

Drawing Ducks

2010 Students:



By Nicole Digweed, age 17, using gouache paint on illustration board. Honorable Mention awarded.



By Johannah Bauch, age 14, using gouache paint on illustration board. Honorable Mention awarded.



By Sam Arguello, age 11, using colored pencils on tinted paper.

Junior Federal Duck Stamp Competition Prep

This year, for the third time, I am coaching a class of children who were preparing entries for the Junior National Duck Stamp Competition. This art contest is free to enter and can help bring science and art together for your students and children.

You can compete this year by visiting the USFWS [website](#) and downloading the rules.

Below are the steps to take to create a great entry:

1. Choose a breed of ducks from the [approved breed list](#).
2. Find photo references from several sources of your breed: internet, nature magazines, color books with photos of ducks and geese, your own photographs. You should have at least five good photos of your bird in various positions, including flying.
3. Practice sketching all of your references in pencil, taking no more than five minutes per sketch. This is a good warm-up and a way to practice drawing the anatomy of water fowl.
4. Create 2-4 different sketches for your final composition and choose your favorite of them. Remember the following as you create your composition:

Regarding the use of photo references:

- You may NOT simply copy one photo. This is plagiarism and you will get disqualified from the contest.

2009 Students:



by Nathan Ramsey, age 11, using soft pastels on colored paper. Honorable Mention awarded.



by Johannah Bauch, age 13, using soft pastels on colored paper

"3rd Place Winner - Illinois"

- You must create a composite composition using many photo references. You might use one photo for the body, another for the head, and another for the water and/or background.
- You must make this composition your own. You can do this by changing or reversing the position of the head or wings

A good composition has:

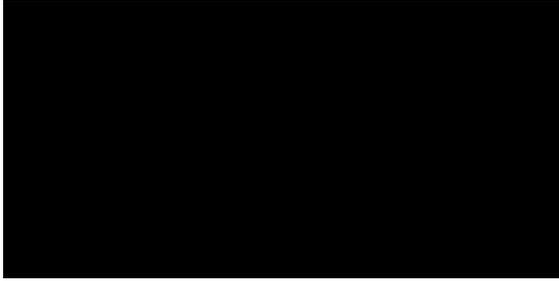
- A focal point with other elements "pointing" to it.
- A background, a middle ground, and a foreground. (Remember that the background is lighter in value than the foreground.)
- Elements that overlap to create perspective.
- Elements that either go off the page or stay within an inch of the edge of the paper.

5. Redraw your chosen composition on your good paper. See the chart at the bottom of this page for the right paper for each medium.

6. Carefully render your composition remembering the following:

- Drawings will be judged for anatomical accuracy. Stick to the real colors from nature. Don't make up any markings on the duck. Use your references.
- The surroundings must represent an environment that this breed of duck actually occupies. Don't add trees or plants that would not be in this breed's area of the country.
- Don't forget shadows and highlights for realism.
- Get your darks really dark and your lights really light.

7. A few contest rules to remember:



- Do NOT sign your work. Any writing on the front of your drawing will disqualify it.
- Do NOT mount or mat your work or create a border of any kind
- You must work on a flat, 9" x 12" surface.
- See the [website](#) for all of the other rules.

Medium	Paper or Board type
Watercolor paints or pencils	Watercolor paper
Colored pencils	Bristol board, illustration board, or lightly colored pastel paper
Graphite pencils or ink pens	Bristol board or illustration board
Soft or oil pastels	Colored pastel paper
Oil or acrylic paint	Stretched canvas or canvas board

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