

News Release



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Necedah National Wildlife Refuge
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Holmen High School Student Wins Best of Show in Wisconsin



This year's winner of Wisconsin's Best of Show in the Federal Junior Duck Stamp contest is 17 year old Samuel Schroeder from Holmen High School. Schroeder's watercolor painting of a pair of Northern Pintail will compete for the title of Best of Show in the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Contest held at the San Diego Zoo on Thursday, April 17, 2008.

This year 690 students entered the contest from 54 schools in Wisconsin. Student ages ranged from 7 year olds in kindergarten to high school students whose work is professional quality. The art is judged in four age classes and the best of show is selected from each age groups first place pieces. "It was truly amazing to see the detail illustrated in the elementary grades. But what is perhaps more inspiring is the fact that 690 Wisconsin students are learning important lessons about the need to conserve wetland habitat through participating in the Junior Duck Stamp Program," said Daniel Peterson, Junior Duck Stamp coordinator.

Peterson spoke with Liz Schank, Art Teacher at Holmen High School about Mr. Schroeder's winning portrait. "Any student interested in drawing or painting ducks must get connected with their subject. A two-week research period is required by every student before starting

on their piece of art. The research provides insight to their subjects such as body shapes, behaviors in the wild, and the kind of habitat it resides in. The young artists then work on sketches so that they address the unique physical characteristics of the species they selected to depict, which leads to the compositional design. Daily dialog with the artist reminds them they are working on “stamp art”, which requires open areas for lettering and that it is intended to be reduced in size considerably”, stated Schank.

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest is the culmination of a year long Junior Duck Stamp conservation curriculum used by educators across the nation in their classrooms. Each State hosted competitions from February until mid-April where Junior Duck Stamp design entries were judged by a group of people active in the local wildlife art or conservation community.

State “Best of Show” winning designs are being sent to the San Diego Zoo, California, where the top three entries will be chosen by a panel of five judges on April 17. The Junior Duck Stamp Contest winner receives a free trip to Washington, D.C., along with the art teacher, a parent and the state coordinator the following June to be honored at the First Day of Sales Ceremony. The first-place winner also receives a \$5,000 award. The second place winner receives \$3,000 and the third-place winner receives \$2,000.

The Federal Junior Duck Program and Stamp Design contest started in 1990 with a pilot program in Florida and California. More states were added each year, with all 50 states and Washington D.C. participating by 1994.

Necedah National Wildlife Refuge has served as the coordinating host site for Wisconsin since 1993. The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association has sponsored the contest every year since then, not only helping with the contest, but also promoting and contributing awards and recognition to the winning artists.

“We can be proud of each of the students who entered the contest”, said Peterson. “The detail expressed in each of the entries was amazing and shows there is talent right here in Wisconsin”. Winning entries have been reproduced and will be shown in three traveling displays at over 20 locations. For a schedule of the traveling display locations, to host the display, and or for information and entry forms for the 2009 contest please contact the

Necedah National Wildlife Refuge by email at Necedah@fws.gov or by calling (608) 565-2551.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 97-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 547 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 fish, wildlife management offices, and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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