



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



JUNE 2023

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**WIDGEON**

If you have been a long time waterfowler at some point in your time pursuing waterfowl you have probably owned a dog or two, or three or four etc. to enjoy the pursuit we do and to have that fellow companion along with you and to retrieve the ducks you knock down, or at least you hope the dog does.

I have owned only two dogs specifically for waterfowl throughout my life. My first dog was a mistake. He was a big yellow lab that I got when I was probably only about 14 and did not know much about dogs at the time and he was already three years old or so when I got him. Actually my Mom got him for me since my older brother had Sam who was a great hunter, but this one, not so much.

I did not know much about dog training, read some books about it, understood some basics and took him to task. Obedience training went well, granted, he was already at least three years old, so probably did not teach him a thing. Decided to take him out to see how he reacted to gun fire. I knew not to shoot my 12 gauge over him so I started out with my trusty 410 single shot Remington shotgun. With him sitting beside me I let off a round. Man, was that a mistake. The first shot he took off like a rocket to the house, I could not stop him. Brought him back out to the field and tried again. Decided this time to get in front of him before I let off the round, better idea which I should of done the first time (not) but with the same results. On the shot, I turned around and all I could see was a dust cloud, he took off so fast and he went into hiding, could not find him. He lasted about a couple of months and decided to give him away, besides, we had Sam to hunt with.

Fast forward about twenty five years, I had just got out of the military and settling down to civilian life. Decided to get another dog for hunting. Did not want to make the same mistakes I did in my youth so I started reading about dog training, specifically a waterfowl dog that would also be a family dog. Landed on the training methods of Richard A. Wolters in the book called Water Dog. Granted, his training techniques were old at the time, but made sense to me and through his techniques I figured I was armed with the knowledge to get that hunting dog I always wanted.

At the time, I did not really know much about selecting a dog, other than to make sure the mom and dad were available to see and that they came from a hunting animal. Understand, this was the time before the internet and had to search via newspapers or word of mouth. I found an advertisement for hunting Labradors, black labs, so I went to check them out. Well, when you have three kids in tow to go look at a pup, needless to say, it is almost impossible to not bring one home. The Mom and Dad looked ok, not great, Mom was slightly smaller but Dad was a big blocky dog, which was what I was looking for, neither one had a hunting pedigree but with the kids we picked one out and brought Widgeon home with us. Another lesson learned, leave the kids at home when looking at a dog, especially a pup.

More stories about Widgeon next month.

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## 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

## APRIL MEETING ANSWERS

From our April meeting we had MDC Agent Jeff Breuer as our speaker, it was an outstanding meeting. Below are his answers to the questions along with his contact info if needed:

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? **Call your local Agent to get advice, mistakes**

**happen, honesty is the best policy.**

2. What does an agent expect from us hunters when the agent approaches the hunter? **Muzzle pointed in safe direction is paramount, don't be nervous, just freeze and do exactly what the Agent says.**
3. Is breasting a waterfowl or any game bird considered wonton waste? **No. If entire animal is wasted then yes and you need to be home when breasting since you are required to have wing attached when transporting.**
4. Hunting for wildlife with harvested crops under correct farm practices and design considered legal? **Yes, waterfowl digest spells it out in the Federal Regulations.**
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? **Agents carry an application with them to look up your info. Recommends to take a picture of your license either by screen scrape or regular picture and store on phone.**
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? **Only if he has reason to check.**
7. What is the legal status of the usage of drones? **Not allowed while hunting and not allowed to use at all in conservation areas.**
8. What is the legal status of the usage of lasers? **Not allowed.**

## MVDHA BOARD

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**Fin. Secretary:**

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Bill Hilgeman

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Jerry Mercurio

**Asst Chairman of the Board**

Art Wende

**Directors:**

Brad Douglass,

Jerry Mercurio Jr.,

James Edwards

Nick Witte

9. What is the legal status of the usage of electronic decoys? IE Robo Duck. **Still legal but you cannot use a drone nor use one to make sound.**
10. Can you use stuffers as decoys? IE using a mounted Canadian goose as a decoy. **Yes, you can use them but you cannot use live decoys**
11. Who enforces regulations at urban trout parks during winter trout fishing? **MDC Agents or Peace Officers of the Parks that are certified.**
12. Who enforces regulations at the State Trout Parks? **MDC Agents at those parks.**
13. Do Agents carry a breath analyzer with them? **No, but he suspects alcohol is involved the Agent will call for support.**
14. Is drinking alcoholic beverages illegal on conservation lands? **No, as long as you are not hunting, driving or operating a boat.**
15. Has MDC invested so much money in lands is there still enough for maintenance and agents in the future? **It depends on the budget. Each agency submits their budget and has to justify their budgets.**
16. What are the trespass rules on rivers and streams? **It depends. A person could own area in the water that is not flooded. If you don't know, don't go in there. He did state that if you are in the main channel of the river or creek you should be good.**
17. Do fishing limits apply on private lakes? **Yes. When leav-**

**ing area, the Agent does not know where you caught them so limits apply.**

Agent Breuer cell is: 314-607-2708

### **Conservation Department Offices**

Cape Girardeau 573-290-5730

Columbia 573-815-7900

Jeff City (HQ) 573-751-4115

Kansas City 816-622-0900-

Kirksville 660-785-2420

St. Charles 636-441-4554

St. Joseph 816-271-3100

Springfield 417-895-6880

West Plains 417-256-7161

### **Toll Free Numbers**

Operation Game Thief/Forest Arson 800-392-1111 (24 hrs)

Purchasing Hunting & Fishing permits 800-392-4115 Normal business hours.

## **FAMILY FUN UPDATE**

If you missed the trip to Perry Community Lake, try to make it next year! We all had a great time! Fishing was not as good as in the past, but just about everybody got some fish. Below are some pictures of that trip. We had about twenty people in attendance.



Jerry and crew with the infamous canoe of Bill's



Not all of the fishing were for fish. Eric and Kenny fishing out Kenny's hat.

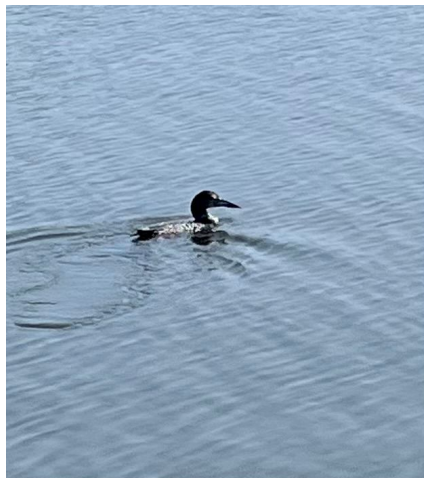


Good eats. Art looking on waiting his turn.



Enjoying the day.





And you never know what you are going to see when you are outdoors. Some how a Loon lost its way down south. He caught more fish than I did while watching him dive after them.

## **MDC GOOSE BANDING**

MDC GOOSE BANDING DAY, will be held at Tillies Park on June 14th 2023. We meet them at 8:00 am sharp. Tillies Park is located at 9551 Litzsinger Road. St.Louis Mo. 63124. This is a GREAT opportunity to bring the kids out and introduce them to waterfowl.

## **RMEF BANQUET**

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation the O'Fallon Chapter Banquet planned for Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at Knights of Columbus Hall is still scheduled to take place. We look forward to seeing you there and appreciate your continued support!

Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Knights of Columbus Hall  
402 E Hwy 50  
O'Fallon, IL 62269

See <https://events.rmef.org/shop/ofallon>

For further info.

## **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

## MANITOBA

New Manitoba Waterfowl License Regs: Applications Accepted June 15 to July 15, 2023

All American duck and goose hunters wishing to hunt Manitoba this fall will be provided a license, but must apply for licenses this summer

Manitoba Natural Resources and Northern Development has announced new licensing requirements for foreign resident migratory bird hunters in the province beginning with the 2023 hunting season.

Under the new regulations there will be three categories of foreign resident licenses: 1) a seven-day permit for freelance hunters issued via a drawing, 2) a legacy migratory gamebird license for grandfathered property interest holders, and 3) a seven-day permit purchased through a licensed Manitoba outfitter.

These changes are essential news for all hunters who want to go to Manitoba and hunt on their own this fall. They'll need to apply via the e-licensing portal be-

tween June 15 and July 15. For the 2023 hunting season, all hunters who apply via the portal within the proper time frame will receive a license—a 100 percent success draw rate. What's different from the past is that the license will be limited to one seven-day period during the season. There will be no over-the-counter migratory gamebird licenses sold.

For further info go to :

<https://deltawaterfowl.org/new-manitoba-waterfowl-license-regs/>

## 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

**June 13 :** Trap Shoot

**July 12 :** Swap Meet

**Aug 9 :** NO MEETING

## 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: June 13, 2023 At Henges**

**Next Board Meeting: June 26, 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

