



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSOCIATION
A NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATION OF, BY, AND FOR THE DUCK
HUNTERS.



APRIL 2023

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THE BOYS FROM SOUTH CAROLINA PT1

It is kind of funny on how the majority of my memories in Waterfowling deals with the cold, or the lack there of, and when my son turned twelve, I believe, I took him for his first hunt. Now, I read all the stories of when taking a young'n on their first hunt to make sure it would be an enjoyable trip. When I took his older sister on her first hunt, which was kind of a rainy cooler day, she had a very successful hunt where she bagged a drake Greenwing teal with my old trusty single shot Remington 410, but this was not the case on this hunt.

At the time, I lived in South Carolina and about the only public lands that produced anything was out on Lake Marion. The ducks basically short stopped in Virginia or North Carolina and the only birds harvested were either Wood Ducks, Ring Necks or the occasional rare Mallard raised locally and released. It was about 55 degrees if I remember right, not too cold nor warm. I had my boat with boat blind all loaded up, took my heater with me just in case and planned on making him breakfast in the blind.

We got to our spot navigating through the thick fog in the early hours. After setting up the blind, I got the decoys out and started to cook breakfast of smoked kielbasa and new potatoes. Even though he was dressed correctly, I could tell he was getting cold, so I fired up the heater. We sat there for a couple of hours watching the sun come up and enjoying the marsh coming to life and I could tell he was not having a good time because of the cold, so I decided to bag it. Fast forward about eight years.

When my son went to college at Clemson University in SC a couple of his friends, who enjoyed Waterfowling, wanted to plan a duck hunting trip and he called me up. We made plans for the upcoming season and set the dates for them to come up to Missouri for a better chance to harvest ducks other than Wood Ducks, but when the month came for their trip, as usual, Mother Nature had other plans.

This was the year where it got really cold, down to single digits for several days and the birds basically left the area. When the Boys from South Carolina showed up the weather was not looking very good locally. I knew of a honey hole out on Columbia Bottoms (yes, they do exist) that I thought I would try first to see what these boys were made of.

When we went in for the draw, we were not the only crazy hunters to be out in these temps but we were able to get to the area I wanted. The ice was probably about two inches thick and I brought a sledge hammer to break up the ice and told the boys to go at it. They broke up a sizeable hole having fun slipping and sliding where we set up the decoys and settled into the corn. We did not see a duck at all that day other than a flock of Swans that came in which excited these young men since they had never seen Swans before. They wanted to make a sneak on them, it was absolutely hilarious watching my son and his buddies crawling on snow and ice trying to get close to them, which the birds took off when they got within a hundred yards.

I guess that hunt when my son was 12 did not ruin him after all.

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FUND RAISER UPDATE

The winner of this years fund raiser again, was Brad Douglass. We were able to raise over \$1000 for YOUR MVDHA. Thanks to all who participated!

TROUT TRIP UPDATE

As usual, we all had a great time for our annual trout trip to Taneycomo. But it was all about the water, too much of it.



With the advent of the heavy rains the day before, the Corp opened up five flood gates, which they later opened up all ten gates about a foot. Making fishing extremely difficult with debris coming down and the fast current, but most of us caught fish and we all definitely had a great time!

In the trout tournament we had \$190 to pay out, which were the following:



Longest Fish of \$75 went to Mike Hopon!



Second Heaviest Stringer of \$50 went to Scott Combs

The Heaviest Stringer of \$65 went to Logan Mercurio



After the trout tournament we all enjoyed deep fried everything! From trout, catfish, chicken and what ever else people brought! Along with baked beans, coleslaw, potato salad and other side dishes, we all had a

MVDHA BOARD

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Jerry Mercurio Jr.,

James Edwards

Nick Witte

great time telling stories of that days challenges with the water and what secret bates were used.



It was a great time for all who came down and enjoyed the weekend.

Currently, we are not too sure if we are going back to Blue Haven Resort for next year's trip but consider next year if you did not come this year, we always have a great time enjoying each others friendship during this annual trip.

A WORD OF THANKS

MVDHA MEMBERS and Their Families, I just want to say Thanks for coming and enjoying the weekend in Branson Mo. on Lake Taneycomo with me and my sons. Saturday turned out nice and we caught a few fish. But the Saturday night Meal was the "Best"!!! The food was Great and the company was Outstanding. Again Thank You for coming down to the Lake. I hope you had as much fun as I did, hang'n out and partying with everyone that night! God Bless !!!!! Jerry

APRIL MEETING UPDATE

As stated before, this coming members meeting we have a rare opportunity to hear from a Field agent (aka Game Warden). MDC Agent Jeff Breuer who is the field agent for the St Louis County region which includes Columbia Bottoms. The questions we submitted to him to discuss are follows:

1. Waterfowl limits. I have five ducks in the blind and two ducks come in cupped up and I shoot once and both birds fall. How should a hunter handle this and how would you handle this if you observe this?
2. What does an agent expect from us hunters when the agent approaches the hunter?
3. Is breasting a waterfowl or any game bird considered wonton waste?

4. Hunting for wildlife with harvested crops under correct farm practices and design considered legal?
5. If you approach a hunter or fisherman and check their license and all the person has is an electronic license through the MDC application on their phone, but there is no reception to show that license, what would you do in a case like that?
6. What if a duck has lead shot in it but you shot it with a legal steel shot shell. Do you check for lead pellets in waterfowl?
7. What is the legal status of the usage of drones?
8. What is the legal status of the usage of lasers?
9. What is the legal status of the usage of electronic decoys? IE Robo Duck.
10. Can you use stuffers as decoys? IE using a mounted Canadian goose as a decoy.
11. Who enforces regulations at urban trout parks during winter trout fishing?
12. Who enforces regulations at the State Trout Parks?
13. Do Agents carry a breath analyzer with them?
14. Is drinking alcoholic beverages illegal on conservation lands?
15. Has MDC invested so much money in lands is there still enough for maintenance and agents in the future?
16. What are the trespass rules on rivers and streams?
17. Do fishing limits apply on private lakes?

FAMILY FUN UPDATE

We are going to try and do this again this year since it was cancelled last year due to extreme weather and the years before due to COVID. We are planning for a family fun day out at the Perry Community Lake in Perry County on **20 May**. Come when you want to come out to enjoy the great outdoors with your family, kids, grandkids and friends! Your MVDHA will provide some easy up shelters, hotdogs, chips and water. We are planning on eating at noon. So bring your lawn chairs, any other beverages (NO ALCOHOL), fishing poles, bait etc. to enjoy a wonderful day! The lake has great banks from fishing from but if you want to bring a boat you can! There are a couple of ramps to be used but it is a no wake lake, but a boat is really not needed. This lake is great for kids to catch lots of fish, it will be great fun for them! Make sure you bring mosquito spray and sunscreen since the bugs will be out, along with tics! There is also an archery range nearby with tree stand targets to practice for the upcoming season. From the MDC site: Perry County Community Lake is located about two miles west of Perryville and can be accessed from Route T and from the Interstate 55 west outer road. The Conservation Department, in cooperation with the citizens of Perry County who passed a bond issue to purchase 310 acres from private landowners to create the public area, developed the site and constructed a 103-acre impoundment, which was opened to fishing in 1971. The area now includes two access roads, four parking lots, two boat launching ramps, a fishing access trail for bank anglers,

and two small picnic areas. The area also features a disabled accessible fishing pier, where fish cover structures have been placed to improve fish habitat. Disabled-accessible restrooms are located near the fishing pier.

JUNE MEETING

Mark your calendars now, we are changing the meeting date and place for our June meeting.

The June meeting will take place on 13 June at 5:30 PM out at Jay Henges.

We are fortunate to be able to have the Trap Night again this year on Tuesday, June 13th at Jay Henges Conservation Area.

The scenario is the same as last year. The MDC will furnish the clay targets while members need to bring their own ammo (size 7 1/2 or smaller lead shot).

MVDHA will furnish hot dogs, chips, and water for members and their significant other. Plan on arriving before 6 to enjoy a dog and listen to the safety rules.

I told Terry Bertholomey we should have 15 to 20 people at the event as we did last year.

We should get in a good two to three rounds of shooting before darkness.

Terry Bertholomey is a new member of MVDHA so please introduce yourself and thank him for use of the area.

Art Wende

MO MUDDY KIDS

COVID pretty much slammed the door for MO Muddy Kids that Jerry has heading up and he has decided to close the doors on MO Muddy Kids. It was a great effort and Jerry did much good in introducing kids to the wonderful sport we all love. Due to by laws the money

he has left over in the bank is going to be donated to DU ear marked for kids events.

5 STAND INSTRUCTION

Jay Henges Shooting Range offering one-on-one 5-Stand shotgun instruction sessions during April

Shooters will receive personalized coaching to help improve their skills in this challenging shotgun sport.

EUREKA, Mo.—5-Stand shotgun shooting can be a challenging sport to master. There's no better way to get a jumpstart on the learning curve than with personal, one-on-one instruction. That's exactly what the Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) Jay Henges Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center will offer during the month of April.

Henges Shooting Range staff is offering personalized Instructional 5-Stand sessions on eight dates during the month of April. Each session is free and open to ages 11 years and up. This program is designed for those who have had some experience with shotguns. It will cover safety, appropriate guns and ammunition, rules of the game, etiquette on the field, and field layout.

The classes will provide one-on-one instruction for those shooters familiar with shooting clay targets but haven't shot 5-Stand before. Participants will get the opportunity to shoot 1 round of 5-Stand with the instructor working through strategies and techniques for the different bird presentations on the menu.

Participants will need to bring their own firearm and ammunition with them; improved cylinder or modified chokes are recom-

mended. Shot size must be 7.5, 8, or 9. Participants can come for instruction during regular operating hours on the specific day for which they've signed up (Wednesdays, 1-7:30 p.m. or Thursdays 10 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.). Shooters will need to check in for their instructional round at the main range office by the rifle/pistol range.

Pre-registration is required. Dates of the April Instructional 5-Stand sessions and registration links are:

Wednesday, April 12, 1 – 6:30 p.m.: <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/4QA>

Thursday, April 13, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.: <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/4Qd>

Wednesday, April 19, 1 – 6:30 p.m.: <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/4QP>

Thursday, April 20, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.: <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/4QW>

Wednesday, April 26, 1 – 6:30 p.m.: <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/4Qm>

Thursday, April 27, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.: <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/4Qs>

5-stand shooting is an excellent preparation for those looking to get into game bird hunting. Targets imitate the flight patterns of some of Missouri's most popular game birds. Shooters rotate through five stations where they will see clay targets flying left and right, toward, and away from them at different angles and speeds.

The Jay Henges Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center is at 1100 Antire Road, just off I-44, exit 269 in Eureka.

2023-2024 Season

Teal Season: Sept. 9-24

Limits: 6 daily and 18 in posse

Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Ducks Season:

North Zone: Oct. 28 - Dec. 26

Middle Zone: Nov. 4 - 12 and Nov. 18 through Jan. 7, 2024

South Zone: Nov. 23 - 26 and Dec. 7 through Jan. 31, 2024

Bag Limit: 6 ducks daily with species restrictions of:

4 mallards (no more than 2 hens)

2 scaup for first 45 days and 1 scaup for last 15 days

3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 1 pintail, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 mottled duck

DELTA WATERFOWL

Duck Hunters Expo

July 28-30, 2023

There will be something for everyone at the Duck Hunters Expo! All stages feature presenters who are leaders in their area of expertise. Delta Waterfowl will have the foremost experts in the fields of duck production, waterfowl habitat conservation and the future of our hunting heritage presenting daily. Get three packed days of the in-depth information that duck hunters crave. Hosted by Genesis Hunters & Trinity Training, Pastor Jay Johnson

The largest event in North America dedicated to the duck hunter!

Little Rock, AR

Join us in the duck hunting capital of North America. The Duck Hunters Expo will take over the Little Rock Statehouse Convention Center covering over 80,000 square feet of exhibit space. Located right

on the Arkansas River and only a 10-minute drive from the airport. See <https://deltawaterfowlexpo.com/> for more info and tickets.

Banquet

Two Rivers Chapter – Brussels, IL

Saturday, April 15, 2023
Doors Open – 5:30 PM | Dinner – 6:30 PM

Youth Ticket – \$20, Single Ticket – \$45, Couples Ticket – \$60

Hunters Table of 6 – \$150

Single Sponsor Ticket – \$135

Includes Sponsor Delta Waterfowl membership & 1 entry into a Sponsor Only raffle. Couples Sponsor Ticket – \$150

Includes 1 Sponsor and 1 Friend Delta Waterfowl memberships & 1 entry into a Sponsor Only raffle. Sponsor Table of 6 – \$240

Includes 1 Sponsor and 5 Friend Delta Waterfowl memberships & 1 entry into a Sponsor Only raffle. Raffle Bag – \$200

Includes a 1 in 35 chance at an exclusive gun. Only 35 sold!

Does not include entry ticket.

For more information contact:
Jo Ann Bieker at (618) 600-1466
| jdbieker@frontier.com

Up Coming Events

Apr 12 : Agent Jeff Breuer

May 10 : Movie Night

June 13 : Trap Shoot

July 12 : Swap Meet

Aug 9 : NO MEETING

Sept 13 : Waterfowl Forecast

Oct 11 : TBD

Nov 8 : NO MEETING

Dec 13 : Holiday Party

General Information

This newsletter is distributed to our active members. For non-active members check the website for the current newsletter. We have our general meeting the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM and our Board of Directors' Meeting every fourth Monday at 7 PM. Members meetings are held at Borgettis Bar & Grill 1667 South Old Hwy 141 Fenton MO. Board Meetings are held at various locations, contact Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548 for this month's location. In case of bad weather call Ken Liebel at 314-822-8030 or Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548.

Visit YOUR web site at <https://mvdha.com> to get the most recent news, events and updates. There you will find this newsletter and other helpful information concerning conservation and the great outdoors that we love. If you would like to be added to the email listing of important news and updates you can do that through the web site through the contact us link, fill out the form and make sure you add your email address.

Any comments or suggestions concerning the newsletter or the website can be sent to mvdha@mvdha.com. I am always looking forwards to suggestions concerning content and what you would like to see or be presented in these publications.

Next members meeting: April 12, 2023

Next Board Meeting: April 24, 2023

Members are invited to the Board Meeting

Member's meeting start at 7:30, Board meeting starts at 7:00

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSN. INC.

"A Nonprofit Association of, by, and for the Duck Hunters"

"ST. LOUIS' NONPROFIT ASSOCIATION"

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