

MIGRATION REPORTS – OCTOBER 2016

OCTOBER 31, 2016



Hunters Moon & Migrating Teal

Migration Update

As of late last week here is what is happening up and down the Central Flyway. As mentioned earlier the last cold front deposited tons of ducks on our properties including a number of specks, but that has been the only delivery of waterfowl from up North. Across the prairies of Southern Canada waterfowl are staging in large numbers and are perhaps at their peak. Snow geese and large concentrations of puddle ducks are just now moving into Dakotas per various reports. Divers are on the move with the front edge of the main migration just now hitting the Northern States. Specs are just now moving into the Mid-west in good numbers. Gadwalls, pintails, and teal, what I like to call the fair weather ducks are just moving into the plains of Nebraska and Kansas. Sandhill Cranes appear to be peaking in Nebraska.

Overall as one would suspect the migration is somewhat stalled, but this may be the new norm as waterfowl linger to the north of us in mild weather. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of fronts sweeping down through the Central Flyway during late October and into November. These fronts are the major bird movers. Waterfowl are still genetically wired to migrate when hit with major fronts at this time of year, fear of water and food supplies being frozen over will

inherently move birds, even if it does not freeze over. Later in the season the drive to escape freezing temps is replaced by a drive to propagate and arrive on the breeding grounds as quickly as possible. This means come January, the drive is to be in Kansas or Missouri, assuming unfrozen conditions, as opposed to Texas or Louisiana. I have seen massive fronts come through in December and only deposit a few new birds. And I have witnessed in the early spring birds pushing the freeze-line in the Mid-west leading credence that weather takes a backseat to ducks wanting to pass on their genomes. Let's hope for some stiff cold fronts to break the spell of record setting temperatures.