



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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NEBRASKAN WINS FEDERAL ELECTION IN WASHINGTON, DC;
LESSER SCAUP TO GRACE NEXT FEDERAL DUCK STAMP

A pair of lesser scaup, painted by Nebraska wildlife artist Neal R. Anderson, was selected Tuesday, November 8, as the design for the 1989/1990 Federal Duck Stamp.

The gouache painting was picked from 681 entries in the 1988 Duck Stamp contest judged Monday and Tuesday, November 7 and 8, at the Department of the Interior in Washington, DC. The contest is sponsored annually by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

When telephoned at his home in Lincoln, Nebraska, by Fish and Wildlife Service Director Frank Dunkle, Anderson called the news, "Fantastic." He entered paintings in five previous Duck Stamp contests, placing second in the 1985 competition with a pair of redhead ducks, and third in 1983 with a single redhead. In those competitions, artists could choose to depict any species of North American waterfowl that had not appeared on a Duck Stamp the previous 5 years.

Anderson faced a new challenge this year, however, as revised contest regulations specified only five species which could be entered, and his favorite subjects, including the redhead, were not on the list. Eligible this year were the lesser scaup, spectacled eider, red-breasted merganser, Barrow's goldeneye, and black-bellied whistling duck. Anderson chose the lesser scaup because of its availability in Nebraska.

An additional challenge faced by waterfowl artists this year was finding subjects to observe and paint. The ducks are "just gone" noted Anderson, who has lived in Nebraska all of his life. "I've never seen it this bad," he added, commenting on the summer's drought. "Several lakes near my home are dry for the first time since I can remember, and the waterfowl just aren't there."

The fall flight of ducks this year was estimated to be only 66 million, second only to the 1985 all-time low of 62 million ducks. Recent years of extreme drought in important breeding areas of Canada and the United States have contributed to this decline. In addition, the overall loss of wetland habitat is another factor contributing to depressed waterfowl populations.

"In light of these near-record lows, the Federal Duck Stamp takes on even greater importance," Dunkle said. "It has helped reduce wetlands loss by funding the acquisition of nearly 4 million wetland acres since the program began in 1934. It can truly be called conservation's stamp of success."

Money from the sale of Duck Stamps is deposited in the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund and is used to add vital waterfowl habitat to the National Wildlife Refuge System. Last year alone, this fund made possible the purchase by fee and easement of 71 tracts on 12 refuges, the acquisition of 301 easements and 135 fee tracts for waterfowl production areas, and the lease of 11,600 acres on nine refuges and one waterfowl production area. A total of 65,846 wetland acres were protected at a cost of close to \$32 million, over half of which came from the sale of Duck Stamps in fiscal year 1988 alone.

Vicky Hipsley, from Redlands, California, placed second in this year's Duck Stamp contest with her oil painting of a red-breasted merganser; and Paul Butala's acrylic of a pair of spectacled eiders broke a seven-way tie for third place in a fifth round of judging. Butala is from Southfield, Michigan.

In addition to placing in previous Federal Duck Stamp competitions, Anderson, 40, won the 1984 and 1988 Nebraska Conservation Stamp competitions sponsored by the Nebraska Wildlife Federation, and was commissioned to paint the 1984 National Arbor Day Stamp, the 1984 Nebraska Trout Stamp, and the 1986 Wood Duck Stamp sponsored by Waterfowl USA. He won the Ducks Unlimited competitions for sponsor artist in the States of Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri, and was the featured artist in the 1986 National Wildlife Art Show sponsored by Ducks Unlimited and the 1988 Iowa Wildlife and Western Art Festival. His work has been exhibited through Wild Wings Gallery in Lake City, Minnesota, and he has illustrated the Fauna series of NEBRASKALAND magazine since 1974.

Anderson studied at Omaha Art School, and worked as a commercial artist for 13 years while devoting his free time to painting wildlife. In 1986, he began devoting full time to wildlife painting. He paints almost exclusively in gouache--a gum-and-honey-based tempera paint.

Specializing in waterfowl, Anderson's work is known for its detail, sharpness, and clarity. Although stylistically different, Anderson cites noted wildlife artist Robert Kuhn of Roxbury, Connecticut, as a decided influence in his development of an appreciation for wildlife art. Coincidentally, Kuhn served on the panel of judges which selected Anderson's painting in this year's contest.

Other judges on the panel were Joan Allemand, art educator and administrator from Beverly Hills, California; Jack Lorenz, executive director of the Izaak Walton League, from Arlington, Virginia; F. John Marshall, attorney and waterfowl art collector from Grand Forks, North Dakota; and Tom Paugh, editor-in-chief of Sports Afield from New York City. Serving as alternate judge was Lieutenant General David Grange, from The Plains, Virginia, retired U.S. Army career officer, and private consultant.

The Duck Stamp has been issued annually by the Federal Government since 1934 when Jay N. ("Ding") Darling's drawing of a pair of mallards in flight became the first design for the stamp. Subsequent artwork was commissioned until the contest began in 1949.

The Federal Government offers no monetary award to the winner. A pane of stamps bearing the artist's design and autographed by the Secretary of the Interior is presented to the artist during the next year's competition. However, commercial wildlife art dealers market limited edition prints of the winning design under private agreements with the winner. Through this contest, the reputations of previously unknown wildlife artists have been established and those of professionals considerably enhanced.

The five species eligible for this year's contest were selected from a list of nine that have never before appeared on a Federal Duck Stamp. Next year, the lesser scaup will be dropped and the black scoter will be added to the list of five eligible species. Through an annual process of elimination, all 42 species of North American waterfowl will be portrayed on a Duck Stamp by 1997.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sells an average of 2 million Duck Stamps a year, mostly to hunters who must carry a current, signed Duck Stamp while hunting waterfowl. Others interested in the outdoors are buying the stamp as a way to make a direct contribution to conservation. In addition, more and more stamp collectors are recognizing the value of the annual waterfowl stamp.

The current 1988 Duck Stamp, designed by 1987 contest winner Daniel Smith, is on sale at most U.S. Post Offices and some national wildlife refuges across the country for \$10.00.

Information about the 1989 Duck Stamp Contest will be available next spring from the Duck Stamp Office, 202-343-4354.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Single black-and-white glossy photographs and color transparencies of the winning artwork are available on a loan basis by calling 202-343-5611.

