FOUNDATION
WILDLIFE | FISHERIES | PARKS | MARINE

HOW TO ENTER

Youth who are accepted include those enrolled in Mississippi schools as well as homeschooled students, participants in after school programs, scouts, etc. Each student must submit only **one entry** depicting a Mississippi native fish or wildlife species. Each student must submit the **Entry Form** and **art piece** no later than **May 10, 2027**. (Do not use staples to attach these items.)

Entries must be clearly addressed and may be sent or delivered to the following:

Visitor Education Center
Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery
Attn: Art Contest
P.O. Box 100
457 County Road 36
Enid, MS 38927

At this time, art entries cannot be returned. **However**, **participants can claim their artwork at the above location after the contest, or teachers/schools/parents can send a pre-paid return envelope. (Please see FAQ section at the end of this document.)**

Entry Form

Entry forms must be filled out completely to avoid disqualification and must accompany each art piece. **If children are home-schooled or do not have an art teacher, the parent/guardian can also sign as the teacher.** For questions on the entry form, please call the Visitor Education Center at (662) 563 – 8688.

Entry Checklist

Please read completely. This checklist is used to determine eligible entries into the contest:

- Art should depict a type of **native** species that currently lives or migrates within Mississippi. Artwork depicting male and female or adult and juvenile of the species is accepted. No extinct species allowed.

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- Only one piece per one student.

- Artwork must be the artist's original work. Entries may not be traced or copied from published works. **Photographs can only be used as guides. No use of AI is allowed.** Photographs or images created with computer software are **not accepted** and will be immediately disqualified.

- Artwork cannot be framed. Pictures can be matted.

- **Entries must be postmarked by May 10, 2027.**

- Artwork must be the original work of the student entering the contest. Any medium or mixture of medium is accepted. Examples include but are not limited to the following:

  - Watercolor
  - Pencil
  - Chalk
  - Lead
  - Acrylic
  - Charcoal
  - Crayon
  - Collage
  - Mosaics
  - Clay
  - Woodcarving
  - Woodburning
  - Oil

- Chalk and lead creations must be sealed with adhesive.

- No names or initials can be visible on the front of the artwork. All names or initials will be covered for judging, which may affect score.

Categories (by ages):

- 5 – 7
- 8 – 11
- 12 – 15
- 16 – 19

Judges:

- Fisheries Representative TBD
- Wildlife Representative TBD
- Arts Representative TBD

Judging Criteria: Complete grading rubrics are provided on the website.

- Concept and Originality: Exhibits creativity
- Composition: Effective use of form
- Overall Appearance: Cleanness
- Elements of Art: Color, space, line, and texture
- Craftsmanship: Use of medium and material
- Degree of Difficulty: Appropriate for artist's ability and age
- Wildlife Message Content: Accuracy of wildlife message
- Accuracy of species/habitat: Correct color, habitat, etc.

Winners, Honorable Mentions, and Runners Up:

Each category will have first, second, and third place winners. Winners will have their work included in *Mississippi Outdoors* magazine and posted on the Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery website. Each winner will receive a certificate and a complimentary copy of the *Mississippi Outdoors* magazine displaying their work.

First place winners will also receive a BassPro gift card of $100. Second place winners will receive a $50 gift card. Third place winners will receive a $25 gift card.

Any honorable mentions and runners up will have their work displayed on the Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery website.

Winners, honorable mentions, and runners up will be notified by email or phone. <u>Please include this information (legibly printed) on the entry form.</u>

Finalists in the top 50 after judging will receive a ribbon and certificate.

Please Note:

All artwork submitted is hereby the property of the Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, Park, and Marine (MWFPM) Foundation. MWFPM Foundation possesses the right to display, reproduce or use the artwork at any time in the future without the prior approval of, or compensation to the artists.

Please contact the Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery Visitor Education Center (BTFH VEC) at (662) 563 – 8688 with any questions or visit www.mdwfp.com for the latest updates.

FAQs:

Our focus is our young artists. The goal of these Q&As is to help answer questions and avoid delays. If a question is not addressed here, please reach out to the VEC or email Emily-Jo.Wiggins@wfp.ms.gov. Thank you!

1. Can more than one student work on a collaborative project?

    No. Categories are limited to one piece per one youth.

2. Can students with special needs participate?

    Yes! Students of all ages and abilities are welcome to participate.

3. When will students receive their magazine and certificate?

    The art contest article usually appears in the Sept/Oct issue of *MS Outdoors*. Certificates are usually mailed in June after judging is completed and winners are notified. **The address provided on the forms is the address the VEC will use to mail these items.**

4. When will judging be completed?

    The judging varies from year to year. Target completion for judging to be finalized is the first week of June.

5. Who picks up art pieces, the parents or the school?

    Parents and/or art teachers will be allowed to pick up artwork. Please contact your child's art teacher to inquire about pick-up or contact the VEC at (662) 563-8688 to see if artwork is pending pick-up. **Artwork will be held at VEC for one year. Once winners are announced, pieces will be available for pick-up. Please call at least one to two days in advance of your visit to ensure staff can locate piece/s and have them ready for pick-up.**

6. **Can the VEC mail pieces back or are electronic entries accepted**?

    Although we are continuing to implement ways to improve the contest, we are not accepting electronic entries at this time. We accept all size artworks, so return is not possible at this point. *If you have questions, please contact the VEC at (662) 563-8688***. If parents/teachers send a pre-paid envelope, pieces can be returned. Due to the number of pieces received annually, the VEC is not responsible for tracking or returned mail.**

7. Do the same judges grade the artwork each year?

No. Judges will vary from year to year.

8. When will gift cards be mailed?

Magazine inclusions are printed in the Sept/Oct issue of Mississippi Outdoors. Gift cards will be mailed no later than the magazines.

9. When will certificates be mailed?

Certificates are usually printed and mailed within 7-10 days of announcement of winners.

10. Is this the National Fish Art and Essay Contest?

No. **However, fish entries will be considered for advancement to the National Fish Art and Essay Contest sponsored by the Art of Conservation and Wildlife Forever.**

11. What if my child places, and he/she does not receive the certificates?

Please reach out to the VEC for questions on gift cards, certificates, and ribbon mailings. **Please respond within the calendar year, as staff must prepare for the next year.** If there are missing awards, issues with cards, etc. the VEC will *not* be able to address these while preparing for the upcoming year.

12. Can we be notified of upcoming contests?

Yes! Please make sure to include a printed email on the entry form and check "yes" for future notifications.

Thank you!