



# SEPTEMBER 2025

VOLUME 69 ISSUE 9    SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

## TECHNOLOGY

Technology is a great thing, when it works. In a past life I was a software developer for over twenty years and that software, or any software you use can make life wonderful, more easier to manage things you need to do each and everyday and also helps you in your pursuit of the sport we all love, except, when it doesn't.

As a software developer, we had an unwritten rule that you program for the 80/20 rule. Which means, that you try and cover 80% of all possibilities or scenarios, in any given situation, and the other 20% can be covered at a later date, either by software updates or data fixes in the database. This is why, sometimes, when you have an issue in your phone or computer and something odd is happening, that the developer did not consider your particular scenario and the software does not run correctly or when software updates occur you wonder why you keep getting them, same reason, the company is pushing the update to fix those issues that were discovered after the initial rollout. Every change that a company makes to software makes it weaker (you would think the opposite, but not true) and they will have to rewrite the entire software package eventually. Whenever an issue occurs in a program it can make life very frustrating, sometimes very expensive and sometimes life threatening.

Recently I had such an issue with the MDC application when I put in for the preseason waterfowl draw, which you might want to do also early in case this issue happens to you. I navigated to the MDC website, it had a link halfway down the page for preseason draw. (no searching for it this year) Selected the link and went to the page to fill out my conservation number and date of birth and it threw an error stating that I did not qualify since I was not a Missouri resident. I thought maybe since I was on my iPhone it might have been my browser, knowing some companies do not code for specific browsers, so I went to my computer and tried Chrome, same error. I have been a resident for at least 19 years and had no issues in the past, as a matter of fact I just renewed my resident hunting license so this told me that MDC when they changed the application for this year that they did not test very well or a database update was incorrect. This was very frustrating since you have only a short timeframe in order to apply and if someone had to do a database update in order to fix this, that would take weeks to accomplish. So while I was out at Henges, I asked Mike if they could figure it out and he stated no that I would have to go to Powder Valley. The nice lady at the desk asked me for my drivers license and opened up the admin application and found out somehow I was showing as a nonresident. After updating it, life was golden once more and technology was great again!!  
 You have been warned.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SHORT STORY	1
MEMBERS MEETING	2
WATERFOWL CLINIC	2
FUND RAISER UPDTE	2
PRESEASON DRAW	2
SHOOTING TIPS	2
USFWS UPDATE	3
DUCK FEST	5
PERMIT FEE HIKES	5
SEASONS SET	5
UPCOMING EVENTS	5
GENERAL INFO	COV

**SELL  
 THOSE  
 MEAT  
 TICKETS!!!**

**SELL  
 THOSE  
 MEAT  
 TICKETS!!!**

**MEMBERS MEETING**

This month's meeting we will be having a member of Denny Dennis Sporting Goods Store at 1 Gravois Rd, Fenton, MO 63026 to discuss the changes and exciting happenings at Denny Dennis since the change over to new ownership.

**WATERFOWL CLINIC**

Your MVDHA in conjunction with the MDC is going to be putting on a Beginners Waterfowl clinic to be held at the Jay Henges Conservation Education building and shooting range. This will take place on 11 October 2025 beginning at 3 PM. Currently we are planning on several activities and informative talks including:

- Equipment needed
- Decoy placement
- Dogs
- Shooting
- Shooting Distance
- Ammunition needed
- Hunting public and MDC lands

This will be a great outreach program to get the word out of your MVDHA, but we need your help. We need 6-8 volunteers to assist in this clinic. If you are interested, please reach out to any board member. We will be having a final planning meeting at 6 PM at Jay Henges just before the member's meeting on 8 October. We all have the experience, so lets get the word out to help those who want to try the great sport we all love!

**FUND RAISER UPDATE**

Once again we will be having our popular fund raising event of the Kenrick's meat certificates. This is for a gift certificate of \$300 towards a meat package of your choice from Kenrick's Meats at 4324 Weber Rd, St. Louis, MO 63123. Tickets will be \$5 each **OR 5 TICKETS FOR \$20**

and the winner of the certificate will be drawn at this years Holiday party in December. Contact any board member for tickets or contact Jerry for tickets to sell at 314-603-6548 and he will get them to you. Remember, this is for your MVDHA Club.

**PRESEASON DRAW**

The application time frame for the managed waterfowl hunts at MDC conservation areas began on 1 September. Go to the MDC website and halfway down the page you will see the link to take you to the registration page. Hunters may apply for pre-season reservations at up to three managed waterfowl hunting areas. Draw registration period is from Sep 01 2025 to Sep 18 2025. Draw results will be available Oct 01

**SHOOTING TIPS**

From Ducks Unlimited  
 20 Off-Season Shooting Tips  
 Prepare for next season with these pointers on guns, ammo, and shooting techniques  
 Shooting, unlike riding a bicycle, is a perishable skill. In other words, if you don't use it, you lose it. Think of your shooting eye as a knife in need of sharpening, and add shooting practice to your list of off-season chores, along with working the retriever and painting decoys. These 20 tips will help you stay focused and organized as you work toward improving your shooting during the off-season.

- Clean Your Gun
- Check Your Point of Impact
- Test Your Pattern
- Learn to Aim Below the Target
- Learn to Trust, Not Measure
- Lose the Bead or Supersize It
- Add a Pad

**MVDHA BOARD**

- President:** Ken Liebel
- First V. Pres.:**  
Scott Thoele
- Fin. Secretary:**  
Rob Mueller
- Rec. Secretary:**  
Bill Hilgeman
- Correspondence Secretary:** Bill Hilgeman
- Membership Chairman:**  
Vacant
- 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

- Take a Lesson
- Learn to Focus
- Count Pieces
- Load Your Own
- Learn to Shoot in a Ghillie Suit
- Work on Your Mental Game
- Play the Field
- Check Your Eyesight
- Exercise Your Eyes
- Get in Shape
- Film Your Form
- Join a League
- Hunt Doves

For the specifics of each one of these shooting tips you can go to:

<https://www.ducks.org/hunting/shooting-tips/20-off-season-shooting-tips>

For more info.

species. They went through the

## USFWS UPDATE

Delta Waterfowl Reports: USFWS Annual Breeding Waterfowl Survey Estimates 33.98 Million Ducks

Breeding population nearly identical to 2024, but dry prairie conditions likely suppressed duck production

**BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA** — Duck numbers are steady, but a sharp decrease in the number of May ponds casts serious concern about the strength of the upcoming fall flight.

The breeding population of ducks in the Traditional Survey Area was estimated at 33.98 million which is just below last year's estimate of 33.99 million, according to the 2025 Waterfowl

Population Status report released today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

When ducks returned to the prairies this spring, they encountered dry conditions. May pond counts, a key indicator of breeding habitat conditions and potential production, declined 19% from the previous spring. Pond counts in the North-Central United States — which includes Montana and the Dakotas — dropped 34%, while the prairie and parklands regions of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba were down 5% from 2024. The 2025 May ponds estimate of 4.18 million is 20% lower than the long-term average.

“Duck production is not likely to be good this year,” said Dr. Frank Rohwer, president and chief scientist of Delta Waterfowl. “When you look at the wetland conditions maps from May, they show it was very dry everywhere across the prairie pothole region except eastern South Dakota. The best hunting seasons occur in wet years when the fall flight has more young ducks in the migration.”

The total of just shy of 34 million ducks is 4% below the long-term average in the survey which has been conducted annually since 1955. The survey is used to set hunting regulations for the following year, so in this case, for the 2026-2027 season. Based on these results, waterfowl hunters will again enjoy a liberal season framework next season.

Mallards are estimated at 6.55 million, a 1% decrease from 2024, but 17% below the long-term average. More mallards settled in the Canadian prairies this spring, but at numbers still well below the long-term average.

“The survey shows a bit of a redistribution of mallards from last year when a higher percentage settled

in the Yukon and Northwest Canada,” Rohwer said. “In southern Saskatchewan, mallards had a little better water this spring, but it was still dry there.”

Among other puddle duck species, gadwalls, wigeon, shovelers, and pintails increased, while both blue-winged teal and green-winged teal decreased.

Wigeon, estimated at 3.19 million, increased 9% and sit at their highest breeding population since 2016.

“Wigeon seem to be defying logic again,” Rohwer said. “They breed in the prairies and the Arctic. I have to believe the Arctic is producing more ducks than we thought.”

Pintails increased to 2.24 million, bouncing 13% higher than 2024. One-third of the breeding pintails settled in the Alaska/Yukon Territory/Old Crow Flats region, with another one-third in Central and Northern Alberta/Northeast British Columbia/Northwest Territory.

“I think there’s new evidence that pintails in the Arctic are reproducing better than we gave them credit for,” Rohwer said. “We used to think when the prairies were dry, they’d go to the Arctic and not breed. With the prairies in a drought, the Arctic and boreal forest regions seem to be producing enough ducks to maintain the populations.”

As a result of a change in harvest models, waterfowl hunters throughout most of the United States are allowed to shoot three pintails daily this season but be sure to check regulations for the state you are hunting.

Gadwalls continue to thrive, increasing 6% to 2.41 million, a figure that’s 17% above the long-term average.

Blue-winged teal declined 4% to 4.32 million, their lowest level since 2004. Bluewings were down 18% in the Eastern Dakotas, where more than a third of the population breeds during a typical year. Several consecutive dry springs across key nesting areas in the Dakotas and Saskatchewan have hurt production, Rohwer said.

Green-winged teal, which breed primarily in boreal forest regions, declined 15% to 2.55 million, however, the population remains 16% above the long-term average.

“If there’s good news for southern hunters, it’s that a lot of gadwalls settled in the eastern Dakotas, and green-winged teal are above the long-term aver-

age,” Rohwer said. “Hunters in Louisiana and Texas will still have greenwings and gadwalls.”

Among diving duck species, canvasbacks and redheads increased, while scaup populations dropped 10% to 3.68 million. Canvasbacks are estimated at 690,200, the most since 2017. Redheads, which breed primarily in the same semi-permanent wetland habitat as canvasbacks, jumped 17% to 918,200.

Results for the Eastern Survey Area, ducks that migrate down the Atlantic Flyway, show 1.14 million mallards, essentially no change from 2024. Black ducks are down 6% but remain 11% above the long-term average. Ring-necked ducks were estimat-

ed at 756,000, a 9% increase, while green-winged teal were down 24% to 342,000. Goldeneyes also declined by 25%, while mergansers increased 1%. Wood ducks in the Atlantic Flyway are estimated at 900,000, similar to the long-term average.

Habitat conditions in the Eastern Survey Area were deemed “good to excellent,” so duck production should be strong.

In contrast, duck production on the prairies is likely to be fair to poor. Rainfall in late May across North Dakota and eastern Saskatchewan provided hope, which mostly had evaporated by June.

“The May rains likely helped support a moderate number of nesting ducks,” said Mike Buxton, waterfowl programs director for Delta Waterfowl. “However, much of the precipitation in North Dakota and Saskatchewan arrived too late, and the gains were short-lived as heat, wind, and a lack of more rain dried up wetlands in June. Localized areas of Alberta received rain in June, and they stood out as rare bright spots.”

Ducks — like duck hunters — are resilient, Rohwer said.

Delta Waterfowl continues to help ducks thrive throughout North America, continually expanding the organization’s innovative Habitat Conservation and Duck Production programs. All of Delta’s programs and initiatives, including Duck Distribution, are aligned to deliver more ducks and duck hunting opportunities.

“We hope everyone has an excellent waterfowl hunting season making memories with their families and friends,” Rohwer said.



### 2025 WATERFOWL BREEDING POPULATION AND HABITAT SURVEY

SPECIES	2025	2024	% CHANGE FROM 2024	% CHANGE FROM LTA
MALLARD	6.55	6.61	▼ 1	▼ 17
GADWALL	2.41	2.28	▲ 6	▲ 17
AMERICAN WIGEON	3.19	2.92	▲ 9	▲ 22
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	2.55	3.01	▼ 15	▲ 16
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	4.43	4.60	▼ 4	▼ 13
NORTHERN PINTAIL	2.24	1.98	▲ 13	▼ 41
NORTHERN SHOVELER	2.76	2.65	▲ 4	▲ 4
REDHEAD	0.92	0.78	▲ 17	▲ 25
CANVASBACK	0.69	0.57	▲ 22	▲ 17
SCAUP	3.68	4.07	▼ 10	▼ 25
<b>TOTAL DUCKS</b>	<b>33.98</b>	<b>33.99</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>▼ 4</b>

NUMBERS IN MILLIONS. LTA (LONG-TERM AVERAGE)

**DUCK FEST**

12th Annual Duckfest, 3,4 October at the Knights of Columbus — St. Paul, 1270 Church Rd., St Paul, MO 63366. Presented by Flynn Drilling Company and Dive Bomb Industries.

There will be food and drinks, vendors, live music, duck gumbo competition, raffles/live auctions, calling contests, dedicated kid zone, conservation area and much more!

**PERMIT FEE HIKES**

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo -- Missouri is home to more than 1 million anglers, 500,000 hunters, and several thousand trappers. MDC issues nearly 2.6 million hunting, fishing, and trapping permits each year.

To keep pace with continually rising costs of goods and services, MDC is proposing increases for 2026 to some nonresident, resident, and commercial permit prices. Changes include significant increases to nonresident deer and turkey hunting permits to bring MDC nonresident-permit prices more aligned with surrounding states, creating a new nonresident migratory bird permit at a proposed price of \$60, and creating a new nonresident trout permit at a proposed price of \$40.

Additional revenue from permit sales will help MDC maintain and improve its nationally recognized programs and services for hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers, and others. Additional revenue from permit prices will also help MDC with rising costs of maintaining infrastructure at conservation areas, fish hatcheries, intensively managed wetlands, lake and river accesses, and shooting ranges that are many

decades old and in need of significant repair or replacement.

Approximately 43,000 nonresidents hunt deer, 10,000 nonresidents hunt spring turkeys, and 165,000 nonresidents fish in Missouri annually. More than 400,000 Missourians hunt deer or turkey and more than one million fish annually.

In response to concerns raised by resident hunters, MDC surveyed both resident and non-resident hunters. While the proportion of nonresident hunters and anglers is low compared to residents, the opinion survey and public feedback showed Missourians generally supported raising nonresident hunting permits to bring them more in line with surrounding states. MDC added that other states also continue to increase nonresident permit prices.

“Across deer, turkey, and waterfowl, one potential change supported by residents is adjusting permit prices to be more in alignment with surrounding states,” said MDC Director Jason Sumners.

The Missouri Conservation Commission gave initial approval to the proposed MDC permit price adjustments at its May 16 open meeting in Jefferson City.

**MDC SETS SEASONS**

**MDC sets upcoming migratory game bird and waterfowl seasons**

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri Conservation Commission approved recommendations from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) at its April 4 meeting for upcoming 2025 migratory-game-bird-hunting seasons and 2025-2026 waterfowl-hunting seasons.

**2025-2026 WATERFOWL HUNTING**

**Teal Season: Sept. 13 - 21**

**Ducks Season:**

**North Zone:** Nov. 1 — Dec. 30

**Middle Zone:** Nov. 1 - 9 and Nov. 15 through Jan. 4, 2026

**South Zone:** Nov. 27 – 30 and Dec. 7 through Jan. 31, 2026

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

**3 pintail** 2 scaup for first 45 days and 1 scaup for last 15 days

1 mottled duck

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

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2026

**White-Fronted Geese**

Season: Nov. 11 — Feb. 6, 2026

**Canada Geese and Brant**

Season: Oct. 4 - 12 and Nov. 11 – Feb. 6, 2026

**Light Goose Conservation**

Season: Feb. 7 — April 30, 2026

**YOUTH HUNTING DAYS**

North Zone: Oct. 25 and 26

Middle Zone: Oct. 25 and 26

South Zone: Nov. 22 and 23

**Up Coming Events**

**Sept 10 : Denny Dennis**

**Oct 8 : Waterfowl Forecast**

**Nov 12 : NO MEETING**

**Dec 10 : 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: September 10, 2025**

**Next Board Meeting: September 22, 2025**

**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

