



Contest Description

This year's contest will celebrate the great contributions of wildlife artist, Maynard Reece. Reece is considered one of the founding fathers of wildlife art. As a child, he spent many hours exploring Lake Okoboji. His teachers discovered his artistic ability at the age of 13 and entered one of his drawings in the Iowa State Fair. As a young adult, Maynard worked at what is today known as the State Historical Museum collecting specimens for the museum's collection and painting fish to create the plates for the original publishing of *Iowa Fish and Fishing* – this was instrumental in launching his career as a freelance artist. Reece's fish drawings can be viewed on the [DNR website](#).

Theme

Use your artistic skills to create an image of your favorite Iowa fish (see the eligible fish list below) in its natural habitat.

We are partnering with the [Wildlife Forever® State-Fish Art® Contest](#) to host an *Iowa State-Fish Contest* in conjunction with our annual *Take It Outside Art Contest*. The first place artwork in each judging category will be submitted for [National Awards](#). First place winners at the state level will be honored at the annual [State-Fish Art Expo](#) this summer.

Eligible State-fish:

- bluegill
- brook trout
- channel catfish
- largemouth bass
- longear sunfish
- muskellunge
- northern pike
- paddlefish
- walleye
- white bass

Eligibility

- Iowa K-12 public or accredited nonpublic school students.
- Each school can submit up to three entries per judging category.

State Competition Awards/Recognition

Each school that submits entries to the state competition will be entered in a drawing to receive a reimbursement for expenses related to a fishing experience (funded by Sport Fish Restoration Funds through *Fish Iowa!*) at a local outdoor recreation area.

- Major focus (over 50% of time) must be fishing. Other outdoor natural resources based activities such as archery, shooting sports, and/or boating may also be included.
- "Local outdoor recreation area" can be a state or county park, lake, forest, river, etc. up to 50 miles from the school.
- Reimbursement is limited to \$5 per participating student (up to 75 students) and must be used for transportation and/or programming costs.

Each student submitting an entry will receive a Certificate of Recognition. First place entries in each judging category will receive a prize package. Those judged to demonstrate best use of theme, best use of color, and to be most creative may also be recognized.

Judging Categories

Category I – Kindergarten-Grade 3

Category II – Grades 4-6

Category III – Grades 7-9

Category IV – Grades 10-12

Entry Requirements

Artwork

- should depict any of the eligible State-fish (see list above).
- should show the fish in its natural habitat.
- must be **original, hand-done** work and must not infringe upon any copyright laws - photographs and computer-generated artwork will not be accepted.
- should be **9"x12"** and not exceed 1/4 inch in total thickness.
- must be **HORIZONTAL**, without a mat, frame or border.
- should not have the artist's signature, initials or name on the front.
- mediums may include, *but are not limited to*, paint, pencil, markers, ink, crayon, oils, charcoal, scratch-board, chalk and pastel. **Please spray chalk and pastel entries with a fixative to eliminate scuffing and smudging.**
- must include completed entry/release (attached to the back using a clear Glue Stick - NO STAPLES/TAPE/PAPER CLIPS).

The Words

"Words" are NOT required – BUT all submitted will be judged and the top three in each judging category will receive the [National "Fish Make You Smarter" Award](#). Writing tips are available on the [State-Fish Art Contest website](#).

- should not exceed **one side of one page** in length; not judged by length, but by what you say.
- should show the student's personal knowledge, connection and/or understanding of their chosen state fish, its habitat, behavior or conservation needs/issues.
- should be original...in the student's own words...and may be an essay, story, or poem or in any other creative form.
- may be handwritten or typed, be decorated or have illustrations and/or be creative in appearance. However, the words should be the focus.
- should include the student's name, grade and state **on the back**.
- submitted with the artwork but leave it separate – do not attach to the art.

To Enter

Entries must be mailed flat or rolled in a tube – no folding, please! Mail to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, c/o Shannon Hafner, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034. Please mail all entries from the same school together in one envelope (or several, if needed).

Entry Deadline

All entries must be postmarked by **March 31, 2015**. Late entries will not be considered.

Judging Criteria

The following criteria will be used to review and select the winning entries:

- Portrayal of theme
- Creative expression
- Originality
- Visual appeal
- Artistic merit

A panel of independent jurors will judge entries and select three winners per judging category. The judging panel has not yet been chosen. Judges will be selected by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. All decisions of the panel are final.

Winner Notification

Judging will be completed by April 23, 2015. Submitting teacher of the winning entry will be notified via email by Friday, May 8.

If you have any questions about the Contest, contact the Aquatic Education Program at 641/747-2200 or by email Edinfo@dnr.iowa.gov.