



November 17, 2014

To All THC Members:



Rob Sawyer, "Mattie", Curtis Bixler, Mike Handel, Jason Luker, & "Burn"
41 Birds - Rice Field #4

2014 2nd Week Results

For the 3rd Saturday of waterfowl season, 37 hunters bagged 202 birds for an average of 5.5 birds/gun. For the 3rd week 55 duck hunters shot 300 birds for a weekly average of 5.5 birds/gun with limits being enjoyed by 11 out of 16 groups hunting - I was told there should have been more. Limits were shot on the following ponds; Rod North Pond (2), Nellie Pond (2), Toby Pond, Greenwing Pond, Shoveler Pond, Swale Pond (2), Middle Pond, and Appelt Pond. Much to the delight of some shovelers made their way on many straps, along with greenwings, gadwalls, redheads, and widgeon. Big flights of pintails were showing up late in the week, along with big flocks of geese.

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(From Upper Left Clockwise) - Bart Huges, Tyler Moore, & Michael Ryan - limits from Middle Pond, Noland Wadland & Curtis Bixler - Sunday Goose Hunt @ Field #4, Chad Crim - limits from the Greenwing Pond, Travis Peterson & Mike Davenport - limits from Rod North, Larry Liveover & Michael Corbett - limits from the Appelt Pond, Travis Watson, Chance Patton, & Scott Dautzet - limits from Nellie Pond

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Migration Update

Up North it is cold, ice-fishing tip-up walleye-time cold. The northern states are just one big block of ice. Wind chills so severe that there is not a shooting glove made that will allow one to comfortably pull the trigger. With a month left in their season the birds have left and the duck hunters have cried "uncle," snubbed of what was going to be an outstanding season with great habitat and record hatches. In the mid-west the shallow wetlands are either frozen or will be frozen shortly, leaving just big reservoirs and rivers with open water. There are still ducks, but there numbers are dropping fast, mostly mallards, greenwings, gadwalls, and divers. The shallow water wetlands that were harboring vast acres of food have been sealed in a winter tomb, buried in ice from the ducks. Goose numbers are building in Kansas and Missouri, time will tell whether there is enough open ground for the geese to feed on. Geese can stay north and roost on big water, but only if they have food sources. Frozen iced-over snow makes for tough foraging for even the toughest old Canada goose. Currently half the country is blanketed with snow with sub-freezing temperatures all the way down to the panhandle of Texas and the middle of Arkansas. Based on the goose numbers I saw late Saturday evening at the Northern property and local reports, a lot of geese have moved into coastal Texas and it is a good bet that more are to come. It was good to sit on the front porch Saturday evening with cocktail at hand and see the big birds trade back and forth over the property. Just two weeks ago it was a graveyard firmament, an October synopsis of silence, depressing skies. Up in the northern states the habitat was in place to delay and even halt many birds heading to Thunderbird, but thanks to an aberrant push of inclement weather the birds are here, hopefully for the stretch.



**"Mattie", Rob Sawyer, Ward Griffith, Curtis Bixler, & "Toby"
Limits from the Shoveler Pond**

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Lease Update - Northern Goose Boundaries

Still pumping away at Rod North. The rice at the Northern has been 90% cut. We will not be putting in a duck pond into the big southern rice field (#16/17 on Northern map to follow) as the field is too wet and rutted. We are exploring the idea of flooding a section in the Northern field #4. If flooded it will be done during the split in the duck season. Currently I have some sections blocked off to catch rainwater and attract pintails for the goose hunters. As of this weekend no rice has been cut at the Louise property.

A map of the Northern and its boundaries to protect the duck hunting will follow this newsletter.

Wednesday Rotation

For this Wednesday the following is open, Rod North and all Northern Ponds. Five or more groups hunting and we will open the Harrison/Mayfield Ponds. Assume we will have five groups hunting and choose accordingly. FYI for this season including teal, we have averaged 2.5 groups on Wednesday.

On Sunday I saw a lot of ducks go into the Bree Pond. Hunting Louise on Wednesday has historically produced poor hunts according to the landowner; therefore we will take it out of the Wednesday rotation. This past Sunday only the Swale and Nellie Ponds were hunted.

Typically we have a large crowd hunting with a lot of guests on Thanksgiving Wednesday. I will query everyone next Monday to get a feel for the volume of traffic. If it is high then every pond will be open Thanksgiving Wednesday.

Canceling a Hunt

If you should have to cancel a hunt for whatever reason please make every effort to call the person handling the draw or hunt as soon as you know, whether it be for ducks or geese. We have had a number of "no shows" this season and it is becoming a problem - on no less than five separate occasions. Here is why, when you make a reservation you block out either a duck blind or spots in a goose field. When you "no show" on a duck pond members hunting that morning are not given the option to upgrade to a better pond. Additionally if you "no show" on a key pond holding a lot of birds the groups hunting on surrounding ponds will suffer as the birds are not pushed between groups. We purposely limit how many goose hunters (generally no more than 8) that can go into a hot field. "No showing" on a goose hunt prevents us from calling others to join the group. Per the rules we have stated clearly that if you "no show" and make no effort to contact us then you will be billed a guest fee for every unused slot. This policy will be enforced from now. Thank you for your cooperation on this matter. It is not meant to be restrictive, rather it is designed to enhance the opportunities at Thunderbird and be fair to all.

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The Beaver

Nancy, "You are late!"

Yours Truly, "Found water running out of a rice field, had to take a shovel to it."

Nancy, "You have all attributes to become a good beaver, instinctively blocking any form of running water!"

Best regards,

Todd Steele & Paul McDonald



**There was a Bigfoot Sighting on the Leases over the Weekend
Last Seen Ringing a Duck's Neck at Louise**

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