

44th Annual
Havre de Grace Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival
(May 2 & 3, 2026)

DECOY COMPETITION RULE BOOK

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. All entrants must complete and sign the entry form prior to submission at the registration table.
2. **Each carver must show their entry receipt for admittance to show and must pay for guest(s).**
3. See contest divisions for registration, entry fees and times. All entries must be hand-delivered upon registration. There will be no arrangements for mail-in entries. **All competition entries must remain on display until 4:00 PM Saturday and picked up by 5:00 PM Saturday.**
4. Entries are limited to carvings that have not been entered in previous years. Any visible identifying marks will be covered by the entrant prior to competition. All entries shall be by the entrant. No detailed machine-made blanks will be allowed.
5. Business cards may be placed on carvings **following judging** of that competition.
6. If there are three or more entries of the same species in the miscellaneous or in any category where they are not specified as a species/class, a separate species/class will be opened to judge these decoys **at show committee's discretion.**
7. All entries must be carved of wood, cork, or stretched canvas. Metal and/or cast metal is not acceptable, except where required for strength. Plastic inserts may be used only on pintails, long-tailed ducks and mallard curls. **NOVICE ONLY entries in Decorative Lifesize Wildfowl Division: Although hand formed habitat, feet and legs are encouraged, it is not required.**
8. There is **no limit** on number of entries. If two or more wildfowl decoys are entered in the same species/class, then both sexes must be represented.
9. Entrants are responsible for the correct placement of their entries.
10. **The Competition Committee shall have final authority related to all entries. Decision of Committee is FINAL.**

LEVELS OF COMPETITION

Novice - Carvers who have not won two Best of Shows in the Novice level in this Show or Competition.

Intermediate - Open to carvers who have progressed beyond the Novice level by winning two Best of Shows at the Novice level in this Show or Competition. A carver cannot enter who has previously won two Best of Shows in the Intermediate level in this Show or Competition.

Open - All carvers may enter.

WILDFOWL CATEGORIES AND SPECIES / CLASS DESIGNATIONS

Puddle or Marsh Duck Category

Species/Class - All Mallard, Black Duck, Pintail, Widgeon, Teal, Wood Duck, and miscellaneous puddle ducks.

Diving Duck Category

Species/Class - All Canvasback, Scaup, Golden Eye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck (Summer or Winter), Merganser, and miscellaneous diving ducks (including sea ducks).

Canada Goose/Confidence Category

Species/Class - Brant, Swan, Gulls, Terns, Grebes, Loons (Summer or Winter), Coots, Gallinules and all other confidence birds, all Geese.

Songbird Category (Decorative Non-Floating & Miniature Divisions ONLY)

Species/Class - Blackbirds, Buntings, Chickadees, Creepers, Crows, Cuckoos, Dippers, Finches, Flycatchers, Gnatcatchers, Goatsuckers, Grosbeaks, Hummingbirds, Jays, Kingfishers, Kinglets, Larks, Nuthatches, Orioles, Parrots, Pipits, Shrikes, Sparrows, Starlings, Swallows, Swifts, Tanagers, Thrashers, Thrushes, Titmice, Vireos, Warblers, Waxwings, Woodpeckers, Wrens.

Shorebird/Wading Birds Category (Decorative Non-Floating, Contemporary Antiques, Gunning Shorebirds & Miniature Divisions ONLY)

Species/Class - Avocets, Coots, Cranes, Egrets, Flamingos, Gallinules, Godwits, Herons, Ibises, Limpkins, Oystercatchers, Plovers, Rails, Sandpipers, Snipe, Stilts, Storks.

Seabird Category (Decorative Non-Floating, Contemporary Antiques & Miniature Divisions ONLY)

Species/Class - Auks, Boobies, Cormorants, Frigates, Grebes, Gulls, Jaegers, Loons, Pelicans, Petrels, Shearwater, Skimmers, Terns, Tropic Birds.

Upland Game Bird Category (Decorative Non-Floating, Contemporary Antiques & Miniature Divisions ONLY)

Species/Class - Doves, Grouse, Pheasants, Pigeons, Quail, Turkeys.

Bird of Prey Category (Decorative Non-Floating & Miniature Divisions ONLY)

Species/Class - Eagles, Falcons, Hawks, Owls, Vultures.

Waterfowl Category (Decorative Non-Floating & Miniature Divisions ONLY)

Species/Class - Brant, Black Duck, Bufflehead, Canvasback, Eiders, Gadwall, Geese, Golden Eye, Mergansers, Mallards, Long-tailed, Pintail, Redhead, Ring Neck, Ruddy Duck, Scoter, Shoveler, Swan, Teal, Widgeon, Wood Duck.

DIVISIONS

Decorative Life-Size Floating Division - The entry will be judged in the tank. They must float with life-like attitude, but do not have to self-right.

Entry Fees: Novice and Intermediate Level - \$15 first entry, \$10 each additional.
Open Level - \$25 for first entry, \$15 each additional.

Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**

Judging: Saturday, May 2, 10:30 AM

Awards: All Levels - 1st, 2nd, 3rd Ribbons in species/class
All Levels - 1st, 2nd, 3rd Rosettes in Category
Novice, Intermediate & Open - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Best in Show Rosettes
Best in Show (Open only) - Plaque

Decorative Life-Size Wildfowl Non-Floating Division - Entries must be full bodied or part of an environment composition.

Entry Fees: Novice and Intermediate Level - \$15 first entry, \$10 each additional.
Open Level - \$25 first entry, \$15 each additional entry

Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**

Judging: Saturday, May 2, 10:30 AM

Awards: All Levels - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Ribbons in species/class
Novice, Intermediate & Open - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Best in Show Rosettes
Best in Show (Open only) - Plaque

Whitey Franck Division - Division **OPEN** to all carvers. Entries are judged on the table and are not floated. Feather groups including primary, tertials, and tail feathers may be individually carved. No stoning or burning of feather groups is allowed. Keels and weights are not required but permitted. There will be no restrictions on painting of Whitey Franck Division decoys.

Entry Fees: \$25 for first entry, \$15 each additional.

Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00-10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**

Judging: Saturday, May 2, to follow completion of Decorative Floating judging

Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Ribbons in species/class
1st, 2nd & 3rd Best in Show Rosettes
Best in Show (Open only) - Plaque

Gunning Shorebirds Division - Division **OPEN** to all carvers. Entries must be stick mounted and be of wood. Judging will be made in one class, hunting.

Entry Fees: \$15 for first entry, \$10 each additional.
Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**
Judging: Saturday, May 2, after 12 Noon
Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Best of Show Rosettes

Decorative Miniature Wildfowl Division - Division **OPEN** to all carvers. All entries must be one-half life-size or less but with a maximum subject length of eight inches. Length is measured from center chest to tip of tail. Entries must be full bodied or part of an environment composition.

Entry Fees: \$25 for first entry, \$15 each additional.
Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**
Judging: Saturday, May 2, 10:30 AM
Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Ribbons
1st, 2nd & 3rd Best of Show Rosettes

Contemporary Antique - Division **OPEN** to all carvers. Entries are to emulate the appearance of decoys and birds which were carved prior to 1950. Decoys will be judged in hand. The division will be divided into categories as three or more birds of the same species are entered in the miscellaneous or in any category where they are not specified as a species/class. The Competition Committee will have the right to establish species/class under categories.

1. All entries must be signed and dated.
2. Entries can be inspired by old decoys from geographic areas but must be the carver's original design and interpretation of an 'old' decoy.
3. Decoys should be made to look old by the manner in which they are carved, painted, and finished.
4. Shorebirds and Wading Birds must be mounted on a dowel and have a simple base.

Entry Fees: \$25 for first entry, \$15 each additional.
Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00-10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**
Judging: Saturday, May 2, after 12 Noon
Awards: 1st, 2nd, 3rd Ribbons in Class
1st, 2nd & 3rd Best in Show Rosettes
Best in Show (Open only) – Plaque

AQUATIC DIVISION

Decorative Aquatic Division - Division **OPEN** to all carvers and all entries will be judged in a single division (no individual class/species). Freshwater (Bass, Catfish, Perch, Trout, etc.) and Saltwater (Bass, Mackerel, Tuna, etc.) fish are acceptable. Water bound mammals (dolphins, whales, etc.) are acceptable. All entries must be of wood. No resin or wood composites. Glass eyes, fishing line, fishing hooks and metal for strength and/or stability are acceptable. Wire may be used for whiskers and barbers. No plastic, silk or manufactured plants will be permissible. All domes and cases must be removed for judging. All components used to create the environment must be made by the carver. Entries which are comprised solely of wood or those which contain as little non-wood materials as possible will have an advantage over entries that contain substitute materials.

Entry Fees: \$25 for first entry, \$15 each additional.

Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**

Judging: Saturday, May 2, 10:30 AM

Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Ribbons.

FLOATING GUNNING DIVISION

Each of the following competitions will include two divisions: 1) an open division, consisting of any decoy matching the below qualifications; and 2) a round-bottom class, which must have a round bottom and smooth back true to Upper Bay style decoys, in addition to the below requirements. Each division will be judged in the categories of confidence, puddle ducks and diving ducks.

Gunning Singles Division

Floating Gunning SINGLES Division open to all carvers. Entries will be of a type and style suitable to hunt over (traditional and functional working decoy). Entries must be full size or larger. All decoys must be made of wood, cork, or stretched canvas with no undercut wing tips, fragile bills, tails, or feather burning. Painting must be basic enough to facilitate repainting by the average hunter. Painting must be effective at a distance of twenty feet, the distance from which it will be judged from the float tank. Decoys must self-right from any position. Geese and Swan decoys must self-right from a side position. Decoys must have a means for anchor line attachment.

Entry Fees: \$10 first entry, \$10 each additional

Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 am – 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**

Judging: Saturday, May 2, 12 PM

Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Ribbons in species in **Open Singles only. NO species ribbons in Round Bottom Singles.**

1st, 2nd & 3rd Best of Class Rosettes (open and round-bottom)

1st, 2nd & 3rd Best of Show Rosettes (open and round-bottom)

Best in Show - (Open and Round Bottom) Plaque

Gunning Pairs Competition

Floating Gunning PAIRS Division open to all carvers. Entries will be of a type and style suitable to hunt over (traditional and functional working decoy). Entries must be full size or larger. All decoys must be made of wood, cork, or stretched canvas with no undercut wing tips, fragile bills, tails, or feather burning. Painting must be basic enough to facilitate repainting by the average hunter.

Painting must be effective at a distance of twenty feet, the distance from which it will be judged from the float tank. Decoys must self-right from any position. Geese and Swan decoys must self-right from a side position. Decoys must have a means for anchor line attachment. **Pairs must be tethered.**

Entry Fees: \$10 first entry, \$10 each additional
Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**
Judging: Saturday, May 2, 11:00 AM
Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd Ribbons in species in **Open Pairs only. NO species ribbons in Round Bottom Pairs.**
1st, 2nd & 3rd Best of Class Rosettes (open and round-bottom style)
1st, 2nd & 3rd Best of Show Rosettes (open and round-bottom style)
Best in Show - (Open and Round Bottom) Plaque

Youth Gunning Division - Open to all carvers aged 16 and under. Entries are limited to one decoy of each sex per species/class. Entries must be full size gunning style birds or larger. All decoys must float and be made of wood or cork, with no inserts, wing tips, fragile bills, tails, or detailed feather burning. Entries will be of a type and style suitable to hunt over (traditional and functional working decoy). Decoys must self-right from any position. Geese and Swan decoys must self-right from a side position. Decoys must have a means for anchor line attachment.

Entry Fees: **No entry fees in Youth Division**
Registration: Saturday, May 2, 9:00 - 10:30 AM at Festival venue. **No early registrations.**
Judging: Saturday, May 2, 10:30 AM
Awards: 1st, 2nd, 3rd & Honorable Mention Ribbons
Best in Show Rosette