



A Dall's Domain



My painting, "A Dall's Domain," was created in 2020, 51 years after I saw this magnificent ram viewing his domain on Black Mountain in the Wrangell Mountain Range. My wife and I were on our way to a 21-day hunting and fishing safari in September 1969 with our master guide No. 5, Don DeHart. Our destination was the Copper Lake spike camp where we would overnight before heading to the Upper Sheep Camp to hunt for Dall's rams.

The reality of us finally being in Alaska after an almost two-year preparation finally sunk in as I spotted the Dall's ram. We were mentally and physically prepared for this 21-day wilderness trip. After reading articles by Elmer Keith and Russell Annabel, books by Clyde Ormand, and shooting our rifles until they felt like extensions of our arms and the scopes felt like extensions of our eyes, we were on our way with our guide Don DeHart and his crew to the sheep camp.

As we approached the Upper Sheep Camp, the beauty of the Alaska wilderness had us mesmerized. This was about to become even more dramatic as we reached the camp. It was situated near the base of Mount Sanford, the tallest peak in the Wrangell Range, standing 16,237 feet and the sixth tallest mountain in the states. It appeared as a giant snow cone of white that took on a tint of pink and orange as the reflected light of twilight took effect. We woke up every morning to the sight of this wonderful mountain. Helen and I hunted for six days before we both harvested Dall's rams. Both hunts were exciting and success was only achieved after long hours of glassing and long, exhausting stalks on the steep slopes. The entire experience was magical and rewarding.

As we headed towards the lower Copper Camp to finish our hunt, we took one final look at the magical Mount Sanford, the pride of the Wrangell Range. We spent the remainder of the trip at the Copper Camp where we hunted and fished. We witnessed the mass migration of herds of caribou as they moved to their winter range. The ground shook under the pounding of hoofs on the tundra, and we both harvested barren ground caribou. I took a 60-inch moose and a beautiful blonde grizzly bear. In Copper Lake, we caught lake trout and Arctic grayling. We also shot ptarmigan, and dinner was always a spectacular gourmet event. The highlight was a dinner of stuffed moose heart. The chambers of my moose heart were filled with a stuffing of sourdough bread-crumbs and wild berries—absolutely delicious. Our three-week adventure in the Alaska wilderness was much more than we could have ever expected and very rewarding. As we rode back to the Hart D Ranch, we realized how blessed we were to have shared the Alaska wilderness with Don DeHart and his crew.

- Anthony J. Conte

As we approach the twilight of our lives—I will soon be 90, Helen 87, and we approach our 67th wedding anniversary—we realize that our 1969 safari into the Alaskan wilderness was our trip of a lifetime! Over the years we hunted and fished all over North America, but our memories always return to 1969 and Alaska.

We'd like to thank Clyde Ormand for putting us in touch with Don DeHart. He and his crew made our trip a lifetime memory. I will always cherish my memory of the magnificent Dall's ram on Black Mountain that remained in my mind and inspired me to paint "A Dall's Domain" 51 years later.



About the Artist

Anthony J. Conte was born May 19, 1930. He graduated from Brooklyn College of Pharmacy in 1952 with a Bachelor of Science degree and earned a Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Chemistry from Columbia University 1954. He was the owner and operator of a pharmacy for 40 years.

Anthony has been married to his wife Helen for 66 years. They have two children, Dr. Charles Conte and Lisa A. Conte, founder and CEO of Napa Pharmaceuticals. Both are hunters and fly fishermen. Both have hunted in Alaska and have harvested Dall's rams, moose and caribou. Charles is Grand Slam sheep hunter #817. Anthony became a Grand Slam sheep hunter (#816) in 1995, is a member of the Wild Sheep Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Ruffed Grouse Society and Atlantic Salmon Society. He has donated paintings to Wild Sheep Foundation, Atlantic Salmon Society and Trout Unlimited. He has also had articles published in *American Hunter*, *Upland Almanac*, *Wild Sheep Journal*, the *New York Outdoor News* and *Alaska Magazine*. Anthony likes to hunt, fly fish, ski, figure skate, paint wildlife and write outdoor articles.