



# DECEMBER 2024

VOLUME 68 ISSUE 12    DECEMBER 3, 2024

## ODDS AND ENDS

Just some odds and ends for this month's short story.

IF YOU HAVE ANY MONEY OR TICKETS FOR THE FUND RAISER PLEASE **MAKE SURE** YOU BRING THEM TO THE COMING HOLIDAY PARTY.

Our annual trout trip date has been set, refer to this newsletter for that info. If you are planning on going or even if you are still thinking about it, make your reservation **NOW**. If you decide to not go when the time gets closer, you have two weeks to cancel your reservation without any penalty. Reservations go fast so get them in. Don't forget to reserve a boat or slip, if needed.

Hope your hunting season is going well. I was out this past week testing one of my TSS 20 gauge loads and it did not fair well. I crippled a Teal and it was on the water not 30 yards from me and I smacked it twice with a 3/4 ounce TSS nine shot. Either that Teal had a bullet proof vest on or my shot string was going sub sonic, which is what I think it was doing. Back to the drawing board on that one. My 410 loads are doing fantastic! That 9 shot puts a hurting on the ducks. And yes, the Teal was eventually retrieved.

Ever thought about the evolution of our sport we all love. I was sitting in the blind last week looking at a bleak empty sky and began thinking of the years gone past. I will be 67 in a few days and was reflecting back when I started out hunting and the equipment I started out with. You all know about my trusty Remington 410 single shot bolt action which I past down to my Daughter who shot her first Teal with, but the other gear I had to start out with. When I was about twelve starting out, I got a pair of rubber hip boots to hunt in. My jacket I wore, much to my Mom's chagrin, was a brown corduroy brown jacket with a hood, which was my school jacket. For layering, if you want to call it that, since that term was not really used in those days or if it was not familiar with it, I wore two pair of cotton socks, I had a set of cotton long johns, both tops and bottoms. For gloves, it was normally ski gloves, or what ever we could find. I had a dozen rubber blow up decoys. With all that I would trapes on out and be a mighty duck hunter in 20 degree temps back home! Froze my tail off. Times have changed. 3 to 4 MM waders with 1400 grams of thinsulate in the boots that can cost you a fortune, hand and foot warmers, jackets built to withstand whatever mother nature can throw at you, again, cost a fortune! Life like decoys that hardly weigh anything, again, cost you a fortune! Yes, times have changed. How did you start out?

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**MEMBERS MEETING**

Holiday party, see below

**ART WENDE**

Got an update from Art the other day and his doctor has released him to normal activity where he no longer has to be careful lifting anything over a certain weight. Sorry Art, your excuse for not helping out at home has been taken away from you! Glad you are doing better!

**SCOTT COMBS**

Update on Scott. He is doing quite well. Out of the hospital, as of last update, still going to therapy but has been released to drive and is actually out hunting. This is GREAT news!

Take care of yourself !!

**HOLIDAY PARTY**

We will be having our end of year holiday party for our December meeting. We are planning on providing two free drink tickets FOR JUST BEER OR SODA. We are considering selling raffle tickets for a box of 3/4 ounce number 9 TSS 20 gauge loads if there is interest. We also will have other TSS Turkey loads on the gift table. **Speaking of the Gift table, we are hoping some members can bring in some items since we are low on gifts as is past years. So please check your stuff and if you have anything you would like to donate bring it in.**

For food, we are planning on sandwiches from Borgettis Bar & Grill, chips and cake. We need a head count of all those planning on attending so we can order enough food to cover all members planning on attending. Please let Jerry know or give him a call 314-603-6548.

**BOARD ELECTIONS**

Ever had or thought there was a problem with the association? Ever

complained about one thing or another on why this association does this or that and should do it this way? Ever thought about becoming a solution to these problems instead of just complaining about them? Here is your chance! There will be board member elections. Step up now and put your name in the hat. So if you are interested in becoming a board member, or if you have questions on becoming a board member, you can ask any board member, talk to Jerry, email your questions or interest to [mvdha@mvdha.com](mailto:mvdha@mvdha.com) or mail them to the address on the back of this newsletter and they will be forward to Jerry. If you want to make a change, here is your chance.

**2024 FUND RAISER**

The fund raiser for this year, Kenny Liebel has created a custom made hunting knife.

- Made out of 496 Staret Tool Steel
- 5 to 7 inch blade length
- The blade will be buffed out to mirror finish
- It will have a Brass Hilt
- Laminated handle made out of



- wood that is similar to golf driver handles
- Leather Sheath that will is hand stitched
- The value of the knife is about \$600.00

**MVDHA BOARD**

- President:** Ken Liebel
- First V. Pres.:** Scott Thoele
- Fin. Secretary:** Rob Mueller
- Rec. Secretary:** Bill Hilgeman
- Correspondence Secretary:** Bill Hilgeman
- Membership Chairman:** Erik Liebel
- Board of Directors:**
  - Chairman of the Board** Jerry Mercurio
  - Asst Chairman of the Board** Art Wende
  - Directors:** Brad Douglass, Jerry Mercurio Jr., James Edwards, Nick Witte, Gary Hirsch

Huge thanks to Kenny for making this knife.

We will be drawing the winning ticket at the up and coming Holiday party in December.

If you have any money or tickets from this fund raising please make sure you get them to Jerry before the drawing.

Thanks to all for your assistance in this fund raiser.

### SURVEY

From Delta Waterfowl:

Annual Breeding Waterfowl Population Survey Estimates 33.99 Million Ducks, Up 5% From 2023

Mallards, wigeon, green-winged teal, and scaup post increases; Pintail bag limit for 2025-2026 season will increase to 3 daily in all flyways

BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA — Duck numbers are up, and wetland habitat conditions have improved over important portions of the key prairie pothole region.

The breeding population of ducks was estimated at 33.99 million, a 5% increase over last year, according to the 2024 Waterfowl Population Status report released today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, May pond counts, a key indicator of breeding habitat conditions and potential production, also increased by 4% over the previous spring.

The report details the results from the Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey, which has been conducted annually by the USFWS and Canadian Wildlife Service since 1955. The survey is used to set hunting regulations for the following year, so in this case, for the 2025-2026 season. Based on these results, waterfowl hunters

will again enjoy a liberal season framework next season.

“An increased breeding population of ducks and pair counts, along with wetland habitat conditions that improved throughout May and June with good spring rains across most of the prairies, should help boost duck production,” said Dr. Frank Rohwer, president and chief scientist for Delta Waterfowl. “We definitely have potential bright spots for duck production in the eastern Dakotas and possibly in Manitoba. The spring rains really helped in those areas, as well as parts of Alberta that started the spring quite dry.”

The survey, which was completed in May, estimated 5.16 million total ponds, a 4% increase overall. However, the location of those











ponds differed greatly from 2023. The ponds estimate on the Canadian prairie and parklands, which includes southern regions of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, decreased 19%. Meanwhile, ponds in the United States, including Montana and the Dakotas, increased by 49%.

“The prairies didn’t have a good snowpack last winter,” said Mike Buxton, waterfowl programs director for Delta Waterfowl.

“Heading into last fall, conditions were OK in the Dakotas, but prairie Canada was dry. Manitoba got decent snow, but not so much in Saskatchewan and Alberta. So, the wetland habitat there started spring in poor condition. That really affects where ducks settle. If the table isn’t set



## 2024 WATERFOWL BREEDING POPULATION AND HABITAT SURVEY

SPECIES	2024	2023	% CHANGE FROM 2023	% CHANGE FROM LTA
 MALLARD	6.61	6.13	▲ 8	▼ 16
 GADWALL	2.28	2.56	▼ 11	▲ 11
 AMERICAN WIGEON	2.92	1.89	▲ 55	▲ 12
 GREEN-WINGED TEAL	3.01	2.50	▲ 20	▲ 38
 BLUE-WINGED TEAL	4.60	5.25	▼ 12	▼ 10
 NORTHERN PINTAIL	1.98	2.22	▼ 11	▼ 49
 NORTHERN SHOVELER	2.65	2.86	▼ 7	0
 REDHEAD	0.78	0.93	▼ 16	▲ 6
 CANVASBACK	0.57	0.62	▼ 8	▼ 4
 SCAUP	4.07	3.52	▲ 16	▼ 17
<b>TOTAL DUCKS</b>	<b>33.99</b>	<b>32.31</b>	<b>▲ 5</b>	<b>▼ 4</b>

NUMBERS IN MILLIONS. LTA (LONG-TERM AVERAGE)

early on, ducks don't stick around to nest. Alberta was really dry, so not many ducks settled there. Saskatchewan was a little bit better."

While the number of total ducks in the Traditional Survey Area increased slightly over 2023, all of the gains were in the far north and west. Just three survey regions (out of eight) posted increases. The Central and Northern Alberta/Northeast British Columbia/Northwest Territories estimated 11.25 million ducks, up 35% and 49% above the long-term average for the region. The Alaska Yukon Territory/Old Crow Flats region showed a 28% increase over 2023, while Northern Saskatchewan/Northern Manitoba/Western Ontario was up 5%. In contrast, duck estimates across the prairie pothole regions were down 10% to 16%, except for the Eastern Dakotas, which was down less than 1% from 2023.

## ANNUAL DUES

Your annual membership dues will be due at the end of the year. Please consider renewing your membership dues of \$25. You can bring your money to the Holiday party or mail your check to the address on the back.

## TROUT TRIP

MVDHA is planning on our annual Trout Trip this coming year. The dates are going to be 14 March 2025 through 16 March 2025. Coming home on the 16th. 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/>

Don't forget that if you need to reserve a boat or a slip to set that up also. If you are a military veteran they also give discounts for that too. If you have never gone to one of our annual fishing trips to Taneycomo you are really missing out on one of the best trips or events that we do. It is always a great trip and Trout Hollow is one of the best areas to go to down there.

One note to mention, if you bring any food to be cooked at the cookout, please make sure it is totally thawed out so there are no issues when it is deep fried.

Hopefully we will see you there!

## RIGHT TO FISH

Jerry Jr sent me this article from Outdoor life. Interesting read and we are going to look into to see if we have something similar in Missouri.

### Florida Voters Pass 'Right to Fish and Hunt' Amendment

Unofficial election results show Florida is the latest state to adopt a constitutional amendment to protect hunting and fishing as a wildlife management tool

By Natalie Krebs

Posted on Nov 6, 2024

Preliminary election results show that voters in Florida passed the No. 2 Amendment to "preserve forever" the right to fish and hunt in the state. It's the 24th state to adopt such a resolution, according to the Congressional Sportsmen Foundation, as more wildlife-related ballot measures crop up across the U.S. and anti-hunters work to join wildlife commissions.

Ballot measures require 60 percent approval to pass in Florida,

and voters there easily outstripped that margin with 67 percent of voters, or 6.8 million people, casting their ballots to protect hunting and fishing, according to the unofficial results posted Tuesday evening by the Florida Division of Elections. Roughly 33 percent of voters, or 3.3 million people, voted against adopting the amendment. (For comparison, roughly 1.2 million residents bought recreational fishing licenses in 2021, according to the American Sportfishing Association; about 207,000 residents bought hunting licenses that year.) Interestingly this trend bucks the urban-rural divide often seen in wildlife-based ballot measures; every single reporting county was in favor of the amendment, including the large metropolitan areas of Orlando, Tampa, and Jacksonville.

The ballot measure asked Floridians to vote yes or no on the following: Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to preserve forever fishing and hunting, including by the use of traditional methods, as a public right and preferred means of responsibly managing and controlling fish and wildlife. Specifies that the amendment does not limit the authority granted to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission under Section 9 of Article IV of the State Constitution.

Unsurprisingly, the amendment was vehemently opposed by anti-hunting organizations like the Humane Society of the U.S., who argued that the inclusion of "traditional methods" in the amendment would legalize gill net fishing, which was banned there in the 1990s. This is inaccurate, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission.



“Both our conservation and legal teams have stated that the current language proposed in Amendment 2 does not change or alter the existing net ban or the ability for it to be enforced. ‘Traditional methods’ does not undo regulation, nor reset FWC’s regulatory authority. Moreover, the net ban is protected by the constitution already, similar to private property rights. Nothing in Amendment 2’s language affects these laws,” FWC chairman Rodney Barreto said in September. “The FWC maintains regulatory authority over all fish and wildlife in our state. Seasons, bag limits, methods and licensing are still in place and will continue to govern time, place and manner should Amendment 2 pass.”

In other words, adopting Amendment 2 won’t change any existing fishing regulations or the agency’s ability to set seasons, bag limits, or methods, and sportsmen will still have to purchase fishing and hunting licenses.

“A constitutionally-protected right to hunt or fish would make it substantially more difficult for attempts by the state to ban or restrict the hunting or fishing of species of animals,” reads a guide to the state’s amendments. The measure was placed on the ballot with ready approval in the Florida legislature after it was introduced by state representative Lauren Melo. She referenced hunting and fishing’s economic contribution to the state and its role in funding the FWC.

**2024—2025 SEASON  
WATERFOWL HUNTING**

**Ducks**

North Zone: Nov. 2 thru Dec. 31

Middle Zone: Nov. 2-10 and Nov. 16 through Jan. 5, 2025

South Zone: Nov. 28 through Dec. 1 and Dec. 7 through Jan. 31, 2025

Bag Limit: 6 ducks daily with species restrictions of:

4 mallards (no more than 2 females), 3 wood ducks, 2 red-heads, 2 hooded mergansers,

2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks,

1 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

**Snow Geese (White and Blue Phases) and Ross’s Geese**

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2025

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

**White-Fronted Geese**

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2025

Limits: 2 daily and 6 in possession

**Canada Geese and Brant**

Season: Oct. 5-13 and Nov. 11 – Feb. 6, 2025

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

**Light Goose Conservation Order**

Season: Feb. 7 through April 30, 2025

Limits: No daily or possession limits

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

**NEWSLETTER**

As part of membership to the Mississippi Valley Duck Hunters Association this newsletter is distributed to the members either by mail or via email. All members who have an email address will be receiving this newsletter via email. With the cost of postage, printing, labeling and handling on the increase this will save YOUR MVDHA a little over \$1.50 per month per member that can be used in other areas. That is a substantial savings, with a projected cost savings of over \$250.00 a year if all members received the newsletter via email. If you still wish to receive your newsletter via snail mail, just let me know at the next member’s meeting or if you wish to no longer receive it by snail mail and want to save the association funds you can provide me your email address by sending me an email at [mvdha@mvdha.com](mailto:mvdha@mvdha.com). Please consider this, it will save the association money over the time of your membership that can be used else where.

**Up Coming Events**

**Dec 18: Holiday Party**

**Jan 8 : Zone Discussion**

**Feb 12 : Shotgun Deep Cleaning with Gun Smith Eric Olson**

### 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: December 11, 2024**

**Next Board Meeting: December 23, 2024**

**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

