

SOUTH SHORE
WATERFOWLERS

ASSOCIATION, INC.



September 2018

Web site: sswa.org

P.O. BOX 217

BRIGHTWATERS, NY 11718

**First Meeting of the Season –
Tuesday, September 4 at 7:00 pm**

**REMINDER: Your Membership Has
Expired. Send Your Dues Today**

Date to Remember

The Annual Duckboat Show and Waterfowl Festival is October 28. This is our fundraiser for the year. ALL members mark your calendar and come down and please lend a hand. It is your club after all.

— Flyer and vendor application on separate pdf —

Please print out copies of the flyer and post in your local stores, delis, and hang-outs.

Vendors interested in attending the Duckboat Show, please print application and send it with the check ASAP. Tables are assigned in the order I receive them 1st one - 1st table, 2nd one - 2 table, and proceeding further down the row.

Annual Raffle

- 1st place — \$750.00 Camp-Site Gift Card
- 2nd place — 2 Rod Fishing Package
- 3rd place — Shooters Package - ammo, skeet & trap
- 4th place — Duck decoys & bag
- 5th place — Gift Card

Ticket drawn Oct. 28 at Duckboat Show

Please sell or buy all your tickets

For electronic e-mail receivers your tickets will arrive in a separate envelope.

Task Force Meeting - August 21st

by Ron Sineo

The members of the task force were introduced to E-Bird, an on-line reporting platform which was put in place back in 2002. It is a site where the public can report daily bird sightings, numbers and species by location on any given day. This is a well-used website and provides a huge collection of data about bird sighting. Waterfowl are included, this makes the data potentially useful. It is also pretty detailed. It lists the date of the sighting, the number of each species, and the location. This would let us know when the most birds were around. We could then learn what migratory birds start to arrive, when they arrive, and how long most stay.

After a brief introduction, we were given some work sheets, and we then participated in an alternative season setting exercise, based upon 10 different alternative priorities. These Alternatives had been determined through a state-wide hunter survey which was conducted some years ago. All together, we looked at 10 of these objectives, and we saw the data reported for L.I., Species Abundance week by week, as well as Species Migration, week by week., and then we selected an aggregate 8 weeks in each case. The exercises that we participated in were offered as examples of "Structured Decision Making". As we went through the exercises, it became apparent (to me) that this data was basically going to support what we have been selecting all along as a task force. It remains to be seen just how influential this data-mining becomes down the road. I don't think we need to jump to any conclusions about it now, one way or the other. My initial sense of it is that while most of us typically aren't comfortable with change, this could be a good tool to use because the data should support what we have been saying all along.

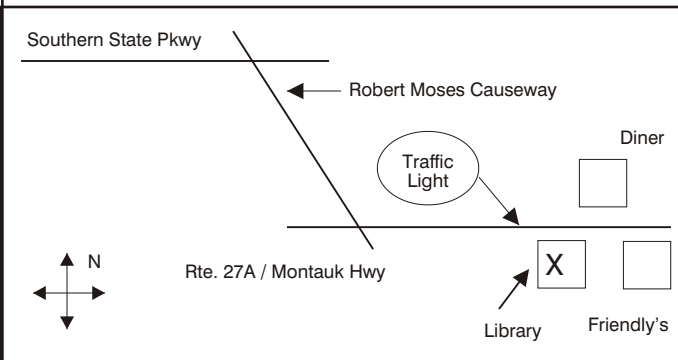
South Shore Waterfowlers

Voice of the Long Island Waterfowler

The South Shore Waterfowlers meet at 7:00 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) 902-2220.



South Shore Waterfowlers Association — Officers —

- President Ron Pliszak
631-902-2220
- 1st Vice President Kate Sohm
516-413-8476
- 2nd Vice President. Erik Tallbe, Jr.
516-799-6613
- Secretary Dani Karam.
631-921-3633
- Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Duckboat Show Chairman, Membership, Historian, Club Dinner, BBQ Chairman, Feed Fund, and Fundraising Curt Matzinger
631-661-0379
- Sergeant at Arms Erik Tallbe
516-799-6613

President's Corner

With the end of August fast approaching, it's time to start thinking of the upcoming waterfowl season. With a September Goose season on eastern Long Island and in areas upstate, an October Goose season on western Long Island, as well as an early October Duck season in both the northern and southern zones upstate, it'll be here before you know it.

Hunting Licenses are already out and this year's Duck stamp has been available since early summer. For those who didn't take advantage of the Peconic shoots or haven't been out to the range, it would probably be a good idea to shoot a few rounds of skeet to get ready for the season. Between decoys, boats, blinds, and all the other tools of the trade, there is plenty of equipment to go through to make that first hunt of the year less frustrating and more enjoyable. Remember, your gear will only be as good as you put it away last February.

SSWA functions will also be in full swing. Your participation at these meetings and other events is key to the success of our club. The Summer BBQ was on August 25 at Sears Bellows County Park. It was a fun time for the whole family with plenty of great food and company. **Our first monthly meeting of the season is on Tuesday, Sept. 4 (because of the holiday) at 7:00 at the Brightwaters Library.** I am looking forward seeing all of you there.

We will be looking for help with our various fundraisers and events for the upcoming season. We have a table at the Gun Show on November 10/11, and will be looking for volunteers to help man it. The Duckboat Show is on October 28. This is our main fundraiser and can help make or break us financially for the year. Member participation for the Duckboat Show has traditionally been good. Hopefully this year will be no different. So clear your schedules.

Remember, our club is only as strong as the support it gets from its members. With your help I know we can again make this a successful year for us and be able to continue to help promote and support the sport of waterfowling in our community.

Ron Pliszak

In the July 19th edition of the Delta Waterfowl Newsletter, this Article appeared. Kudo's to Delta Waterfowl for standing by its Hunter members!

DELTA SAVES HISTORIC HUNTING AREA

by Kyle Wintersteen



Delta Waterfowl is The Duck Hunters Organization — your voice and advocate when duck hunting is imperiled, be it on the national level or even in your own community.

A recent threat to local hunting access occurred in a surprising place: Havre de Grace, Maryland, at the head of the Susquehanna Flats. It's a region steeped in waterfowl hunting culture and history, where canvasbacks toll, honkers call and some of the nation's most legendary decoy carvers have gunned. Arguably, it's where waterfowling as we know it today first began.

The issue arose in early 2017, when the city announced plans to annex an offshore island and all the water leading to it. And because discharging firearms is illegal within Havre de Grace city limits, strict application of the law would outlaw hunting in a key area for local waterfowlers. "There's no place anywhere else on the flats like the sandbars surrounding Tydings Island," said Captain Joey Jobes, famed decoy carver and Delta volunteer. "It's great for body booting or any kind of hunting when the wind is whipping out of the northwest. A hunting ban would've easily affected more than 100 hunters, including a large number of youths who hunt there to learn what they're doing before they're ready to venture out into the big water.

Unfortunately, I didn't find out about it until the day before the city council's vote on the annex."

Time was of the essence. Jobes expressed his concern to the council, and contacted Delta regional director Matt Kneisley, who in turn phoned John Devney, senior vice president of Delta Waterfowl.

"It sure would've been nice to enter the fray earlier in the process," Devney recalled. "But we had Delta Waterfowl members who were faced with losing a spot they'd hunted their entire lives. Can you imagine? Every time you motored by or thought of it, you'd just feel sick. We had to try, because Delta stands up for hunters, win or lose — no exceptions."

Devney immediately issued a letter to every member of the city council, imploring them to carve out an exemption to the city's firearms laws for hunters within the proposed annex.



The result? The annex passed — but hunting would remain open!

"I think Delta Waterfowl's action was the deciding factor," Jobes said. "Some on the council probably saw me as just a guy who didn't want to lose his hunting spot, but when someone of Devney's stature writes a letter, people tend to listen. It's further convinced me that Delta Waterfowl is the only organization that exists that will fight for duck hunters. Every waterfowler needs to support Delta if they want to protect their own hunting interests."

UNDERSTANDING WATERFOWL:
WHAT'S WRONG WITH EASTERN MALLARDS?

***DECLINING NUMBERS OF THIS POPULAR SPECIES WILL
LIKELY RESULT IN CHANGES TO HUNTING REGULATIONS
IN THE ATLANTIC FLYWAY (Reprint from DU Website)***

by John M. Coluccy, Ph.D

Dr. John Coluccy is director of conservation planning in DU's Great Lakes/Atlantic Region

The mallard is far and away North America's most abundant duck, and this highly adaptable species is found year-round throughout almost the entire continental United States. Historical accounts suggest that breeding mallards were once rare in eastern North America, although they were common seasonal visitors along the Atlantic coast during migration and winter. Today, nearly 1 million mallards breed in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada, but surveys indicate that this population has been declining in recent years.

How did mallards gain a foothold in the East? During the 20th century, millions of captive-reared mallards were released in eastern states to supplement wild populations. Coupled with changes in habitat conditions caused by farming and urbanization, breeding mallards became well established from the mid-Atlantic states north to New England and across much of eastern Canada. Recent advances in genetic techniques have confirmed that eastern mallards are more closely related to Old World mallards (the source of captive-reared stock) than are their counterparts in other flyways.

The Status of Mallard Populations Overall, continental mallard populations have been doing well. In 2017, breeding mallards in the traditional survey area (including the Prairie Pothole Region, Western Boreal Forest, and other breeding areas) numbered 10.5 million birds (a level 34 percent above the long-term average), and have been trending upward over the long term. Mallards are counted separately in the eastern survey area (encompassing eastern Canada and parts of Maine) and in the northeastern United States from Virginia to New Hampshire. Over the past 20 years, this population—which numbered just under 900,000 birds in 2017—has been gradually declining at a rate of about 1 percent per year. While breeding mallard numbers have been largely stable in eastern Canada, they have decreased by about 38 percent in the northeastern United States. Data from the independent Breeding Bird Survey also suggest that breeding mallards have been declining in this region.

If mallards are doing so well continentally, why should we be concerned about the status of the eastern population? To answer this question, we must examine how source populations contribute to the mallard harvest in different areas. This is accomplished by calculating harvest derivation using data from mallards banded on specific breeding areas, band recovery data from mallards harvested in different states, and breeding population data. In the northeastern United States, an estimated 79 percent of the mallards harvested by hunters are produced in that region. In Pennsylvania, 75 percent of harvested mallards are raised in the state, while in New York, 69 percent of harvested mallards are homegrown. As you move south in the Atlantic Flyway, the proportion of locally raised mallards in the harvest decreases. For example, in the mid-Atlantic region only 39 percent of harvested mallards are produced locally, although 72 percent are derived from the eastern mallard population.

Continued from p. 4

Why Are Eastern Mallards Declining?

Waterfowl managers are not sure what has caused the decline of the eastern mallard population. There are many theories, including the loss and degradation of breeding and nonbreeding habitat, lower survival and fitness caused by winter food shortages, and the adverse effects of hybridization between wild birds and released game-farm mallards. But none of these hypotheses have been formally tested.

The size of the annual mallard breeding population is largely influenced by two factors: adult survival and production of young. The long-term decline in eastern mallards suggests that there is a problem with either survival or production, or perhaps both. However, survival estimates from banding data have changed little since the 1990s, when the population was stable. Over the same period, estimates of mallard production obtained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Parts Collection Survey have not decreased either. This suggests that there might be an issue with the accuracy of one or both of these data sources.

Proposed Changes to Hunting Regulations

Since 2000, the status of the eastern mallard population has been used to set hunting seasons and bag limits for ducks in the Atlantic Flyway. Given that mallards make up only 20 percent or less of the total duck harvest in the flyway, this is no longer considered an optimal strategy. As a result, the Atlantic Flyway Council and USFWS have developed a new approach to harvest management based on the status of four other common species (wood ducks, American green-winged teal, ring-necked ducks, and common goldeneyes). Moving forward, hunting regulations for eastern mallards will be developed like other species that are currently below their population objectives, such as northern pintails and scaup. Based on our current understanding of eastern mallard population dynamics, recent harvest rates for these birds may no longer be sustainable. Consequently, waterfowl managers have recommended a reduction in the mallard bag limit from four birds to two (in the Atlantic Flyway only), beginning in the 2019–2020 waterfowl season. Hen restrictions within the two-bird mallard limit are still being considered. Managers are hopeful that a bag-limit reduction will stabilize the eastern mallard population while a new harvest strategy is developed using the best available science.

Final decisions regarding the change in the mallard bag limit and a new multispecies harvest management approach will be made this fall. The Atlantic Flyway Council will make a final recommendation to the Service Regulations Committee following their September meeting. The USFWS will then make a recommendation to the assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, who makes the final decision on the regulations. (See “How the Seasons Are Set” on page 48 of the printed magazine for more information about this process.)

Assisting the Recovery of Eastern Mallards

A crucial first step toward the recovery of the eastern mallard population is evaluating potential bias in banding and Parts Collection Survey data to help pinpoint the cause or causes of the decline. Specific research can then be conducted to evaluate what’s potentially impacting survival or production. If research shows that habitat loss is significantly influencing the decline of eastern mallards, DU will work with our state and federal partners to develop conservation strategies to help stabilize and increase the population.

BBQ Recap

Saturday, August 25th was our Annual BBQ. It was held at Sears Bellows County Park. There was plenty of great eats on hand. Burgers, hot dogs, goose, duck tacos, fish boil, pheasant rolls, smoked fish, blackened striper, great salads and desserts. Everyone had a great time and the day was beautiful. Thanks to all.

Dog Related Stuff

by Ron Sineo

A part-time Guide takes out a party of goose hunters up by Lake Ontario and uses the outfitter's dog to retrieve the birds. They shoot some geese and one sails across the field out of site. The guide lines up Blackie and he takes off across the field. A couple of minutes later he's coming back across the field with this "white bird" in his mouth and one of the hunters starts yelling, "he's got a snow goose". The guide knew it was not big enough to be a goose in its mouth and had no idea what it was until the dog spit it out at his feet . . . it was a white laying hen still alive. Oh boy! Then the guys started in on that . . . "We like chicken better than goose.... send him off for more." The guide took the dog back across the field and picked up the crippled goose and never did find out how that dog ended up with that white chicken.

Morale to that story: You never know what the dogs going to bring back to the blind!

Here's one that you probably have not heard before: Two guys are up the road and they shoot a mallard. The bird is crippled and falls right in the decoys. King, (a retrieving mutt) is swimming to get the bird, when behind them in the marsh they hear something running right at them at high speed (they thought it was a deer that might have been spooked when they shot the duck), next thing they know, this black lab comes busting through the marsh, jumps right in front of them and starts for the duck. King has already gotten the duck and is swimming back to the blind. The black lab starts barking, King gets testy, then they start to fight in the decoys. One of the guys was trying to wade over and break the fight up, when the duck starts to get away. He grabbed the duck and also his dog. Risking life and limb, the other guy grabs hold of the black lab, and walked him back across the marsh to another person's blind and sent him back across the creek to its rightful owner. . . . An awful lot of excitement going on for one mallard!

The first dog Joe ever had was a petite black female named Jenny. (Joe's Jenny of Pasturehill) At about 7 months old she was well on her way to a great first season. . . . She was laying between his legs in the front seat of a friend's car, as they were heading to a near-by swamp for an early season woodie hunt. Since it was dark and Joe was running his mouth, Joe did not fully pay attention to exactly what Jenny was "up too." As they got to their spot they rolled out and to Jenny's credit, she made her first and second retrieve that morning. Yes Joe was proud . . . until he got back to the car (in the daylight) and he discovered she had chewed the knobs off his radio/air-conditioner. She did stop that habit and did in fact turn out to be one great /hunting buddy/duckdog!

To finish with a humorous duck hunting story, there were these 2 hunting buddies who went to Texas to hunt public land. They had a local map which showed a series of ponds in a farm setting. They left their motel well before first light to try and "jump" the ponds. They crouched and crawled until they got within about 500 feet of the first pond, and as first light approached, the pond had more than 100 ducks on it. the ducks exploded in the air as they stood up to shoot, but they were too slow to react. This happened with the next pond and again with the 3rd one. One of the hunters noticed that there were some cows grazing near the pond's edge, and this didn't seem to spook the ducks. Back in town, they found a saddle shop that sold cow hides, so they bought one thinking they could use it as cover to get a lot closer to those ponds. The next morning they tried out their idea. They lined up single file on their hands and knees, with the cow hide draped over them, and they crawled towards the 1st pond. Just about the time they were really close, the hunter in back started smacking the front hunter repeatedly on the rump. The front hunter says "Why are you hitting me? Don't you see those ducks on that pond? Raise your gun and shoot at them! The second hunter says, FORGET ABOUT THOSE DUCKS, HERE COMES THE BULL!!

And lastly, remember:

- "A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than he loves himself"
- "The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue."
- "If your dog is fat, you aren't getting enough exercise !

Quack's Tips

Quack wants to talk today about the 5 biggest mistakes that hunters make when duck hunting. Admitting that you sometimes make one or more of these mistakes when duck hunting will probably go a long way towards improving the odds.

1. INADEQUATE CONCEALMENT:

Birds are quick to detect movement. So being well hidden is a big advantage.

2. MISTIMING THE SHOT:

Anytime you are not shooting alone, consider the others in your hunting party before you make a decision on when to call the shot. "The toughest job in waterfowling is calling the shot right. You have to call the shot for maximum effectiveness. Too many people wait for the shot to be good for themselves. Better to call the shot so everyone in your group has a chance to contribute to your success.

3. UNNATURAL CALLING:

Know when to call and when not to call. Calling at the wrong time or blowing a sour note is the quickest way to decrease your chances.

4. IMPROPER DECOY PLACEMENT

Once you find a field or wetland that birds are using and obtain permission to hunt the site, how you deploy your decoys can have a big impact on your success. Bad decisions will cost you birds.

5. INSUFFICIENT SCOUTING

Many guides agree that the best time to scout for ducks is when the hunting is good, so if you finish hunting early one day, take that extra time to look for more spots. Using your time wisely can help you find great new places to hunt.

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ATTENTION MEMBERS

We are currently in the process of raising funds for our BIG REED POND PROJECT in Montauk. We will be holding raffles in an effort to raise additional funds for this project. We will be keeping you up to date on the progress of this project with e-mails. Thank you for your support.

Members Receiving Paper Newsletters

To receive the password for the MEMBERS ONLY section of the sswa.org website, call Curt at 631-661-0379 and give him your e-mail address so he can add it to the mailing list so you can receive your newsletters electronically.

— South Shore Waterfowlers Association —

P.O. Box 217 Brightwaters, NY 11718

Membership Enrollment / Renewal Card (please print legibly)

Address Change Address Correction New Member Renewal

Name _____ Today's Date: _____

Street _____ Amount Paid: _____

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

e-mail: _____ (Mandatory to receive e-newsletters)

Telephone No.: (_____) _____ Membership expires in Sept.

— *South Shore Waterfowlers Association* —

CALENDAR OF UP-COMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- September 4 — First SSWA meeting, Brightwaters Library, 7:00 pm
September 16 — PRSC Breast Cancer Sporting Clays Shoot
September 30 — Delta Dinner at Bocce Beach. Call John Ferguson at 631-807-0251
October 1 — SSWA meeting, Brightwaters Library, 8:00 pm Waterfowl ID Class
October 28 — Annual 38th Duckboat Show and Waterfowl Festival (see flyer for details)
November 4 — Rain date for Duckboat Show
November 5 — SSWA meeting, Brightwaters Library, 7:00 pm
Nov. 10 & 11 — Youth Day AND Gun Show at Local 25
December 3 — SSWA meeting and holiday party, Brightwaters Library, 7:00 pm
??? – E-mails will be sent any time a date is confirmed.

VOICE OF THE LONG ISLAND WATERFOWLER



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