



PATTERN YOUR GUN

Do you know what your shooting stick is doing with your given hunting load or your target load? I know for me, I figured it performed the same with any load I sent down the tube, that is so very wrong and you need to shoot a few rounds at paper with the choke tube you plan on using to see what it does. Is it blowing out the pattern because it is too fast? Are there too many holes in the pattern because the pellets are hitting each other going through the choke tube? Many other things can be going on, but you do not know until you put shot on paper.

If you recall last month's short story, I finally got my Retay Ace-R 28 gauge in, it has been on order since last January. To break it in I took it out to Jay Henges to put some boxes of shells through it. After shooting I took it over to the patterning board and with the Improved Modified choke tube, which is one step opened up from the Full choke tube, to see what kind of pattern I had, I was surprised to see it was throwing a 4' by 4' pattern at 20 yards, which should have been less than 30".

When I got home, this pattern really perplexed me, wondering how can this be, so I got out my Mic and began to measure. The Improved Modified tube measured out at .550", thinking, ok, what is the standard? Brought up google and found out that for an IM tube, the standard is .535" to .534", still not thinking too much about this, since I have really not studied choke tube constriction standards until I looked at the Cylinder standard, which is .550". My eyes were wide opened then. The IM tube I got from Retay was in fact a Cylinder tube! No wonder the pattern was so wide. After measuring the other tubes that came with the gun, I found out that just about every tube was opened up by about .02" over standard. So I contacted Retay.

Got ahold of a very nice person from customer service, explained the issue to them and they went to measure one of the Ace-R tubes that they had and found out similar results. I could almost see it in their eyes over the phone where they were thinking, 'What the?', he immediately stated that he would get back to me.

One week later, I contact Retay since I had not heard of anything yet, and since I had not heard anything yet, decided to make this formal and put in a warranty claim with them. Once I put in the warranty claim, I heard back immediately and they stated that what I had received were prototype choke tubes and that they would get back to me when more info is available.

One week later, still no info from Retay, contacted them again. In a nutshell, he stated that the manufacturer had to go back to design in order to create new tubes and test them and that he stated that this is the manufacturer's number 1 priority.

I can only imagine what is going through their heads since this model of the gun has been out since January and no telling how many people have these tubes.

I will give them another week for another follow-up, stay tuned.

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MEMBERS MEETING

The June meeting will take place on 16 June, **WHICH IS A TUESDAY**, out at Jay Henges. We are fortunate to be able to have the Trap Night again this year on Tuesday, June 16th at Jay Henges Conservation Area. The scenario is the same as last year. Show up between 5 PM and 5:30 PM to get the MDC safety briefing. 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. AGAIN, plan on arriving BETWEEN 5 AND 5:30 pm to enjoy a dog and listen to the safety rules. We should get in a good two to three rounds of shooting before darkness. Recommend to bring at **LEAST THREE TO FOUR BOXES OF SHELLS. BRING EAR PROTECTION AND SAFTY GLASSES.** While there, please tell the MDC staff how much we enjoy this event.

FOR SALE

If you are looking for an outstanding dog for the coming seasons you have a rare opportunity. Jerry Wymer contacted me and stated a prior member's son, Mario Cattaniri, has a litter of AKC Pointing Labradors that will be available Father's Day weekend. They are all black, 4 females and 3 males. The sire of the litter is Ozi who retrieved over 1,000 ducks and geese this past season. The cost is \$1,000.00 per pup. If interested or want more info contact Jerry at 314-422-4772

TROUT TRIP 2027

MVDHA is planning on our annual Trout Trip for 2027. The dates are going to be 19 March 2027 through 21 March 2027. Coming home on the 21st. We will be staying at Trout Hollow Lodge at Taneycomo as we did last year. The address for Trout Hollow Lodge is: 1500 Acacia Club

Rd, Hollister, MO 65672. To reserve your room call Trout Hollow at 417-334- 2332 and tell them you are part of MVDHA or online at <https://trouthollow.com/>

FAMILY FUN DAY

We have a date for our annual Family Fun Day. Mark your calendars for 27 June 2026. We will be going to: 1350 Loughboro Road Bismark, MO 63624 again this year, a HUGE reminder, this is the home of Mark Haberberger, BE RESPECTFUL. Looking at google maps, this looks like an outstanding location, the lake looks awesome! Couple of notes:

- Scott Thoele stated he is going to set up signs for directions
- This is a persons home, so respect that
- There will not be any restrooms here, but Bismark is about two to three miles down the road with a nice gas station
- The lake is 30 acres in size
- The lake is stocked, primarily with bass and Crappie
- The lake is very accessible from shore
- Bring chairs, drinks, bug spray, sunscreen, everything you need for an outdoor activity, fishing etc.
- Hotdogs, chips and water will be provided for lunch
- There are two docks and a cleaning station for your use
- There is no boat ramp, but hand launch boats are ok with no motor restrictions

This looks like it is going to be a great time, so come on out and enjoy the day!! Thanks

MVDHA BOARD

- President:** Ken Liebel
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The Science of Disturbance (part 4 and last part)

Takeaways for Managers and Hunters

Yes, ducks loaf on sanctuaries during shooting hours. Yet research also indicates that providing sanctuary can keep birds in an area longer, providing additional opportunities for hunters on surrounding lands. GPS studies have also shown that ducks do in fact leave sanctuary areas on a daily basis, and when sanctuaries are close to huntable ground, those often short but predictable flights can put more ducks over your decoys.

Ducks aren't disappearing—they're adapting to a landscape in which suitable wetland habitat is shrinking, and hunters have better access to these areas than ever before. Fortunately, biologists have some amazing technology to keep track of duck behavior as the birds adapt to our activities. In human-dominated, heavily hunted landscapes, mallards make the same calculations every day: safety first, food second, and keep the commute as short as possible. When we provide true daytime sanctuary and place those safe areas within easy reach of quality foraging habitat, ducks will keep using the landscapes that we hunt. Ducks move more and stay longer, and we see more hunting opportunities if both of these components are available. In short, sanctuary—alongside natural and managed habitats for food—is a critical component of the wetland habitat complex that migrating and wintering ducks need to thrive. Done right, sanctuaries don't wall ducks off from hunters but instead provide

hunting opportunities throughout the season.

Dr. Nicholas (Nick) Masto is a waterfowl ecologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat and Population Evaluation Team. Dr. Abby Blake-Bradshaw is a post-doctoral researcher at the Forbes Biological Research Station. Cory Highway is a doctoral student and Dr. Bradley Cohen is associate professor at Tennessee Tech. Jamie Feddersen is migratory gamebird coordinator with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

SHOOTING RANGES

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) offers free recreational firearms shooting on more than 35 unstaffed shooting ranges around the state. The ranges were designed decades ago primarily for hunters with most traditional use being in the spring and fall in preparation for various hunting seasons.

According to MDC, range use has increased significantly in recent years with more home/self-defense firearms practice and increasing use of modern sporting rifles.

Increased use has also resulted in increasing damage to shooting range signs, booths, and other infrastructure from some shooters, along with increasing litter from some shooters in the form of spent shells, targets, and other items not being collected and properly disposed of.

To help reduce range damage and misuse, MDC is proposing requiring users of its unstaffed firearms shooting ranges to have a valid small game permit. Existing age and disability exemptions will remain. The proposed regulation changes would apply only to MDC owned unstaffed firearms shooting

ranges, not partner ranges or MDC's five staffed shooting ranges.

For residents, the allowable permit options start at \$11.50 for an annual small game permit. For non-residents, daily small game permits are \$16 and annual small game permits are \$108.50.

The Missouri Conservation Commission recently gave initial approval to the proposed MDC permit recommendation at its May 29 open meeting in Washington.

MDC invites online public comment on the proposed regulation changes July 16 through Aug. 14 at mdc.mo.gov/contact-engage/public-commenting-opportunities.

The Commission will then give final consideration to the proposed regulation changes at its Sept. 11 open meeting. If given final approval, the changes will become effective Feb. 28, 2027.

WHY PERMITS ARE NEEDED

"The illegal misuse of MDC unstaffed shooting ranges has resulted in significant increases in damage from some users intentionally targeting range signs, booths and other infrastructure, along with more litter such as spent rounds left on the ground," said MDC Hunter Education and Shooting Range Specialist Justin McGuire.

McGuire added that the rising popularity of home/self-defense firearms practice and other high-volume recreational use has led to many more people using the ranges throughout the entire year and much more spent ammo being left as litter.

McGuire explained that the permit requirement would have several benefits.

“Unless exempt, Missouri hunters are required to have completed a certified hunter education program to get firearms hunting permits. Hunter education teaches shooting safety, ethics, and etiquette,” he said. “Requiring a small game permit to use MDC unstaffed firearms shooting ranges would ensure that users have completed hunter education to help improve safety for themselves and other range users, visitors, neighbors, and MDC infrastructure. It also gives conservation agents another tool to improve public safety at MDC ranges.”

He added that requiring a permit will also help create an increased sense of ownership of the ranges, respect for the facilities, and compliance with posted rules for safer and more responsible range use.

McGuire noted that many shooting range users won't be affected by the new permit requirement because they already purchase a small game hunting permit or they're exempt from needing one.

“These challenges are not unique to Missouri,” he said. “Among neighboring states, both Oklahoma and Kentucky have hunting-permit requirements for users of their unstaffed shooting ranges.”

OFF-SEASON

From the DU website. I will sprinkle some of these is when space is available.

10 Off-Season Projects for Waterfowlers

Project # 2: Give Your Shotgun a Thorough Cleaning

When it comes to care and maintenance, duck guns usually get short shrift during the hunt-

ing season. Sure, you might wipe down your shotgun before putting it away and swab out the barrel after every few outings. But that's hardly enough to remove the powder residue and grit that builds up from cycling hundreds of shells in wet, cold, and muddy conditions.

To get down to the nitty-gritty of properly cleaning your gun, you'll need to take it apart. In the case of pumps and semiautos this may involve removing the barrel, magazine tube, bolt, and trigger group. Double guns are fairly easy to break down, but pumps and semiautos can be trickier. If the owner's manual doesn't provide proper instructions for disassembling your gun, or if you don't feel up to the task, you might want to consider having it cleaned by a professional gunsmith. If you do clean it yourself, be sure to use the proper solvents and oils, and always in moderation. Too much oil can attract grime and gum up a gun's working parts.

MDC SETS SEASONS

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri Conservation Commission approved recommendations from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) at its March 27 open meeting in Jefferson City for upcoming 2026 migratory-game-bird-hunting seasons and 2026-2027 waterfowl-hunting seasons, pending final federal approval.

Mourning Doves, Eurasian Colared Doves, and White-Winged Doves

Season: Sept. 1 through Nov. 29
Limits: 15 daily and 45 in possession combined total for all three species

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

2026-2027 WATERFOWL HUNTING

Teal

Season: Sept. 12 - 20
Limits: 6 daily and 18 in possession

Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Limits: 6 daily and 18 in possession

Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Ducks

Season:

North Zone: Oct. 31 through Dec. 29

Middle Zone: Nov. 7 - Dec. 13 and Dec. 19 through Jan. 10, 2027

South Zone: Nov. 26 – 29 and Dec. 7 through Jan. 31, 2027

Bag Limit: 6 ducks daily with species restrictions of:

4 mallards (no more than 2 females)

3 wood ducks

2 redheads

2 canvasbacks

2 black ducks

3 pintail

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

1 mottled duck

Possession Limit: Three times the daily bag or 18 total, varies by species

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

Snow Geese (White and Blue Phases) and Ross's Geese

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2027

Limits: 20 blue, snow, or Ross's geese daily with no possession limit

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

White-Fronted Geese

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2027

Limits: 2 daily and 6 in possession

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

Canada Geese and Brant

Season: Oct. 3 - 10 and Nov. 11 – Feb. 6, 2027

Limits: 3 Canada geese and Brant in aggregate daily, 9 in possession

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

Light Goose Conservation Order

Season: Feb. 7 through April 30, 2027

Limits: No daily or possession limits

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset

Methods: For the taking of blue, snow and Ross's geese, hunters may use shotguns capable of holding more than three shells and recorded or electronically amplified bird calls or sounds or imitations of bird calls or sounds.

YOUTH HUNTING DAYS

North Zone: Oct. 24 and 25

Middle Zone: Oct. 31 and Nov. 1

South Zone: Nov. 21 and 22

Limits: Same as during regular waterfowl season

Hours: Same as during regular waterfowl season

Requirements: Any person 15 years of age or younger may participate in youth waterfowl hunting days without permit provided they are in the immediate presence of an adult 18 years of age or older. If the youth hunter is not certified in hunter education, the adult must have the required permits and have in his or her possession proof of hunter education unless exempt. The adult may not hunt ducks but may participate in other seasons that are open on youth hunting days.

ILLINOIS TAX UPDATE

UPDATE: I was informed by Craig this this bill is now dead but could be brought back in another session.

New Hunting tax: Illinois Democrats are **proposing** a new tax on hunters and firearm enthusiasts in Illinois.

Starting Jan 1, 2027 Illinois firearms owners, hunters, and marksmen will pay a five cent tax per round of ammunition tax under HB4414. Plus, there will be a new requirement that each round of ammunition be registered with a serial number.

That trip to the shooting range or hunting trip will soon get very expensive and very complicated.

Illinois House Bill 4414 mandates that starting January 1, 2027, all handgun ammunition sold or possessed in Illinois must be serialized and traceable by the Illinois State Police (ISP).

The bill was just introduced by Chicago area State Representative Anne Stava-Murray (D - Downers Grove). Democrats support the bill.

The bill will create a centralized registry for transactions, imposes a fee of up to 5 cents per round, and makes possession of non-serialized ammunition a misdemeanor.

HB4414 includes:

Serialization Requirement: All handgun ammunition manufactured, imported, or sold in Illinois must have unique identifiers on the packaging and the ammunition itself starting Jan. 1, 2027.

Registry and Tracking: The ISP will manage a database of handgun ammunition transactions, recording the buyer's identification and the unique identifier of the ammunition.

Fees: A fee of up to 5 cents per round will be charged to the end-user the money will go to the state of Illinois.

Huge Penalties: the law would make Possessing non-serialized handgun ammunition in a public place a Class C misdemeanor.

Exceptions: Exemptions apply to law enforcement, military, and specific authorized individuals

The bill is designed for the ISP to track ammunition transactions.

Revenue from the five cent per round tax would go to the state of Illinois.

(This bill is still in committee)

Up Coming Events

16 June : Jay Henges Shoot

8 July : Swap Meet

12 Aug: No Meeting

9 Sept : Ducks at a distance

14 Oct : MDC Forecast ?

11 Nov: No Meeting

9 Dec: Holliday 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 also held at Borgettis Bar & Grill 1667 South Old Hwy 141 Fenton MO. 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: June 16, 2026 Jay Henges

Next Board Meeting: June 22, 2026

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

