

S O U T H S H O R E WATERFOWLERS

A S S O C I A T I O N , I N C .



MARCH 2017

Web site: sswa.org

P.O. BOX 217

BRIGHTWATERS, NY 11718

2017 Long Island Waterfowl Task Force

On Saturday, March 4th, the 2017 Waterfowl Task Force met in Stony Brook. The purpose of this task force is to make calendar recommendations to the State regarding the coming duck hunting season. The state also requests input from the task force on the calendar dates for the fall youth waterfowl hunt, and for the dates for Canada goose and Snow goose hunting in the Long Island Goose Zones.

Once again, by the end of the meeting, a consensus was reached and these are the recommendations which were presented for the 2017-2018 waterfowl season:

Youth Waterfowl Weekend:

November 11-12

Regular Duck Season:

Nov.23-26, and Dec 4 – Jan. 28

Regular Canada Goose Season:

Western Zone: October 14-29, November 23-26, December 4–February 26

Central Zone: November 23-26, December 4–February 7

Eastern Zone: November 23-26, December 4–February 7

Brant: (will be the same as the regular duck season)

Snow Goose Season: November 23–March 9

13th Annual SSWA Dinner

April 8, 2017 – 6-10 pm

**Fisherman's Catch Restaurant
Point Lookout, NY**

\$60.00 per person

Includes pass around cocktail hour hors d'oeuvres, appetizer, salad, entree, dessert, beer/wine/soda and a chance at a gun.

Don't forget to bring any unused items you no longer need for the Chinese Auction.

Call Curt at 631-661-0379 to get on the list before it fills up.

Nominations for April Elections

So far:

President , , , , , , John Adams

1st Vice President , , , Ron Pliszak

2nd Vice President , , , Kate Sohm

Secretary , , , , , Erik Tallbe, Jr.

Treasurer , , , , , Curt Matzinger

Advisors , , , , , Dani Karam, Bill McGinley,
Bill Spatafora, Jerry Chasteen

Fisherman's Catch Restaurant



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DANA LARSON
Catering Manager

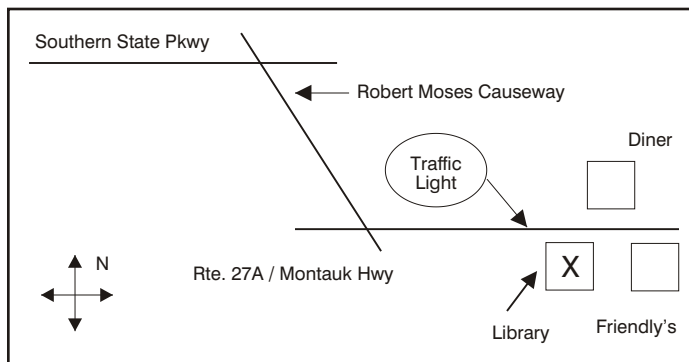
South Shore Waterfowlers

Voice of the Long Island Waterfowler

The South Shore Waterfowlers meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 1st Monday of each month from September through April. If the 1st Monday falls on a holiday, the meeting will take place on an alternate date (to be announced). (A library holiday is the same as a U.S. Postal holiday.)

Meetings are held on the first floor conference room of the Brightwaters/Bayshore Library located on Montauk Highway (Rte. 27A) in Brightwaters/Bayshore (see map below).

For additional information, please call John (631) 874-7459 or Ron (631) 902-2220.



South Shore Waterfowlers Association	
— Officers —	
• President	John Adams 631-618-5728
• 1st Vice President	Ron Pliszak 631-902-2220
• 2nd Vice President	Erik Tallbe, Jr. 516-799-6613
• Secretary	Kate Sohm 516-413-8476
• Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Duckboat Show Chairman, Historian, Club Dinner, BBQ Chairman, and Feed Fund. . .	Curt Matzinger 613-661-0379
• Sergeant at Arms	Erik Tallbe 516-799-6613
• Membership	Bob Dasch 631-472-0683

Great Shows – Antique Decoy & Gun Show

The SSWA had a table at both shows. We were able to do 4 raffles, to get some memberships, and move some merchandise. Many thanks to the people who manned the table: John, Dani, Ronny, Tom, George, Gary, Ben, Erik Sr., Erik Jr., and Joe. Great work fellas!!

D.E.C. Youth Camp

The SSWA wants to sponsor a youngster from 11 to 17 years old to a week-long camp upstate. There are 8 camps in different regions of the state. We would pay for the enrollment, but the youngster is responsible for travel to and from the camp. If a child of a SSWA member in good standing wishes to be added to the list, call Curt at 631-661-0379 to be added for a chance to win the trip to DEC camp.

Peconic Sporting Clays Shoots

Once again the SSWA will hold shoots at the Peconic River Sportsmans Club. Once a month we will shoot some sporties and have lunch. Dates not set at this time, but watch website for more info.

Fishing Trip Fundraiser for Disabled Warriors Project

We are looking to raise money for an upcoming person-with-disabilities project. We are having a fishing trip on Monday, July 10 for sea bass aboard the Fish On out of East Moriches. It is from 7-11 am. Trip will include: boat, rod, lunch, beverages (you can BYOB), all for only \$50 pp. Call John at 631-618-5728 or Curt at 631-661-0379 to sign up. Then make check payable to SSWA and mail to Curt Matzinger, 32 Magro Drive, N. Babylon, NY 11703. This fundraiser is for a good cause. Call today.

SSWA Website Login

Name: **Member**
 Password: **sneakbox**
[Login](#) [Cancel](#) [This is a member login]

Talking About Dogs

by George Grivas

“The dog did not see that last bird fall.
How will we get it?”

The above is not an uncommon situation. So what do you do? The answer is to teach the dog the blind retrieve. I would like to describe what, in my opinion, is what the hunter needs which differs from the field trialer and the hunt tester.

The blind retrieve consists of two parts: 1) Taking a line, and 2) Casting. All skills are taught first on land where you have total control. After that you can move to water setups.

1) Taking a Line

By taking a line I mean that you line your dog up at heel and send him for a retrieve of an unseen bird, one he didn't see fall. One way to teach this is to set up a white stake or white bucket. Sit your dog a few feet away, toss a few white bumpers to the stake while you say dead bird. Then you move 30 yards away with the dog, line him up, place your left hand over his head say the cue “dead bird” then send him with the cue “back.” We are teaching him a behavior pattern. Teach this over several days. Extend the distance up to 100 yards which may take several days. Shorten or lengthen accordingly. We want very high success. When the dog gets good at this, he has built his confidence, remove the stake. Redo this sequence in several places in order to teach him that when you say “back” there is always something to retrieve.

2) Casting

For your hunting dog you need only to teach four casts: right over, left over, back, and come in. This differs from what is done in field trials and hunt tests. And the best way to teach this is with the baseball drill.

Go to a baseball field and place your dog at the pitcher's mound. Have him face home plate while you stand maybe 10 feet in front of him. Blow a whistle sit, say sit, and toss a bumper to first base. Stick out your right hand while taking a step to the right and saying over. The dog should go for the bumper. After a day or two of this do the drill by throwing to third base instead of first. Step left and send with your left hand, stepping left, and saying over. Do this a couple of days. These are your over casts. Next cast is your back cast. Dog on pitcher's mound, blow sit whistle, say sit, toss bumper to second base, and raise your hand while saying back.

Next set up with bumpers at all three bases. Send him to different bases each time. No corrections other than bringing him back to the pitcher's mound and redoing the cast in order to get the correct cast.

You now have basic casting. Teach distance by stepping back from the pitcher's mound until you can do the drill from home plate while the dog is at the mound.

Now teach the come in cast. While the dog is at the mound, blow sit whistle, toss bumper in front of you, blow “toot-toot” while stooping over and pointing your casting hand toward the ground.

Putting This Together

Now go to a field. Place a stake with bumpers in the field. Bring your dog out of your car, say “dead bird,” hand over head, then send on “back.” Start at 30 yards, shorten or extend distance according to progress. Your dog should go for the bumper pile. Do this a couple of days. Then repeat without the stake. If the dog goes way off line on the way to the pile, blow your sit whistle (one sharp blast) get the dog to sit, and give an “over” cast to bring him more in line. When in line blow another sit whistle, get the dog to sit, then give your “back” cast. If the dog over runs the bumper, blow another sit whistle and give your dog the “come in cast.”

Building On This

Once this is good you can progress to running blinds on a pond. A small pond will allow you to do the above drills easily.

Some Hints

Give casts with your palm facing the dog. Set up the drills for 100% success. Use training birds from time to time. Pay attention to how you line up the dog for the retrieve. Teach this with the wind at your back. Get your dog to heel on the left and send with your left hand. Start to make use of cover when the dog gets good. Every dog learns this at a different rate: What took months for Buffy was accomplished in two days with her puppy Thor.

Teaching a dog to run blinds is very useful. It is worth the time and effort to do this.



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in our fundraising efforts at the
Annual Waterfowl Festival and Curt Matzinger Dinner

Atlantic Flyway Report

by Ron Sineo

At the Atlantic Flyway Winter meetings in Wheeling, West Virginia, the meetings opened as usual, with reports from the USFWS and CFW about what has gone on in the past year. In the US, the bad news is that our new President has put a hold on any new hiring of Federal jobs (hopefully for the FWS this may be temporary). The good news is that last summer's 3 open Section Chiefs positions have already been filled. Canada is struggling to deal with attrition from retirements, and both countries have seen their waterfowl budgets dwindle. A spokesman from the Bird Banding Laboratory in Pautuxtent addressed the tech section with some depressing news. He indicated that the phone-in hot line for reporting banded birds is most likely going to become a thing of the past. For one thing it has become too expensive to staff, and for another, the BBL no longer has the resources to do the data mining necessary to provide the requested information. It is probable that in the US at least, the 800 number for reporting banding will be shut down by June 2017. There was much discussion about alternatives, and the best one remains online reporting. For the time being, Canada will keep their toll-free number in operation.



Of course, you have probably heard by now that next year's black duck bag limit will be 2 birds/day. Staying with report bands for a moment, the possibility of having new "REWARD BANDS" made and placed on some black ducks was discussed. This would give hunters an incentive to make an effort to report their take, even though they know the phone call center is being shut down. New bands will need to be made by the BBL and these will not have the US call center number on it. Instead, reporting would have to be done online. Those who advocated for reward bands felt that this should be at least a 3-year study, and this would help ensure that banding data would continue to be available (especially now that the bag has been increased to 2 birds/day).



A major topic of discussion was the **Atlantic Brant**. Brant are unique in the current harvest management spectrum in that they stand alone. Biologists wait for the mid-winter survey count and then apply those numbers to an adaptive harvest management plan that has 6 possible outcomes depending on the numbers. Ted Nichols (NJ) presented data crunched by the USFWS that suggests that a history of consecutive Brant seasons has been like a roller coaster ride, and that the Brant regs. are hardly ever the same 2 years in a row. He proposed reducing the number of options from 6 to some smaller number, and also taking a hard look at what this fragile population can actually endure in terms of hunting pressure and still bounce back for the following year.

This year's mid-winter count was good enough to allow for a second season of 60 days/2 bird daily bag. We have typically not had more than 2 consecutive years of this, before the season must again be restricted.



(Continued from Page 4)

We have only had a liberal season (60 day/3 bird) once in the last 10 years. Ted’s proposal would likely result in some modification of the Brant Harvest plan to help guarantee no closed seasons on Brant, but also to prevent each season’s regs. from going up and down like a yo-yo. At any rate, the committee members could not agree, and decided to table this proposal at least until the August meeting. My sense of this is that they may reach a compromise in August, but I think that the next mid-winter count will be crucial to what that compromise will be.

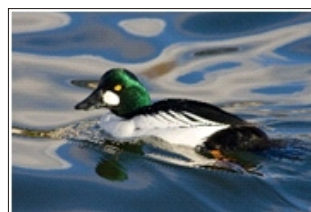
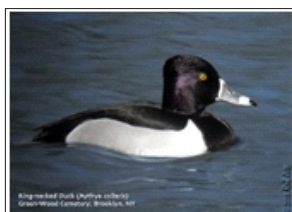
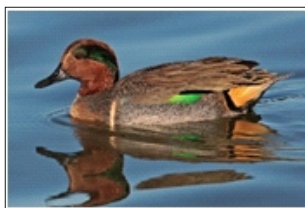
Sea Ducks were also an important topic at the winter tech meetings. As you know our season was slashed by 47 days and limits on some species were also reduced. The intent was to create an immediate and lasting 25% reduction in harvest of sea ducks. This regulation is likely to be in place at least for the next 5 years and perhaps indefinitely. It is very early in the game to draw any conclusions from this regulation change on sea ducks, but there was a lot of reporting, state by state, on what their sense of how the season change affected local hunters, and also if the goal of a 25% reduction in harvest was achieved. After all the reps took their turn at reporting, the committee chairman tried to summarize the results. Discussion ensued about how difficult and expensive it is to improve the data reporting on sea ducks, largely because of the remoteness (both in distance and in sustained poor weather) of their breeding grounds. It is very labor intensive and very expensive to band sea ducks in sizeable numbers. Still, it was agreed that current efforts should be sustained, and where possible efforts should be increased to minimize error in making these determinations.



Multi-stock duck harvest management

I have been reporting for 3 years now that there is a definite focus on shifting to managing our Atlantic flyway duck resource by taking a multi-stock duck harvest approach, instead of the current approach, which is based upon eastern mallards.

The “multi-stock” referred to in this concept includes 5 species. They are:



The intent here is to maximize hunter opportunity, while at the same time simplifying the regulations, so that the season length and bag limits will remain stable, without having closed or restrictive seasons on several species. The preliminary data suggests that the current liberal 60-day season and 6-bird daily bag limit is not something that is likely to be sustainable down the road. I don’t think we are looking at any changes prior to the 2018-2019 season, but I do think that these changes are definitely in our future. But for now . . .

The major changes to next year’s duck season are: 2 black ducks/day instead of 1, and 1 pintail/day instead of 2.

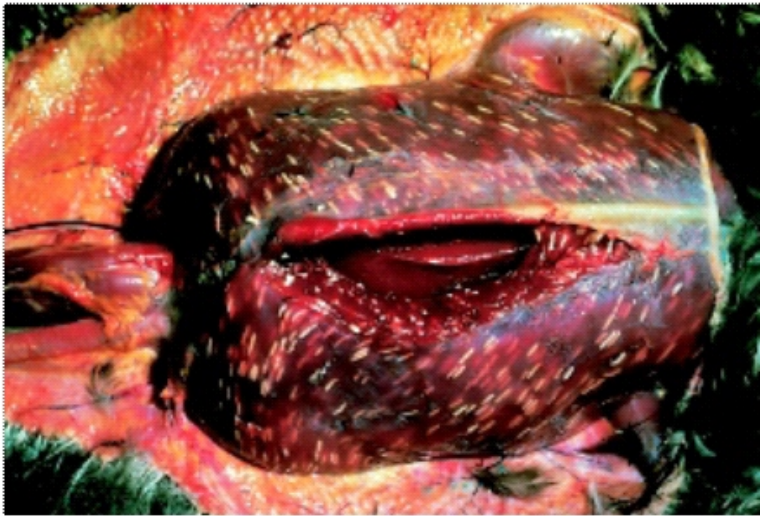
Sarcocystis – “Rice Breast” Disease in Puddle Ducks

by Ron Sineo

At the February 6, 2017 SSWA meeting, one of our members (Ben Sohm) raised the issue of his finding “rice breast” disease in local black ducks in ever increasing numbers in recent years. He also pointed out that the likely local culprit in all of this is the raccoon. To understand why this may be so, I decided to revisit this topic. (My original article on *Sarcocystis* was published in the September 2010 edition of the SSWA Newsletter.)

When hunters notice an abnormality or apparent disease in wild game they are preparing for consumption, they naturally have questions regarding their observation—particularly how it might affect their own health or the health of people consuming the meat.

BELOW IS A PHOTO SHOWING THE SKINNED CARCASS OF A DUCK INFECTED WITH *SARCOCYSTIS*. PROBABLY A GOOD ARGUMENT FOR SKINNING YOUR BIRDS.



WHAT IS IT?

Sarcocystis is a parasitic infection caused by a proto-zoan (single-celled organism). Some species of *Sarco-cystis* can cause illness in certain animals. However, waterfowl affected with this disease usually do not look or act sick and generally the disease is not fatal. Occasionally, severe infections may cause muscle loss with resultant lameness or weakness. Such affected birds may be more susceptible to predation.

How do I know if my duck has this disease?

You won't usually see external evidence of *Sarcocystis* infection. However, once you skin the bird, you can easily recognize the visible

form of the disease—you will see cream-colored cylindrical cysts running in parallel lines throughout the muscles. Since cysts are located in muscles, hunters who pluck birds without viewing the meat may miss the disease.

Because these cysts resemble rice grains, *Sarcocystis* is commonly called “Rice Breast Disease.” The cysts usually occur throughout the skeletal muscles in the breast and thighs, but may also occur in the heart or smooth muscle of the digestive tract. Deposits of minerals around the cysts enhance their visibility and may feel gritty when you cut the muscle with a knife.

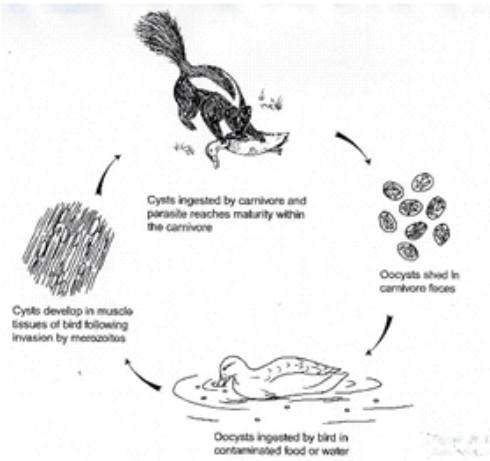
Sarcocystis appears to take time to develop visible cysts, so juvenile birds rarely show any signs. In years of poor duck production, hunters may bag more adult ducks and thus be more likely to notice infected birds.

What animals are affected? A wide variety of birds, mammals, and reptiles can contract *Sarcocystis*. Among waterfowl, dabbling ducks (mallard, pintail, shoveler, teal, black duck, gadwall, and widgeon) are the species most commonly affected with the visible form of the disease. Diving ducks are only occasionally affected.

How do they get it? Waterfowl and other animals become infected with *Sarcocystis* by ingesting the eggs of the parasite in food or water. The parasite requires a primary host (carnivore) and a secondary host (waterfowl and other herbivorous animals) to complete its life cycle. In the primary host's intestine, the parasite matures and produces microscopic eggs. The eggs pass out in the carnivore's feces, contaminating the environment. Waterfowl ingest the eggs while feeding. When the eggs hatch, the parasites move through body tissues to the skeletal muscles where they form cysts. The cycle is completed when a carnivore consumes prey infected with *Sarcocystis*.

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THE DIAGRAM BELOW SHOWS A SKUNK AS THE PREDATOR. HOWEVER, ON LONG ISLAND, THE MOST LIKELY PREDATOR WOULD BE THE RACCOON (AND POSSIBLY THE FOX.) Ben reported seeing lots of racoons in the marsh where he hunts. As you can see from the diagram, Ben is probably correct about the racoon being the guilty party in all of this.



We don't know a lot about the life cycles of most species of *Sarcocystis*. Currently it appears that each type of *Sarcocystis* prefers specific primary and secondary hosts. **This means that different carnivores are involved in the infection of different waterfowl, and may explain why only certain species of waterfowl are infected in some areas.**

Can it be controlled? No methods currently available will control the disease in wild waterfowl, nor is the need for this control seen, from a biologist's point of view. This is because *Sarcocystis* rarely kills waterfowl directly. To control

the parasite, we would have to interrupt its life cycle, which would require a thorough understanding of specific carnivore to waterfowl species interactions. (This information, and the development of control measures, would be more useful in captive waterfowl.) However, in specific locations, with specific predators, predator control may in fact have a positive impact. Even though studies show that the most likely locations for this are the breeding grounds, racoon control in the local black duck marsh just may have a beneficial effect.

Is *Sarcocystis* a threat to me or my animals? We are told that *Sarcocystis* found in waterfowl presents no known hazard to humans and is not known to be transmitted to humans. Proper cooking destroys all forms of the parasite; however, hunters usually discard unappetizing carcasses containing large visible cysts. Other species of *Sarcocystis* (*S. hominis*, *S. porcihominus*) infect cattle and pigs, respectively, and can be transmitted to humans who eat undercooked meat.

Dogs can be the primary host for at least seven species of *Sarcocystis*, with elk, mule deer, cattle, horses, pigs, and sheep acting as secondary hosts; but infection does not cause disease in dogs or other domestic animals. *Sarco-cystis* species commonly found in waterfowl have not been shown to infect dogs or other domestic animals. However, because dogs are susceptible to at least some species of *Sarcocystis*, it is not recommended to feed uncooked infected waterfowl to domestic animals. Remember, if you cook the meat, you kill the parasite.



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Perseverance Can Pay Off

by Ron Sineo

I interviewed Jerry Chasteen, SSWA member shortly after he had had a great day in the salt marsh. Jerry works in his family construction business, and on any given day he is likely to be working somewhere within an easy drive of the salt marsh in Nassau or Suffolk Counties. Jerry enjoys scouting new places and often takes his lunch hour at the nearest water or marsh land to the job site. By doing this he hopes to uncover new hunting opportunities. Once he sees birds, he looks for access, and he continues to scout the birds in hopes of learning their movements. Jerry does most of his hunting on weekends.

On the Sunday in question, Jerry had decided to hunt a spot he had been scouting that week. The weather report was for very blustery wind and overcast skies. The temperature was a balmy 22°. The tide was high, but would already be on the outgo by the time he made the trip from the launch ramp to the spot he had picked out. This meant he would have only a couple of hours of actual hunting. Staying longer than that would trap him there by the falling tide.



When Jerry got to the launch ramp that morning, he was shocked to feel that the wind was at least 15, gusting to 20, and had shifted more than 90°. He had second thoughts about what he was going to do. He had his homemade one-man grass boat, but the wind was going to create a difficult ride in the dark. He donned his PFD, launched the boat, and tried to pull-start the engine. It took a few minutes, but finally the engine fired up, and Jerry decided to press on. He had his phone with him, so he checked the time. It was just 5 a.m. He sailed off into the dark. It only took about 3 minutes to feel the blast of driving wind hitting him broadside. He started tacking as best he could, but the salt spray was rhythmically splashing him on his chest and face as his little boat heaved up and down in a 2-foot chop. It seemed like forever before he arrived at the spot he had scouted. He got the nose of his boat up and over onto the little patch of meadow he had chosen. The wind was holding him there for the moment. He checked the time. It was 5:25 a.m. Good, he thought to himself. I'm here with plenty of time to spare.



The first problem that Jerry had was to better position his boat so he could hunt out of it. No matter how he tried, the wind was basically right in his face. He flashed his light left and right but there was no way to get out of this wind. His boat was already even with the mudbank and as the tide was falling, he needed to have his boat out in front of that bank. He tried hard to at least quarter the boat to the wind, but he quickly became frustrated and realized that it just wasn't going to happen. His bow anchor was already hooked on the meadow, so he used his second anchor to grab a different patch of the same meadow some 20 feet distant. Then, by taking up slack on both anchor ropes in turn, the boat became stable enough. He would have to set his decoys from the boat. He began the task of setting decoys, one at a time. He started with his black ducks. He set 3 directly out in front of him. Next, he went for his mallards. He set just 3 to his left so that there was a hole between the blacks and the mallards, and that hole was left of center in his gun swing (Jerry is right handed). He had more decoys with him, but he thought these would be enough. He checked the time. It was 6 a.m. He still had 45 minutes before legal time. Standing in his boat, he shined his light behind him. The meadow only stretched about 12 feet behind him before a small sheltered cut opened in the meadow. He got out a pair of wood duck decoys and lobbed them into that cut from his boat. Then he sat down, the wind still hitting him in the face. He took out his gun & ammo, and settled in to await first light.



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It was still too dark to see much, but after about 5 minutes of waiting, Jerry started to hear some wingbeats on the wind. He was encouraged by this, until the faint sound of a motor started to mix with the howling wind. As it got steadier and louder, it soon became clear that another hunter was bearing down on Jerry's spot. Jerry got out his flashlight and tried to wave him off, but the boat short stopped about 100 yards from Jerry, out in front of his right quarter. There was another patch of meadow there, and that is where they stopped. The 2 hunters made a racket as they talked it up and set decoys. At this point, Jerry was not a happy camper.

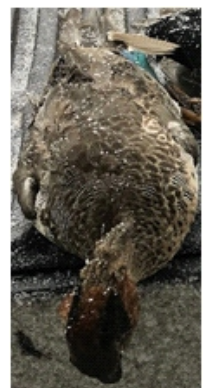


The other hunters finally settled down, and none too soon, since now it was 6:45 a.m., and was legal shooting time. As Jerry looked in their direction he saw that they had put out a large spread of decoys, including motion decoys. After about 10 more minutes, he spotted 6 black ducks with the wind behind them, making a straight line for the other hunters. As Jerry watched, it seemed that the black ducks couldn't find a place to sit down. They circled once, fighting the wind, and then overflowed the big rig, heading straight for Jerry who was well hidden in his grass boat. Still high as they approached, they tried to circle his rig, but they were fighting the wind and needed to circle a second time. They turned until the wind was behind them, and then they straightened out. At first Jerry thought they were too high, but they kept coming . . . as if they were going to dump into the wood ducks behind him. They still don't see me, he thought. At that, Jerry dropped the folding rail on his grass boat, shouldered his gun, and shot, and the lead black duck tumbled out of the sky, landing just 10 yards from the boat. While Jerry was picking up his black duck, he heard shots from the other hunters. As he whipped his head around, he saw puddle ducks flaring from the shots, and he **knew** that these guys were sky busting. As he settled in to hunt some more, again he hear a barrage of shots, and saw more high flying birds flaring away from the big rig. What he didn't see was any retrieval of birds. These guys were just wasting ammo.

There were more birds on the wind, but none that seemed to get close enough to tease Jerry. Then the snow flurries started. It really cut down his vision, and the wind was non-stop and right in his face. After about 20 more minutes, Jerry was about to stand up, when he caught a glimpse of some birds on the same flight path as those earlier black ducks. He waited and watched. They weaved and bobbed in the wind, working their way closer. He kept losing sight of them, due to the snow flurries. At one point Jerry was thinking that the other hunters would sky bust and ruin his chances at these birds. As the birds closed the distance, he suddenly realized that the birds had given the big rig a wide berth, and they were bearing down on him. They were taking a similar approach to that of the black ducks earlier, except that they were targeting the hole between the black duck and mallard decoys. Finally, they locked up, and Jerry fired 3 times with 2 gadwalls splashing down. One was belly up, but the other was trying to swim and dip under the water. It was getting further away with every second.



Jerry fought time as he tried to free his boat from its shackles, start the motor and chase the cripple. His gun was empty. He took a moment while idling, to reload his gun, and then took off after the crippled gadwall. With the chop on the water, the gadwall looked like it was trying to swim and dive. The wind pushed the boat every time he killed the engine, it took him at least 10 minutes of hunt and chase before he got a shot. He made the shot, and then started up the engine to go scoop up his prize.



(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

As he turned the boat back toward his spot, he couldn't believe how far away he had gotten from his spot. He squinted his eyes, and strained to find his decoy spread in the distance. There it was. As he turned the boat in that direction, he thought he saw a small duck, dropping low on the water and landing in the mallard decoys. With the poor visibility, he assumed it was a bufflehead. As he motored slowly back toward his decoys, he knew he still needed to get at least 500 feet closer if he was going to get a shot. He closed the distance by half, but the snow flurries were intensifying. He lost sight of the bird, and assumed that it dove out of sight. He hit the kill switch on the engine, and was letting the boat coast to a stop. The wind was still pushing the boat closer, and he had his gun in hand. Just then, a bird swam out from behind a mallard decoy, and as he shouldered the gun, with a strong downward thrust of its wings, the bird exploded out of the water, and flew straight up. Jerry fired, and the bird flew into a wall of #3 steel shot, and summersaulted back to the water, landing with a splash. He paddled his way through the decoys and picked up the dead bird. Imagine his surprise and delight to pick up a drake green-winged teal!

(He wondered how rare it was to shoot a green wing on Long Island late in the season, in snow flurries no less.)

Jerry let the wind push his boat the last 15 yards to the now very visible meadow. The tide had dropped quite a bit, and it made him reach for his phone to see what time it was. It was 8:15 a.m. Jerry was very excited and, as he took inventory, he realized that he had put a black duck, 2 gadwalls, and a green-winged teal,



4 great birds in his bag, in less than 2 hours. He tied up once more, to his anchors and settled in for the hunt. He had been up since 4 a.m. and he was tired. After another 10 minutes, the wind, the cold and the wet, ganged up on him, and he decided to call it a morning. Picking up the 8 decoys was a real chore because the snowfall was getting heavier, the wind was driving it, and the boat was difficult to stop long enough to grab a decoy. It was agony picking up those dekes. Finally, he set the nose of the boat into the wind and began the cold, sloppy voyage back to the launch ramp.

His perseverance had really paid off!

SSWA's Sportsman's Dinner

Sunday, June 11, 2017

Doors open at 12 pm – NO WALK-INS!

**Bocce Beach Restaurant
Ocean Beach, Fire Island**

**\$100 Donation includes: Round-Trip Ferry,
Dinner, Dessert, and Full Open Bar**

Become a Table Captain with a Table of 8 and
Be Entered in the Drawing for a FREE GUN!

Call Curt at 631-661-0379

(Note: Last Year's Dinner – Great Food/Great Day)



You and Your Scattergun

by George Grivas

I thought I knew how to shoot but I was wrong. After years of mediocre shooting, both in the field and on the trap range, I decided to change things. I accepted a friend's invitation to come down to the range and start shooting regularly. My shooting partners have averages from 96-98. They shoot quite well and taught me a lot. I do not claim to be a good shot but I am an educated one.

How well do you know your shotgun? How much time did you put into getting to know your gun? If you do not know your gun you cannot shoot well.

To start, does your gun fit you? If you find that you are placing the butt of the stock on your shoulder joint or your bicep it is too long. Cut it down. If your thumb is hitting you in the face it is possible that your stock is too short. Extend it.

How are you using your beads on your shotgun? If you are using your bead or beads to aim your shotgun YOU ARE NOT USING THEM PROPERLY. You should not even be looking at the beads or barrel at all. Your eyes should be focused on the bird and the barrel would then be a blur in your peripheral vision at best. The beads are used to help you with your gun mount by making sure the muzzle, barrel, and eye are all in line. Beads are not sights and if you are using them that way you are using them improperly. And now a word about those high visibility beads. If I need to borrow a shotgun and it has a high visibility bead, I will cover it up with electrical tape because I find it makes me look at the barrel which is not what I

want to do. I recently had to borrow a shotgun to shoot flyers at a field trial and the first thing I did was cover the high visibility bead.

How can you find the center of your pattern (point of impact)? The following is from Kay Ohye's shooting clinic. Go to the pattern board with your paper. If your paper does not have a target on it, draw one—a circle with a 5" diameter will do. Step back 10 yards. Mount the gun, make sure the beads form a figure 8, hold still and fire at the bottom of the target. You will probably find two holes in the paper, one from the wad and one from the bunched up shot. The location of the shot hole will tell you two things: 1) Does your gun shoot where you are pointing it? and 2) How high or low is your point of impact (POI)? If your POI is 2" high at 10 yards it is 8" high at 40 yards. And remember, you will kill more birds when they are in the center of your pattern.

Finally, how to use your stock. Of course it is there to cheek and shoulder your gun but you should also remember to keep your cheek pressed to it after you pull the trigger. Keep wood to wood as we say in trapshooting circles. If you don't, you will be lifting your head and ruining your shot, most likely shooting low and behind.

This is really written for people who are new to shooting. We as hunters often spend time showing newbies decoys, rigs, and setups but we rarely take the time to teach them how to use their shotgun. Know your gun and practice.

Faz's Sportsman's Dinner

Sunday, April 2, 2017

Brentwood Country Club

Doors open at 2 pm – NO WALK-INS!

\$100 Donation

Become a Table Captain with a Table of 8 and Be Entered in the Drawing for a FREE GUN!

Call Pete Fazio at 631-926-3353

Don't wait! Tickets are limited & sell out fast!



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Eric Kreuter, Esq.

Quack's Tips

It is common knowledge that salt water is the enemy of just about all things metal. Waterfowl hunters should be painfully aware of this. Yet, for one reason or another, lots of hunters will dig through their gear next fall only to find that the salt water has damaged some of their stuff. Quack hopes that most hunters will take care to thoroughly clean their firearm at the end of the season. But this task is just the tip of the iceberg. So many other necessary pieces of hunting gear and equipment require some attention as well. Clothing, blind bags, and soft gun cases have zippers, which are often made of some metal parts. The brass on open boxes of shot shells is vulnerable also. Range finders, binoculars, safety shooting glasses, and many other accessories have metal parts. Tool kits and tool boxes that usually spend the duck season in your boat need to be checked too.

If you have a duck boat, the motor needs to be flushed with fresh water before it is put in storage for the season. The trailer requires a wash down with fresh water EVEN if it is galvanized. There are some metal parts on most trailers which are not galvanized (axles, wheel hubs, springs) etc.

And let's not forget the pick-up truck or the SUV you tow your boat with. Most pay-for car wash locations have an optional service that provides an under-carriage wash and rinse. The key to all of this is to do it as soon as possible after the season ends. Letting the rest of the winter pass you by without attending to some of these details could result in some unnecessary damage to your things.

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— *South Shore Waterfowlers Association* —

CALENDAR OF UP-COMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- April 2** — Faz's Sportsman's Dinner, Brentwood C.C. (call Faz at 631-926-3353)
- April 3** — SSWA Meeting (Officer Elections, last meeting),
Bay Shore/Brightwaters Library, 7 pm
- April 8** — 13th Annual Curt Matzinger Dinner, Fisherman's Catch, Point Lookout
(see Page 1 for more info)
- May–August** — Peconic River Sporting Clay Shoots (dates to be announced)
- June 11** — SSWA Sportsman's Dinner at Bocce Beach, Ocean Beach, Fire Island
(see Page 10 for more info)
- June ???** — SSWA Paintball Day (work in progress, to be announced)
- July 10** — SSWA FUNDRAISER Fishing Trip (see Page 2 for more info)
- August ???** — SSWA Family BBQ, Flanders

Some items listed above still have to be scheduled. E-mails will be sent any time a date is confirmed, Also it will be listed in the June newsletter.

VOICE OF THE LONG ISLAND WATERFOWLER



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