

Arkansas Execs Talk
GUNS + GEAR

Which State Kills The
MOST MALLARDS?

When Weather
DRIVES DUCKS

GREENHEAD

The Arkansas Duck Hunting Magazine

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1987

A SPORT OF LEGACY



INSIDE WINGMEAD:

The History Behind
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Special Supplement to Arkansas Business Oct. 3, 2011, Volume 28, Issue #40



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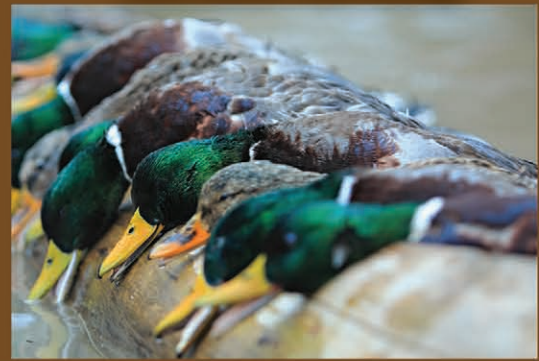


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PASSING ON THE LEGACY

Meet Arkansas families who have been duck hunting for generations, and learn how they're getting today's generation in on the hunt, too. PLUS, SUBMIT YOUR OWN FAMILY HUNTING PHOTOS TO GREENHEAD.NET/PICS!

ON THE COVER:

A snapshot of the Finley family, taken in 1987 after a successful day of duck hunting at Lost Island. READ MORE ABOUT THEM ON PAGE 48.



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Publisher's Note



Dear Readers,

We're very pleased to present the second annual edition of the ArkansasSports360.com *Greenhead* magazine for executive duck hunters.

No other state in the country is as steeped in rich duck hunting traditions and legacies as Arkansas. In one of the articles, writer Brent Birch points out that hunters in no other state harvest as many mallards each year as we do. Family heritages are built around duck hunting in our state, and we take a look at how it has been passed down through the generations and also what is being done to encourage other young people to get involved in the sport.

Inside, you will hear from ArkansasSports360.com columnist Jim Harris on his attempts to master duck calling, and he also takes a look at the effects of the weather on successful hunting and the ducks themselves. We talk with executives around the state who simply love duck hunting, and we share tips that will help you video your experiences out on our fields, rivers, reservoirs and woods.

I'm happy to report that the first edition of *Greenhead* was named the Bronze Award winner for Best Ancillary Publication by the international Alliance of Area Business Publications.

Please share your ideas and thoughts with us — and check out our Greenhead.net website, like "Greenhead" on Facebook and follow @huntarkansas on Twitter to stay updated throughout duck season and review more photos and resources.

We appreciate our advertisers who made this edition of *Greenhead* possible. I hope you enjoy the magazine and that this duck season is a great one for you.

Jeff Hankins
Publisher



P. S. : **TAKE THE BIRCH ISSUE CHALLENGE AND WIN THE WATERPROOF GUN CASE.**

(The one right here in the Watershed ad)

While working on this issue of *Greenhead*, the staff began joking that this was The Birch Issue. Brent Birch, in addition to being our Chief Information Officer, also serves as our Chief Duck Hunter (or Dr. Duckhead when he's particularly persnickety about the *Greenhead* photos and copy) and is heavily relied upon from conception to proofing and everything in between to produce both our website and magazine.

In recognition of this fact, we decided to issue a challenge to our readers: How many Birch photos can you find in this issue? This can be a bit tricky because not all Birch photos are immediately recognizable. However, the first person to identify the correct number of Birch photos will receive the awesome Watershed gun case you see at right. (Thank you, Watershed!)

As you're reading this issue, count the number of photographs with a Birch in it and submit your entry online at Greenhead.net/birch. The first correct entry will be notified immediately and announced online.

Note: Staff members, of course, don't get to play...or help their buddies.

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The advertisement features a camouflage-patterned gun case with various technical features highlighted by callouts. At the top, the Watershed logo is displayed above the website address www.drybags.com. The product is identified as a "WATERPROOF TORPEDO™ GUN CASE". Callouts point to specific features: "AIRTIGHT, WATERPROOF ZIPDRY SEAL" at the top opening; "EXPEDITION GRADE HARDWARE" on the side; "MIL-SPEC STITCHING" on the lower side; "PADDED CARRY HANDLE" on the back; "RADIO FREQUENCY WELDED SEAMS" at the bottom; and "UV-RESISTANT POLYURETHANE LAMINATED NYLON" at the very bottom. An American flag icon is also present with the text "MADE IN USA". The ZipDry logo and "WATERPROOF LUGGAGE" are at the bottom, along with "ASHEVILLE, NC USA".

JUST My Dog

Photo essay by LEE THOMAS KJOS/THE RAW SPIRIT

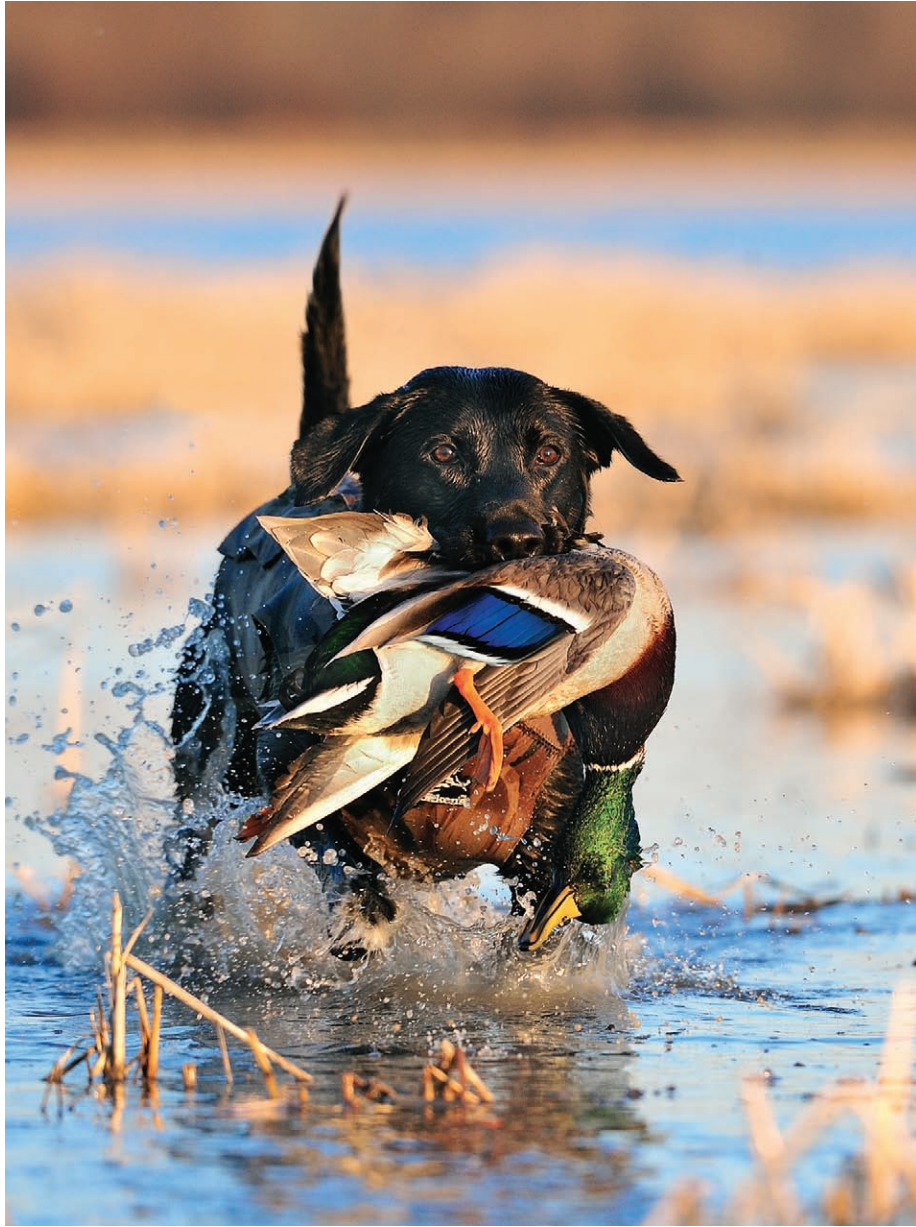
Poem by GENE HILL

HE IS MY OTHER EYES that can see above the clouds;
my other ears that hear above the winds.
He is the part of me that can reach out into the sea.

He has told me a thousand times over that I am his reason for being;
by the way he rests against my leg;
by the way he thumps his tail at my smallest smile;
by the way he shows his hurt when I leave without taking him.
(I think it makes him sick with worry when he is not along to care for me.)...







WITHOUT HIM, I am only another man.

With him, I am all-powerful.

He is loyalty itself. He has taught me the meaning of devotion.

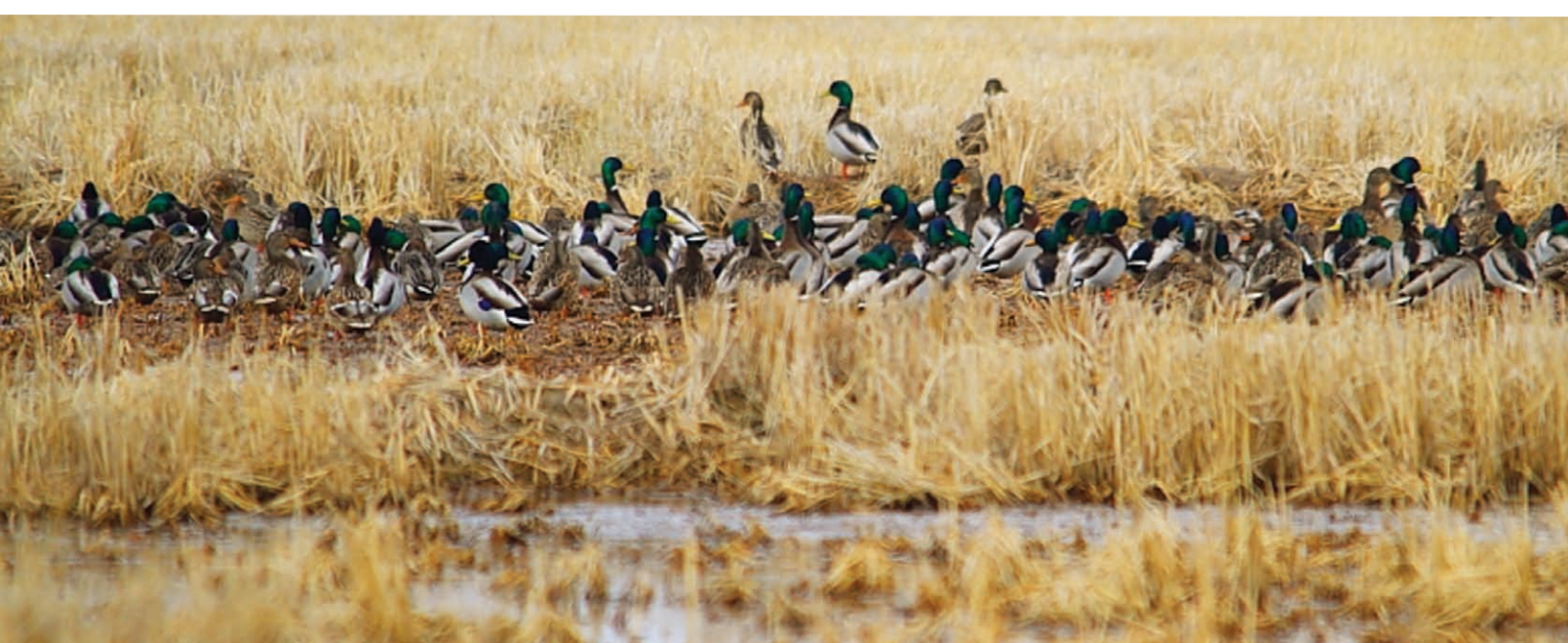
WITH HIM, I know a secret comfort and a private peace.

He has brought me understanding where before I was ignorant.



HIS HEAD ON MY KNEE can heal my human hurts.
His presence by my side is protection against my fears of dark and unknown things.
He has promised to wait for me...whenever...wherever - in case I need him.
And I expect I will - as I always have.
He is just my dog.







In 2010-11, Arkansas harvested nearly 100,000 more mallards than the entire Central Flyway (which includes Kansas, Oklahoma and the Dakotas).

BOB BARNETT
BRENT BIRCH



Numbers Don't Lie: More Mallards Killed in Arkansas

Annual Totals, Per-Hunter Averages Both on the Rise

BY BRENT BIRCH

Perception is reality. Sometimes. For the last handful of years, a lot of chatter among Arkansas duck hunters has centered on the improved habitat up north and the contiguous states becoming a hotbed for hunting mallards. States like Missouri, Mississippi and Oklahoma have even begun to increase their marketing efforts to attract more hunters chasing greenheads as a boost to their tourism industry.

The reality is the habitat has improved and opportunities are greater in those states than they were 10 to 20 years ago. Conservation programs and willing landowners have improved food supplies and habitat for wintering ducks more than ever before, especially in the eastern Central and western Mississippi Flyways. Television appearances on popular hunting shows by outfits such as Habitat Flats in north-central Missouri and Wildlife Inc. in west Mississippi have enhanced the perception that these guys are whacking all the mallards nowadays.

Without question, some excellent hunting opportunities exist outside Arkansas. The popularity and affordability of trips to Canada and the Dakotas for early-season birds proves that to be true. But the assumption Arkansas is losing its place as the premier mallard-hunting destination simply isn't true.

So where is successful and improving mallard hunting taking place?

Harvest totals and per-hunter averages



Improved habitats have helped the duck hunting industry in several states.

from a handful of competitive states, according to U.S. Fish & Wildlife data, tell the story.

For the purposes of this analysis, we will compare Arkansas with Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi and Oklahoma with figures dating to 1994. The results should be eye-opening for Arkansas duck hunters and, at worst, make an excellent topic for debate.

A Little Background

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) started conducting surveys of federal duck stamp purchasers dating to 1952 in an attempt to estimate waterfowl harvests and hunter participation levels each

NUMBERS continued on Page 14

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photo provided by motofish.com

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season. This survey was in place until the 2001-02 season when the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program, which waterfowlers know as HIP, officially replaced it.

Upon issuance of a license, hunters in each state must complete a HIP survey based on their previous season's results. Granted, the numbers represented in this article are estimates, but given the complexity of tracking every single hunter afield and every downed duck, this is the best available information. If these numbers are good enough for the FWS, they are good enough to prove who is harvesting the most mallards.

Analytics for the Waterfowler

Some duck hunters like to crunch the numbers. These are the guys that keep detailed records for their club. Each spring, bird counts and forecasts of fall flights are carefully broken down and compared to past reports. The numbers allow the detailed hunter to establish a measuring stick as to the success or failure of a season.

Others fall into the category of skeptics, where the forecasts and counts are just made-up numbers to drum up more duck stamp sales, and ballpark estimates on number of ducks harvested are good enough. Their seasons are measured in terms of excellent, pretty good, fair and terrible without hard facts to back it up. Not that there is anything wrong with that.

But I am a numbers guy, and when I started tinkering with this breakdown, I was surprised at some of the results and put a little less belief in mallards stopping short of Arkansas due to recent improvements up north. Note: I said "a little less," as I am not totally converted. No doubt hundreds of thousands of mallards never make it this far due to various factors waterfowlers love to blame, like weather, improved food supplies up north and availability of water.

Put your duck call down and get your pocket protectors and scientific calculators ready. On to the statistics.

Lets start off with the rise and fall of hunters afield. Based on duck stamp purchases, Arkansas has seen a sizeable decline in hunters since a recent history peak in 2000-01. My buddy Matthew

Finley likes to refer to that explosion in hunters as the “Class of 2000.” Attribute that growth to spinning-wing decoys (SWDs) and the largest fall flight in many years. With the SWDs temporarily outlawed and the ducks getting wise to such devices, the hunting got tougher for some and they bailed. Others have been chased out by expensive prices for land and leases, or the competition to hunt ducks on public land.

Interestingly, Louisiana has seen its stamp sales skyrocket. Maybe the popularity of Louisiana’s own Phil Robertson (a.k.a. The Duck Commander) has something to do with it, or hunters decided to get legal down there and actually purchase a license. A more likely explanation is Louisiana offers a wealth of hunting opportunities for various species of ducks and geese, and hunters are taking advantage.

Most hunters have seen the charts or raw numbers showing Arkansas, in grand totals, harvests more mallards than any other state. In 2010-11, Arkansas harvested nearly 300,000 more mallards than the entire Atlantic Flyway and nearly 100,000 more than the entire Central Flyway (which includes Kansas, Oklahoma and the Dakotas). Pretty impressive numbers when looked at in the aggregate.

But the raw numbers aren’t really an apples-to-apples comparison, not when you consider the number of Arkansas hunters chasing ducks versus a state like Kansas. Arkansas sells exponentially more duck stamps than many other states, so from a 30,000-foot level, one would assume Arkansas appears to kill more mallards in total because we have more duck hunters.

In 2010-11, Louisiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Texas and California had more active duck hunters than Arkansas, but significantly fewer mallards harvested. Louisiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin are all in the same Mississippi Flyway that funnels ducks to Arkansas each season, but most know those aren’t exactly hotbeds for mallards. A lot of ducks end up in Louisiana, but mallards aren’t plentiful, especially the farther south you go.

Looking at grand totals of number of mallards harvested is the quick and easy way to proclaim Arkansas as the No. 1

MALLARDS continued on Page 16



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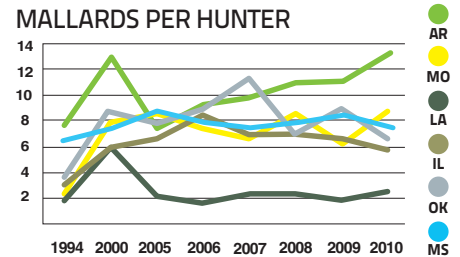
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MALLARDS continued from Page 15

mallard hunting location in the United States. Local hunters still like to complain that things aren't like the good old days. So let's dig a little deeper.

MALLARDS PER HUNTER



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

This is the breakdown that really opened my eyes to where Arkansas stacks up as far as harvesting mallards goes. Take a close look at that chart. Per the FWS surveys, Arkansas hunters averaged more mallards per hunter this past season than 2000-01. Hard to believe, as most waterfowlers remember that as the last really good season. Maybe the surveys are a shade off? Maybe the hunters that are still pursuing ducks after the decline of the "Class of 2000" know how to hunt mallard ducks and are more efficient afield?

Most of the folks reading this magazine kill more than 13 mallards a season, which was Arkansas' average for 2010-11. But remember, the number is an average. Many hunters buy a stamp but don't hunt other than a couple of weekends. Many hunters buy stamps from out of state, hunt one weekend the entire season in Arkansas and sometimes go home empty handed. All that factors in the average, and although it seems sketchy that an Arkansas duck hunter only averages 13 mallards all season, that's the only number we have to go on based on what the FWS releases. Regardless, that 13-per-hunter average blows away any other state in the country. North Dakota reports 4.2 mallards per hunter. South Dakota hunters each average 5.1 mallards. Get the picture?

Arkansas is still the one. And it's not even close.

A few other interesting items to take away:

With improved habitat and against a relatively flat growth in duck stamp sales, Missouri has seen an increase in mallards harvested. An astronomical 263 percent jump since 1994-95 but relatively flat yet consistent year-to-year since 2000. But if flat since 2000, how are ducks considered

to be stopping short of Arkansas if Missouri's hunting success hasn't continued to climb? We'll give you a minute to think on that one and provide my theory a little farther into the article.

Illinois rode the wave in the mid-2000s only to see its harvest rates level off somewhat, going from 8.4 mallards per hunter in 2006-07 to 5.62 in 2010-11. Ducks stopping short the last five years? This number makes you doubt that Illinois is where the mallards are holding up.

Anyone surprised how low Mississippi's average mallard per hunter is? Western Mississippi has some fantastic hunting grounds very similar to Arkansas with backwater off the river, flooded green timber and agricultural fields aplenty. Arkansas kills in excess of 575,000 mallards more than our neighbor with over 35,000 more duck stamps sold. No wonder so many folks out of the Memphis area head west, versus south, to duck hunt.

Mallards aren't bypassing Arkansas for a better deal to the south. Louisiana hammers the gadwalls, teal, woodies, specks and spoonbills, but not a lot of whackin' and stackin' of mallards going on down there.

Not many hunters consider Oklahoma a mecca for mallards, but the eastern edge of the Central Flyway has produced some good hunting periodically in the 2000s. Oklahoma typically has a higher bag limit for mallards than neighboring states. In 2010-11 Oklahoma allowed a hunter to bag five mallards, which boosts the per-hunter average when things get right.

Why All the Complaining?

The 2010-11 season didn't seem as awesome as a decade ago, but Arkansas' average per hunter was higher. What gives? Waterfowlers are pessimistic by nature. The reality is duck hunting is a lot like baseball. Three hits in 10 at-bats in baseball is All-Star material. Good to great duck hunting is a higher percentage than that, but that depends on your expectations. We all know a buddy or two who slam them "every day," but that isn't the norm. Odds are most duck hunters would be tickled to death if they could limit on mallards one out of every three hunts.

Notice I said, "most." To others, this would be a disappointment. Success in duck hunting is relative.

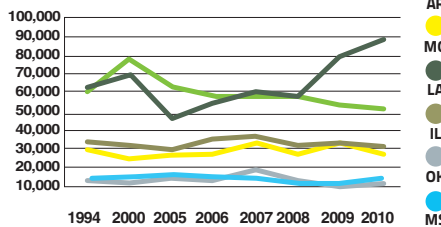
Another factor for a higher-per-hunter average is the hunters chasing ducks 10



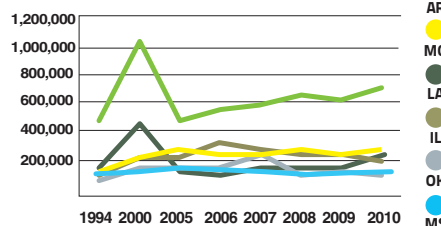
ALEX PRINCE

Hunters in Arkansas continue to harvest much higher numbers of mallards (both per hunter and in total) than in surrounding states.

DUCK HUNTERS BY STATE



MALLARDS HARVESTED BY STATE



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

years after SWDs and the record fall flight are better hunters. This past season had more dedicated hunters afield with more experience scouting, calling, managing habitat and shooting versus those in the sport 10 years ago. Most of the marginal hunters gave up due to lack of water and opportunities, and hunting ducks isn't easy as literally flipping a switch like in 2000.

So Where Are the Ducks?

Now, back to the question posed seeking an explanation as to Arkansas hunters' perception that ducks are stopping short to the north while the average per hunter in other states (such as Missouri) has stayed relatively flat since 2000. There is no doubt ducks are sitting tight north of Arkansas and/or moving back up there if the weather allows once they get here and shot at for a few days. The main reason Arkansas waterfowlers aren't seeing the numbers we think we should is the investment in habitat to the north of us by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Missouri Department

of Conservation and other conservation organizations. Acres upon acres of ground have been improved to house migrating mallards with food supplies that are an all-you-can-eat buffet as long as the weather keeps it available. The weather has to get extremely harsh to lock up Missouri's rivers and refuges to push all the mallards out of the state. Therefore, a large chunk of mallards never make it to Arkansas and the vast refuge and rest area properties prevent Missouri hunters from taking advantage as the ducks have very little incentive to leave these sanctuaries.

The Place to Be

Who knows if there will ever be another flight like the one in 2000-01 where 3.3 million mallards were harvested in the Mississippi Flyway (a third of them were killed in Arkansas). Hunters should probably stop comparing any and all seasons to that particular event, as it may have been a once-in-a-lifetime situation.

The projections for 2011-12 appear to be our best opportunity since 2000-01, with the mallard population 9 percent above 2010's numbers and 22 percent above the long-term average. With the right weather and water conditions, the season could be special. The early spring flooding in Arkansas will play a role, as will the very dry summer we've had.

Despite perceptions and some marketing to the contrary, Arkansas still is the unrivaled destination for hunting mallards. Nothing against our border states, as they do have fine hunting opportunities in certain pockets or intervals in time. But year after year, the numbers confirm Arkansas' flooded timber, rice fields and sloughs consistently give hunters more bang for the buck when getting after greenheads.

Let's hope the trend continues.



Wingmead in the early 1940s.

On *a* Meadow *of* Wings

NESTLED IN THE HEART OF ARKANSAS DUCK COUNTRY RESTS AN HISTORIC HUNTER'S PARADISE

*Excerpts taken from "Arkansas Duck Hunter's Almanac" by Steve Bowman and Steve Wright;
and research and writing from Ralph Wilcox with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.*

The story of Edgar Monsanto Queeny and Wingmead is about one extremely wealthy, highly intelligent man's love for ducks and Arkansas.

Located about eight miles south of De Vall's Bluff and 4.5 miles northwest of Roe on Arkansas Highway 33, Wingmead is a 14,000-acre farm and estate built in 1939 as a hunting retreat for Queeny, then one of the richest men in America and a man who inherited the Monsanto Chemical Company and turned it from a small operation to a billion-dollar corporation.

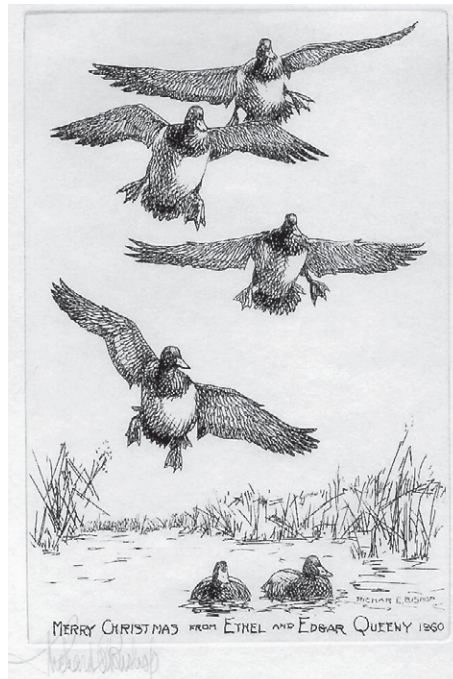
Queeny's "hunting shack" at Wingmead had 8,000 square feet, nine bedrooms, nine bathrooms and a separate dining room. Certainly no other place on the Grand Prairie at the time required formal dress for dinner. In addition to the main house, the estate included separate buildings for an office, a writing cabin, the manager's house, a stable, a kennel, a garage and storage facilities.

Few other places could match the illustrious guest list here either. It included outdoor writer Nash Buckingham, legendary film animator Walt Disney, waterfowl artist Richard Bishop and countless leaders in American business.

After Queeny purchased the land, the reputation of Arkansas' Grand Prairie duck hunting began a steady rise, and Wingmead became one of the world's most famous hunting clubs. Today, the Wingmead estate is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

A Successful Man

Edgar Queeny, born in 1897, was 22 when he went to work for Monsanto. His father had started the company in 1901 with only \$5,000 in capital but saw great success four



Renowned waterfowl artist Dick Bishop annually sketched Christmas cards for the Queenys. "Merry Christmas from Ethel and Edgar Queeny 1960" is lettered at the bottom on this card.

years later when World War I cut off German supplies of saccharin and greatly increased demands for all other chemicals.

Edgar Queeny started work at his father's company as the advertising manager. When his father named him president in 1928, he was only 30 years old and had been with the company nine years.



Queeny

Although his father was concerned that Queeny was "going to ruin Monsanto" because he "wants to change everything," the opposite was the case.

By the time Queeny retired from Monsanto in 1960, it had become the third-largest chemical company in the country and the fifth largest in the world. It had 44 plants in the United States that manufactured chemicals, plastics, petroleum products and man-made fibers.

Meadow of Wings

Residents of St. Louis, Edgar and his wife, Ethel, began taking "travel-trailer" trips to Arkansas' Grand Prairie in the early 1930s. Ethel is said to have been able to handle a shotgun almost as well as her husband.

But after several years of living in the trailer on trips to Arkansas, Ethel finally gave Edgar the ultimatum that if she was going to continue coming on the trips, Edgar was going to have to find better accommodations than the trailer.

Edgar soon began looking for property.

After hunting with Tippy LaCotts on Mill Bayou near DeWitt, Queeny tried to buy some land there.

WINGMEAD continued on Page 20

Hard feelings still exist over the way Queeny purchased the 11,000 acres on LaGrue Bayou that became Wingmead.

Verne Tindall's Reservoir, built in 1927 near Stuttgart, had created the wave of the future on the Grand Prairie. Rice production was on the rise, but the water table there was already showing signs of stress.

Irrigation wells had to be dug twice as deep as they were 30 years before.

Tindall's Reservoir had shown that ducks were also attracted to these shallow lakes built to hold water for rice irrigation.

That's what most interested Queeny, the ducks. He formed Arkansas Irrigation Co. and proposed the construction of a 3,500-acre lake on LaGrue Bayou. Roger Crowe of Stuttgart helped put together the deal that gave Arkansas Irrigation the power of eminent domain. Several farmers in the Slovak area were forced to sell their land to make room for the new impoundment, which became Peckerwood Lake.

Ethel Queeny enjoyed putting the official titles on the Wingmead property. "Wingmead" refers to the "meadow of wings" the Grand Prairie becomes each year when ducks migrate.

Peckerwood Lake got its name from the thousands of woodpeckers that tapped out tunes on the acres of standing dead timber created when the lake was impounded.

Edgar Queeny built three green-tree reservoirs on the property – Wingmead, Greenwood and Paddlefoot. He allowed no outboard motors; the wooden boats and canoes had to be paddled or pushed through the shallow lakes.

Carl Hunter, who ran Wingmead for 20 years, believes Wingmead was possibly the first green-tree reservoir on the Grand Prairie. It was at least one of the first in which wooded areas, especially pin oak flats, are temporarily flooded to attract ducks. This recreates the setting that has attracted mallards to the overflow bottomlands of Arkansas for centuries.

Peckerwood Lake was used primarily as a rest area for waterfowl. Queeny enjoyed flooded timber hunting, not open water.

Wingmead Today

Even though some changes have occurred at Wingmead since it was built in 1939, for the most part it still reflects the period in which Edgar Monsanto Queeny owned and visited the property. Even with the changes, if Queeny were to return to Wingmead today, he would have no problems recognizing the estate.



Conservation work at Wingmead continued until Queeny's death on July 7, 1968, and remained the property of his late wife, Ethel, until her death in 1975. After her passing, Wingmead became the property of Barnes Hospital, which announced that the estate would be sold by sealed bids on Jan. 8, 1976.

Rumors quickly started to spread about who might be interested in purchasing Wingmead, and they ranged from Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash to Anheuser-Busch.

However, Wingmead was ultimately purchased by the Lyon Family, and it is still owned by Frank Lyon Jr., and his wife, Laura Jane. In the time since the Lyons purchased

Wingmead, they have continued to use the property as a farm and hunting retreat.

Today, Wingmead remains the premier farming and hunting estate in eastern Arkansas and a monument to the work and legacy of Edgar Monsanto Queeny.

From the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



Wingmead's interiors are adorned with reminders of Edgar Queeny's love of Arkansas' natural beauty.

When all the construction was finished at Wingmead, Queeny literally had a place where he could step out of a mansion wearing his house slippers and kill a limit of ducks in some of the finest flooded timber hunting anywhere.

Experiments & Conservation

Throughout his time at Wingmead, Queeny took conservation and sound wildlife management practices very seriously. In 1957, he hired Hunter, a prominent Arkansas conservationist and wildlife writer on leave of absence from

the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission.

Ultimately, Hunter would manage not only the wildlife component of Wingmead, but the agricultural component as well. He stayed at Wingmead until Queeny's death and then returned to AGFC.

He was keenly aware of Queeny's priorities at the estate.

Recalled Hunter: "Mr. Queeny said, 'Do what you want about the farming. Just make sure the hunting is good.'"

HUNTER continued on Page 22



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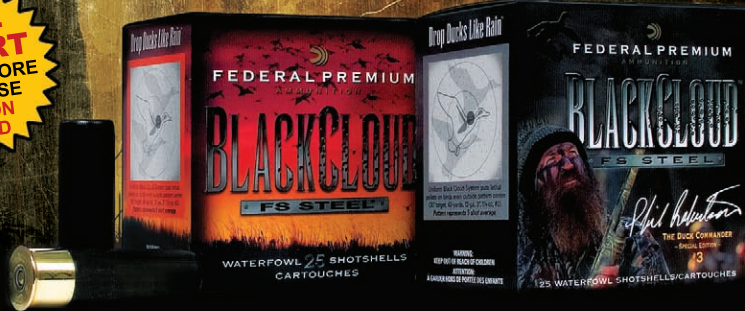
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Formal attire was required at Wingmead's evening dinners.

HUNTER continued from Page 20

"He wouldn't walk off the porch to shoot the biggest deer in the woods. Ducks and quail – that was it."

It was the perfect job for a hands-on wildlife biologist like Hunter. Queeny continued to experiment, and one of the first they tried was establishing Canadian geese, which were no longer migrating to the Grand Prairie in significant numbers.

Locally raised captive Canadian geese were placed in rest areas. Wild-trapped young geese were held in pens at Wingmead over the winter. With this imprinting, the flock of Canadian geese that migrated to Wingmead each year grew to as many as 2,000.

Hunter built up a population of 30 quail coveys on the property. Whether it was ducks, geese, quail or growing crops, Queeny was always willing to invest the money to try something new.

Although the conservation work completed at Wingmead from the 1930s until the late 1960s was important, one of the key reasons for its success was the knowledge and involvement of Queeny. His work and knowledge of waterfowl, particularly, was especially noteworthy in Arkansas.

The renowned nature writer Nash Buckingham even recognized Queeny's importance early on. In the introduction to Queeny's book "Cheechako," Buckingham wrote, "It is good to have gunned with Edgar Queeny the man, and to have watched his steady trend toward a sportsmanship bent upon contributions of high value."

For more information about the history of Wingmead and Edgar Queeny's significant contributions to the development of waterfowl in Arkansas, as well as historic photographs, visit Greenhead.net to view a copy of the comprehensive registration form submitted to the National Register of Historic Places. Copies of the "Arkansas Duck Hunter's Almanac" are available at TheDuckSeason.com.

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Whether the
Weather Matters
Is Up to the
Hunter

BY JIM HARRIS





Serious duck hunters rarely if ever let a spate of bad weather keep them from hunting. But most of them still want to know if the weather around them will influence how many ducks they might see on that particular hunting morning.

Of course, the serious hunter also knows that weather, here or in all parts north of Arkansas along the major waterfowl flyways, is just part of the equation for determining a good duck hunt.

Regularly, it seems, some hunters particularly in South Arkansas hear the same line, “the ducks just haven’t gotten here yet,” as the 60-day season runs its course. Hunters keep a close eye on the nightly TV weather forecast and websites such as the National Oceanographic and Aeronautical Administration (NOAA) for key information that might influence Arkansas hunting.

If only someone could accurately forecast the entire duck season — the weather and the ducks’ arrival — in the Mississippi Flyway...

Well, somebody has tried. Successfully, it appears.

Researchers at Mississippi State University’s College of Forestry Resources and its James C. Kennedy Endowed Chair of Waterfowl and Wetlands Conversation investigated the relationship between changes in relative abundance of ducks and changes in weather in the Mississippi Flyway.

What the researchers came up with was a weather severity index (WSI) – the sum of (1) the average daily temperature, (2) the number of consecutive days with average temperature below freezing,

(3) snow depth and (4) number of days with snow cover.

Without letting the math equation cause a headache, what the WSI explained was the significant variation in changes in relative abundance of ducks at mid-latitudes in North America during the 2009-10 and 2010-2011 seasons. What they found was that as the WSI increased, the likelihood of mallard migration to southern locales increased as well.

And somewhere out there, the veteran everyday smart-aleck duck hunter is probably saying “No s***, Sherlock. When the ducks’ food gets covered up and the snow or ice doesn’t thaw, the ducks come our way.”

But at least somebody put this down on paper, and on the Internet. Read all about it here: CFR.MSState.edu/KennedyChair/Weather.asp

The last two season’s weekly forecasts are archived, and as best as we can tell, the Mississippi State study was dead-on for Southeast Arkansas duck hunting.

“I think it’s a really cool thing,” said Luke Naylor, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission’s chief waterfowl biologist. “People have been asking this question about what drives bird migration, specifically duck

migration. This is really the first formal way to use analytical technology and data sets to see what factors into duck migration.

“It predicted to a pretty strong degree these migration movements the past two years. There are so many factors in play, and something like this, as successful as it was, was a big step to

Got Ducks?

The Weather Severity Index (WSI) –the sum of ① the average daily temperature, ② the number of consecutive days with average temperature below freezing, ③ snow depth and ④ number of days with snow cover—estimates when ducks will arrive in Arkansas. As the WSI increases, the likelihood of mallard migration to southern locales increases as well.

RUSSELL POWELL

WEATHER continued on Page 26

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WEATHER continued from Page 25

understanding duck migration.”

Steve Bowman, a Little Rock-based outdoors journalist, who hunts ducks throughout North America and co-authored the definitive duck book, “The Arkansas Duck Hunter’s Almanac,” is like most veteran everyday Arkansas duck hunters: He gets his information the old-fashioned way.

“I’m always looking at the forecast, Weather.com, the Weather Channel, watching [Little Rock TV weathermen] Ned Perme, Ed Buckner, Barry Brandt. I’m going to try to catch every little clue I can,” Bowman said. “Weather.com gives me a 10-day forecast. If it tells me I’m getting a cold front, I’ll actually plan seven to 10 days out, knowing that it can change, that it will change. But I’m ready to hunt before, during and after the front comes through.”

Bowman said the expert hunters are also looking at the snow or ice cover “from the U.S.-Canadian border to the Missouri boot heel.”

Duck biologists such as Naylor say the birds aren’t necessarily spurred to move when cold weather hits in the north – “Blue-wing teal will move with the first cold front, whereas mallards won’t,” he said. What prompts them is when their food options run out. Then they’re looking for more carbohydrates from waste grains during the migration south; only late during the mating season does their diet change to proteins (re: invertebrates) for egg production.

If Arkansas has the food but not enough water, that can push the

migration further along. If the state has the water and not enough waste grain – same thing. In fact, the same Mississippi State research group, led by Rick Kaminsky, has studied the impact of decreasing waste grain in the Delta on duck distribution.

Ducks inherently traveled the established flyways for eons for food while navigating the major water sources, and confluence of several major waterways in the Central and Mississippi flyways coincided with the food (i.e., rice).

But in the past several years, food opportunities north of Arkansas have kept many of the ducks from moving this far, especially if the weather remained mild.

“Some ducks don’t even migrate out of their nesting habitat at all,” Bowman noted. Arkansas only benefits when the abundance of food in the north is covered up in snow and ice.

But, with a record estimate of 45.1 million ducks in the northern breeding grounds, counted by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service this summer, plenty of mallards and other ducks will find their way to Arkansas’ wetlands, woods and fields.

“We harvested 700 thousand mallards this [past] year and 1.4 million ducks total, so duck distribution hasn’t changed much,” Naylor said.

The Arkansas mallard limit remains at four per day, with six total ducks per day, so hunters know it’s worth their while. Nobody is staying home, even if the snows never dump on the honey holes further north.

“At the end of the day, a duck hunter is going to go when he can go, when the

STAY INFORMED

Web resources to help your hunt:

WEATHER

Look for cold fronts moving from Canada through the Midwest. Check out local and national weather forecasts at Weather.com.

WATER LEVELS

Check water levels of the White and Arkansas rivers, as well as the wildlife management areas via the Corps of Engineers website or NOAA.org.

DUCK COUNTS

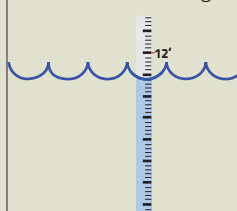
Visit AGFC.com for weekly duck counts, links to both Arkansas and Mississippi aerial surveys and other pertinent information.



EYE FROM THE SKY

See satellite views of waterways via the National Weather Service’s website, Weather.gov; look for flooded backwater areas off rivers. Checked for years by fishermen, more duck hunters are now using this resource. Note the long-term forecast for water levels too.

COLD



season is open, and he can spend the greatest amount of time in the field,” Bowman said. “The other side of that is, if he’s out there and the perfect storm is lining up from the north and he sees that thing marching down, he’s for sure gonna make the time. It’s always a last-minute deal for a lot of hunters and it’s just the craziness that makes up waterfowling.

“My wife knows that. When the electricity is off and the ice is on the road. I’m gone. The women folk want the men folk at the house to take care of things in that weather, while a waterfowler just wants to be out in the ice busting caps... I really never think about the weather until the weather makes me think about it.”

Arkansas has to have rain, preferably in November in the two weeks before the first season split begins, because the bottoms need to fill with water, but hunters probably would rather not hunt in a downpour.

“And ducks will hunker down on a bad day too, they’re a lot like humans are in that respect,” Bowman said.

A cold front running as deep as the southern end of Missouri, and frozen precipitation with it, is like heaven to the Arkansas waterfowler.

Then, give a hunter like Bowman a clear day, 34-35 degrees, with a 10-mile-per-hour wind at the back, a breeze that’s just enough to put a little ripple in the water to bounce the decoys around and bring the cupping ducks into the hole.

That is the perfect duck weather in Arkansas. It’s just made better if the folks up north are caught in a blizzard. “I hope everybody above us is freezing their ass off,” Bowman said.



SNOW COVER

CFR.MSState.edu/KennedyChair takes into account relative temperatures, snowfall and length of snow cover to determine advantageous hunting periods in the southern portion of the Mississippi Flyway.

DUCK MIGRATION

MDC.MO.gov is a well-researched Missouri duck hunting resource that graphically shows the current migration of ducks along the prominent middle U.S. flyways.

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"Waterfowl's definitely, by far, the hardest game you'll ever film," says Taking Flight Outdoors producer Lance Nations.

The Other Kind of Shooting

Harder than hunting ducks, filming them takes skill, practice

BY SAM EIFLING

With Taking Flight Outdoors, the Bentonville production company he co-owns, producer and editor Lance Nations records a variety of hunts in a variety of settings, from deer season through turkey season. But he doesn't hesitate to name the sport that's most challenging to document visually.

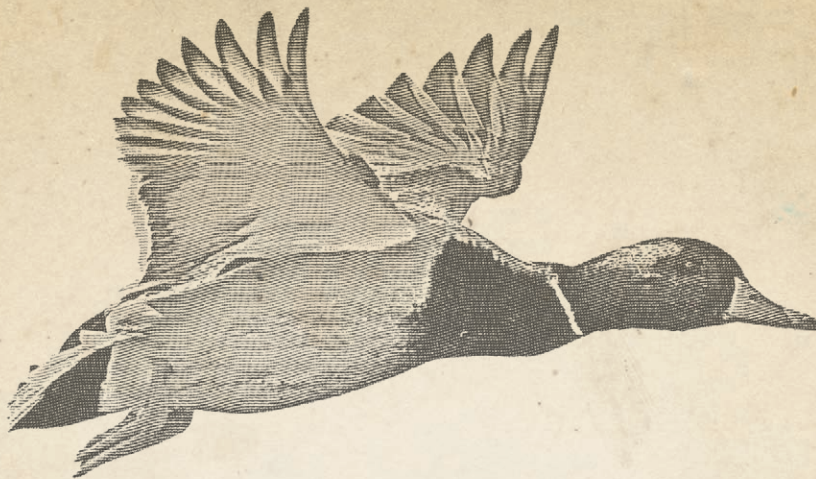
"Waterfowl's definitely, by far, the hardest game you'll ever film," Nations says. "The movement is so quick and you're filming in the sky."

In fact, the challenges to shooting a duck hunt with a camera surpass even those of shooting a duck with a shotgun. Temperature, moisture, standing water, timber underfoot — all of these will work to complicate a video shoot.

But as with many difficult things, the challenges are often worth the trouble. "When you run multiple cameras from multiple angles," Nations says, "you can make a mediocre



FILM HUNT continued on Page 31



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hunt look like a really good hunt.” For instance, if you’re wearing waders, you might follow the retriever partway into the water, to get the low shot of the dog returning — or, if birds approach at that moment, the angle of the hunters blowing calls, readying their guns and firing. Put the camera on the stake when someone stakes a decoy. Get high up on an embankment and capture the entire spread. Get a camera arm that attaches to a tree by your stand. “Waterfowl is definitely the hardest to film,” Nations says. “But you do have the most leeway to do creative stuff with it.”

That impulse can go too far, of course. In an email, Zac Stephens, a camera operator with the video production crew on the Duck Commander series of DVDs, says it’s easy to get carried away. “Safety is the most important part,” Stephens says. “No good piece of footage is worth your life. Don’t get shot. I’ve come close a couple of times and it’s no fun.”

No matter where you’re (safely! prudently!) setting up to shoot your footage, you will need a camera. The adage says the best camera is the one you have with you, and you could do worse these days than to let your iPhone roll. “Not everybody’s a golfer, not everybody likes to play golf, so there’s no reason to run out there and buy yourself a set of Pings,” says Freddy King, a 16-year veteran outdoors videographer and producer out of Searcy whose work appears regularly on BloodBrothersTV.com. “Start out with some WalMarts.”

Once you elect to drop a little coin on a proper rig, the pros recommend checking out either B&H (BHPhotoVideo.com) or eBay for the best deals, and they all are keen on Sonys. King and Nations suggest the Sony Handycam HDR-FX7; separately, Stephens recommends the HDR-FX1 for the budding amateur, in part because it has a decent internal microphone. “Audio is a different animal,” he says. For

a cheaper, all-weather camera suitable to mount as a second camera, Nations likes the Kodak Playsport line.

From a purely technical standpoint, the trickiest part of getting proper images of birds in flight will be adjusting your camera’s light sensitivity such that it doesn’t allow the light of the sky to overwhelm the birds in the frame. The colors of the sky and clouds should remain steady both when you shoot a sky-only shot and when you capture land and sky together.

That adjustment will mean the difference between seeing the colors of an approaching bird and seeing only a dark shape against a blown-out background. As for positioning, the cameraman should be at least 10 to 15 feet away from your subjects, Nations says, for the best framing.

Weatherwise, remember that moisture in all forms is the enemy. Rain is the obvious. But Nations also recommends keeping the camera as close to the outdoor elements as possible before a shoot. If it’s going to be 25 degrees the morning of the shoot, you run the risk of having a foggy lens if you bring the camera in the house the night before. His solution: “Keep your cameras in your truck. Bring your batteries in.”

If a novice videographer will make one mistake when first going out to shoot, it will be to pan and zoom too much. King’s suggestion is that if a duck is so far away you have to zoom and

focus, it’s too far away to be worth your time. And as for pans, they ought to be slow, methodical and purposeful. “No herky-jerky movement,” he says. “Don’t just jump from here to there. Have a reason. Hold the shot for at least eight

to 10 seconds before you move anything else.”

Stephens said shaky footage afflicts beginners. Use a tripod, he says, especially for any dialogue. But he echoes King when he says, “No one wants to watch a bunch of sporadic camera movements.”

Once you’ve got the very basics covered, then you can begin to shoot with editing in mind. Get shots of what are commonly called “cutaways” or “B-roll,” basically supporting images that will allow the editor (that might be you) to transition cleanly between two shots. On a hunt, this might be shots of a hunter blowing a duck call, of shell casings bobbing in the water, or of decoys floating. They will include close-ups, too, like water dripping from a dog’s whiskers or a hunter reloading his shotgun.

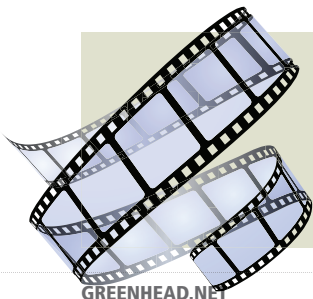
Quick cutaways help an editor tell the story briskly, efficiently. “One of the most boring things

to watch is somebody else’s home video,” King says. “From an editor’s standpoint, however long your video is, if it’s a duck hunt, no matter how good a duck hunt it is, it should never be longer than about 10 or 12 minutes.” Nations recommends



MICHAEL PIRNIQUE

FILM HUNT continued on Page 32



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A Two-Minute Guide to Shooting a Decent Hunt Video

Don't shoot just one type of shot. There's only so long you can stare up at the sky, or scan the inside of the blind.

Don't get zoom-happy. Don't pan unless you have to. Frame a shot and allow the action to unfold inside that frame. Hold each shot for at least 10 seconds. Swinging the camera around just makes for confused, disorienting footage.

Get an external mic to mount on your camera. The sounds of the hunt's bird calls, shotguns crackling and dogs splashing in the marsh are too much a part of it to skimp.

Watch your light metering. It would be easy to begin a morning in utter darkness and continue to shoot video in 10 a.m. sunlight. Don't assume the light settings for one hour will suit the next.

Tripods are your friends. At the very least, stabilize your shots. Zooming will also make any shaking all the worse in the final video.

Video on the Web isn't TV. There are plenty of ways to explain the when, where and who of a hunt without having to narrate it to the camera. Save any dull facts for a written description and use the video and audio to capture the moment itself.

Follow Freddy King's three-step checklist:



the hunting-specific editing suites from Campbell Cameras (CampbellCameras.com) for anyone just getting started in editing hunting video.

The other quality of an engaging hunt film, King says, is banter. He admits he can seem pushy on a hunt, even rude, but he bosses his hunters around, he says, in order to get them engaged with one another, and to talk. If you later watch a finished video with a friend and have to explain anything to him, King says, you haven't done your job in the field. "The video that only has awesome looking footage, it goes dormant, it loses its flavor," he says. "Those little pieces of audio are what will save it." His message: Don't sell the sound short and don't forget that the final video, however you decide to shoot it, should tell a story.

"When it comes to actually filming, practice makes perfect," Stephens says. "Don't be afraid to experiment. If you miss your shot, don't worry, because there will be another set of ducks coming soon enough."

Sam Eifling is a freelance writer and a former assistant editor at Arkansas Business.

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Q & A

Executive Summaries: Ducks, Dogs, Clubs & Calls

BY ALEX GRAHAM

It's that time again, when men turn into boys, excited about "Opening Day" and the upcoming season, amassing and assembling their toys, plotting and strategizing, planning and replanning.

Duck season in Arkansas is around the corner. There are memories to be made, stories to be told and good times to be shared — dads with their sons and daughters; husbands with their wives. The sheer joy obtained by a simple day in the woods, on the stick pond or in the field with friends and family is palpable. You can touch it.

There are many different methods and manners of hunting, but one thing is certain: The magic of what duck season brings to this great state, the duck capital of the world, is undeniable.

What follows are the experiences of six Arkansas business executives as they shared with us their love for duck hunting.



Rick Griffin didn't catch the fever until he was 28 years old.

RICK GRIFFIN

Manager, Griffin Properties of Fort Smith, LLC, Fort Smith

Number of days you hunt a season?

20 to 30 — varies year in, year out

Where do you hunt? Hildebrand's Farm, two miles east of Humnoke

Club name? Gee Ridge Duck Camp

Pump or semi-automatic? Benelli Super Black Eagle LH in Camo, 12 gauge semi-automatic

Duck call? Rich-N-Tone

Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Mostly flooded fields for ducks and dry ground for speckle belly geese

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Blustery, rainy, wet and ugly with fronts blowing by; I like it cold 'cause ducks gotta eat!

Favorite hunting story/memory? The time

I took all the shells out of Benson Cashion's gun and we only saw one duck all morning. You should have seen his face when he squeezed the trigger.

Favorite place to eat during duck season?

Sportsman's in Stuttgart, but heard it closed this year. Shame — they made a fine cheeseburger and had cold beer.

What got you into duck hunting? Around the age of 28 or so, some buddies took me and I was hooked. I've hunted ducks ever since.

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting? If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts? I have daughters and have taken them both, but they don't much like it. I do get to hunt with Brent Birch's sons, Reid and Fuller, and they are a hoot!

One day Fuller and I were hunting. It was slow and he got bored. He asked me to blow my duck call, which I did. A bedded-down, large, 10-point buck jumped out of the brush on the other side of the levee about 10 yards away, scaring us good. He was missing his antlers on one side (which looked like they had been shot off). He just stood there looking at us. I think he had a concussion, and he was acting goofy. For a minute I thought he might charge us, which would not have been good for him or us, but he finally bounded off across the flooded rice field, falling down every third or fourth bound. We never saw him again but it spooked Fuller and me a bit.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? Camo face paint (we hunt off the levees, which can be scant of cover) and a tool kit to fix a jammed or broken gun

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Bob Birch. Unfortunately, I kinda suck!



William Clark's son, Alex, still talks about the two ducks he killed on New Year's Day.

WILLIAM CLARK

CEO, Clark Contractors, Little Rock

Number of days you hunt a season?

Probably about 12 to 15

Where do you hunt? Between Humnoke and Carlisle

Club name? Hamilton Plantation

Pump or semi-automatic? Pump

Duck call? I don't call but have friends who do!

Fields, reservoir, river or timber?

Timber and reservoir

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? The weather doesn't matter, but I'm an early "out" if it's cold and the ducks aren't flying.

Favorite hunting story/memory? I have a bunch of them, but one that stands out is the first duck I killed. I had been hunting with my dad many times and had super hunts where I shot an entire box of shells but couldn't knock one down. I was about 10 at the time. Finally, one day, I winged a mallard drake that went down in a bean field a few hundred yards away. Joel Ledbetter was hunting with us that morning and was kind enough to go after it himself. He was gone for more than 20 minutes, and when he finally found the duck he brought it back to the blind. The problem was that a hawk had found it first. When he held up what was left, it was hardly recognizable as a duck except for the green head. I can still vividly remember how mad I was at that hawk for a few months afterward.

Favorite place to eat during duck season? My cabin. Steaks taste better on the prairie.

What got you into duck hunting? My dad started taking me hunting when I was in the fourth grade, and we had a lot of good times together doing that.

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting?

If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts? I take my three boys some. They're ages 10, 10 and 13. One of my 10-year-olds shot this year for the first time, and on our

New Year's Day hunt he killed two. He's still talking about it!

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? I don't keep any unusual things in the blind with me, but I won't hunt until I've had my Coke and powdered doughnuts.

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Ford Overton can bring 'em in from anywhere.



Dick Carmical always hunts with his 50-plus-year-old-ragged-out hat.

DICK CARMICAL

President and CEO, The Price Companies Inc., Monticello

Number of days you hunt a season? 50

Where do you hunt? Drew, Desha, Arkansas and Chicot counties

Club name? Firehunt

Pump or semi-automatic? What I shoot has changed with the land and the laws. Early on, there was more woods hunting and we shot 20 gauges with high brass 7 ½s. As the Delta was cleared and we did more field hunting, I shot a 3-inch Model 12 with No. 4 lead. Since we were forced to go steel, I shoot a 3 ½-inch Benelli with BBs but still drop back to a 20 gauge or smaller if in the woods.

Duck call? Roten and cut down OLT Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Yes

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Windy, clear, cold

Favorite hunting story/memory? A duck hunt is a good place to really see what kind of person someone is. One friend was dealing with the loss of a daughter, yet he lifted me up with his example of faith and strength.

Favorite place to eat during duck season? Our camp

What got you into duck hunting? As a child I loved hearing the old men sitting on the porch of the country store. They hunted land unchanged for a thousand years and shot ducks with black powder shells that left smoke over the waters. They had no four-wheelers, Gore-Tex, cell phones or TV hunting stars to tell them what to buy. I miss them.

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting? If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts?

The last afternoon from a long season of guests, I was able to slip off with my three sons (ages 7, 11 and 13 at the time). We all sat on the same log. The ducks worked. The boys were safe with their guns and shot well, killing their limits.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? My 50-plus-

year-old ragged-out hat.

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Chuck Cook (Regions Bank) and Gar Lile (Lile Real Estate) are good hunters and good advocates for the sport. Marcus Beard, a senior manager with our group, and Curt Preston with Cullum Seed are very dangerous men in the duck woods.



Leon Catlett II has been hunting with his son, Cori, for 30 years.

LEON B. CATLETT II

President, Motel Sleepers Inc., Little Rock

Number of days you hunt a season? 30-40

Where do you hunt? Humnoke, Stuttgart and Montrose

Pump or semi-automatic? Automatic

Duck call? Rich-N-Tone

Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Timber and fields

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Bluebird in timber and rain in the fields

Favorite hunting story/memory?

Limiting out in 15 minutes in green timber and filming my son calling tornadoes of ducks that swam between our legs and knocked our hats off

Favorite place to eat during duck season? Papa Joe's in Humnoke, Sportsman's in Stuttgart and Holly Ridge [Grocery, Sporting Goods & Restaurant] in Eudora

What got you into duck hunting? My brother-in-law

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting? If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts?

I've been hunting with my son for more than 30 years. The highlight was the day he shot his first greenhead with his single shot .410.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? Roloids and Halls cough drops

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Not me

JIM KINCANNON

President, AHBI Consolidated, Inc./
Apartment House Builders, Inc.,
North Little Rock

Number of days you hunt a season? Around 40, give or take

Where do you hunt? Anywhere I can, but primarily in the Stuttgart area

Club name? Pintail Bayou Hunting and Social Club, Humphrey (pronounced "Ump-free")

Pump or semi-automatic? Automatic; the newer lightweight models seem to help you stay on target and shoot faster.

Duck call? A close friend gave me an original Taylor Made call from the late Alvin Taylor of Clarendon many years ago, but I'm not worthy.

Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Our club is primarily fields, so my partner-in-crime Rick Del Donno allows me to regularly hunt the timber with him.

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Any day duck hunting is a good day. But the best bluebird day hunting I've ever experienced is at Randy Covington's field adjacent to Cardin Bottoms in the shadow of Petit Jean Mountain. Watching the sun rise over the mountain and the ducks come toward you for what seems like miles. Then they get close enough to see the sunshine reflect on their green heads and you can hear them cackle as they circle the blind — spectacular.

Favorite hunting story/memory? Of course the hunts I've had with my father are really wonderful memories. As for true "expeditions," here goes: Picture a really cold, driving rain. Four brave souls with expectations that match the weather trudge out to a flimsy skid blind with virtually no protection from the elements, situated in the middle of a flooded field. We're already soaked by the time we get there, wondering why the heck we didn't stay in bed like the rest of the group. Barely get the decoys out when it starts raining even harder. Then, as if on cue, there they are, barely visible in the morning soup, coming to the call and trying to land. We high-fived each other. You don't know if you don't go. We couldn't look up into the sky for the rain and wind, so we had to wait to shoot until they appeared over the decoys. Fifteen minutes later, we all had

greenhead limits somehow, oblivious to the weather. We went back to the house and woke the others up, and they went out and did likewise, while we drank coffee.

Favorite place to eat during duck season? At Pintail Bayou; our club boasts the best chefs on the prairie. Period.

What got you into duck hunting? I don't deer or squirrel hunt like my father did when he was a boy. In fact, I never duck hunted until graduating from college. After a couple of trips with Danny Smith, I was hooked. Then, around 1981, my soon-to-be wonderful, understanding wife made the mistake of buying me my first shotgun as a Christmas present.



Jim Kincannon and Sidney at Pintail Bayou in 'Ump-free'.

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting? If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts? My eldest daughter got water in her boots the first time out, so I messed up my chance with her. My youngest really enjoys the outing and watching the dog work, but now lives in Dallas and can't go very often. I've been blessed with the opportunity to take my nephews hunting, and was there for my late brother's son's first duck, a mallard drake. That was a special moment.

'We never fired a shot but still limited out before 7:30'

NORM DEBRIYN

Associate Director, Razorback Foundation Inc., Fayetteville

Number of days you hunt a season?

About 15 to 20 days a year

Where do you hunt? In Arkansas, Oklahoma and South Dakota

Club name? Prairie Wings with Dr. Bo Busby and Stickpond with the McGeorge Family

Pump or semi-automatic? Benelli 12-gauge automatic

Duck call? Banfield's Best, but I'm not very good. The ducks go the other way when I call. I like to hear good callers.

Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Prairie pot holes in South Dakota and timber in Arkansas

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Bluebird sky is the best.

Favorite hunting story/memory? Last November at Prairie Wings, about 200 ducks came into the flooded timber right



Retired Razorback Baseball Head Coach DeBriyn duck hunts at Prairie Wings and Stickpond.

at shooting time and landed all around us. The noise of the wings was unbelievable. Everyone just froze. Nobody fired a shot, but we still limited out before 7:30 a.m. What a great memory.

Favorite place to eat during duck season? At Prairie Wings — the cooks, Aunty Egie Wilson and Billy Bogy put on a spread that's hard to beat.

What got you into duck hunting? Started duck hunting with Marion Berry of Gillett years ago.

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting? If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts? I used to take my boys (Todd, 40, and Marty, 35), when they were young to Marion Berry's Greenhead Hunting Club. It was usually during

Thanksgiving or Christmas break while they were in high school.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? I like coffee.

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Dr. Bo Busby is good and so are the McGeorge brothers.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? It's not really unusual, but dog treats (Snausages) for Sidney, my slow-but-steady golden retriever. At 8 years old she had her best year ever last season, single handedly responsible for more than 350 retrieves. She justifiably requires a reward for every trip. I buy a lot of Snausages.

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Chuck Cook (Regions Bank), executive or not, is one of the best I've ever heard. David Nutt (J.W. Nutt Co.) is really good too, although he should hunt more. Mark Bentley (Colliers) deserves honorable mention. Pete Fotioo (Bank of the Ozarks) has the softest of all hail calls.

DENNIS ADKINS

Owner, Adkins, McNeill, Smith & Associates Realtors, Little Rock

Number of days you hunt a season? 58-60

Where do you hunt? Brummitt (between Humnoke and Stuttgart)

Club name? Feather Farms
Pump or semi-automatic? Semi-automatic Benelli Super Black Eagle II in Camo

Duck call? Yentzen

Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Fields and reservoir

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Rainy and nasty

Favorite hunting story/memory? A photographer for a magazine came to shoot photos at our club. While in the pit, I shot a duck and as he took the picture, the duck hit him in the face and broke his nose.

Favorite place to eat during duck season? Cajun Bistro in Stuttgart

What got you into duck hunting? My brother-in-law took me on my first duck hunt to Poor Boy duck club in the early 1970s. I was hooked from then on!

If you have children, do you take them



Since he was 3, Kris has hunted with his father, Dennis Adkins, almost every day of the season.

duck hunting? If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts? Yes, my son started going when he was 3 years old and we still hunt together almost every day of the season.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? Swivel seats

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? My son, Kris Adkins

KEVIN HUCHINGSON

President and CEO, Colliers International, Little Rock

Number of days you hunt a season?

15-20

Where do you hunt? Mostly Northeast Arkansas, south of Harrisburg on the Languille River

Club name? Whitehall Hunting Club

Pump or semi-automatic? Semi-automatic

Duck call? I keep one in my bag but rarely get it out.

Fields, reservoir, river or timber? Dead timber and brush

Rainy, nasty or bluebird sky? Prefer bluebird — the hunting is usually better.

Favorite hunting story/memory? We were in a blind hunting with a group in the middle of Benson Lake near Lodge Corner. There were several guys and we were busy talking when we noticed the boat had floated off and was several hundred feet from the blind. An unnamed individual – whom I consider the best Arkansas executive duck caller – used the barrel of his gun to pry off a board of the



Kevin Huchingson and wife, Dianna, and children Claire (11), Julia (7), Emma (9) and Grace (12)

blind (I believe he bent his barrel). He then used the board to float and paddle to retrieve the boat. He was the morning hero.

Favorite place to eat during duck season? Josie's in Waldenburg. Fun atmosphere and kids enjoy watching and participating in karaoke.

What got you into duck hunting? I went to college in Louisiana and started going with some friends then. Once I came back to Arkansas, I never stopped.

If you have children, do you take them duck hunting?

If so, what are some of the highlights from these youth hunts? I have four girls and they have all gone hunting with me since they were very small. The entire family usually spends a few weekends a year at the hunting club, and there are other families and kids around most of the time. There are many experiences, some good and some bad. When my two oldest girls were probably 3 and 5, I was wading through shin deep water carrying them in each arm.

I was moving too fast and tripped on a limb underneath the water and fell forward submerging both girls under water. We then had a long four-wheeler ride back to the cabin. Last year, the girls retrieved a crippled mallard and kept it as a pet for the weekend. They named it Bob.

What is your most unusual "must have" in the duck blind? Snacks and an iPhone

Which Arkansas executive calls ducks the best? Gar Lile



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Duck DIVA

Lodge cook has 'em staying for the food

BY AMANDA HOELZMAN

Stop by Dry Lake Hunting Service's lodge almost any time during duck season and you'll find Angela Chapman in the kitchen cooking big, hearty meals for the duck hunters that flock to Stuttgart each season.

Chapman says

you do not need to marinate meat to make it tender. You can take any meat, no matter the cut, season it and let it get to room temperature and it will be great.

A self-proclaimed "unschooled chef" and a former duck hunter, Chapman has worked with Dry Lake and its owner, Jay Coker, for about six years. She attributes her talent to her Italian heritage and a passion for cooking. "I put love in my food," she says, "and that's what makes it different."

Her made-from-scratch specialties include mouthwatering Southern favorites like biscuits and gravy, chili-cheese omelets, shrimp and grits, duck gumbo, roasted quail, ribs and jambalaya. Chapman's food is so loved by the hunters who frequent the lodge that she and Coker have joked they should change their tagline to, "You come for the ducks, you stay for the food."

Go see her. Seriously. She'll whip up a mean meal for you. But in the meantime, enjoy her recipe for a delicious duck appetizer that has received rave reviews among even the most stringent duck meat naysayers.



In addition to her Italian heritage and passion for cooking, Angela Chapman explains, "I put love in my food, and that's what makes it different."

DUCK APPETIZER

INGREDIENTS

For the duck:
 Duck breasts
 Non-seasoned meat tenderizer
 Cavender's All Purpose Greek Seasoning OR Zatarain's Blackened Seasoning
 1 cup vegetable oil

For the sauce:
 24 oz. sour cream
 One package of Hidden Valley Ranch powdered dressing
 A handful of real bacon bits
 Milk to taste and consistency

DIRECTIONS

For the duck:

1. If using frozen duck breasts, let them thaw completely. After thawed, sprinkle with a non-seasoned meat tenderizer and Cavender's All Purpose Greek Seasoning on both sides, or, if you prefer a spicier meat, Zatarain's Blackened Seasoning only on one side. Allow meat to rest

outside of the refrigerator and get to room temperature. To obtain the proper tenderness, it's important to let meat rise to room temperature before cooking.

2. Pour vegetable oil in the bottom of a skillet and heat to medium-hot. Place seasoned duck breast in skillet and cook till desired doneness, turning meat every few minutes.

3. Remove meat from skillet and slice breasts diagonally into pieces, about the width of a finger. Stick toothpicks in each piece.

For the sauce:

1. Blend sour cream with ranch mix and fold in bacon bits. Add milk to taste and consistency.
2. Dip duck meat into sauce or pour the sauce over duck. Enjoy!



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Life, Lessons and the Legacy

Love of Duck Hunting Shared by Generations

BY BRENT BIRCH

The thought has crossed my mind a time or two as to what I would do with myself if I didn't duck hunt.

It is impossible to recall a winter without decoys, dogs, guns and gear. Duck hunting has occupied each and every winter of my life for the past 35 years.

I consider myself beyond fortunate to have been raised in a hunting tradition that goes far beyond totaling how many ducks were killed. For that, I, like many of my duck hunting contemporaries, owe a huge debt of gratitude to my dad for dragging me along to those minnow ponds north of Keo all those years ago.

Many articles have been written about the father-and-son relationships built through shared outdoor activities. For some, the relationship is forged on the golf course. For others, it may be at deer camp or casting spinner baits at a favorite fishing hole. But in Arkansas, there is something about sharing a duck blind with your dad that creates a unique bond and fosters the desire to pass on to the next generation the significant life lessons learned there.

Maybe it's because Arkansas is world famous for its duck hunting, and we embrace the traditions of those before us. Maybe it's the social aspect of a duck hunt, as there tends to be plenty of time for conversation when the ducks aren't participating. Perhaps it's because life slows down just enough to put off answering the next email or phone call that makes duck hunting such a fertile training ground.

My dad doesn't fish, doesn't deer hunt; and outside of a few social dove hunts through the years, he has really only pursued ducks. Raised in Fort Smith, my dad wasn't exposed much, if any, to duck hunting by my grandfather. He stumbled into the sport while starting his career at the original Twin City Bank in the early 1970s. If you worked at the bank, you duck hunted. As he climbed the corporate ladder, invitations to the bank's deluxe lodge atop Crockett's Bluff along the White River began. Like many banks in that era, customers were hosted at an upscale lodge with caretakers, guides, bartenders and a cook staff. This was country club hunting at its finest.

For a kid, the Crockett's Bluff years provided interesting insight into how business was conducted

LEGACY continued on Page 46



Brent's father, grandfather and uncle, Bob, Frank and Jim Birch, with Scott Mosley at Crockett's Bluff in 1976



By 1979, a young Brent Birch was already a 3-year duck hunting veteran.



A 17-year-old Brent Birch with his father, Bob, the late Mark Pennebaker, and Pete Fotioo, after a successful hunt in 1988 at Crockett's Bluff.



Three generations of hunters: Rob Birch, Fuller Birch, Brent Birch, Reid Birch, Hayes Tribell and Bob Birch, Gee Ridge 2011

... in Arkansas, there is something about sharing a duck blind with your dad that creates a unique bond and fosters the desire to pass on to the next generation the significant life lessons learned there.

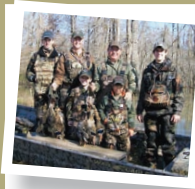


Father and son, Bob and Brent Birch at Gee Ridge, 1995



By 2009, Brent and his father had been hunting together for 33 years.

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LEGACY continued from 44

and how community leaders interacted away from the suits and power lunches. Arkansas is one of the few places on the planet where business gets done while standing in knee-deep, freezing water at sunrise holding a firearm. Here I was, a little kid, sitting in on conversations about big business going on back in Little Rock while learning the ins and outs of chasing ducks. What a life for a young man!

We have long since moved on from the Crockett's Bluff Hunting Lodge and things are a lot less corporate at "the farm." My dad got an opportunity in the early 1980s to get in on a lease at the famed Hildebrand Farm, which lies between Humnoke and Stuttgart on Highway 165. This coming season will mark the 30th year we have hunted that farm, which provides some of the finest field hunting in the state.

Duck clubs are great classrooms to learn about things they just don't teach at school. An early lesson learned is how to behave and be respectful around adults. Unruly kids at duck camp can really upset the apple cart. My brother and I



Jimbo Ramsay

Duck hunting has always been a family affair with us. I have fond memories of shooting my first duck with both my father and grandfather there. We shared dozens of hunts together until my grandfather's passing in 2004. When I was growing up, my dad would push my grandfather in and out of the woods in a boat so he didn't have to wade or paddle. I have noticed in the past couple of years when we take my wife or some special guests (he may kill me for saying this) Dad will hop in the boat and take a ride with me pushing. Him riding is not due to age or inability to walk to the hole, but more to remind me of all the times he pushed me in growing up. I am hopeful that one day my wife and I will have a son so he can have some of the same experiences that I did growing up shooting ducks with my family. Those are memories that I will never forget.

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learned early on that being on your best behavior and saying, “yes sir, no sir” were imperative to get a return invitation.

As funny as it sounds, those standards still exist at the duck club today and are expected of kids and adult guests. If you think about it, proper duck club behavior really applies to most social settings. Be respectful of the crowd you are in and show appreciation for the opportunity you have been provided and, odds are, you will get asked back.

Without question, hunting is more fun when it's successful, but my dad stressed there is more to it than filling the duck strap. The social experience of duck camp is integral. Weekends are much more enjoyable when it's spent with people who get along and enjoy each other's company. Many good duck clubs are ruined by sorority house drama that takes away from the hunt and spoils the camaraderie.

Thinking back, I have hunted in every type of weather you can imagine with Dad. Some days we had no business going out, but we both had the optimism that day was going to be special. More times than not, it was. Torrential downpours,

CAMP continued on Page 48

Brant Foster

My grandfather, Marion Foster, recently passed away. He

duck hunted until last year when he was 88. He lived most of his adult life in Marvell and hunted the White River Refuge. As a child, spending time with him in the big woods was special for me, planting the seed for the love of hunting that I have today.

After he retired in about 1992, he moved to England to be closer to his family, and so I was the one able to take him hunting. This picture is of me (center) after a nice morning hunt with my grandfather and several friends in 1994.



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Matthew Finley

When I was 13 years old, my dad did two things that I distinctly remember. One was he gave me a copy of *The Old Man and The Boy* by Robert Ruark. He told me to read it, and I did, several times. The other was he showed me a map of the United States and said, "Here we are right here (Little Rock), and way up here is Canada. In five years you will be 18 and becoming a man. If Canada was the way to manhood, which way would you go?" I just pointed straight up to Canada. Dad just smiled and said, "Sure, you would go straight north. That would be the quickest way, but I promise you life is hard, and the decisions you make in life will alter that path and you may find that you have to start over a few times, but it's a marathon not a sprint". I have been all over the map, but Dad is right that it's a marathon and not



a sprint. Quail, ducks, deer, dogs ... Dad was always there. Growing up as a kid and spending time with my dad was priceless. I could not have handpicked a better father.

Above: Still hunting after all these years, Bud Finley with his sons, Stuart (left), and Matthew (right). On the cover: Matt and his father in 1987.



CAMP continued from 47

sideways sleet, 40-mph winds, 75-degree days, I think we have done them all. Seems when the weather is the worst, all one needs is an accomplice to say, "Yeah, let's do it," and away we go.

Our mantra is: You're not going to kill them in bed.

There's just something about fighting elements unbearable to most people while trying to fool some ducks into the decoys that brings a father and son closer together. And the experience can teach a boy that there are benefits to enduring hardship.

The most valuable thing I have come away with after 35 years of duck hunting is unforgettable memories, some old, some new. When I was in the sixth or seventh grade, I have vivid recollections of Dad taking my brother and me to Dismuke's Grocery in Humnoke and buying a pile of bologna, a loaf of bread, a bag of chips and some Cokes. This was our clue that we were camping out all day on the levee until the ducks showed up. More times than not, they did. Little things like that don't happen much anymore, and I regret that for my boys — the opportunity to

There's just something about fighting elements unbearable to most people while trying to fool some ducks into the decoys that brings a father and son closer together.

learn that good things come to those who wait. Everyone seems to be a lot busier than we were back then. Duck camp has unfortunately become a microcosm of society, I guess, and I worry about losing some of the most important values that require time to be fully perceived.

Given a little weather and enough water, this year's fall flight is supposed to be epic — "the greatest in our lifetime," folks say. Who knows how long successful duck hunting, as we know it, will last; so I plan to make the most of it. Remember the 30-day seasons and a two-mallard limit? If we are not involved advocates for the sport we love, things may be headed back there.

My generation of waterfowlers is indebted to our fathers' and grandfathers' stewardship for waterfowling that got us to this point. Now, it's up to us and our children to continue not only the dedication to conservation, but the deeper appreciation for the entire experience, the rich traditions of the sport and the important lessons about living that are passed from one generation to the next. In an era of the fastest boats, most decoys, loudest calls, biggest blinds with kill shots caught on video backed by speed-metal guitar, I wonder if we will live up to our responsibility for the legacy our fathers have so carefully handed to us.

McCrary Hunter Introducing Kids to Nature

Adult volunteers, corporate support make Muddy Bayou YoungGunz work

BY ZACK HILL

Living in Arkansas, it is easy to take for granted the state's amazing outdoor and hunting opportunities. At any time you and your child can venture outdoors for some quality

bonding time and experiences that many people outside of Arkansas could only dream of.

What's hard to believe, and what many Arkansans don't realize, though, is that thousands of children right here in the state still aren't offered the opportunity to experience the state's natural beauty or the chance to go on a quality Arkansas duck hunt.

Arkansas has an annual youth hunt, an attempt to do its part in providing this opportunity to the state's youth. But all too often this isn't enough.

A child participating in the youth hunt must have an adult who is not only willing to hunt, but also knowledgeable in the field. Often a lack of supplies, gear or clothing is the cause of a missed youth hunting opportunity.

There isn't much the state can do about these instances. The issues are simply out of its hands.

So the question becomes: How do we as hunters do our part to help remove these obstacles for the



CLAYCONORPHOTO.COM

youth in Arkansas?

Cody Alberson of McCrary had an idea.

Alberson founded The Muddy Bayou YoungGunz, an organization associated with the local Delta Waterfowl chapter in Northeast Arkansas. The organization is dedicated to removing the challenges that keep kids away from hunting and the outdoors.

"We encourage people to take a kid hunting, but not just your own. If you know of any kid that would like to go hunting, take them," Alberson said.

The organization has taken a proactive stance on getting youth involved by organizing an annual Muddy Bayou youth hunt. The youth hunt, which enters its third year, is just one way Alberson has worked to increase youth involvement.

"I really want to focus on the kids who never get a chance to go hunting," Alberson said. "There are a

For the hunt, each child is paired with an adult volunteer and outfitted head-to-toe by corporate sponsor Drake Waterfowl.

YOUNG GUNS continued on Page 50



Because thousands of Arkansas children never experience the state's natural beauty, Cody Alberson wanted to focus on the kids who never get a chance to go hunting.

YOUNG GUNS continued from Page 49

lot of kids out there that would enjoy experiencing the outdoors, but their parents have never hunted and, therefore, they aren't equipped."

For the hunt, each child is paired up with an adult volunteer.

"We want adults that know the benefits of teaching a child early about the outdoors, hunting and conservation. There are not only hunting lessons to be learned, but life lessons also," said Alberson, who has made a career out of the lessons he has learned.

Of course, none of this is possible without backing. And Alberson has seen enough support in Arkansas — including help from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission — that he hopes to grow the event in other states.

Corporate sponsorship also has been a huge help. With equipment being the biggest challenge, donation of gear and apparel has been the toughest part of organizing the hunts. However, Drake Waterfowl has stepped up as main sponsor for the past several years, outfitting the youths head-to-toe with Drake gear — hats, boots, pants, coats and even underwear. Echo Calls also got in on the action, providing boxes of duck calls for the youths to use while in the blind.



YoungGunz learn about the outdoors and conservation as well as hunting.

"It is a great opportunity for these companies, to show how they support these youth at a young age," Alberson said. "As they get older, the kids will remember that and support those brands."

It's not all about hunting for The Muddy Bayou YoungGunz. They have organized and participated in all kinds of conservation-related activities like duck-banding operations and hunter-safety

instruction with AGFC. The organization believes that these types of events allow youngsters to form their own relationships with the outdoors and to see firsthand all that goes into making sure their kids have the right and the ability to hunt one day.

Alberson has big plans for the future of Muddy Bayou YoungGunz. He is looking to branch out to other Delta Waterfowl chapters and find additional support from adults, organizations and corporations.

"I know the bigger we grow, the harder it is for these companies and organizations

to support so many kids, but we do not need to let that slow us down," Alberson said. "What we can do is get enough people involved, raise money, keep making each kid's wishes come true, and build a foundation for our future hunters."

To learn more about Muddy Bayou YoungGunz, contact Cody Alberson at BDGOutfitters@Hotmail.com or (870) 351-0633.

MORE ABOUT CODY ALBERSON:

How did you learn about hunting and becoming active in the outdoors?

I was lucky to have a very "hardcore" hunting family. My grandpa, George "Mann" Alberson, was the start by teaching my father, and he then taught me. Right off, I was hooked. This eventually led to me wanting to help and show people the world I live in.

When did you get the idea of creating Muddy Bayou YoungGunz?

It was the kid coming out in me, and the passion for duck hunting. I was able to go along with the Arkansas Game & Fish [Commission] to assist in banding ducks. As the cannons went off and we started banding, I realized I was having a ball and was positive kids would love it, too. I always knew I wanted to be a part of introducing kids to the outdoors, and events like this would be a perfect opportunity.

What do you do for a career?

Since hunting is my passion, my career has always revolved around hunting. I am a freelance videographer for the Outdoor Channel. When I am not doing that, I am guiding duck hunts through my guide service, Bayou Deview Ducks. Also, I am a Pro Staffer for Drake Apparel. I love to hunt and to be outdoors so, needless to say, I love my job.

2011 Duck Classic

Annual Hunting Event Benefits Northeast Arkansas Residents

BY CODY ELMORE

The NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation in Jonesboro guarantees this year's Duck Classic to overflow with food, fun and hope.

A group of NEA Baptist physicians founded the NEA Charitable Foundation in 2001, and held the first Duck Classic in December 2003. Money raised annually funds five programs that benefit residents of Northeast Arkansas.

This year's NEA Baptist ninth annual Duck Classic, sponsored by DNW Outfitters, is scheduled for the first week of December at the Craighead County Fairgrounds. Arkansas Game & Fish Commission rules on hunt limits and scheduling are followed during the event, which raised approximately \$290,000 for five different health programs in Northeast Arkansas communities in 2010.

"Everybody looks forward to getting together and having fun," fundraising coordinator Kim Provost said. "All of the people who attend know that they are making a difference just by being there."

Teams of four hunters are put together by raffle during a pre-event banquet. Local landowners donate spots to hunt and provide guides. All land used is located within a 60-mile radius of Jonesboro, ensuring each team has a fair chance to win.

Although each year the event has brought in more and more people from out of state, a strong base for the fundraiser still rests within the Jonesboro community.

"We have a lot of farmers and guys who grew up around here who've known each other for years doing the event together," Duck Classic board member Ronnie Norman said. "The landowners come back each year for the chance to compete. We have predetermined around 40 plots of land from various landowners around the area."



The 2010 Duck Classic winners

Money raised by the Duck Classic supports these charities that benefit NEA residents:

Hope Circle: A support-based program for families dealing with catastrophic diseases such as cancer.

Center for Healthy Children: A health and nutrition program designed for children suffering from obesity.

Wellness Works: A medical- and health professional-monitored fitness program

available for diabetic, cardiopulmonary and cancer patients.

Shared Hope: A support program for those whose lives are touched by the death of an infant.

Medicine Assistance Program: A program that helps patients receive pharmaceutical medication for free.

The cost per team is \$1,500, and each team is guaranteed a day's hunt, starting in the early morning hours and ending at noon. Teams are capped at 30 to keep the event exclusive and the hunting top-quality.

Judges tally the scores after the hunt, crowning the winning teams. Each four-man team (not including the guide, who may not carry a gun) is allowed five boxes of shells and can kill the state-regulated limit on waterfowl. Scoring is relatively simple with three points awarded for a drake mallard and one point for a hen. Teams have until 1 p.m. to call a designated number to report their hunt.

In addition to the hunt itself, the pre-event banquet night also brings in participants. The banquet serves as the primary fundraiser, and anyone who attends can purchase a \$100 raffle ticket. Winners can claim a variety of prizes, including shotguns, the chance to win a Labrador puppy or the use of DNW's "Duck Truck," a vehicle outfitted for handling the harsh elements that go hand-in-hand with duck hunting.

"The banquet is open to anybody who wants to come," Provost said. "Part of what makes the event so special is the interaction it gives us with the community. It gives us an opportunity to reach out and make people aware of the

purpose our different programs serve in their town.”

Interested businesses can find plenty of sponsorship possibilities, ranging from recognition in advertisements to a logo featured in the event program. The Duck Classic has grown from NEA Baptist’s annual fundraiser in 2002 to a nationally renowned duck hunting competition. ESPN Outdoors provided national media coverage in 2007 and 2008.

The NEA Baptist fundraising foundation depends on the donations received from the Duck Classic to continue its efforts to support the citizens of Northeast Arkansas’ communities.

Norman, who represents the Duck Classic board, said if not for the event, some programs available to help citizens of Northeast Arkansas would not exist. He cites the Center for Healthy Children as a program started because of the amount of money raised over the years by the event.

“I am blessed to have the opportunity to see some of the lives that the Duck Classic contributes to,” Norman said. “To see the programs benefiting the community like they do really gives me a sense of gratitude for helping with the event.”

Rules & Regs

The guidelines for the competition are as follows: Four-man teams with a limit of five boxes of shells per team. The host/guide may not carry a gun. The limit is based on the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission duck limit, which has been six ducks the past several years. The scoring is relatively simple, with three points awarded for a drake mallard and one point for a hen. Once limit is reached (fair chase, all birds must be retrieved), the team calls a specific phone number to record its score. In the event of a tie, the team that called in earlier is the winner. All hunting must stop at noon with check-in remaining open until 1 p.m.

Details

Additional information on the event can be found at DuckClassic.com or by phone at (870) 934-5101. Nov. 19 is the deadline for interested participants.

Do the Math

With a total cost of \$1,500 per four-member team, each individual’s fee is a \$375 tax-deductible donation. Not too shabby for a chance to hunt some of Arkansas’ premier waterfowl territory.

For the Non-Hunter

Additional auction and dinner tickets can be purchased for \$45. A ticket offers access to the dinner, raffle, auction and other events the night before the hunt.

Seasonal Challenge

The biggest obstacle each year for the Duck Classic is dealing with the ducks’ flight patterns.

Sometimes you’ll have a premier spot that just heats up and brings in a lot of opportunities to get some quality ducks. Then the next year that same spot might only produce two ducks. That’s not something we can control. We want to make sure that even if [participants] don’t have the best hunt of their lives, they come back next time.

— Duck Classic board member
Ronnie Norman

COMIN' RIGHT AT YA

WEEKDAY MORNINGS FROM 6-10 am

103.7 THE BUZZ

The graphic features three men smiling against a green background. The man on the left is wearing a dark pinstriped suit jacket over a white shirt. The man in the middle is wearing a blue Hawaiian shirt with a tropical pattern and sunglasses. The man on the right is wearing a dark and light brown striped polo shirt. The text is overlaid in a bold, stylized font.

OUTSTANDING

in their



Greenhead went on the hunt for the Mississippi Flyway's most outstanding duck hunting services and clubs, and we didn't come up empty handed. Whether you're seeking expert guides, top-quality amenities, great food and expansive facilities, or just a good hunt, this guide has got you covered.

Read on to discover our
**top 10 best
duck hunting
resources.**

BIG CREEK WATERFOWL CLUB



2881 Woodruff County 585, Wheatley, AR 72392
Hunting grounds are near Hunter, AR
(901) 497-7381
www.MallardHunter.com
BBarnett@MallardHunter.com



- food & lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → Yes
- goose hunting → Yes
- equipment → Yes
- bird processing → Yes
- dogs welcome → Yes
- women/children welcome → Yes
- mixed hunting parties → No
- wingshooting → Yes
- skeet shooting → Yes
- hunters can you accommodate → 30

ABOUT :: BIG CREEK WATERFOWL CLUB We offer prime Arkansas duck and goose hunting with thousands of acres of privately-owned land in Wheatley, Arkansas and the surrounding area, located on an excellent migration route, smack in the middle of proven “Duck and Goose Hunting Country”.

Big Creek Waterfowl Club understands that many waterfowl enthusiasts simply don't have the time to seek out and find good waterfowl hunting clubs or prime areas themselves. We offer fully guided hunting and non-guided hunting in Pits, Blinds and designated hunting areas in Rice Fields, Bean Fields, Flooded Timber, Sloughs and breaks. Our key to outstanding success is a combination of several significant factors: more than ample habitat, limited hunting, and food plots for our wintering waterfowl to rest, feed and take shelter from the elements.

If you want to use a guide for your group, you have it available. If you don't, we will simply get you to and from the hunting areas each morning. If you choose hunting with a guide, you are encouraged to use your duck call, and bring your own dog. After all, this is what makes waterfowl hunting—the experience and participation. One thing you can count on regardless of which service you choose is excellent hunting!

As a kid growing up in the early 60's, I hunted ducks along the MS River near Hughes, AR. I can remember just how difficult it was for a young kid with limited resources (and certainly without the modern day equipment we have today) to bag a limit of ducks, when in the surrounding area there were fancy private clubs that seemed to be so easy for them! I promised myself “one day” I would have one of those types of clubs and after many years of hard work and development I now do! The people I meet and hunt with make the most enjoyable part of operating Big Creek Waterfowl Club. We have guests from the East to the West Coast, North to South, in the U.S., and as far away as Europe and Asia hunt with us each year.



A TYPICAL DAY

starts off with an unlimited supply of coffee/juice in the mornings, then all the hunters meet at the “Duck Shop” and the guides will take their designated hunters out from there. We typically hunt til about 10:30 in the morning, return to the Duck Shop where all the gear and birds are properly taken care of. Our Lodge is smack in the middle of our hunting area, so no long rides/drives to the hunting areas. Afterwards, a southern breakfast made for Kings! Afternoons are usually filled with Upland Bird Shooting or Goose Hunting, followed by a wonderfully prepared dinner in the evenings.

DRY LAKE HUNTING SERVICE



1709 Club Cove, Stuttgart, AR 72160
(870) 830.0299 • (870) 830.1900
www.DryLakeHuntingService.com
JayCoker@ClassicNet.net

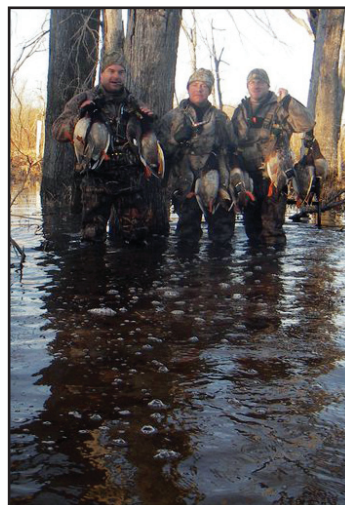


- food & lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → Yes
- goose hunting → No
- equipment → Yes
- bird processing → Yes
- women/children welcome → Yes
- mixed hunting parties → No
- wingshooting → No
- skeet shooting → No

ABOUT :: DRY LAKE HUNTING SERVICE We are located 15 miles south of Stuttgart in the lodges corner area. We have a lodge that sleeps 14, 5 Private bedrooms with baths. This is one of if not the best areas in the state for mallard habitat and winter concentrations of ducks. We hunt on family owned property that we farm and manage for ducks on a year round basis. We hunt in sunken pit blinds in rice and corn fields as well as a buckbrush slough. All hunts take place over unharvested crops of rice, beans, corn and millet. We have been in business for over 20 years.

A TYPICAL DAY

A continental breakfast before the hunt around 5:00am, then meet guides and leave lodge at 5:30. We travel from lodge in ATVs or lodge vehicles to your hunting area. The hunt lasts til around 10:00am. Then we arrive back at the lodge for a full breakfast/brunch around 11:00am, tag birds and take pictures. Fishing is available in the afternoon in a private reservoir adjacent to duck lodge. We leave for an afternoon hunt if requested around 2:00pm. A dinner of your choice which is coordinated with our cook around 6:30pm. Enjoy fellowship with guides and guests during the evening, then visit and arrange the next day's hunting schedule.



WHY WE'RE BEST

Our guides, our habitat and our way of doing business. We have the most friendly, and safe and knowledgeable guides you will ever hunt with with. We are honest and loyal to our clients. We are committed to providing each hunter with a memorable experience. All hunts over unharvested food plots and are on private property we own and farm.

MOST REWARDING PART

We enjoy the friendships and relationships we have developed with our clients over the last 20 years, who have become our "hunting buddies". We enjoy seeing the excitement in their eyes, knowing they depend on us to provide them with a great hunt. It's challenging to match wits with mother nature and ducks.



132 Old Hwy 17, St. Charles, AR 72140
(870) 946.5770
www.WRGS.net
WhiteRiverGuideService@gmail.com



- food & lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → No
- goose hunting → Yes
- equipment → No
- bird processing → Yes
- dogs welcome → Yes
- women/children welcome → Yes
- mixed hunting parties → Yes
- wingshooting → Yes
- skeet shooting → No

ABOUT :: WHITE RIVER GUIDE SERVICE White River Guide Service has been in business for over 20 years in St. Charles AR. We offer some of the best oxbow lake hunting (timber) and field hunting in Arkansas. We are only 35 miles from Stuttgart, AR, the rice and duck capital of the world. Bass Creek Lodge is our newest addition to WRGS, also centrally located in St. Charles, AR. Bass Creek Lodge has all the amenities for cooking and sleeping, a home away from home.

A TYPICAL DAY A typical day starts early morning, before day break, arriving at the destination by either boat or atv, getting ready for shooting hours and beginning to hunt. We typically stop mid-day.



WHY WE'RE BEST

We are among the best in this business because hunting is our passion. We offer a professional atmosphere with down home touches. We strive to give our clients a quality hunting experience.

MOST REWARDING PART

The most rewarding part of the job is meeting new people from all walks of life who enjoy the sport as much as we do.



14585 Hwy E., Sumner, MO 64681
(660)734-3195
www.HabitatFlats.com
Tony@HabitatFlats.com

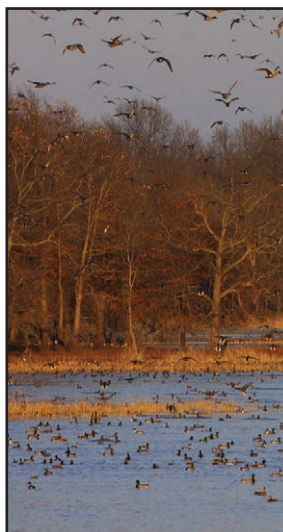


- food & lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → No
- goose hunting → Yes
- equipment → Yes
- bird processing → Yes
- dogs welcome → Yes
- women/children welcome → Yes
- mixed hunting parties → Yes
- wingshooting → Yes
- skeet shooting → No

ABOUT :: HABITAT FLATS We are fortunate to have over 35 pits and above water wooden blinds in the timber, not including areas we hunt with layout boats and ground blinds, and several thousand acres of some of the best dry field duck and goose hunting in the Midwest. At full capacity, we take six groups of four duck hunters...meaning over 80 percent of our spots are rested on any given day, not counting the areas we refuge for the entire season!

A TYPICAL DAY

Wake up early to a nice, hot breakfast for those who want it, or sleep in a little longer and have a continental breakfast or hot sandwich on the way to the blind. Morning duck hunts, taking place in intensely managed areas, generally result in full straps of ducks prior to lunch. Come back to the lodge for a hot lunch and possibly a nap. For those who choose to, afternoon upland bird hunting for pheasants and quail over well-trained pointing dogs is available. A five star dinner overlooking the Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge concludes an excellent day of wingshooting!



WHY WE'RE BEST

We spare no expense in managing our farms to their fullest potential; managing to have birds the entire year even as their nutritional needs change based on the weather and also managing pressure. Our excellent staff at the lodge and five star meals make this an unforgettable experience for our hunters.

MOST REWARDING PART

Putting in the sweat equity in the off-season to set the waterfowl 'buffet table' and seeing the thousands upon thousands of fowl that stay on our properties every year is extremely rewarding. However, interaction with our clients is the most rewarding; possibly showing them something they have never seen before, hearing how they do stuff and what works for them in other parts of the country...ultimately providing them with not only a good hunt, but an all around incredible experience they will never forget!

JL'S COUNTRY STORE & CAFE



18 Miles south of Stuttgart
on Hwy 79
870.766.9977



Where Hunters Can Find
Good Southern Food

- Eat-In
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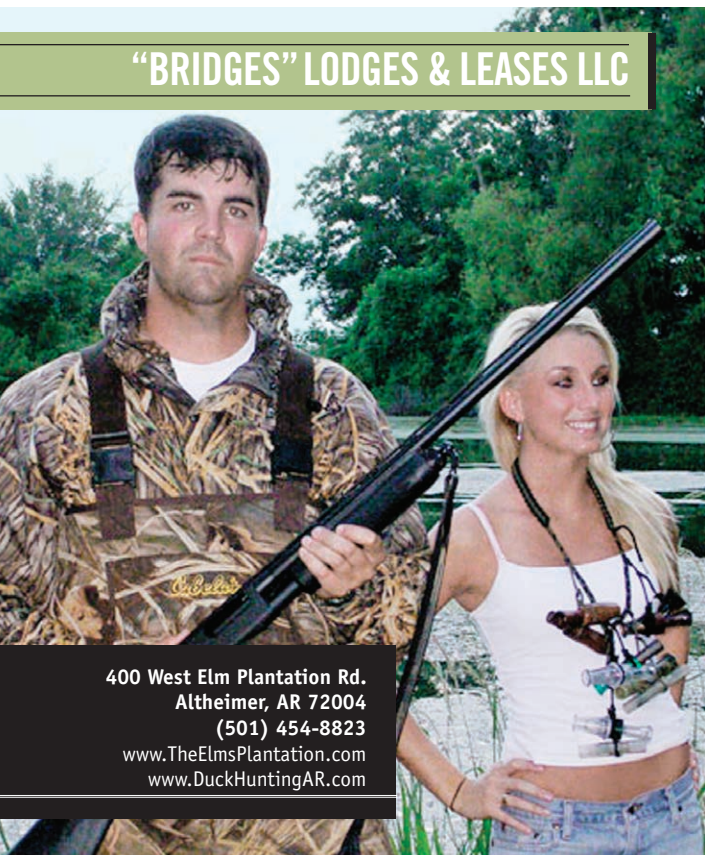
ABOUT :: JL'S COUNTRY STORE & CAFE

Don't miss our Special Event on Saturday, November 26, 2011. We will feature Live Entertainment from 7:30 pm until midnight (Doors open at 7:00 PM). Tickets at the door are \$5.00 for a single person or \$7.00 per couple.

Space is limited. Purchase your tickets in advance and get one entry into the drawing for a "Limited Edition Duck Call", to be given away Saturday evening, Nov. 26, 2011.

To purchase tickets,
call 870-766-9977
or 870-766-8421.

"BRIDGES" LODGES & LEASES LLC



400 West Elm Plantation Rd.
Altheimer, AR 72004
(501) 454-8823
www.TheElmsPlantation.com
www.DuckHuntingAR.com



- food & lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → Yes
- goose hunting → Yes
- equipment → No
- bird processing → No
- dogs welcome → Yes
- women/children welcome → Yes, but no children under 12
- mixed hunting parties → Yes
- wingshooting → No
- skeet shooting → No

ABOUT :: "BRIDGES" LODGES & LEASES

LLC Offering field duck hunting at its best, Bridges is located in the Mississippi fly-way 15 miles south of Stuttgart, AR.

As a part of the Wetland Restoration Program (NRCS), our fields are designed to be a natural habitat for waterfowl. Our fields are designed to incorporate millet, barnyard grass, smart weed, NRCS selected trees and water. We offer lodging by the season or by the night. Please call or email today for more information: 501-690-0164; elmsplant@yahoo.com.

Kim Freeman, present owner, kept the name of the family farm, "Bridges", for duck hunting lands. Bridges offers fields to lease for the season, ranging in size from 40-300 acres. These fields were planted rice and beans in 2011. Bridges also offers pits and blinds, and hunting dogs are welcome. Water is provided along with field management. Our fields are proven fields.

ABOUT :: BAYOU BOTTOMS At Bayou Bottoms we have one goal and that is killing waterfowl. We offer a comfortable, clean lodge out in the country to relax and unwind on your trip. It sleeps fifteen and is fully furnished with a working kitchen. When you book a hunt at Bayou Bottoms your party will have exclusive access to our entire farm. We only book one group per day so there is no competition among other hunters, allowing your group to move around our farm to your desired blind. Our guides, with over fifty years' experience, will put you in the best spot we have for that day-guaranteed!! For us to be the best at what we do, then we have to give you, the best opportunity for killing your limit. Our duck blinds are thirty-five to forty feet long, and hunt eight men comfortably. Eight man limits are very common. We also have heaters in our blinds for those cold days and cook stoves for coffee or even a mid-morning breakfast. We usually arrive at the duck blind twenty minutes before shooting hours to insure being ready at daybreak. A typical day we will hunt until noon to allow the ducks to rest in the afternoon. Killing out before noon is not uncommon. Now thirty-nine years old, I started duck hunting with my dad when I was five. So the most rewarding part of my job is getting to take kids hunting and showing them a hunt they will never forget, and make memories they might cherish with their fathers.

For more information please visit www.bayoubottoms.com



BAYOU BOTTOMS



- lodging → Yes
 - unguided hunts → Yes
 - goose hunting → Yes
 - equipment → Yes
 - bird processing → No
 - dogs welcome → *Yes
 - women/children welcome → *Yes
 - mixed hunting parties → No
 - wingshooting → Yes
 - skeet shooting → No
- *encouraged

ABOUT :: CYPRESS POINT DUCK CLUB is located near Casscoe, Arkansas, on the banks of the White River. The lodge is a 10,000 square-foot hunting facility that provides for all your comforts. We provide all meals, snacks, and beverages from our wet bar, which is included in the hunting package. The recreation room includes a pool table, TV and bar. Fishing and skeet shooting are available at the lodge, along with some of the best duck hunting available.

Our hunting is provided only on private lands. We own and lease 1900 acres of rice and soybean fields, flooded green timber, and cypress brakes. Our acreage is spread out over Arkansas and Lonoke counties. We scout our areas every day so that our hunters have the best chance of bagging their duck limit. We provide retrievers but our customers are welcome to bring their own dogs. We also offer afternoon geese hunting at an additional charge.

In hunting the fields we have specially-equipped ATVs that so that we are able to drive you to your hunting site. There you can step out of the ATVs and into the pits.

COME TO CYPRESS POINT DUCK CLUB and enjoy a great hunt, wonderful accommodations and friendships that will last forever. Our ultimate goal is for you to have a great time, make memories, and our cooks guarantee that you will be a few pounds heavier when returning home.



CYPRESS POINT DUCK CLUB

Cypress Point Duck Club
 Casscoe, AR 72026
 (870) 241.3980
 (334) 687.8075
www.cypresspointduckclub.com



- lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → No
- goose hunting → Yes
- equipment → Yes
- bird processing → Yes
- dogs welcome → Yes
- women/children welcome → Yes
- mixed hunting parties → Yes
- wingshooting → No
- skeet shooting → Yes

ABOUT :: D.O.A GUIDE SERVICE D.O.A Guide Service is located at the heart of Bayou Meto, Arkansas, 24 miles south of Stuttgart. While you're with us you will experience first class waterfowl hunting with true southern hospitality. We provide hunting in rice, bean, corn, and millet fields, reservoirs, and cypress sloughs, from skid blinds and sunken pits. Our guides farm and live on the land we hunt. Our hunting area lies between Mill Bayou and Big Bayou Meto, in southern Arkansas County. All hunts are on private property, owned by our family. A typical hunt generally lasts until we limit out or 10:00a.m. Lodging is available with D.O.A. as well as The Schoolhouse Lodge.



- food & lodging → Yes
 - unguided hunts → No
 - goose hunting → Yes
 - equipment → No
 - bird processing → Yes
 - dogs welcome → Yes
 - women/children welcome → Yes
 - mixed hunting parties → No
 - wingshooting → No
 - skeet shooting → *Yes
- *(if booked in advance)

D.O.A. GUIDE SERVICE

2106 Fairway, Stuttgart, AR 72160
 (870) 830.1316
TheSchoolhouseLodge.net
RickGill@CenturyTel.net

ABOUT :: DOUBLE DEUCE Enjoy duck hunting at its very best! For the sportsman in you, it is the place to be!

Owned and operated by Arkansas Hall of Famer and former Major League Baseball player Kevin McReynolds, Double Deuce offers the finest in Arkansas Duck Hunting.

Double Deuce is a duck hunter's paradise — a 565-acre private hunting refuge — complete with expert guides, pristine duck habitats, great food and a premium lodge built with your comfort in mind. Even after a day's worth of hunting, there's still plenty to do! Unwind in front of a roaring fire after a mouth-watering meal, shoot pool, play cards, watch sports on our large high-definition flat screen TV, or just relax — you've never had it so good.

We are conveniently located in the heart of duck country, only a 90 minute drive from Little Rock and a 2 hour drive from the Memphis Airport.

Double Deuce is an ideal place to get away from it all and enjoy the sport of duck hunting!



- food & lodging → Yes
- unguided hunts → No
- goose hunting → No
- equipment → Yes
- bird processing → Yes
- dogs welcome → No
- women/children welcome → Yes
- mixed hunting parties → No
- wingshooting → No
- skeet shooting → No

DOUBLE DEUCE

572 Little Texas Lane, Gillett, AR 72055
 (870) 548.2533
www.DoubleDeuceInc.com
mchicky22@aol.com

2011 Hunting Lodges, Guides



Backwoods Duck Club & Lodge LLC

Wabbaseka
(870) 879-3177
BackwoodsDuckClubAndLodge.com
BackwoodsDuckClub@Yahoo.com
Number of guest rooms: 8 rooms, sleeps 32

Amenities: 4,300 SF lodge that sleeps 32 with a full-service kitchen; recreational activities, six professional hunting guides, dog kennels and hunting packages.

What areas do you hunt with your services? The Backwoods Duck Club & Lodge is tucked away in the northeast corner of world famous Bayou Meto Wildlife Management Area -- the true center of duck hunting in America. The Lodge is just minutes from both the Little Rock and Stuttgart airports and is located in Wabbaseka.

Is transportation provided? N/A
Do you provide meals? There is nothing better than our Southern, home-cooked meals, steaks and BBQ. Lodging includes full lodge amenities for one night, continental breakfast, lunch and dinner.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Trey Bohannan; Brett Craine

Bayou Bottoms Hunting Club

Jonesboro
(618) 988-1253
BayouBottoms.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 15
Amenities: A fully-furnished kitchen, satellite TV, grill, dart board, two showers, sheets and towels are also furnished.

What areas do you hunt with your services? Cache and Bayou De View River systems
Is transportation provided? No
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? No
Lodge contact: Kenny McNeal

Bayou Deview Guides

McCrary
(870) 351-0633
ArkansasDuckGuide.com
BayouDeviewDucks@Hotmail.com
Number of guest rooms: 8 guests
Amenities: Our two guest lodges include TVs, kitchens and bathrooms.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Many areas, including rice fields, bean fields, sloughs and green timber
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, meals are provided, but hunters can also cook for themselves.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Cody Alberson

Bayou Meto Double D Waterfowl Guide Service & Lodge

Lonoke
(501) 676-2191
ArkansasDuckHuntingBayouMetoDoubleD.com
Info@BayouMetoDoubleD.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 16
Amenities: Satellite TV, open bar, gift shop.

What areas do you hunt with your services? Private fields/four different farms
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes. Continental breakfast, brunch and supper.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Blake Harrison

Belle Gulley Guide Service & Lodge

Tichnor
(870) 548-2525
BelleGulley.com
Info@BelleGulley.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 4
Amenities: Fully furnished lodge, refrigerators, kitchen, grills available for hunters to prepare their own meals.
What areas do you hunt with your services? White River NWR
Is transportation provided? No
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Marty Austin

Big Creek Waterfowl Club

Wheatley
(901) 497-7381
MallardHunter.com
BBarnett@MallardHunter.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 10
Amenities: Fully-furnished lodges and complete guide service for waterfowl hunting.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Flooded fields, sloughs, and timber
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Breakfast and dinner meal service.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? Yes
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Barry Barnett

Black Dog Hunting Club

Stuttgart
(877) 625-5273
BlackDogHuntingClub.com
Info@BlackDogHuntingClub.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 4
Amenities: We provide lodging with meals, guided duck and goose hunting, daily maid service and bird processing.
What areas do you hunt with your services? N/A
Is transportation provided? N/A
Do you provide meals? Yes, all meals are provided at the lodge.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? N/A
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Todd & Gwen Brittain

Black Mallard Hunting Services

Manila
(870) 930-0586
BlackMallardHunting.com
Info@BlackMallardHunting.com
Number of Guest Rooms: N/A
Amenities: Black Mallard Hunting Club will help you arrange hotel accommodations.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Fields, rivers, sloughs and timber
Is transportation provided? Yes

Do you provide meals? Yes, catered meals.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Gene Adams

Bust-A-Duck Guide Service

Augusta
(501) 513-0058, (501) 472-8525
BustADuck.com
Info@BustADuck.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 10 guests
Amenities: We offer some of the best flooded field and timber hunting in the Mississippi flyway. A maximum of eight hunters will be booked per day. NO PARTY MIXING.
What areas do you hunt with your services? East Arkansas
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? Yes
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Buster Cooper

Cypress Point Duck Club

Casscoe
(870) 241-3980, (334) 687-8075
CypressPointDuckClub.com
GCHartzog@Earthlink.net
Number of Guest Rooms: 10
Amenities: The 60x45 Great Room as big-screen TVs and sitting areas around the fireplace. The recreation room includes a pool table, TV and a bar. Afternoon goose hunts are \$100 per day, per hunter. There's also a lake at the lodge, where guests can go bass fishing. Skeet shooting is also on site.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Lonoke and Stuttgart counties
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Grady Hartzog

D.O.A. Guide Service

Stuttgart
(870) 830-1316
TheSchoolHouseLodge.net
RickGill@Centurytel.net
Number of Guest Rooms: 10
Amenities: At the Schoolhouse Lodge, every room as two beds and a bathroom. The lodge has satellite TV, a full kitchen and all the other comforts of home.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Private property in south Arkansas counties
Is transportation provided? No
Do you provide meals? Yes, upon request
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Richard Gill

Double Deuce, Inc.

DeWitt
(870) 548-2533
DoubleDeuceInc.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 10+
Amenities: After the hunt, relax at the lodge while our cooks make you a meal fit for a king. Our 5,300 SF lodge features cards, pool, foosball and ping pong tables

and a full bar.
What areas do you hunt with your services? 565 acres of private property including rice fields
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, meals provided for guests.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Robert Fox

Dry Lake Hunting Service

Stuttgart
(870) 673-6883
DryLakeHuntingService.com
JayCoker@ClassicNet.net
Number of Guest Rooms: 5
Amenities: Bass fishing lake, outdoor fire pit, 3,500 SF lodge built in 2005, no mixing of groups.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Private land near Lodge's Corner, flooded fields, cypress sloughs and reservoirs
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, continental breakfast before hunt, full breakfast/brunch after morning hunt, gumbo lunch, full dinner in evening.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? Yes
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Jay Coker

Duck Guides, Inc.

DeWitt
(870) 509-1385
DuckGuidesInc.com
Info@DuckGuidesInc.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 7
Amenities: A fireplace and flat screen TV, La-Z-Boy couches and recliners, bar area and regulation-size pool table.
What areas do you hunt with your services? N/A
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, three full meals a day.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Thayn Morton

Duxmen Outfitters Guide Service & Lodge Inc.

Jonesboro
(870) 897-3066, (501) 944-8007
DuxmenOutfitters.com
TeamDuxmen@Yahoo.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 6 Bedrooms, 3 Bathrooms
Amenities: Satellite TV, skeet shooting facility, pool table, air hockey table, outdoor shop, beds for 24 hunters and full kitchen and bathrooms.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Cache River areas and Claypool Reservoir
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes. Three are meals included.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Zach Fahlberg; Spencer Jeu



LODGES & GUIDES continued from Page 61

Faras Run Guide Service, LLC

Carlisle
(501) 940-2741
FarasRunGuideService.com
FarasRunGuideService@Gmail.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 0

Amenities: N/A
What areas do you hunt with your services? Rice and bean fields, sloughs, timbers and more
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? No
Lodge contact: Matt Kelly

Five Forks Hunting Lodge

Cornerstone
(870) 535-3223
IPA.net/Janwil/Five_Forks/
Janwil@IPA.Net
Number of Guest Rooms: Call for details.
Amenities: You can lease a lodge or take advantage of the full-service package which includes lodging, meals, open bar, guided hunts, boats and more.

What areas do you hunt with your services? Flooded green timber bordering Bayou Meto WMA
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes. Group hunts include lodging with meals for overnight guests.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? No
Lodge contact: Bill Wilson

Five Oaks Duck Lodge

Humphrey
(870) 873-4444
FiveOaksDuckLodge.com
Info@5-Oaks.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 10
Amenities: Skeet shooting, fishing, tennis, conservation tours.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Private land
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, catering service at lodge.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? Yes
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: George H. Dunklin

Fowl Play Lodge/Duck Guides Inc.

DeWitt
(870) 946-8181
DuckGuidesInc.com
Info@DuckGuidesInc.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 22 guests
Amenities: Full service.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Flooded timber and fields
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, three full meals a day.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Sally Morton

JTBS Guide Service

Star City
(870) 866-4010
JTBSGuideService.com
JTBSGuideService@Hotmail.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 0
Amenities: Our guides offer duck hunting on privately-owned land. We offer hunting packages for small groups of hunters. Transportation is provided to and from the blinds as well as cleaning of the game.
What areas do you hunt with your services? N/A
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? N/A
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: John White

Mallard Point Duck Hunts, Inc.

Paragould
(870) 573-6771
MallardPoint.net
Number of Guest Rooms: 11
Amenities: The Mallard Point Duck Club has two lodges that include cable TV, washer and dryer, dog kennels, fully-equipped kitchen, dining room and gun-cleaning area.
What areas do you hunt with your services? N/A
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? N/A
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Keith Shumard

Paradise Wings Lodge

Brinkley
(870) 734-2030
ParadiseWings.com
ParadiseWings@Yahoo.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 15
Amenities: 50-inch big screen TV, 12-foot bar and game room.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Areas include flooded green timber, flooded rice fields and flooded bean fields
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, three full meals a day.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? No
Lodge contact: Ronnie Steinbeck

Pluck-A-Duck Duck & Goose Lodge

Wynne
(800) 545-5944
Pluck-A-Duck.com
Info@Pluck-A-Duck.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 21 guests
Amenities: All-inclusive, full-service duck and goose hunting lodge.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Rice and bean fields and timber
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, three full meals a day.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? N/A
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Clay Andrews

Prairie Sky Guide Service

Amagon
(501) 529-7080
PrairieSkyGuideService.com
JBurris2@Yahoo.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 10 guests
Amenities: Satellite television.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Northeast Arkansas private leased land
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, three full meals a day.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Jeff Burris

Quack Attack

Almyra
(870) 830-0995
QuackAttackGuideService.com
West_BJ@Hotmail.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 16
Amenities: Lodging includes all linens, comfortable furniture, satellite TV, dishes, stove, grill and fish cooker.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Private land
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: BJ West

Slick's/Stuttgart Hunting Club

Stuttgart
(870) 830-0133
StuttgartHuntingClub.com
Number of Guest Rooms: N/A
Amenities: Two lodges include beds, satellite TV, dining room.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Flooded green timber
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, three full meals a day.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Brad Moss

Snow Pros

Paragould
(870) 239-1000
SnowProHunts.com
Jon@SnowProHunts.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 0
Amenities: We offer spring and fall goose hunts as well as duck hunts.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Northeast Arkansas
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? N/A
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Jon Bounds

The Elms Duck Lodges

Altheimer
(501) 454-8823 or (870) 766-8421
TheElmsPlantation.com,
DuckHuntingAR.com
Kim176@Comcast.net
Number of Guest Rooms: Separate lodges for rent

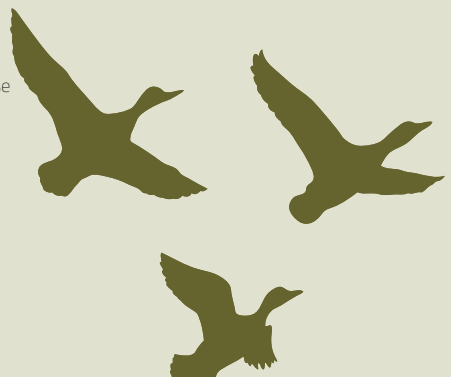
Amenities: Full-size kitchen with refrigerator, large-screen satellite TV, washer and dryer, grills
What areas do you hunt with your services? N/A
Is transportation provided? No
Do you provide meals? No, but we own JL's Restaurant and it is only 3 miles away. Great place to eat.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? No
Lodge contact: Kim Freeman

White River Guide Service

St. Charles
(870) 946-5770
WRGS.net
WhiteRiverGuideService@Gmail.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 3 (four people per room)
Amenities: Satellite TV, grills and other equipment for cooking, and a sitting area.
What areas do you hunt with your services? Arkansas and Phillips counties
Is transportation provided? No
Do you provide meals? No
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Walter Jones

Wildlife Farms

Casscoe
(870) 241-3275
WildlifeFarms.com
Info@WildlifeFarms.com
Number of Guest Rooms: 14 private, 5 bunk-style, 2 cabins
Amenities: Room rates include three meals a day, full bar and lodging; other amenities include conference center, game room, fishing, hunting, shooting range, massages and facials.
What areas do you hunt with your services? 1,900 acres of private land along the White River
Is transportation provided? Yes
Do you provide meals? Yes, exceptional food service.
Is hunting gear (clothes, guns, etc.) available at the lodge? No clothing, guns are available.
Do you offer duck processing? Yes
Lodge contact: Sally Barnett; Daniel Barnett



For complete lists of hunting guides, lodges and public hunting grounds, visit **Greenhead.net**.

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the arkansas duck hunting website

The Last Word

Call of the Wild

BY JIM HARRIS

Writers know it as “writer’s block,” and if we were talking about golf, I’d be diagnosed as having the “yips,” the inability to even pull the club back to hit. So, what do you call it when you hold a duck call up to your lips and can’t blow air into it without fearing what sound will come out?

“Quacks” might work. Whatever it is, I’ve tried to blow the loud, commanding hail call and either I can’t get started or I eventually let loose with some kind of exploding kazoo-like screech that could clear the White River National Refuge of any living creature.

Surely there are head doctors out there – a Bob Rotella of duck calling, perhaps – who could fix me for a few thousand dollars. Without that amount easily at my disposal, however, I decided to seek out an expert at duck calling first and see if she could figure it out.

“You have to practice and practice and just teach yourself,” said 19-year-old Shelby Free from Stuttgart. “It doesn’t come easy. You literally have to start from the basics or you’ll never get it.

“It’s like picking up a musical instrument. You can’t start at the top.”

So, I guess what Shelby’s saying is, I’ll need to keep working that call even if it means running every duck out of South Arkansas while I practice. Imagine Warren Beatty’s futile clarinet playing in the classic film “Heaven Can Wait,” but with a duck call.

Shelby Free, a sophomore at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, began mastering the duck call at age 5. Shelby announced her arrival on the competitive scene in 2005 by winning the Women’s Junior World.

She won three Women’s World titles in the World’s Duck Calling Championships in Stuttgart before she was 18; after three crowns you’re retired from winning the division and pretty much limited to trying to win the World’s Championship, mostly against men.

She was fifth last year in the last-chance qualifier for the World’s Championship but didn’t make the final field. She’ll try again.

“I started in the youth clinic with Butch Rickenbach,” she said. “We started from the very basics, starting with doing five ‘huts’ into the call.”

Rickenbach is the inventor of the Rich-N-Tone calls, made in Stuttgart. Shelby’s personal favorite call is the Rich-N-Tone MVP personally carved for her by Butch.

Stuttgart heralds itself as the Duck Capital of the World, and celebrates its standing with the annual Wings Over the Prairie Festival every Thanksgiving week. The event culminates with the many duck-calling championships that are decided on Main Street.

“With boys ... they’ll be like, ‘You’re Shelby Free? You’re that duck-calling girl.’ Yep, I’m that duck-calling girl.”

Shelby’s father, Bill Free, is one of the organizers long involved with the festival and oversees the duck-calling championships. That had to be one proud papa when his oldest of two daughters began winning championships.

Along with his day job at Riceland, Bill Free guides at Five Oaks Hunting Club in Arkansas County.

The UA sophomore’s love for competitive calling is taking a back seat these days to college life.

“It’s not as easy practicing in the dorm or the sorority house as it is in the garage at home,” admits the Pi Beta Phi member and advertising and public relations major.

“They kind of look at you funny.”

On the other hand, a good percentage of the male UA population is familiar with duck hunting and all that goes into it. “With boys, it’s like I’ll be hanging with my friends and they’ll be like, ‘You’re Shelby Free? You’re that duck-calling girl.’ Yep, I’m



COURTESY STUTTGART DAILY LEADER

Shelby Free competes in the 2010 Women’s World’s Championship Duck Calling Contest.

that duck-calling girl.”

There are YouTube videos to prove it.

As longtime Wings Over the Prairie festivalgoers know, being a champion women’s caller isn’t unusual. Chick Major, who created the Dixie Mallard call, taught his three daughters to hail with the best, and the best of the bunch was Pat (Peacock), a World’s Champion. “I’ll still go and let Ms. Pat hear me call,” Shelby says, “because she’s one of the best. She and her sisters do a little clinic during the festival for 3- and 4-year-olds. That’s pretty much where everybody starts.”

Well, we’re a little late for that beginner class. So, what are the chances of a late-arrival like me overcoming the “quacks” and learning to call?

Shelby says competitive calling is nothing like calling in the woods.

“That’s Main Street calling,” she says. “It’s loud. It’s all about volume and air ... You have to build up your air. Your lungs aren’t used to that amount of air needed to blow a duck call nonstop for 90 seconds. It’s not something you can wake up one morning and decide you want to do.

“In the woods, the calling is quiet. You’re trying to do as little as possible.”

Well, I’ve sort of got that down then. The duck-calling manufacturers put out a teaching CD with their products, but Shelby, who also hunts some, says she’s never listened to them. So, with that, I just heed her tips.

“Never use a hail call in the woods, just the comeback call, the feed call and the mating or lonesome hen call,” she said. “Mainly you use the comeback call.

“You’ll get it one day. You just can’t give up. Start from the basics.”



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Built-in Gun Box
with Aqua Block
Technology for
dry storage

Extreme
Turn
Technology
(EXT)
tight turns
through
timber

.100 Gauge Hulls
thicker than competitors

3/16"
Extruded Keel
hard, strong, tough

New
Standard
Treadplate Floors
No tripping over ribs

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about our
Timber
Runner
Package!*

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