Montana Migratory Bird Stamp Art Contest

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is holding a migratory bird art contest to call attention to the importance of wetland habitat across the state and to highlight efforts to restore and conserve wetlands on private and public lands. The winning artwork will be featured on a commemorative 2024 waterfowl stamp package. Each year about 35,000 hunters purchase a Montana Migratory Bird License. In 2024 each of these hunters will receive a decal and postcard with the 2024 Montana Migratory Bird Stamp design. People who want to support wetlands conservation and restoration may also purchase a Montana Migratory Bird License as well and receive the Montana Migratory Bird Stamp decal and postcard. The sale of migratory bird stamps funds game bird research, surveys, habitat improvement, and conservation projects.

Contest Dates

Entries will be accepted between November 1, 2023 and January 31, 2024.

Contest Rules

Art entries must feature a species of duck or goose in its natural habitat setting. The species must be identified as found in Montana per the Montana Field Guide: https://fieldguide.mt.gov/

All entries including the winner and honorable mentions will be displayed on the Montana FWP website and may be featured in FWP social media.

Prize

The winning artist will receive a $2,000 award.

Contest submission details

- Artist depictions must be identifiable as an eligible species or will be disqualified from the competition.
- Image shall be landscape-oriented and formatted to a 3:4 ratio. Minimum size shall be 6 inches x 8 inches, and maximum size shall be 12 inches by 16 inches.

- Artwork shall be full color and may be in any of the following media: acrylic, oil, watercolor, pen and ink, or tempera. No photographs, sculptures, fabric art, computer-generated or computer-enhanced art, or carvings will be accepted.
- Artwork must be on a smooth surface art medium (i.e. gesso Masonite, Crescent illustration board, clayboard, etc.), rather than a textured surface such as canvas.
- Artwork must be the artist's original creation. A direct copy of another person's artwork or photograph is not acceptable.
- Artwork must be unsigned by the artist. No scrollwork, lettering, or other design element other than species itself and habitat can appear in the artwork.
- All entries must be submitted as a high-resolution photo uploaded to FWP for review. Minimum file size should be 12 inches wide JPEG at 300 ppi.
- The winner's artwork must be packaged and physically delivered to FWP. Artwork will be returned to the artist in the same packaging as originally submitted. FWP will not be liable for a loss or damage during shipment to or from the department's offices.
- It is the responsibility of each entrant to obtain adequate property insurance coverage for their contest submission. FWP assumes no liability for damage, loss, or theft of any entry.
- Artists may submit more than one entry.
- Artists must submit a completed Migratory Bird Art Contest Entry Form with each entry. FWP reserves the right to use this information for publicity and promotion.
  - Department employees are not eligible to participate in the contest.

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Judging Criteria

The contest winner will be chosen by a panel of judges comprised of the Wetlands Protection Advisory Council, a seven-member citizen council that advises FWP on wetland protection and enhancement projects. The panel will score:

- Artistic composition
- Anatomical accuracy of the species
- Habitat accuracy
- General rendering
- Background
- Overall appeal

Art Show

- After the judging is complete, the winning artwork will be available to be viewed by the public. An announcement as to the location and timing of the judging and art show will be provided in advance.
- Indicate on the Art Competition Entry Form whether you authorize the department to provide your contact information to members of the public who may be interested in purchasing your entry if you do not win the contest.

Winning Entry and Rights

- The winning entry becomes the shared property of the artist and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. FWP shall retain all reproduction rights of the winning entry.
- Any refusal of the winning artist to sign the release, to challenge the rules or regulations concerning release of rights, or otherwise take any action that would delay the reproduction of the art as a state migratory bird stamp and or any related use, shall be grounds for that art being disqualified for payment of purchase award and use of the design for the state migratory bird stamp or other related usage.
- In the event a disqualification should occur, the art receiving the next highest number of points in the voting shall be then declared the winner and shall be used to reproduce the state waterfowl stamp and/or promotional items.
- The winner artwork will appear in an issue of *Montana Outdoors* magazine.