

S O U T H   S H O R E  
WATERFOWLERS  
A S S O C I A T I O N , I N C .



MARCH 2011

Web site: [sswa.org](http://sswa.org)

P.O. BOX 217 • BRIGHTWATERS, NY 11718

***April Meeting –  
Election of Officers***

At the April meeting, we will be holding elections for next year's officers. The slate so far is:

John Adams, Jr. – President

Ron Sineo – 1st Vice President

Richie Franks, Jr. – 2nd Vice President

Erik Tallbe – Treasurer

George Duguid – Secretary

Curt Matzinger – Sargeant at Arms

Anybody interested in running for an officer position, please come to the meeting to be added to the slate and be included in the elections. Only paid-up SSWA members are eligible to vote.

***Friends of the  
NRA Dinner, 2011***

The Nassau County Friends of the NRA Dinner will be held on May 12, 2011 at the Coral House in Baldwin, New York. For more information, contact Charlie Bevilacqua at 516-921-1429.

***Annual Season Setting  
Waterfowl Task Force for  
the Long Island Zone***

On Saturday, April 30, 2011, the Annual Season Setting Task Force will meet at the DEC building in Stony Brook for the purpose of making recommendations to the new DEC Commissioner regarding the dates for the 2011-2012 duck hunting season in the long Island Zone. Dates for any restricted species (e.g., last duck season was 60 days long, but Brant were restricted to a 50 day season), and the dates for the youth hunting weekend will also be chosen. Input will also be given by task force members regarding the fall Canada goose season. If you have any thoughts about season dates, and would like to share your thoughts with the task force, be sure to contact one of the task force members with that information before April 30th. Each of the 9 members on the task force this year represents a major group or organization. This year, we have several friends of SSWA on the Task Force. John Adams represents SSWA, Rich Otterstedt represents SASI, Erik Tallbe represents NCFGA, Ron Kee represents Smith Point Fish and Hunt club, and I sit as a representative to the NYS Conservation Council. So bring your suggestions to any one of us, or to more than one of us, but make your ideas known to us. After all, we are your representatives on that task force. Our phone numbers are located on page 2.



Jon Swezey

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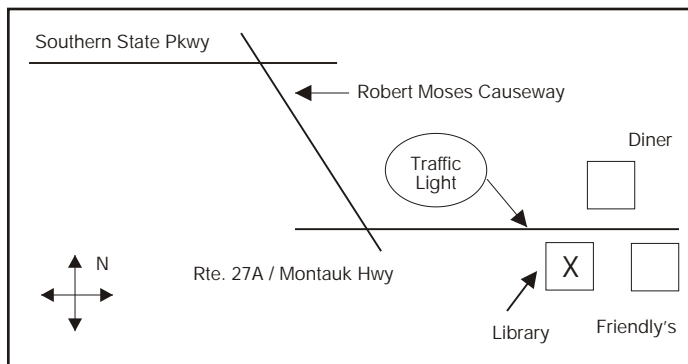
### South Shore Waterfowlers

#### Voice of the Long Island Waterfowler

The South Shore Waterfowlers meet at 7:30 p.m. on the 1st Monday of each month from September through April. If the 1st Monday falls on a holiday, the meeting will take place on an alternate date (to be announced). (A library holiday is the same as a U.S. Postal holiday.)

Meetings are held on the first floor conference room of the Brightwaters/Bayshore Library located on Montauk Highway (Rte. 27A) in Brightwaters/Bayshore (see map below).

For additional information, please call John (631) 874-7459 or Ron (631) 862-8518.



### The 2011 Long Island Decoy Show

by Ron Sineo

On Saturday, March 5th, the Annual Long Island Decoy Show was held at the IBEW hall on Motor Parkway in Hauppauge. As always, the SSWA had a table, and John Adams was there for the entire show. Curt Matzinger was there for the morning, as was George Duguid and Ron Sineo. After Lunch, Ron Kee arrived and along with John Adams, they stayed the afternoon and closed the show. Typically, this is a good show for our club. We usually do well with the sale of t-shirts, raffles, and such, and this year was no exception. We are always there to sign on new members, and to be ambassadors for our club. The Long Island Decoy Show has become a meeting place for many people of note in the waterfowl world. The complete list of who's who is too long to list here, but such notables as Dave Reylea, Henry (Hank) Dam, Steve Sanford, Craig Kessler, Ed Hessler, and at least 20 other SSWA members stopped by the table during the day. Since there was plenty of help in the morning, I had the opportunity to scope out some of the other tables that were at the show. Almost every table had something I would have liked to buy. Unfortunately, the price of most things that I liked was more than was willing to pay. I did buy an old scoter that was a working bird and it sure had a lot of character. Before I purchased it, I was told a brief story of its history. And that is one of the things that I like best about the decoy show. Just walk up to a table and pick up a bird. Then ask the owner "what can you tell me about this bird." More often than not you will be treated to story. I'm sure that some stories are embellishments, but sorting it all out is half the fun. If you have never been to the Long Island Decoy Show, you might be missing a really good local adventure. Keep an eye open on our website and in our future newsletters for the announcement of the next Long Island Decoy Show. They are usually scheduled sometime after the duck season closes.

#### South Shore Waterfowlers Association — Officers —

- President . . . . . John Adams  
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516-799-6613
- Sergeant at Arms, Newsletter Editor, Duckboat Show Chairman, and Club Dinner Chairman . . . . . Curt Matzinger  
631-661-0379

### LONG ISLAND FOWL OUTFITTERS

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## Birds of Prey

by Ron Sineo

On Monday night, March 7th, among our guest presenters were 2 friends of SSWA, Sonny Squarino and Bob Young. These men practice what is known as the "Sport of Kings" (as it was called throughout Europe for centuries). Of course, I'm referring to Falconry. This sport is said to have originated in Asia some 4,000 years ago. Some of today's Mongols actually still make a living hunting fox and ermine from horseback, using golden eagles. It had been about 5 years since Bob and Sonny last came to a SSWA meeting to share what it is they do. On March 7th, they arrived with several cages of various sizes, and then quickly set about to give us a spectacular and dynamic presentation. There was a newcomer who joined in their presentation this time. It was Cathy Winorr. Cathy is a Wildlife Rehabilitator who had her own raptors to present to the audience.

The three of them each brought several of their birds of prey with them to the meeting, and during various parts of the presentation, they took one or another out of its cage so that members of the audience could get a close up view. Wearing heavy leather falconer's gloves, they paraded the birds around, one at a time, for all to see, while keeping a close check on them to make sure that they were secure to their hand at all times. As Bob Young quickly reminded the audience, these are wild birds. They have not been tamed. They seem to behave because they are kept very well fed. During the course of their talk, Sonny and Bob, and Cathy put falcons, hawks, and owls on display! Bob pointed out that the owl is nocturnal, and really only hunts at night. Both Bob and Sonny are federally licensed falconers, and as such, they are obliged to follow rigorous requirements in maintaining the birds. Besides giving talks and lectures, both men provide a great public service by flying their birds in and around Kennedy Airport especially during migration periods. In this way, the flocks of ducks and geese that would otherwise plague the airspace near the Airport, are intimidated into staying put whenever the raptors are flying.



It was clear from the onset that all three are dedicated professionals who spend a great deal of time in the pursuit of their sport. They were a big hit with the old timers, who couldn't stop asking questions, and also with the youth, who were fascinated to be up close and have near personal contact with these magnificent birds. They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. Well, if you go to our website [www.sswa.org](http://www.sswa.org) and click on "Galleries," you will find the "Birds of Prey" gallery. In this case, I think the pictures tell the whole story much better than I can. On behalf of all the SSWA, many thanks to Bob, Sonny and Cathy for a very enjoyable and informative evening.

*NOTE:* Cathy and her husband do the rehabilitating all on their own, only with the aid of donations. They help out hundreds of birds each year. Please help them continue their fine work. Send donalts to:

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*Some guys will do anything to get in the picture!*

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## ***Atlantic Flyway Winter Report, 2011***

*by Ron Sineo*

I drove up to Portland, Maine for the February 20-25 AFC Winter Technical Meetings. I had snow flurries when I left the Island, and by the time I was near Hartford, Connecticut, it had turned into a snow event. Luckily as I continued to drive north, I drove out of the snow somewhere in Northern Massachusetts. New Hampshire was dry, as was Southern Maine. To save the club some money, I decided to stay in an economy motel that night near Portland Airport. I awoke the next a.m. to about 3 inches of overnight snowfall, and light snow falling. No worries, I thought, I only had to drive about 7 miles to the Conference Center. That 7 miles took the better part of an hour, as traffic entering downtown Portland was almost at a standstill! I finally arrived at my destination, only to discover that my room would not be ready until 3 pm, and the Conference had started about 30 minutes ago. So much for planning ahead!

Now for the Duck Report. To begin with, I would like to make a prediction. I predict that when the summer meetings have ended, and the SRC has made its rulings, this coming season's lengths and bag limits will be just about identical to those last year. I am sticking my neck out a bit to make this prediction because this year, the mid-winter surveys were incomplete, and also were alarmingly low for the following species: Pintail, Canvasback, Scaup, and Brant.

The consensus at the meetings was that it would be prudent to wait for the BPOP (breeding population) estimates on Pintail, Canvasback and Scaup, before jumping to conclusions about having to reduce season length or bag limits. Canvasback were already at 1 bird/day bag limit, while Pintails had been raised to 2 birds/day. I believe that because the mid-winter surveys were incomplete, the BPOP numbers will show that the populations of Pintail and Cans are once again large enough to sustain last year's limits.

In the case of Scaup, the mid-winter counts usually determine the bag for Scaup. However, it is a fact that the Feds do not separate out greater and lesser in their continental counts. (I'm not sure there is a practical way to do that from aerial surveys anyway.) As a result, the flyway counts are an aggregate count of greater and lessers too. This year, the state of Florida was unable to do the aerial surveys that they have done in the past. Traditionally, Florida winters a large number of lessers along its coastline. Assuming that Florida has once again wintered similar numbers of scaup, there should be no reason to change the bag on scaup to anything less than 2 birds/day for a 60 day season.

In the case of Brant, the mid winter survey has fallen short of the 150,000 birds needed for the 3 bird daily bag/60 day season "Liberal package." In 2009, we were at 151,500 birds, and so we had a liberal package for the 09-10 season. Then we dropped to 139,200 birds for last year so we had a "moderate" package of 50 days and 2 birds/day for the 10-11 season. Now in 2011, the count has climbed back up to 148,900 birds, but is short of the necessary 150,000 to change what is. So we can expect 50 days, and a 2 bird bag again next season.

Many other issues were discussed at the Flyway Council Meetings. Some were continuations of issues from last year. And some were new. Next I will deal with those topics that began last year.

- **Lead shot/lead in fishing sinkers.** As most of you know, in 2010, the EPA was challenged to ban lead use in ammunition, as well as in fishing sinkers. The EPA dismissed both of those challenges successfully. Now, in 2011, there are some Anti-Sportsmen groups that have gone to the courts to try and have lead eliminated. Right now, Judges are deliberating as to whether or not they should direct the EPA to revisit both of these requests. Should the courts issue this directive, Sportsmen may not fare so well in the next round.
- **Possession Limits:** In the summer, it was reported that some of Canada has changed the regs. to 3x daily limit for possession limit. In fact, the 5 westernmost provinces and the 3 territories have already adopted this change. Quebec and the 4 Maritimes will most likely agree in time for the 2012 season. CAN THE USA BE VERY FAR BEHIND?
- **THE PRESIDENTIAL ORDER IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY.** As of this summer, the AFC sent a strong letter to the Region #5 Director of the USFWS, opposing the idea of a benchmark number of black ducks (100,000 minimum wintering in the Chesapeake) being used to monitor the quality of the Chesapeake Watershed. The AFC believed that this number was neither achievable nor sustainable. The letter pointed out that as migratory birds, Black ducks spend 7 months of every year outside the sphere of the Chesapeake watershed, and as such, it was impossible to control their numbers during those months. Instead, the recommendation was to improve habitat in the Chesapeake Watershed to allow for the possibility of 100,000 wintering Black ducks. The Director responded positively, and affirmed that he would do all that he could to have the language of the mandate changed to reflect the improved habitat goal instead of a finite number of ducks. There has been no update in recent weeks.
- **HUNTER CHOICE.** This has been a 3 year experiment in the Mississippi and Central flyways, and we are being told that most hunters there are in favor of continuing this plan. The Feds say that it helps to reduce the harvest on those species involved. Don't be surprised if the Feds want to experiment with some form of hunter choice Nationwide.



And, of course, there were issues that were on the table for the first time. These included:

- Woodcock – Populations of woodcock in the Atlantic Flyway have increased to the point where there was a discussion of expanding the 30 day season to 45 days this year. No recommendation until July, however.
- Doves – Although traditionally, the dove season has been about Mourning doves, there is an increased presence of white winged doves in many of the states that allow dove hunting. Currently, it is illegal to take a white winged dove. The Flyway has talked about proposing an aggregate season whereby the bag limit would allow for any combination of both birds. Of course, the dove is still not a game bird in NYS.
- Trumpeter Swans – are the largest of North American Birds and until recently have been about the rarest. Over the past decade, more of these migrants have been showing up in various states and provinces, including New York State. Currently there is no season on these birds anywhere in North America, however, if their numbers keep increasing, it is possible that there could be a season some day. Last year, their continental population increased by 2,000 birds. This year the estimates are yet another 8,000 bird increase. Soon, they may be competing with other species for breeding, nesting, feeding and migrating space. Adult birds have an 8-foot wing span !!!!

Issues –

- Some states have Tundra Swan seasons already.
- Mute swans are not native to North America.
- There are already groups like the T.S. Society (Trumpeter Swan Society).
- Incidental harvesting.
- Conflicts on the nesting grounds, and the feeding grounds.

ZONES AND SPLITS

- Both the Central and Mississippi Flyways have called for more options for Splits and Zones in the regular duck season. The AFC has been asked for its input. Right now only 3 states have ideas for change. New York is not considering change at this time.

And, Lastly, the black duck issue.

For more than 5 years now, the Black Duck Joint Venture (BDJV) Committee has been meeting several times a year to try and get some resolution to the international issue of fairness to both Canada and the USA with regard to the harvesting of Black ducks. There were many issues that surfaced, and some of them have not yet been worked out to both sides satisfaction. Still, we are probably closer today than we have been at any previous time in the 5+ year past, at coming to an agreement. Until such an agreement is reached and put in place, the season regulations on Black ducks will not change from what they have been for more than 2 decades now.

One of the early main stumbling blocks was the issue of PARITY. By International Treaty, the season bag on black ducks is supposed to be a 50/50 split. Half taken in the US and half taken in Canada. Over the years, the Canadians have suffered a more serious and more rapid decline in hunter numbers than we have. For a decade or so, they were able to get close to the 50/50 agreement by increasing their own daily bag limit to 4 black ducks. Even this didn't stop them from falling below 50% of the take. All the while, this forced the U.S. daily bag to be restricted to just one black duck per day. Even so, in recent years, the Canadians have come closer to only 40% of the total seasonal bag on black ducks. If we were to increase our daily bag in the states to 2 black ducks per day, we might wind up with 75% or more of the total take. This would violate the International Treaty.

The solution may be found with the hybrids, and how they are dealt with. You see, according to federal banding surveys, as many as 25% of all black ducks taken each season are really hybrids (black duck/mallard). The Canadians do not count "hybrids" in their black duck bag, but just in the general bag limit.

**BUT WHAT IF THEY DID COUNT HYBRIDS IN THEIR BAG?**

More black ducks breed in Canada than in the States, so more hybrids start their life in Canada than in the States. The Canadian hunting season is earlier than in the U.S. The majority of ducks harvested in Canada are young, unwary birds. It follows that Canadians shoot a lot of hybrids. One proposal would be for both sides to begin counting hybrid black ducks in the black duck bag. Since @25% are hybrids anyway, the Canadians can increase their bag limit to 5 birds per day, (blacks and hybrids) and it will seem like they are taking a greater percentage of ducks, when they are really just counting the same number of ducks taken each year, but @25% more would be counted as black ducks.

In the U.S. Atlantic Flyway, we could then try going to 2 birds per day in the bag (we can actually increase our take by 25%, and still maintain "parity" with Canada) but we would have to count all hybrid blacks as blacks (except for the hybrid that still looked like a mallard from 10 feet away). This proposal is still in its starting stages. It may take 3 or more years for this idea to take hold. Truthfully, this is the first time in 5 years or so that I actually think we have a chance, down the road, at 2 black ducks/day as a daily bag limit.

### U.S. Nationals Returns in 2012

It has been brought to my attention that the history of the U.S. Nationals Decoy Competition will be on display at next year's Antique Decoy Collector's Association show. A committee is being formed to get everything related to the Nationals collected so we can display it. The U.S. Nationals was the largest show of its kind in the country. The SSWA is very proud to be the organization that put on the show. It was a tremendous amount of work to do and it involved quite a large number of volunteers to make it happen. If you have anything that is from the U.S. Nationals Show and would like to display it, contact Curt at 631-661-0379 and I will arrange to get it and present it on your behalf. As the self-proclaimed SSWA club historian, I'd love to get my hands on these items to document them and copy them for our club history. Please go through your treasures at home and see if you have anything related to the U.S. Nationals and please contact me ASAP.

### The Age of E-mails and the Legislative Process

Recently I posted information on the website regarding Sportsman's bills. It is easier than ever to let your assemblyman and/or state senator know that you want them to support or to oppose a new piece of legislation. And if you think that your input doesn't matter, think again. Every legislator's office has some system for keeping track of the public's input on legislative issues. Gone are the days when you have to compose a long-winded letter. All that is need is something short and sweet in an e-mail. Something like: *Dear Assemblyman \_\_\_\_\_, I urge you to support bill # A4786. Thank you. John Smith, 1 Mallard Road, Puddleduck, NY 12345.*

This is just an example. In order for your e-mail to count, you have to put your real name and your real address! You see, no matter what system they use in their office, they have been told that they can only count the ones that have real names and addresses on them. I was recently informed that they received dozens of e-mails on the 2 youth sportsman's bills. SADLY, most were either unsigned, or signed with a nickname like: *The deerslayer*, or the *pitbull*. And there were no addresses. None of those could be counted. What a waste. From now on, let's make sure we are all counted!



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## — South Shore Waterfowlers Association —

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### *Quack's Tips*

#### The Duckhunter's Terminology – Ducks and Decoys

Some common words used by duckhunters whose waterfowling definitions are not so easily found in the dictionary. Some of these are local, and some are regional, and all the words listed here only scratch the surface of the duckhunter's language.

The birds themselves – Pintail (sprig), Goldeneye (whistler), Scaup (broadbill, bluebill) coastal hunters favor broadbill, fresh water hunters favor bluebill, some make the distinction that the greater Scaup is a broadbill while the lesser is a bluebill, Drake Mallard (greenhead) Hen Mallard (Susie), Gadwall (grey duck), Wood Duck (woody) Hooded Merganser (Hoody) Red Breasted and Common Mergansers (Spikers, shellducks, lawn darts) Scoters (coot), Coot (mud hens), White fronted goose (specklebelly), Shoveler (spoonbill), Buffle-heads (Buffalo heads, Butterballs), Long Tailed Duck (old squaw).

The Decoys – or the "rig." Sometimes distinguished by region as the spread or the stool. Others will tell you that you "stool" for puddle ducks, but you put out a "spread" for diving ducks and geese. Still others will take exception, noting that a rig is for divers, a stool for puddle ducks, and a spread is for geese. Furthermore, each decoy in the "rig" is a block. When hunting diving ducks with blocks put out as a rig, each block can be attached to its own anchor, but a more common practice is to connect as many as 10 or 12 blocks to a single "long line" with a substantial anchor attached. "Scouting" is another common practice, and refers to watching and tracking the birds as they move from their overnight resting areas to their feeding grounds, and back again, to see if they establish a pattern. The birds are said to "use" or "trade" in those areas which they move back and forth with regular activity. While this is by no means a comprehensive listing of common terms, it is a beginning at speaking the duckhunter's language.

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### *The Second Annual Sportsman's Legislative Awareness Day*

by Ron Sineo

On Tuesday, January 25, 2011, at the Legislative Office Building in Albany, the second Annual Sportsman's Legislative Awareness Day was held. Sportsmen representing local organizations from all over the state were on hand to let their presence be felt by the legislators in Albany. In all, some 2,000 sportsmen and women were there to support Sportsmen's issues. For the second consecutive year, Long Island sportsmen were well represented, as both L.I. County Federations (NCFGA and SASI) had display tables in the Lobby. South Shore Waterfowlers also had a table, and you can get a good idea of the set up from the picture gallery on our website. As South Shore's representative, I drove up to Albany early on the 25th, and I was accompanied by Warren Ferdinandsen, the SASI Vice President, and Charlie Bevilacqua, the NCFGA President. We met with several L.I. members of the Assembly, and it was a productive day for Long Island Sportsmen's interests. Largely as a result of those meetings, a bill was generated (#A4786) which supports the creation of a youth-pheasant hunting opportunity on Long Island. Also, shortly after the Legislative Awareness Day, the DEC announced that for the first time ever, Long Island youth were going to be able to participate in the Statewide youth Spring Turkey hunting weekend this April. We look forward to next year's Legislative Day with great anticipation that we will once again make a positive impression on our State legislators.



— *South Shore Waterfowlers Association* —

**CALENDAR OF UP-COMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

- March 26, 27** — **L.I. Gun Show, Local 25 IBEW Hall, Hauppauge, NY**
- March 26** — **7th Annual SSWA Curt Matzinger Dinner, Point Lookout**
- April 4** — **Last SSWA Meeting for 2010, Brightwaters Library**  
**(Officer Elections, see page 1)**
- Summer 2011** — **We will try to get some dates for shoots at Peconic River Sportsmens Club.**  
**We will notify you when we do and post them on the website (sswa.org).**  
**Check the website often for new posts.**
- September 12** — **First SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library (2nd Monday due to holiday)**



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