

Junior Duck Stamp Program by Rebecca Lexa

Winter is a great time for indoor nature activities, and one for the kids is the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program. It was started in 1989 as an extension of the popular Federal Duck Stamp Program, which is used to raise money to acquire land for wildlife refuges. Sales of Junior Duck Stamps are put toward conservation education focusing on waterfowl and their habitats.

The Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program combines science and art; students ages kindergarten through twelfth grade learn about the importance of ducks, geese and swans, and the Refuges they rely on. They also draw waterfowl as a way to creatively express some of what they learned. And it encourages them to enter the Junior Duck Stamp Contest.

Students from all over Washington have until March 15th to submit artwork portraying one of our native waterfowl species. All the entries will be judged, and the winner will then be entered in the national contest along with the winners from all the other states. This contest determines the artwork that will be used on the next Junior Duck Stamp.

The Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge is putting together resources to help local kids get involved in the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program and enter the contest if they wish. This includes a presentation by a Friends volunteer that can be given in classrooms, at scout troop meetings, and more. Interested parents, teachers and other adults should contact info@friendsofwillaparefuge.org and put "Junior Duck Stamp Program" in the subject line.