



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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#### 1994-1995 DUCK STAMP TO FEATURE RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS

Neal Anderson of Lincoln, Nebraska, reaffirmed his position as one of America's leading wildlife artists by winning the Federal Duck Stamp Contest for a second time.

Anderson's painting of a nesting red-breasted merganser and her mate took top honors in this year's contest and will be featured on the 1994-1995 Federal Duck Stamp. Money from the sale of the stamp is used to purchase and protect vital wetlands for waterfowl and numerous other species.

Held November 9 and 10 in Washington, DC, the annual contest is sponsored by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Anderson, an avid hunter and outdoorsman, won the 1988 contest with a design of a pair of lesser scaup, which appeared on the 1989-90 Federal Duck Stamp. This year's design was judged best of 434 entries.

"It's fantastic! It's absolutely the best compliment a wildlife artist can receive," Anderson said. "It's also great to be part of a program working to help not only waterfowl but any living thing that depends on wetlands."

Jim Hautman of Plymouth, Minnesota, who won the Duck Stamp Contest in 1989, took second place with an acrylic design of a pair of Barrow's golden-eyes; and Robert Kray of Mountaintop, Pennsylvania, captured third with an acrylic painting of mottled ducks.

Anderson, 45, grew up in Lincoln and studied at Omaha Art School. He has been a full-time artist since 1986 and paints almost exclusively in gouache, a gum-and-honey-based tempera paint. His work is renowned for its detail, sharpness, and clarity.

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In addition to the Federal Duck Stamp, Anderson has designed a number of state duck stamps and his work has appeared in many prestigious art shows and competitions. Last year, he took third place in the Federal Duck Stamp Contest with a design of a pair of mallards.

Anderson said this year's design was especially difficult because of the general scarcity of photographs and mounts of red-breasted mergansers. In fact, the only photographs he had were of a female common merganser.

"I took a real chance," he said. "Originally I started off to paint a Barrows golden-eye but I was concerned the judges would think the design looked too much like my winning design in 1988. Something just told me I should do mergansers instead."

The red-breasted merganser, sometimes called shelduck or saw-bill, is distinguished by a slender serrated bill; ragged crest; and red eyes, feet, and legs. In the male, the head and crest are black glossed with green. The female's are dull red or rusty-colored. The male has a wide whitish band between its head and reddish breast, black back, black-and-white wings, and gray flanks. The female's body and wings are almost uniformly gray.

This medium-sized fish-eating duck breeds in the arctic regions of North America, Europe, and Asia, and winters along the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts of the United States; the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts of Europe; and the Pacific coast of Asia above the Tropic of Cancer.

The Duck Stamp has been issued annually by the Federal Government since 1934 when J.N. "Ding" Darling inaugurated the program with his drawing entitled "Mallards Dropping In." Artwork during subsequent years was commissioned until the contest began in 1949.

All waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older are required to purchase the stamp annually. The stamp has also become a valuable collector's item for philatelists and conservationists across the country and can be used for admission to those national wildlife refuges requiring entrance fees. The current price is \$15, of which 98 percent is used to purchase migratory waterfowl habitat.

To date, the Federal Duck Stamp Program has generated approximately \$450 million to acquire more than 4 million wetland acres, primarily for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

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The Federal Government offers no monetary award for winning the contest, but at the next year's contest, a pane of stamps signed by the Interior Secretary is presented to the previous winner. The winning artist often can earn a substantial amount through the sale of limited edition prints of his or her artwork. The artist also profits from the sale of other items bearing the original artwork design.

Judges for this year's contest included Gary Burghoff, who played "Radar O'Reilly" in the hit TV series "M\*A\*S\*H." In addition to his acting talents, Burghoff is an avid Duck Stamp collector and artist.

Also on the panel were James Baker Hale, former Kansas State game warden, master welder, and metal sculptor specializing in wildlife subjects; Harry D. Knight, former director of parks for the City of Newport News, Virginia, and former chairman of the board of Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; Kenneth Carroll Parkes, senior curator of birds at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Donald J. Vlcek, Jr., avid collector of Duck Stamps and wildlife art, advocate of wildlife art programs, and business executive for Domino's Pizza Distribution, Inc.

Through an annual process of elimination, all species of North American waterfowl will be depicted on a Duck Stamp at least once by the year 2000. Eligible species this year were the mottled duck, Barrow's golden-eye, red-breasted merganser, black scoter, and surf scoter. Next year, artists may submit paintings of the Canada goose, mallard, northern pintail, greater scaup, or green-winged teal.

The 1993-94 Duck Stamp, designed by 1992 contest winner Bruce Miller of Mound, Minnesota, is currently on sale at most U.S. Post Offices, some national wildlife refuges across the country, and the Federal Duck Stamp office in Washington, DC.

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Editor's Note: Black-and-white glossy prints and color transparencies of the winning design are available for loan from the Fish and Wildlife Service's Audio-Visual Office, 202-208-5611.

