



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



JULY 2023

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### WIDGEON CONT

Widgeon settled in just fine in our home at the time. I wanted him to be not only a waterfowl dog but also a family dog as well. He kennel trained good and the kids absolutely loved him! What child wouldn't love a new puppy in the house, chasing him around and playing with him all the time (first mistake). We had all the toys for him to keep him entertained so he would not get bored. You know the drill, for a new and up becoming waterfowl dog, imitation ducks to retrieve, puppy sized bumpers etc. But his favorite toy to play with was an old pair of tube socks tied together. He would chase after those socks like crazy and play tug of war with the kids and myself (second huge mistake). Did I tell you that puppy's nails are sharp? Well, they are, on one session of playing with him he got a little rambunctious and began clawing at my hand trying to keep his sock toy and literally fileted my right hand above my thumb. That scar he left me gives me very fond memories of that dog.

After about a month I began his obedience training. He was a rather smart dog more or less, but I really did not have anything to compare him to. Remember, I was following the Water Dog manual and he was coming along nicely. He learned his sit, heal and stay commands quickly and really well. Started on his retrieving training with the small bumpers in our back yard and that he did quite well also. I would put him in his sit stay position next to me, throw a bumper out and he would look up at me with those big brown puppy eyes, that can just about melt anybody, asking me 'well, can I go and get it?' in which case I would release him and he would charge out and retrieve the bumper and bring it back to me. Granted, not always to hand, but he would bring it back, which we worked on in future months. That was great to see, a hard charging duck dog.

Now, I did not want to have another gun shy dog with Widgeon. In the Water Dog book that I was following, he had a specific section to address this and it came during feeding time of the pup, which Widgeon loved to eat. I would get his bowl ready, put him in a sit and stay position about ten feet away from his feeding spot. I would then place his bowl down, which was next to a wall in the house. He would sit there and begin to salivate waiting for the release command and when I did release him he tore off after his food. More than once he crashed into the wall trying to stop. But during the feeding, according to the book, I am to make a lot of noise, at first use pots with lids on them and bang them together while the dog is eating, and as the sessions increased, increase the noise level, like taking a pot and hitting the bottom of it with a wooden spoon at first then graduate to a metal spoon. Once the dog does not think twice about all this racket and just wants to eat, you move up to shooting blank 22s by him. All of this you start far away and you work your way up closer to the dog while the animal is eating. Widgeon did an outstanding job during this training and never shied away from any gun fire during any hunting trips. Now, my wife at the time, when all this was going on, was not too pleased, with beat up pots and pans and shooting a pistol in the house all to train a dog. But sacrifices must be made!!!! More stories about Widgeon next month.

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## JULY MEETING

This month's meeting will be a swap meet. So bring all of those items you have sitting around the house collecting dust that you think other fellow waterfowlers might be interested in and bring them to the meeting. Have a set price for those items and get ready to haggle!

The second part of the meeting will be to discuss questions about Waterfowling here in Missouri to bring up to MDC. So think about those questions before the meeting and bring them up so we can document them to bring in front of MDC.

## DOVE HUNT

The application time frame for the managed dove hunt out at Columbia Bottom is now opened till the end of the month.

Go to the MDC website and select hunting and trapping link off of the main menu, top navigation. Under the popular species listing on the right hand side select Dove. On the left hand navigation screen of the next page select Managed Hunts. On that page fill out the form and submit.

## GOOGLE REVIEW

It was brought to my attention that when you search from Google for MVDHA that the info in Google for the website and meeting place was not correct. This has been corrected. However, we need some Google reviews to try and get the word out about us. If you are willing, open up the Google Search Engine. Type in MVDHA and hit enter. You will see on the right hand side of Google info about us. Please create a POSITIVE review. You will see an example of a review left by Jerry.

Thanks!!!

## MDC GOOSE BANDING

The MDC goose banding was a huge success!!! Over 16 kids showed up and helped band over fifty geese! Huge thanks goes out to Erin Shank from MDC out of Powder Valley Nature Center for coordinating this! Below are some pictures of that event.



The round up.



Pulling them out to be inspected and banded.

## MVDHA BOARD

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Jerry Mercurio Jr.,

James Edwards

Nick Witte





Getting Banded



Tim's Daughter assisting



Tim's Mom and his Son assisting



Kids having fun while learning



The volunteers and MDC staff.

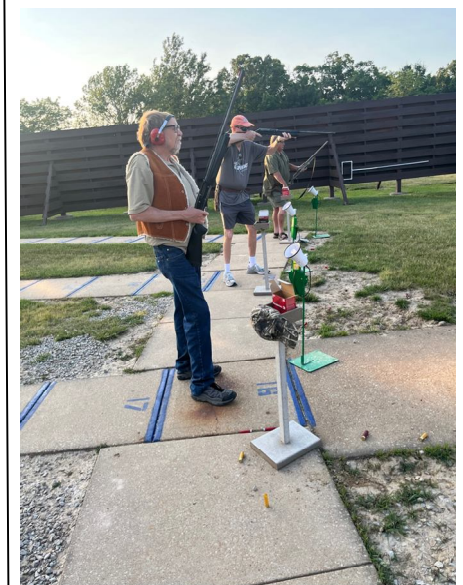
## JUNE MEETING UPDTE

If you missed the June meeting where we had our Skeet Shoot out at Jay Henges along with a hotdog roast, you missed an outstanding opportunity. We all had a great time and most of us were very much humbled in our shooting. (Never could hit those clay birds) Huge thanks goes out to Terry Bertholomey who arranged this for us and to have the range all to ourselves, Greg Ranes and Rich Weimann who gave us the safety briefing, watched over us to make sure we did not do anything stupid and also ensured the throwers

were operating correctly and keeping them full of clay pigeons. All of these fine gentlemen were of the MDC staff assisting us. Could not of had such a great evening without you! Thanks!! Below are some pictures of that event:



Safety briefing, eating grilled hotdogs and enjoying each others company.



The shoot. Art, Tony and Scott





Scott's daughter shooting. I was very humbled shooting next to her. She was shooting a 20 gauge, me a 12, she was a crack shot around the %75 percent range, me, %40 and that is stretching it.



The shooters and MDC kicking back waiting on the next round



Taking a break with MDC



Jerry trying to look cool.

## SWAN LAKE

From the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
News Release

Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge  
16194 Swan Lake Ave. Sumner,  
Missouri 64681

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -  
June 6, 2023

Contact: Steve Whitson, [steve\\_whitson@fws.gov](mailto:steve_whitson@fws.gov),  
(660) 973-6349

### Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge - 2023 Waterfowl Season

Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge will be suspending its waterfowl hunting program indefinitely due to shortages in staffing and workload demands.

In 2012, Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge developed a Hunting Plan expanding hunting opportunities on the refuge. Among these opportunities, waterfowl hunting was added to the existing deer and goose hunting programs. When public uses are considered on a National Wildlife Refuge, they must first be deemed as a compatible use. One of the aspects of the use that must be evaluated during the compatibility process is workload capacity of existing staff and the ability of the staff to carry out the program safely and in a quality manner without negative impacts to other workload priorities. At the time when waterfowl hunting was deemed a compatible use on the refuge, staffing and workload were at levels which allowed for this program to be added without negatively impacting the mission of the refuge. Since that time, staff numbers on the refuge have been reduced and there has been an increase in upcoming management and restoration projects. These include a redesign of about 80% of the refuge water management infrastructure, and the construction of a new office/visitor contact station. Due to these workload demands; we will be suspending our managed waterfowl hunting program until further notice.

We will periodically reevaluate our public hunting programs and keep the public informed as things progress. Our managed deer, conservation order light goose, squirrel, and dove hunting programs will continue as they have in the past.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (660) 973-6349 or by email at [steve\\_whitson@fws.gov](mailto:steve_whitson@fws.gov).

—FWS—

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [fws.gov](http://fws.gov).

Thanks

Steve Whitson - Refuge Manager

Swan Lake NWR 16194 Swan Lake Ave Sumner, MO 64681

[steve\\_whitson@fws.gov](mailto:steve_whitson@fws.gov)

(C) 660-973-6349 (O) 660-856-3323

## MWHI BANQUET

Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc banquet

Banquet season is upon us. This year we are offering sponsorship packages at different levels. Each package has added benefits, along with your banquet tickets. Please reach out to Chance

Ketchum with any questions at 618-946-4901

August 5, 2023

Godfrey KC Hall

Doors open at 4:30

For more info see FaceBook under : Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc

## SHOOTING TIPS

From the DU website:

By Wade Bourne

Making a good shot is one of the great joys in waterfowl hunting. Indeed, shooting is the pinnacle of this sport. Everything else - scouting, building blinds, setting decoys, calling, everything is a lead-up to that moment when you shoulder your gun and fire. Making a clean kill gives you an immediate sense of pride in a job well done.

So, how do you become a good shot? How can you convert misses into hits? What can you do to improve your accuracy and hold your own with more seasoned shooters in the blind or pit?

Good shooting is a mix of coordination, concentration and confidence. Good shooting is more instinctive than mechanical. It's a skill that is honed through adept coaching and lots of practice, similar to other athletic endeavors.

Here's a list of 10 tips for becoming a better shot on ducks and geese. Put these suggestions into practice and you'll shoot better and enjoy your hunting more.

1. MAKE SURE YOUR SHOT-GUN FITS
2. PRACTICE SHOOTING IN THE PRESEASON
3. DON'T GET IN A HURRY
4. SHOOT ONE BIRD AT A TIME

5. SHOOT THE TRAILING BIRD IN A FLIGHT
6. RELY ON INSTINCT TO CALCULATE LEAD
7. DON'T STOP SWINGING
8. ON LONG PASSING SHOTS, LEAD MORE THAN YOU THINK YOU NEED TO
9. WHEN WATERFOWL ARE COMING HEAD ON, BLOT THEM OUT AND FIRE
10. ATTEND A SHOOTING SCHOOL

## 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

## Up Coming Events

**July 12** : Swap Meet

**Aug 9** : NO MEETING

**Sept 13** : Waterfowl Forecast

**Oct 11** : Boat Maintenance

**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](mailto: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: July 12, 2023**

**Next Board Meeting: July 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"

P.O. BOX 6, VALLEY PARK, MO 63088

