



### RETAY ACE-R

You all know how I have had problems with my Benelli Super Black Eagle III 28 gauge with it not shooting straight, meaning, it shoots high and left, which I have sent it back to Benelli. They did do some minor adjustments to get it back into their specs, but it still shoots high and left, so I went out and ordered a 28 gauge Retay Ace-R due to it is basically a different version of the Super Black Eagle but the way Retay manufacturers the barrel it is more true where the POA and POI are the same, basically, I wanted a gun to hit where I point it at, is that too much to ask from these manufacturers? Apparently not with Benelli, anyway, I digress, the Retay finally came in a couple of weeks ago.

After picking it up and bringing it home, I soon discovered that basically Retay copied the Benelli with some interesting upgrades to it making it more simple. For one, my Benelli has a piece that is separate to the receiver and barrel that exposes the trigger group which makes it easier to clean, which I thought for Benelli that was a nice design feature, well, Retay took that one step further and incorporated that piece into the barrel, so instead of a piece that could get lost if you have to take it apart in the field it is with the barrel! Very nice feature! Every shotgun I have owned has a pin to hold in the trigger assembly, a very nice feature that Retay did, was to get rid of that too! They incorporated a locking mechanism in the back of the trigger group that you can release with a button next to the safety, For mine, it is a bit stiff, but it can be done. So now, I can field strip the entire gun in the field with no tools what so every. Very nice engineering!

Now you are wondering how it performs. Understand, this is an inertia gun and Retay recommends to put at least three boxes of field grade shells through it to seat springs etc. So I got four boxes of Cheddite 3/4 ounce number 8s going at 1300 FPS and went out to Jay Henges, did not pattern the gun at all, just wanted to put three boxes of shells through it. Now, I suck at trap, on a good day I might hit 10 out of 25 with my 12 gauge 1 1/4 ounce loads and I was shooting 3/4 oz 28 gauge shells, so I was not expecting much at all. Got all set up in field two, yelled pull and low and behold, the clay bird went to dust, I was ecstatic!!! But my excitement turned to humility since that was the only bird I busted on the first round. My second round went better and my third I was back to my old self, hitting about 10 out of 25, so I was please, The gun performed flawlessly, not a hiccup one. So I decided to go over to the pattern board to see what I had.

On the pattern board, I set up a POA/POI test at 20 yards with the improved cylinder tube in the gun. I was a bit dismayed, it did shoot a bit high and left, but not nearly as bad as my Benelli, but what got me, was at 20 yards and an IM tube, that whole target, which was 4 feet by 4 feet was plastered with shot, now the majority of it was within the 30" circle, but I was surprised. Maybe that is why I was doing so poorly at trap!!! Will have to explore that the next time I am out at Henges.

If you are thinking about looking at the Benelli's SBE, give Retay a look, for about \$700 less than a SBE it might fit your needs, I believe it will mine.

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**MEMBERS MEETING**

For this member's meeting we will be having our very own Scott Thoele giving us a demo and discussion of the intricacies of making your own decoy weights. I am sure it will be a great discussion. So come on out and support YOUR MVDHA!

**TROUT TRIP UPDATE**

We had our annual fishing trip this past month to Lake Taneycomo where we stayed at Trout Hollow and we all had a fantastic time!

For me, the fishing was great, caught the biggest fish and smallest fish up in the trophy area since I have been going, 20" and 4". Fishing this year was a challenge though, glad Duane brought some extra fish, we might not had enough for the fish fry! Thanks as usual to Duane and your family for everything! Here are some pictures of the event.

As per the norm, we had our trout tournament and here are the results:



Largest Fish of 14" Scott Combs

We had a tie for largest stringer of 3.96 lbs between Lucas Mercurio and Ken Harsin



Lucas Mercurio tied largest stringer



Ken Harsin tied largest stringer

**MVDHA BOARD**

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View from the water



Could not do it without these two and their spouses, thanks!



Kicking back and relaxing.



Good food and good company



It was a great time had by all. Plan now on attending next years event, the dates have been set for 19 thru 21 March 2027.

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

The board is pleased to announce that Duane Stinchcomb has stepped up and stated that he will become our Membership Chairman. He told Jerry this at our annual fishing trip this past month. Thanks Duane, much appreciated and welcome!

**The Science of Disturbance (part 3)**

Excerpts from DU, the full article can be found at: [Ducks.org](http://Ducks.org)

**Understanding Waterfowl: The Science of Disturbance**

**Connectivity Among Sanctuaries Matters cont.**

Proximity of sanctuary areas drives the probability that ducks will fly from one location to another (i.e., transition probability). The authors' research indicated that sanctuaries must be less than 10 miles apart for mallards to fly from one to another; otherwise, the potential for birds to alternate between refuges was essentially zero. Photo by GaryKramer.net; Chart by DUDucks Unlimited/ GaryKramer.net

Proximity of sanctuary areas drives the probability that ducks will fly from one location to another (i.e., transition probability). The authors' research indicated that sanctuaries must be less than 10 miles apart for mallards to fly from one to another; otherwise, the potential for birds to alternate between refuges was essentially zero.

**Not All Sanctuaries Are Equally Effective**

In many places, waterfowl managers try to reduce disturbance of waterfowl by closing areas at certain times of day or on certain days. Data from our research and other studies suggest that intermittent "temporal" sanctuaries are less effective than true no-access "spatial" sanctuaries. Limited-access days or noon closures certainly can help increase waterfowl use of crowded public and private hunting lands when no other alternative exists, but these measures are a poor substitute for true no-access spatial sanctuaries. Our data suggest that ducks perceive sanctuary in weeks, not days. Consequently, hunters may have to rest properties or hunting spots for a week or more to significantly improve their hunting prospects.

**Sanctuaries with Food Resources Attract More Ducks**

In many areas of the Mississippi and Central Flyways, land managers flood large areas of high-energy crops. Ducks know it. Our research found that landscapes that offer a combination of daytime sanctuary and high-quality food resources will attract more birds and hold them longer than areas with only one of these habitat components. If hunters are unable to provide food and sanctuary on the same property, they should work with neighboring landowners to provide both habitat components in as close proximity to each other as possible. The distance between safety and forage is the “management lever” for waterfowl.

(To be continued)

**OFF-SEASON**

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

**10 Off-Season Projects for Waterfowlers**

**Project # 1: Join a Local Retriever Club**

Duck seasons come and go, but retrievers are our constant companions. It's up to us to make the most of this canine-human partnership by keeping our dogs healthy and active year-round.

Retrievers need regular exercise to stay physically and mentally sharp. They also benefit from refresher training and drills that help them maintain their retrieving skills. A good way to keep your dog in top form is to get involved with a local retriever club. Most clubs meet regularly and hold hunt tests or field trials throughout the summer. Field trials are highly competitive and feature top canine athletes,

while hunt tests are more laid-back and geared toward amateur retriever owners. You can find a retriever club near you by visiting the websites of the American Kennel Club (akc.org), United Kennel Club (ukcdogs.com), and North American Hunting Retriever Association (nahra.org).

**MDC SETS SEASONS**

MDC sets upcoming migratory game bird and waterfowl seasons

For more information on hunting in Missouri, visit MDC online at [mdc.mo.gov](http://mdc.mo.gov).

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 Col-lared 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.

**CHANGE TO FEDERAL DUCK STAMP**

Per the Federal Duck Stamp Modernization Act of 2023, the Federal Duck Stamp has been converted to a digital version and hunters are no longer required to carry a paper copy. Hunters must have a digital version in their possession.

**ILLINOIS TAX**

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**

**? Means tentative or have plans for**

**13 May : The art of making decoy weights**

**10 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](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: May 13, 2026**

**Next Board Meeting: May 25, 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

