Wildlife Service to supplement other funds for the purchase and maintenance of waterfowl refuges throughout the country. Ninety percent of the fund goes for

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this purpose, while the remainder is used for printing and distribution of stamps, enforcement of the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, and other Federal acts for the protection of migratory birds.

In 1934-35, the first year of issue, 635,000 stamps were sold. Peak sales occurred in 1941-42 when 1,440,000 were sold. Despite wartime restrictions on hunting due to lack of ammunition and gasoline, more than 1,125,000 of the current series have been sold through March 31, 1944.