

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 2015

Web site: sswa.org

P.O. BOX 217

BRIGHTWATERS, NY 11718

**First Meeting will be:
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015**

35th ANNUAL DUCKBOAT SHOW AND WATERFOWL FESTIVAL
Sunday, October 25, 2015
Raindate: November 1

Cedar Beach Marina, Ocean Parkway, 9 am to 3:30 pm. If you are a vendor and interested in getting a table, **read on.** Included is a vender application (see pg. 9).

MEMBERS, please copy the flyer from the website (sswa.org) and post it in your favorite stores, hangouts, and at work. Here is the annual call to come and help out the day of the show. The more people manning the show, the easier it is on all, especially ME. So come on down, half or full day, and help out YOUR club. You'll have a lot of fun doing it. Thanks in advance.

VENDORS, to avoid the usual confusion, I assign tables in the order I receive the checks, not when you call to say you're coming. First check, table 1, second check, table 2, and so on. If you were way in the back last year, it was because I didn't get the check till the day before, or you didn't send one and there was an available table, not because I don't like you. ALSO when you pay for a table, you get assigned ONE table. You don't get to spread your stuff out on all three tables, because there will be another vendor next to you. If you want more than one table, pay for more than one table. OKAY

DUCKBOAT ENTRIES. There have been some inquiries as to how the duckboats are judged, so here is a recap of some rules. If you won BEST IN SHOW, you *cannot* re-enter the boat unless MAJOR modifications were done to it.

First, choose the division your boat fits in. One-man grassboat, two-man grassboat, floating blind, layout boat, sea duck rigs, and miscellaneous. Second, you will be given 5 minutes to talk about your boat. You should talk about: Safety and lighting, is your boat store bought or homemade, show off the grass job, any modifications or improvements you made to it, blind setup (if applicable), paint job, boats internal layout or storage. Anything you want to brag about. **Talk it up.** Points are awarded for each section. The better you have each section, the more points you get. Points are subtracted if you are missing key stuff like safety or lights, or if things are just thrown in. Lastly, there will be ribbons given out for first, second, and third in each division. Then out of the first place winners in each division, a BEST IN SHOW winner will be chosen. So work on your boat, bring it down and show it off. Even if you don't or can't enter it, bring it down so other hunters can look at your boat and steal, I mean borrow, your ideas on how to rig out a duckboat.

NOTE: ABSOLUTELY NO GUNS SHOULD BE IN THE BOATS.

REMEMBER TO BRING CANNED GOODS OR NON-PERISHABLES FOR OUR FOOD DRIVE

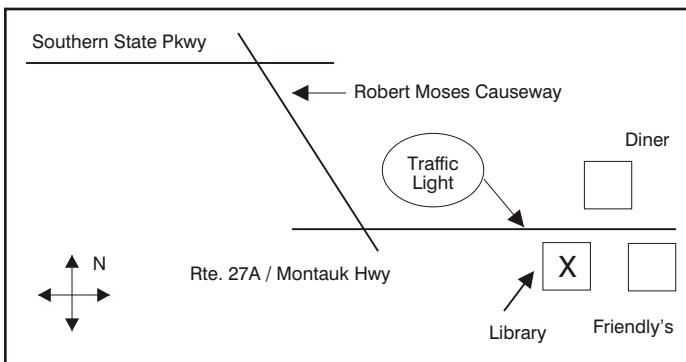
South Shore Waterfowlers

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.



South Shore Waterfowlers Association — Officers —

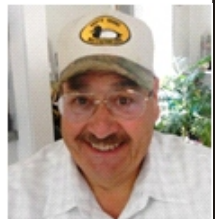
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- 1st Vice President. John Adams
631-618-5728
- 2nd Vice President Ron Pliszak
631-902-2220
- Secretary. Erik Tallbe, Jr.
516-799-6613
- Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Duckboat Show Chairman, Historian, Club Dinner & BBQ Chairman, and Emergency Feed Committee Chairman Curt Matzinger
613-661-0379
- Sergeant at Arms Erik Tallbe, Sr.
516-799-6613
- Membership Bob Dasch
631-472-0683

REMINDER

All Dues for SSWA expired memberships ARE NOW DUE BY SEPTEMBER 1. Check your label on back page for expiration year. Please mail your \$30 dues to **SOUTH SHORE WATERFOWLERS**, PO Box 217, Brightwaters, NY 11718.

The President's Corner

On Saturday, June 27, we held our annual Board Meeting, and the first topic for discussion was to set up an Emergency Feed Committee to take the lead in being vigilant, and in being prepared, should we ever experience another very harsh winter like the winters of 1979-1980, and this past winter. To that end, Curt Matzinger was asked to be the chairman of such a committee and he has accepted. He will be selecting members to sit on the committee. The Board has given his committee four charges. First, to establish the criteria for possible action, second to map out specifically where along our coast the feed should be placed (where it will do the most good). Third to create a contact chain of volunteers who are willing to be pressed into service to help put out feed where it is needed, and lastly, to monitor potential places to buy feed, and keep track of the cost of feed each season. Curt's committee will then periodically report their progress to the Board. In this way, we hope to be better prepared should we need to act in the future. The annual Duckboat show was the next topic, and we expect to have just about all of the offerings and exhibits that we had last year. Many hands make for light work, so if you can help out on that day (October 25) please sign up & let Curt know. There will be a duck calling clinic (class in duck calling) at the show, and the sign-up for that will be started at the September meeting. The other main discussion was about our monthly meetings. If you haven't heard by now, former Capt. of DEC, Tim Huss was promoted to Major, and is now in charge of the Southern District Law Enforcement (Regions #1, 2, & 3) Lt. Dallas Bengel was promoted to Captain, and is now in charge of Region #1 Law Enforcement. We have asked Capt. Bengel to speak to us at the September meeting. Other keynote guests and ideas for meetings this year include: the likelihood of offering another Waterfowl ID class if there is enough interest. We hope to have Capt. Steve from the *FISH ON*, Eric (the marine motor expert), and our own Ben Sohm. We are going to attempt a "Duck Roundtable" this year, perhaps at the January meeting ... more on that to follow. And by popular demand, we are going to try a "recipe swap meet," perhaps with some sampling to go with it. As the summer comes to an end, I'd like to remind you that our 2016 Dues are due on September 1, 2015. We will be collecting them at the September meeting which is TUESDAY night, September 8, 2015. We hope to see you there. (If you are not planning to attend, please mail in your annual membership dues to our P.O. Box.)



Ron Sineo

NYS Waterfowl Identification Course

If you have ever been out in the salt marsh early in the morning ready to hunt, and you are waiting for that “first light,” you know the anticipation and excitement you feel when you hear a low quack in the distance. Sometimes when it is still too dark to see very much in that eerie quiet of the pre-dawn, you suddenly hear the unmistakable sound of cupped duck wings catching air as a duck sits on the water, unseen, but somewhere within earshot. Or else, the quiet may be broken by the sound of wingbeats which tell you that some ducks have just flown by you on their way to their morning feed. As night slowly changes into day, you begin to make out shapes and forms of birds in the sky, you glance at your watch, and you confirm that you only have to wait 5 more minutes for legal shooting time. On grey mornings such as the one I have just described, daylight comes very slowly indeed. Trying to identify ducks on the wing under these conditions are a challenge to all duck hunters. By example, every hunter has been fooled into thinking that he was shooting at say ... a black duck, only to find when he retrieved it that it was a hen mallard. Any seasoned hunter who would deny this is probably not very truthful. Of course, anyone can ID the duck when they are holding it in their hand and leafing through a color picture ID book.

The goal is to know what you have shot **before** you shoot at it. We are trying to determine if there is enough interest to warrant conducting a NYS Certified Waterfowl I.D. Course at the Brightwaters Library this fall. This State Certification is required to hunt DEC areas such as the Bashakill, Oak Orchard, and Tonawanda Wildlife Management Areas, and the Iroquois and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuges, as well as some other NYS and Federal lands within NY State.

Even if you don't plan to hunt any of those areas in the near future, the course is a great way to improve your duck identification skills both in flight and in the hand. Since we need to secure a State Certified Instructor to offer the course, we need to know if there is enough interest at this time. We would be looking to run the 3-hour course the first Monday in November, at the Library beginning at 5:30 pm. Anyone 12 years of age or older is eligible to take the course, and you do not have to be a SSWA member. A test is given at the end of the course, and those who pass will be issued their NYS certificates.

If you think you or any of your family or friends would be interested, just send an e-mail with your name and contact phone number to: duckboater@gmail.com

SSWA BBQ and Pig Roast – August 15

by Curt Matzinger

We held our 3rd annual BBQ at Wind Swept Marina, East Moriches on August 15. We had fun the past 2 years and this year wasn't any different. We had 24 show up the day of the BBQ. We supplied sausage and peppers, venison kielbasa, hot dogs, thresher shark steaks, great salads, and desserts plus watermelon, soda, and waters. SSWA Past President John Adams, the dockmaster from Wind Swept, did the pig roast. Boy did he put on a spread. Food was everywhere. Seafood, salads, desserts abound. Roast pig. Soooo good!!! Thank you John for another great day. We soaked up some sun (or sat in the shade), ate, ate, and ate some more, had a cocktail or two, and enjoyed great comradery from our members and their families. Check out pictures on the web, sswa.org, in the gallery section. Can't wait till next year.



Why the Duck Stamp is Worth the Effort

Insights from Ducks Unlimited CEO Dale Hall

The Federal Duck Stamp, formerly known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, was created under the leadership of editorial-cartoonist-turned-federal-agency chief Jay N. "Ding" Darling in 1934. As both a talented artist and the director of the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey, forerunner of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Darling personally designed the first duck stamp, which was issued at a cost of one dollar. This, in and of itself, represents a conservation milestone, but it is the times in which it occurred that makes this story even more amazing.

In the early 1930s, America was reeling in the wake of the 1929 stock market crash and the onset of the Dust Bowl era. History reflects that 25% of America's workforce was unemployed. Many families stood in breadlines that stretched for blocks just to have a little something to eat each day. In the plains states, farmers and ranchers abandoned their life's dreams in the dust that engulfed their barns and homes. Some returned to the East Coast. Many headed west in hopes of finding a brighter future in California. The quest to feed their families drove everything. Bank closures had created panic in the everyday lives of hard-working people, who now hid what cash they had under mattresses or in coffee cans buried in the corn crib.

A dollar was a lot of money in 1934. It would buy flour, sugar, beans, and a chunk of fatback to feed a family for a week. So it is even more astonishing that waterfowl hunters, watching the populations of ducks and geese rapidly diminish as habitats dried up and blew away, banded together to ask the U.S. Congress to pass a law that required, for the first time, each adult hunter to pay one dollar for the purchase of a duck stamp in order to hunt waterfowl, which was a valued addition to many Depression-era tables. These hunter-conservationists also demanded that the proceeds from stamp sales go directly to habitat conservation.

Since its creation in 1934, the Federal Duck Stamp has raised almost \$1 billion and has allowed the purchase or lease of more than 6 million acres of wetlands, grasslands, and other waterfowl habitat. Ninety-eight cents of every dollar raised goes directly on the ground to conserve habitat that is protected under the National Wildlife Refuge System for the benefit of all Americans. Many refuges also provide hunting and fishing opportunities for millions of sportsmen.

The conservation impact of the duck stamp, however, had eroded significantly since its last price increase to \$15 in 1991. In fact, the duck stamp's purchasing power had dropped to the lowest level in its history. That is why Ducks Unlimited and our devoted volunteers, led by Paul and Skipper Dickson of Louisiana along with our good friends Congressman John Fleming and Senator David Vitter, worked so hard to secure an increase in the price of the duck stamp from \$15 to \$25, with the \$10 increase committed to the purchase of conservation easements on private lands. This allows the land to stay in private hands while still providing conservation benefits to the American people. The Federal Duck Stamp Act of 2014 was passed unanimously in both the House and Senate, and was signed into law by President Obama on December 18, 2014. This accomplishment speaks to the power of dedicated volunteers, the passion that drives us, and our desire to leave a legacy of abundant natural resources for future generations.

Has the duck stamp been worth it? Compare the devastating waterfowl population declines of the 1930s with the more than 100 million ducks and geese that migrated south this past fall. I believe the answer is clear.

Donating Hunting and Fishing Equipment

I recently received a phone call from a past member of the SSWA. He stated that he is getting out of duck hunting due to getting older and having other commitments. He asked me if our club would be interested in his used equipment, and how would it be used? I told him the club would love to get it. I explained that we do numerous programs where the club could allocate his stuff: Youth Day, wounded warrior blinds, new hunter programs. He said he was a supporter of the club and told me that he heard of our Feed Program last winter. He was okay with us selling the equipment and putting the money into the feeding program and/or the wounded warriors. It was up to us as to where the goods/money would be the best fit. What a generous man.

I would like to implement a Donations Program. If any of our members have any hunting/fishing equipment that we could use/sell, we would love to get our hands on it. We could use what we can for the programs and the rest can be added to our Swap Table at the Upcoming Duckboat Show (October 25). So take a look around in your sheds, garages, and basements. If you have good stuff you don't use anymore, think about donating it. We can use it to enhance our programs, replenish the feed money, and start building the funding for upcoming wounded warrior programs. Call Curt (631-661-0379) for donations. Thank you in advance.

2015 Summer Atlantic Flyway Meeting Report

by Ron Sineo

During the week of July 19, I attended the Summer Atlantic Flyway Meetings in Albany, New York. The summer flyway meeting has always been the last step in the Atlantic Flyway Council's process of making recommendations for annual season length and bag limits on migratory waterfowl. (These recommendations are then presented to the Federal SRC.) Since each State and Province in the Flyway gets to take turns as the host for this meeting, this was the first time in 2 decades that NY State was the host location. Perhaps it was the right time, since this was to be the last Summer Flyway meeting ever. A change in Federal scheduling (probably combined with budgetary issues) has prompted the USFWS to change its annual calendar in this regard. There will be a teleconference-type meeting this fall which is to replace the standard summer meeting. If it goes well, it will become the new normal in terms of the "summer" Flyway meeting. This October, the Atlantic Flyway Council will be making recommendations already, on the 2016-2017 Migratory game bird season. Each October thereafter, recommendations will be made a year in advance instead of just 2 or 3 months in advance of the season. Canada has already made scheduling changes that put them in a 2-year scheduling cycle. The Annual Winter Technical Meetings of the Atlantic Flyway will still be held each February.

Because of the past harsh winter that we suffered in the Northeast, I expected to hear a lot of bad news about breeding populations. While there are many mixed opinions about this year's numbers, the census is that our Atlantic Flyway ducks are doing OK. The condition and numbers in our Atlantic Brant population, however, are a lot more "iffy." And so, here are the 2015-2016 bag limits: The daily bag limit in the Atlantic Flyway shall be 6 ducks, with no more than 4 mallards (2 hens), 3 wood ducks, 1 black duck, 2 pintail, 2 canvasback, 2 scaup, 2 redheads, 4 scoters, 2 hooded mergansers, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck, and no harlequin ducks. Brant will be a 30-day season with a 1 bird daily bag limit. (This is a decrease from 2 birds/day last year.) Possession Limits to be three times the daily bag limit.

As I had reported from the winter meetings, one of the hot topics continues to be the concern about Atlantic Flyway Sea Ducks. Here are the proposals as they stand at this time. Changes to the Sea Duck Regulations Regarding Season Length and Bag Limit. THERE ARE NO CHANGES FOR THE 2015-2016 HUNTING SEASON. ***However, the proposed changes for the 2016-2017 season are as follows:***

- Reduce the 107 day season down to 60 days, reduce the daily bag limit from 7 birds to 5 birds, and with no more than 4 Eiders, no more than 4 Long Tailed Ducks, and/or no more than 4 Scoters.

The Game Bird Tech Section continues to refine its new concept of Multi-Stock Harvest Management Strategy. This is a plan to replace the Atlantic Flyway's dependence on the current Eastern Mallards Alternative Harvest Management Strategy. "How will it be different" you ask? Decisions about whether we have a liberal, moderate, or restricted season length are now based solely upon the Eastern Mallard Population. Once this new strategy is in place, 4 other species (Wood Ducks, Atlantic Green Wing Teal, Ringneck Ducks, and Common Goldeneye) would be added to the mix, to determine length of season. The aggregate population numbers would then be used to determine liberal, moderate, or restricted seasons. This should provide a welcome buffer against the possibility of a drastic change in season length from one year to the next. The jury is still out on this one! This concludes my summary report.

GUN SHOW

September 26-27 at IBEW Local 25 Union Hall

Motor Parkway, Hauppauge 9 am to 6 pm

Come down and see the show. Tell your friends.

Members please sign up to help out manning the table.

It is a 2-day event and we can use some help.

Call Curt to sign up (631-661-0379).

Please sell them to support the SSWA

Enclosed are your Raffle Tickets

September Sporting Clays Shoot Scheduled for September 20

The Peconic River Sportsmens Club Sporting Clays Shoot scheduled for SUNDAY, Sept. 13 is changed to Sunday, Sept. 20th. This is a Breast Cancer Awareness Fundraiser Shoot, with a pig roast, raffles, and many fun shooting activities added to the shoot.

This is a fundraiser so it is for SSWA members and a guest. The fee to shoot is \$40.00 per person. \$10.00 more for the pig roast. For sporting clays you need to bring 100 rounds of LEAD, TARGET LOADS ONLY. No high velocity or steel shells permitted (or you will be asked to leave). Eye and hearing protection is a must. There will be other shooting venues available, so bring more shells. Arrive at 9:30. Gate should be open. The pig roast lunch will be after the shoot. Bring extra money for raffles, shooting, and other goodies.

You must call Curt at 631-661-0379 to be placed on the list. NO WALK-UPS will be allowed. We do this because we need an accurate head count. Call today to be placed on the list.

What's Happening with Brant?

by Ron Sineo

Well, we all know that the Northeast had a harsh winter, and I am sure that this negatively impacted the Brant population as well as many other species. But the trouble with Brant has been brewing for several years now, and hunter harvest is probably not the culprit. Our Flyway's harvest strategy model has been based upon a mid-winter count of Brant for some time, and it has served the Brant population and the hunter well enough up until now, that is. What has occurred for the past 3 consecutive years is a steep rise in the ratio of adult Brant that are harvested by hunters, as compared with a sharp decline in juvenile harvest of Brant. This is a clear warning that Brant are in trouble on the breeding grounds. Their Juvenile production and survival rates are alarmingly low. Our recent harvest strategy assumes that each year there will be a "productive" breeding season for Brant, and that at least as many young new Brant will join the fall migration as the number of adults that died from all causes in the previous year. This has not really satisfactorily happened in the past 6 years. Seven years ago we had a Mid-Winter count of over 150,000 Brant but the decline has been steady, and was a mere 111,000 this winter. The Harvest strategy calls for a closed season if that number falls below 100,000 birds. For the past six hunting seasons we have had some restrictions imposed on the season length and bag limit for Brant. This was intended to ease the situation, but the Brant have not "bounced back."

Many think that a combination of things are at work here to negatively impact Brant. For one thing, many Brant have shifted their wintering grounds north from the Jersey Shore and points south, to Long Island. More than half of the entire flyway population of Brant are "staging" here now, before they make the incredibly long and hard journey to the Arctic fringe where they have been instinctively going for years to breed. No one is sure why they have shifted North to Long Island to winter, but some suspect that they are following a dwindling food supply. One thing is certain. If the Brant do not feed up long enough and well enough before they leave Long Island for their breeding grounds, they will arrive there too weak and in no condition to survive the rigors of breeding (if they survive the trip at all). A second toss-up is if the breeding grounds will be thawed out enough for them to forage for food when they get there. If they arrive and the ground is still frozen, they will starve.

Recent research has indicated that Brant hens are not that inclined to defend their nests from predators. While nesting Canada and Snow Geese will face off against a fox or other ground predator which threatens its nest, Brant hens usually remain motionless in the face of predators, perhaps hoping to go unnoticed. When predators do move in on them, Brant hens will abandon their nests. Additionally, in recent years, it seems that the Snow Goose has started to encroach on traditional Brant breeding territories. On some remote islands where Brant once had hundreds of productive nests, only a few dozen might remain, having been crowded out by the much larger and more aggressive Snow Goose.



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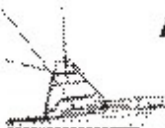
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Quack's Tips

If you have ever experienced the anticipation that comes with a pair of puddle ducks coming hard at your rig, dropping out of the sky like stones, only to flare off just out of gun range, you also know that unmistakable feeling of frustration that follows, as you wonder what flared the birds. At the top of your list, you should consider that it was something they saw that spooked them. Like most birds, ducks have incredible eyesight, and they can see in a color world that may even be more acute than ours. They also know immediately what colors are not "natural" in the marsh. Empty, ejected shotshell hulls, lunch bags, twinkie wrappers, a shiny watchband, the pretty blue wool gloves Aunt Fishbait knitted for you ... all of these things are unnatural sights from above, and to ducks, unnatural spells "danger." "From above" is a key expression. So often we are at water level, hunkered down looking out over our decoys, smugly thinking, "wow, this can't miss!" In reality, a photo taken from 100 feet above you might show a totally different picture. And lastly, don't forget to keep your head down. Many's the duck that has been warned by the flash of a shiny face looking up at exactly a critical time in its decision to join some decoys! QAs you prepare for this new season, give some extra thought to blending into the marsh **as seen from above**.

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P.O. Box 217 Brightwaters, NY 11718

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Dues: 1 year \$30.00

e-mail: _____ Membership expires in Sept.

Telephone No.: (_____) _____ Sponsored by: _____

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P.O. BOX 217 BRIGHTWATERS, NY 11718

Web Site: sswa.org



**APPLICATION FOR THE SSWA
ANNUAL DUCKBOAT SHOW AND WATERFOWL FESTIVAL**

7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Located at Cedar Beach Marina, Ocean Parkway, Babylon, New York

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ PHONE: _____

PLEASE ENTER NUMBER OF TABLES/SPACES NEEDED :

\$30 each – PICNIC TABLE (Provided): _____ –OR– 8 ft x 8 Ft SPACE (1 boat per space): _____

\$50 each – TABLE UNDER THE TENT (limited number of tables, first come first served): _____

TOTAL (Picnic Tables + Spaces) x \$30.00: _____ Reserved Table or Space Donation

TOTAL (Tent Tables) x \$50.00: _____ Reserved Under the Tent Table Donation

NOTE: Non-Reserved Day-of-Show Arrivals: \$40.00 per Table or Space

Payment due PRIOR to Show Date

Please make donation check payable to: **SOUTH SHORE WATERFOWLERS ASSOCIATION**

and mail check AND application to:

Curt Matzinger – Chairman

Att: Vendor Applications

32 Magro Drive

North Babylon, NY 11703

Checks **MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE OCTOBER 20th** to reserve your table or space

Please bring non-perishable food items for our Annual Food Drive

— *South Shore Waterfowlers Association* —

CALENDAR OF UP-COMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- Sept. 8 — First SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library TUESDAY
- Sept. 20 — Delta Waterfowlers 6th Annual Banquet at Bocce Beach
(call John at 631-807-9251)
- Sept. 26-27 — Gun Show at IBEW Local 25 Union Hall, Motor Parkway, Hauppauge, NY
- Sept. 26-27 — Ocean County Decoy Show, Tuckerton, New Jersey
- October 5 — SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library
- October 17-18 — Annual Oyster Festival, Oyster Bay, New York
- October 25 — 35th ANNUAL DUCKBOAT SHOW AND WATERFOWL FESTIVAL
- November 1 — If Needed – Rain date for Duckboat Show (see p. 1)
- November 2 — SSWA Meeting, Brightwaters Library
- Nov. 13/14/15 — Easton, Maryland, Waterfowl Festival
- December 7 — SSWA Meeting Christmas Party, Brightwaters Library

VOICE OF THE LONG ISLAND WATERFOWLER



SOUTH SHORE
WATERFOWLERS
ASSOC., INC.

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Dedicated to Waterfowl Conservation on Long Island