

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 .



SEPTEMBER 2012

Web site: sswa.org

P.O. BOX 217

BRIGHTWATERS, NY 11718

***First meeting of the 2012-2013 season is Monday,
September 10th NOT the 3rd,
due to the library being closed for Labor Day Holiday.
Mark your calendar with the correct date.***

Raffle Tickets

Enclosed are your **Annual FANTASY RAFFLE TICKETS**. First prize will enable you to put together a rig from your wish list. It can be a rifle, shotgun, bow, fly rod, gun safe, etc. Second is a choice of a rod/reel combo or a guided hunt. Third is what the second prize holder didn't choose. Plus other great prizes. More could be added if we get them. If you need more tickets, call Curt at 631-661-0379

***Waterfowl I.D. Class
October 1st***

The SSWA is proud to offer a NYS DEC certificate issued waterfowl ID class. George Grivas has offered his time and materials to teach this 3-hour class. A test will be given and a certificate issued. The class is a great way to learn to ID ducks, but the certification will let you hunt the state W. M.U., such as the Bashekill and others. The class will start promptly at 5:30 p.m. and will go straight through to 8:30. The SSWA meeting will then start at this time, till its regular ending time. **THE SEATING IS VERY LIMITED, AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, SO CALL GEORGE at 718-470-0571 NOW to get on the list. THERE ARE NO WALK-INS THE NIGHT OF THE CLASS. YOU MUST BE PRE-REGISTERED.**

MEMBERS NOTE – The October meeting of the SSWA will start at 8:30 p.m. Being there is a test in progress, non-class participants will not be allowed in the room. So remember to arrive at 8:30. Thanks

***ATTENTION:
ALL SSWA MEMBERS***

**ALL SSWA DUES ARE DUE ON
SEPTEMBER 1, 2012.**

Once again this year, your dues are \$30. Please send a check for \$30, made out to:

South Shore Waterfowlers Association
and mail to:

**South Shore Waterfowlers Association
P.O. Box 217
Brightwaters, NY 11718**

Members Needed to Work Shows

The SSWA is looking for members to man their shows. We need volunteers for the National Hunting and Fishing Day at Flanders on Saturday, Sept. 20. Also on the same weekend, the IBEW Gun Show in Hauppauge is Saturday, Sept. 20th and Sunday the 21st. Since this is only a couple of weeks after receiving this newsletter, it is short notice, but we really need to get some volunteers. Call Curt today to volunteer some time to help out. It is your club, so please step up and help out.

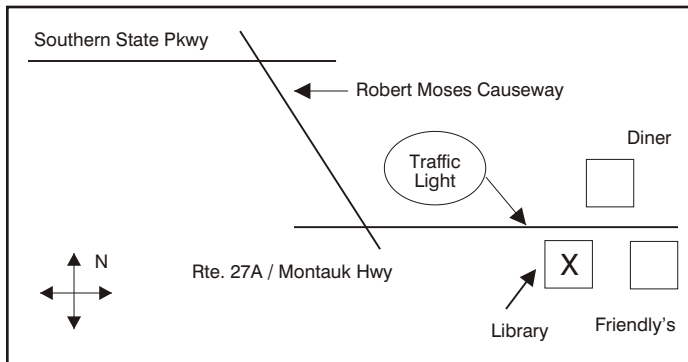
South Shore Waterfowlers

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.



Annual Duckboat Show and Waterfowl Festival is October 28th

(Raindate, November 4)

Mark your calendars for the 32nd Duckboat Show at Cedar Beach Marina on Ocean Parkway, Babylon. It will be open to the public from 8:30 a.m. till 3:30 p.m. Members helping and vendors can arrive at about 7:00 a.m. to get set up. We hope all members can be there at some point to lend a hand. This is our MAJOR fundraiser for the year, so all the help we can get will make sure it's a success. This will enable us to do the programs we sponsor each year, print newsletters, insurance payments, etc. Please help out to keep your club strong. Vendors can download an application at sswa.org, or if you don't have a computer, call show chairman Curt Matzinger at 631-661-0379 to arrange for a table or spot. Prices are more the day of the show, so fill your application and get it in the mail.

Note: We are still seeking a food vendor to take over the food concession. If interested call Curt.



We proudly support the Wounded Warriors

South Shore Waterfowlers Association — Officers —

- President John Adams
631-618-5728
- 1st Vice President and Membership Ron Sineo
631-862-8518
- 2nd Vice President. Richard Franks, Jr.
631-603-6295
- Secretary Ron Pliszak
(631) 902-2220
- Treasurer Erik Tallbe
516-799-6613
- Sergeant at Arms, Newsletter Editor, Duckboat Show Chairman, Historian, and Club Dinner Chairman Curt Matzinger
631-661-0379

Membership Drive Incentive

As an incentive to increase our membership, we came up with an idea to recruit **NEW** members. The SSWA is offering a **\$10.00 dues credit** for **each new** member they recruit into our flock. A new member is a man or woman who has **not** appeared on our membership roll for the past 5 years. This is to get new blood into our ranks. The credit will be toward next year's (2013-14) dues. This way you have the whole year to earn credits toward your dues. Try to get your currently reneged, fellow waterfowlers to re-up, but the credit is for new members only. On the application, they need to add your name to the sponsored by section. Search your address books for appropriate new members. It could be someone you never thought of. Start looking today!!!

2012 Atlantic Flyway Report

by Ron Sineo

As has been my custom for the past few years, I again attended the Atlantic Flyway Council Summer meetings this year. They were held in Williamsburg, Virginia during the week of July 15-20, and the temperature approached 100° each and every day. On Friday, after attending the morning session, I left Williamsburg for the long drive home. The rainstorm that started there early that morning seemed to follow me all the way up the coast. While the ride down on Sunday was a mere 9½ hrs. the return trip on Friday was a 12-hour marathon.

As Flyway meetings go, this one had good news and bad news. I'll start with the good news. The warm winter we had was great for the ducks. Many species had banner production numbers. I think mostly because of this, we are going to have the most liberal season that I can remember. We will have a 60-day duck season, like last year, and a 50-day/2-bird bag on Brant again like last year. The big change is with scaup (broadbill). The feds estimate a continental breeding population of @ 5¼ million scaup, an increase of 21% over last year's numbers! While many biologists don't believe this estimate, they cannot refute it. As a result, we are going to have a 60-day season on scaup this year, with a 4-BIRD DAILY BAG LIMIT! This just might make you want to dust off your broadbill rig and try layout hunting for broadbill like they did in the old days. (I suspect that they will realize the glitch before too long, so this season might be the last good chance for a while.)

The bad news is that there are serious mid-continental droughts in the prairie and pot-hole states and provinces as well as in the corn and wheat belts. This means that banner production (oodles of newly hatched ducklings) may not translate into big increases in the anticipated fall flight numbers. Pot-holes and ponds tend to seriously dry up in a drought. Nests which were built by the banks of ponds this spring may be dozens or even hundreds of feet away from the water's edge come summer. The ponds dry up, and the ground predators have a feast on ducklings that haven't grown flight feathers yet.

Here's some more upsetting news. For the first time since I have been attending these meetings, NY State sent no official representatives from the DEC to attend. Apparently, there are restrictions on out-of-state travel. Consequently, the voting seat at these meetings remained empty throughout the entire conference. To open the wound a bit more, NY was alone among the 17 states in our flyway in being absent. All other states attended. Now, while it is true that I was there, as a hunter, I am not a voting member. I must sit in the gallery (audience), and any participation that I may be allowed to have is at the whim of the chairman of the meeting. Once in a great while I may be able to comment on something or other from a hunter's point of view. By not having a DEC representative at this meeting, all the sportsmen in NY State lost out. We must take steps to try and prevent this from occurring again. Look for more in our next newsletter.

15th Annual Youth Waterfowl Program

October 20th Instruction Day

November 10th & 11th Hunt Days

Hubbards County Park & Southaven County Park

Open to Young Hunters Age 12-15

Certified sportsman's education instructors will show your new hunter everything needed to hunt waterfowl. Call 631-444-0255 for more information and how to obtain an application. Return by Oct. 5.



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Even a Blind Dog Finds a Bone, Once in a While

by Ron Sineo

Well, it seems that if you live long enough, you really do get to see it all! As a duck hunter of more than 50 years, I can remember the “good old days” of duck hunting. Of course, this expression means different things to different folks. In this case, I am referring to those “Special” broadbill seasons of years past, when all other seasons were closed, except for Scaup. There were years when we had a 2 week special season in later January, and you were allowed 7 birds per day on Scaup! That’s right, if you were lucky enough, and could get out every day of that special season, you could shoot almost 100 Scaup during that special season. In those days, it was common to look out above the water and see “swarms” of Scaup, not unlike the swarming of bees.

Well at some point, those special January seasons stopped being offered anymore, and although my memory is foggy about exactly just when that happened, I can tell you that many of us missed them terribly. Everyone I knew who hunted the bay in those days owned a broadbill rig. After a few years had passed and those special January seasons had not returned, you started to see more and more broadbill rigs for sale here and there. Layout boats, decoys, – the whole works – all being let go by hunters who had enjoyed using them for years. At that time (perhaps not so coincidentally), there also began a serious decline in the general number of duck hunters in the bay.

And then, it started...just about 15 years ago, in 1998, during the regular duck season, they imposed a limit of only 4 Scaup per day. WOW...what seemed like just a few years before, an almost endless supply of broadbill and now...no special seasons, and only 4 birds per day? What was going on?? And then the following season they lowered the allowable bag further to only 3 birds per day, and the duck hunting community started to have some real concerns about the future survival of Scaup.

For the next 5 years or so, the biologists scrambled to try and discover what was going on. Some of the prevalent theories centered on the northern boreal forests where the majority of continental Scaup have their breeding grounds. At one point it was observed that less than one in two hens that arrived to breed, even went through the motions of nest building. Why was this? Were the Canadians spraying the forest with some sort of nasty stuff that was messing up duck breeding?

Were their egg shells thinning too much? Was predation rampant?...and so on. After these things were investigated, many biologists turned their attention to the Great Lakes regions, which were always major staging areas for continental Scaup. Are the Great lakes polluted? Are the ducks being affected by something they find there? Why only the Scaup? Is it something they are eating? Can it be a virus that the zebra mussel is carrying? Or is it some heavy metal

or other contaminant in the water there? (For a while, the heavy metal Selenium was the number one suspect.)

Believe it or not, to this day, they still don’t have a clue. It is still a mystery. There are some who believe that as the population of people continues to increase in North America, this causes the available habitat for ducks to decrease. As a particular habitat becomes impacted by the presence of people, so is the waterfowl population affected. Within the waterfowl population, there may not be limitless opportunities for all species to grow in numbers in the same place at the same time especially as available habitat shrinks in size. If the number of mallards spikes, maybe there is a corresponding drop in the number of black ducks, because there is a limit to how many total ducks can live in the same place at the same time. Maybe this is what was happening to Scaup...No one seems to know for sure.

What is for sure is that every time one of these drops in a duck population is discovered, they react by lowering the bag limit, or shortening the season length. It doesn’t matter what the cause of the decline is, the only thing they can control is the HUNTER HARVEST. Even if hunter harvest is not the cause of the problem, it is the only thing that they can control!! And so in 2005, the limit on Scaup was dropped again from 3 birds to 2 birds per day. (We even went into those hybrid seasons with 1 bird for 40 days and 2 birds for 20 days.)

Imagine the surprise when the Feds announced that this year there is a 21% increase in Scaup numbers, and that the continental population has spiked to 5.24 million birds. (Biologists I have spoken to react by saying that this kind of population growth is not only unheard of, it is almost biologically impossible!) The Feds have checked and rechecked, and they stand by their numbers, **so now we are told we will have a liberal season of 60 days with a 4-bird daily bag limit!!!** We have not had such a bag limit since 1998...imagine that.

The most reasonable thing to think is that the Feds may have over-estimated this year’s numbers. This will almost certainly cause a knee-jerk adjustment next year, and it will almost certainly drop us back to the 2-bird per day limit that we have had since 2005. Even so, we must keep in mind that HUNTER HARVEST is not the cause of the Scaup decline of the past 15 years any more than the recent reduced bag of 2 birds per day is the cause of this year’s 21% spike in population.

So dust off your old broadbill decoys, check you cords, connectors, and weights, and get ready. If the weather and the birds cooperate, we just may get a chance at a broadbill season the likes of which we haven’t seen in 15 years! Whatever the reasons that made this happen, we are being thrown a bone. Don’t pass it up, because **even a blind dog finds a bone once in a while!**

LI Chapter of Delta Waterfowl 3rd Annual Dinner

Sunday, September 23, 2012

Bocce Beach, Ocean Beach, Fire Island

12:30 to 4:30 pm

Come and enjoy food, games, raffles,
live and silent auctions

Contact John Ferguson at (631) 807-9251

e-mail: jbronco20@aol.com – OR –

Reserve online at www.deltawaterfowl.org/events



What's This About a Duck Stamp Price Increase?

by Ron Sineo

Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, commonly known as "Duck Stamps," are pictorial stamps produced by the U.S. Postal Service for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. They are not valid for postage. Originally created in 1934 as the federal licenses required for hunting migratory waterfowl, Federal Duck Stamps have a much larger purpose today. Federal Duck Stamps are a vital tool for wetland conservation. **Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar generated by the sales of Federal Duck Stamps goes directly to purchase or lease wetland habitat for protection in the National Wildlife Refuge System.** Understandably, the Federal Duck Stamp Program has been called one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated and is a highly effective way to conserve America's natural resources.

Hunters have always played an integral part in the effort to conserve America's natural resources, by buying Duck Stamps for the past 78 years hunters have contributed to the preservation of more than 500 million acres of strategic wetland habitat. The Duck Stamp Program remains committed to this vital and productive partnership with the hunting community.

Currently, the cost of a Duck Stamp is \$15. This cost hasn't increased in more than 20 years!

I'd ask you to think about something. Every year the Feds try to buy up wetlands with the money from these Duck Stamp Sales. These wetlands are scarce. They are, in fact, "waterfront" property. In the last 20 years all of the bargains have been bought up, and not always by the Feds. The private sector likes to "develop" waterfront property too. So you can begin to see that while we are still charging 1991 prices for a Duck Stamp, the wetlands we try to purchase are selling for 2012 prices. And, as the wetlands become scarcer, their price spikes even more!

Since 1934, the sales of Federal Duck Stamps have generated more than \$750 million, which has

been used to help purchase or lease over 5.3 million acres of waterfowl habitat in the U.S. These lands are now protected in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge. Waterfowl are not the only wildlife to benefit from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps. Numerous other bird, mammal, fish, reptile, and amphibian species that rely on wetland habitats have prospered. Further, an estimated one-third of the Nation's endangered and threatened species find food or shelter in refuges established using Federal Duck Stamp funds. People, too, have benefited from the Federal Duck Stamp Program. Hunters have places to enjoy their hunting heritage and other outdoor enthusiasts have places to hike, watch birds, and visit. Moreover, the protected wetlands help purify water supplies, store flood water, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, and provide spawning areas for fish important to sport and commercial fishermen.

In light of the eroded purchasing power of the revenue from the sale of duck stamps (unchanged in price since 1991), **an increase is not only appropriate, it is sorely needed.** To date, Congress has not been able to legislate an increase, because of the ridiculous riders that some politicians try to place on proposed bills. Senator Mark Begich (AK) has introduced legislation (S.2156) to transfer authority for a price increase from Congress to the Secretary of the Interior in consultation with the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission. If this bill becomes a law, it will allow the Secretary of the Interior to raise the stamp price once every 5 years without an act of Congress. Many Sportsmen's groups have come out in support of this bill. Ducks Unlimited has provided a statement for the record in support. We should not resist a price increase on the duck stamp. We have been getting away cheaply for too many years, at the expense of lost wetlands habitat. By supporting a Duck Stamp increase, we will also increase the chances that our grandchildren will have ducks to hunt when they reach our age.

Please sell them to support the SSWA

Enclosed are your Raffle Tickets

Quack's Tips

At some point, duck hunters usually become painters. While a few are even recognized as artists, most only end up re-painting their boat or their decoys every now and then. If you ask duck hunters what paints they use for their decoys, you may just get 10 different answers. On the one end, there are those who swear by the "kits" (Parker Paints, etc.). These are oil base paints, and the company gives you a paint by numbers color code with a paper blue print of that type duck you are re-painting. Others believe in the water-based latex paints, because they dry quickly and because you can easily get custom colors for added realism. There are lots of variations on these two themes.

Today's tip has to do with the care and storage of that paint, often over several years. How many times have you gone to your paint storage area for duck boat paint or that can of black duck brown only to pry open the lid and see it all dried up or to see and smell mold floating in the paint. So here is a tip that I picked up from a professional painter. (By the way, this tip works for all paint that comes in cans, except spray cans.) Paint goes bad in storage because the lid is never sealed as well as when it first came from the factory. Paint left in the lid channel shrinks when it dries, and allows air to invade the lid channel and sometimes the paint can.

Take care when first opening the can of paint not to damage the lip or the lid of the can. Once opened, use a finishing nail and a hammer to punch 4 holes in the channel groove of the paint can that the lid seats in. Set these holes at the 4 corners of the compass rather than together. When you are first stirring the full can of paint, some paint may spill over into that channel. Now it has a place to drip back into the can without that messy wiping with a rag all the time. Next, as you are painting, you tend to wipe the side of the brush against the lip of the can after you dip the brush into the paint. This action also loads up paint into that lid channel. As the paint

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level drops a little in the can, any paint caught in the lid channel will automatically drip back into the can. Just before you are ready to seal the can again, run the brush carefully through the lid channel to "push" the paint into the drain holes. Whenever you are finished with the paint can but there is still paint in the can you want to save for the next day or the next season, put the lid back on and tap it tightly shut with a hammer. **NOW TURN THE CAN UPSIDE DOWN AND STORE IT LID-SIDE DOWN ON A SHELF.** This keeps whatever little paint is in the lid channel wet so it doesn't dry out. Whatever paint you use will store this way indefinitely as long as the extremes of temperature listed on the can are not exceeded.

— South Shore Waterfowlers Association —

P.O. Box 217 Brightwaters, NY 11718

Membership Enrollment / Renewal Card (please print legibly)

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— *South Shore Waterfowlers Association* —

CALENDAR OF UP-COMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- September 10 — First SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library
- September 22 — National Hunting and Fishing Day Expo, Hunter Check Station, Ridge
- Sept. 22 & 23 — L.I. Gun Show, Hauppauge
- Sept. 23 — Delta Waterfowl Dinner (see page 5 for more info)
- Sept. 29, 30 — Ocean County Decoy Show, Tuckerton, New Jersey
- October 1 — Waterfowl ID Class / SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library
(see page 1 for time change. SSWA meeting starts at 8:30)
- October 13-14 — Oyster Festival, Oyster Bay
- October 20 — 15th Annual Youth Waterfowl Program Instruction Day (see page 3)
- October 28 — Duckboat Show and Waterfowl Festival, Cedar Beach Marina
- November 4 — Raindate for Duckboat Show (Please make copies of flyer & post in stores)
- November 5 — SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library
- Nov. 10 & 11 — Youth Waterfowl Hunt Days (see page 3)
- December 3 — SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library (Holiday Party & Swap Night)

VOICE OF THE LONG ISLAND WATERFOWLER



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