

CALIFORNIA JUNIOR DUCK STAMP COMPETITION

2000

2001



Ring-necked ducks are named for the chestnut ring around the neck of the males, although their angular heads and the white band across their bills are much easier to see in the field. Ring-necks are commonly misidentified as scaup, which they resemble in marking and behavior.

As diving ducks, ring-necks have their feet set far back on their bodies to propel them under the water. Although ring-necked ducks are expert divers, they feed in shallower water than other diving ducks, usually less than six feet in depth.

Adults eat aquatic plant seeds and tubers, while ducklings prefer invertebrates. Ring-necked ducks run on the water to take flight and slide on the surface while landing.

Found across the United States and in the lower half of Canada, ring-necks nest in marshes, favoring those surrounded by woodlands, especially coniferous forests. Egg laying and nest building occur almost at the same time. They usually build nests over water in sedges. Flattened plants provide the base upon which the first eggs are laid.

The eggs are then covered with down, and sometimes overhead reeds are woven to form a canopy. Ring-necks often nest close together, laying anywhere from five to 14 eggs. Once hatched, the young stay with the female until they can fly. The ducklings feed mainly by dabbling on the surface but are able to dive when only a few days old.

Ring-necked ducks begin arriving at wintering areas in the Central Valley of California in mid-September, with their numbers peaking in December. They migrate at night in small flocks of 10 to 75 birds.

California's Best of Show for 2000-01 is a ring-necked duck by Steven Pate, age 14, of Sheldon High School in Sacramento. The artist, who competed in Group III (grades 7-9), used Prismacolor pencils to create this dramatic head-on view. Pate's image also placed in the top 10 in the nationwide Federal Junior Duck Stamp Competition.



This lake mallard done in watercolors and pastels was created by Kim Riddle, age 17, of Lucerne Valley High School in Lucerne Valley. It received an honorable mention among grades 10-12.



Kendle Burton, age 10, was one of three to receive first place among grades 4-6 with his watercolor of a bufflehead. Kendle attends Brockton Avenue Elementary in Los Angeles.



These mottled ducks done with acrylics and watercolors by Juney Lee, age 14, received honorable mention among grades 7-9. Juney created "Soaring Three-some" while attending Ralph Waldo Emerson Junior High School in Davis.



Titled "Teal in Water," this image of a drake cinnamon teal was one of three second place winners in grades K-5. Artist Lora Trout, age 9, used color pencils, marker, and watercolors. Lora attends Sacred Heart Parish School in Red Bluff.

All students in grades K-12 are invited to participate in the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program and annual art competition. Entry into the competition is free. All entrants receive certificates, and 100 winners (25 each from four grade categories) are selected to receive ribbons. The deadline for entry each year is March 15th. For contest rules and curriculum materials, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento NWR Complex (530) 934-2801, or California Waterfowl Association (916) 648-1406. On the Internet, visit <http://jduckstamps.fws.gov/jds/mega.html> for rules, and www.waterfowl.org for curriculum materials.

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