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For those that work like myself, we need the 60 day season as when one considers bad weather, family obligations, and work we are limited in the number of good viable days that we get to hunt. Duck hunting is my only passion that I work at year around and a 30 day season would cut my days in the field in half.

Appreciate your effort to improve our lifestyle we love.

"Always listen

Always want season to end last possible day even days and limits shortened"

Y'all are doing great work. Would love to talk sometime

We all including the big organizations and outfits know good and damn well know what needs to be done so let's all do as a team and make it better for the future I do have one question how does the snow goose population seem to grow and u see them in places never seen before but ducks are just don't come here anymore

Feel like my last box covered what I think. Quit spouting whatever the game and fish and Osborne tells you. They will do whatever the highest bidder tells them too

"Good Job

Look forward to hear the results"

It's difficult to get new hunters interested as bad as the seasons have been the last few years. Seems like the only new hunters are 18-25 year old punks that want to ride around and show off their toys. My kids aren't interested anymore and lease mates barely want to go. I Have to do all of the work and hunt solo a good bit. I also find myself Playing golf, fishing and working around the house more instead hunting extra days like I used to 10 years ago.

"My top issues are loss of PP habitat, influence of game farm mallards (which should be lobbied to be classified as invasive species, similar to Asian carp), season length, hen mallard limits. I don't hunt public land, so my responses do not reflect much sensitivity to that issue, although I am sympathetic to the plight of the public land hunter.

I also have a major problem with the current administration and application of AHM - it simply doesn't pass the smell test or make any sense whatsoever. What about it is adaptive if there is no change, given conditions like what we are currently experiencing.

On the same note, I can't help having a very skeptical attitude towards many of the "official" opinions being proliferated by waterfowl biologists and scientists (some of which seem to call y'all out directly on their own podcasts, i.e. fowl weather). Their

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opinions and condescending rants come off similarly to how the scientists of the COVID debacle came off. Again, doesn't pass the smell test, no common sense. And most concerning, I can't fully understand why there is such a major push by these people to send the message so vehemently that everything is fine, when we can clearly see that it's not. Who is behind that message and for what purpose? I can't understand it but have no choice to believe that the underlying intent is nefarious, as intent typically is when people are bucking common sense and imploring people to trust scientific "fact".

Anyway, sorry for the rant. I greatly appreciate both of you guys bringing these hard issues and questions to the forefront. There are a lot of people like me and we greatly appreciate you taking the hit and being our voice in many ways. It's valuable and does not go unnoticed by many different perspectives.

Thanks again

I just want to see better population of ducks that's my main goal!

Well I could write a book but I'll leave that for you podcasters.

Something has to be done . In most areas ducks are becoming nocturnal because their food is guarded . Too much pressure by scouting afternoons on public ground . Mud motors are tearing up the hardwood floors.

Been at this a long time. It goes in cycles. Times will get better.

"Waterfowl population is biggest problem.

Weather plays big role for us down here in the south. I don't think we get the snow cover and consistent cold up north like we used to. If things don't improve with waterfowl numbers I am for a more restricted season and bag numbers"

Being from the Texas coast I grew up hunting a very different style than the majority of the listeners of this podcast. We have seen a dramatic decrease in the redhead and pintail population and we largely attribute that to climate and pressure keeping the birds from being comfy in the area. I started venturing out of state in 2015 in search of mallards learning on our own and we have become very successful in those endeavors.

With the rise of social media there has been an immeasurable amount of pressure being put on very small areas that certain social media persons have exploited beyond repair. I don't know what the answer is to this. But I am extremely fearful for when my son gets to my age what this sport will look like.

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Duck hunting just keeps getting worst every season. Don't even see the ducks I used to after the season.

I think a draw system should be implement on about 50% of wmas to reduce pressure

I live for waterfowl season, but live in a waterfowl desert... central KY. I travel and hunt almost exclusively on public land in several states. I'd rather see reduced limits, rather than a reduction of days. I also have issues with states limiting out of state access to federal and corporate lands, state land... I understand.

Like the survey and look forward to hearing the results.

"Population and pressure, in my opinion, are the two biggest issues currently with waterfowl hunting, but I think they are separate issues as I do not think pressure affects population.

To explain, no matter the amount of pressure, waterfowl WILL FIND REFUGE, thus not getting shot etc. I think we all see this. Ducks sitting on the refuge and not on the WMAs cause that's where the pressure is. Ducks sitting on the Missouri River in late January because season is out and there is ZERO pressure while there is tons of pressure further south. A great quote from Bryce Decker on Ramsey Russel's Duck season somewhere podcast, "you can have ducks in the woods or hunters in the woods, you can't have both" makes it plain as day. We have conditioned ducks to act the way they do because of pressure.

This is further exemplified by some folks, White Oaks, North Delta Outfitters, Habitat Flats, just to name a few, who just had their "best season yet" amidst the poor seasons had by everyone else. It's because they have large areas of refuge and they manage the PRESSURE.

Similarly, maybe to a lesser extent, what happens on Missouri's public lands with the draw systems.

I happen to love Missouri's draw system. Are my total opportunities limited, yes. But are the opportunities I get high quality and leave me excited to come back again, very much so!

I say all this because, yes, I think we should try to do everything we can to increase the duck population, reduce hen limit, increase PPR habitat etc. But these only MIGHT increase the population. The most vital thing we need to increase the population is water on the PPR and that is out of our control. Again, we should continue to do everything to help increase the duck population, but I think we need to be prepared to hunt a BPOP of 6 million mallards for the foreseeable future.

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I do believe there is a world where we can have successful waterfowl hunting with the current population, but PRESSURE has to be reduced greatly.

I think Arkansas would benefit from a draw system on its public lands. I know that's not what Arkansans want to hear, but we've clearly seen waterfowl hunters cannot regulate themselves. Would there be massive uproar initially if Arkansas moved to a draw system? Most definitely. In ten years after the dust settles, would the folks that get to hunt on Arkansas' public lands draw systems be highly satisfied, I think so. But, take that with a grain of salt as this is coming from a Missourian who has never hunted Arkansas and probably never will with the current culture, and yall will probably pressure yourselves out of ducks in the next 10 years anyway."

I feel populations are way down until the estimates are more accurate (potholes - when theyre counted, more accurate counts from outfitters and private clubs, etc), we should be more restrictive with limits and seasons. Most of the guys I hunt with would rather have 30 days and 3 mallards than for a few years (if it would make a difference) than to have to hope that duck hunting will still exist in an affordable manner for our children.

Good survey questions. Hope you get a large response, and maybe some great info will make it up the food chain to help our great sport!

Good survey, Thanks guys

Appreciate yall helping out the waterfowl community. Talking about issues at hand, and calling out the nonsense that is happening in our sport. Keep up the good work! Social media is the greatest influence on young hunters. Regardless of how my children have been raised (experience over harvest), they are all 3 in the harvest stage of life. Harvesting 3-4 (mixed bag) birds per man is not as cool as posting pics of limits. The sport is quickly pricing out the middle to low man. Guided hunts are in excess of \$600/day/man in many areas. We are worrying about duck numbers yet guides are hammering away for 60 days/season. Too much pressure from guides.

We need to get our Mallard numbers up in the Mississippi flyway, and there will need to be a variety of things to be done to achieve that.

I appreciate the information you and your guest share. It has definitely increased my knowledge about the challenges the waterfowl community is facing. This knowledge has enabled me to have better conversations with my friends and hunting partners about our issues using actual data vs opinions/theories. I would like to hear more opinions or research about the effects of habitat management by private land owners on public land duck hunting - especially in low duck years. Thanks and keep up the good work.

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Guides are ruining this sport. And don't limit when or where I want to travel in states to hunt. No one owes the birds. Suck it up boys.

I would love to hear your comments on non-residents who own a house/property in Arkansas. Me and two friends own a nice house in Gregory with a little land also. We pay taxes/locals to help cut grass/ clean/ pest control/ pay local contractors. But we are limited of hunting public land. It stinks we usually hunt refuge the first half wma the second half but we get worried hearing all the rumors of more regulations against non residents.

Great idea for putting this survey out, y'all take care!

Robos and field hunting in Canada are murdering untold numbers of immature mallards and breeding hens before they ever get the chance to leave the nesting areas. Flooded corn fields and managed private areas flooding other types of crops for the soul purpose of hunting are turning our birds nocturnal along with a rise in pressure due to the commercialization of waterfowl hunting causing more people to hunt longer and more often than ever before. The only rest the birds in our area see are at night in the corn clubs or in a refuge during the day.

Ducks unlimited should be investigated by Elon Musk

The survey was not fair and missed out on aspects of waterfowl management. For example, the question about "which TWO are most impactful to mallard populations" - they only had one habitat option and the rest were season and limit related answers. Both of my top TWO are habitat and duck production related. Additionally, hunting has never successfully been implemented to control populations of any species, including waterfowl. Additionally, the science shows that a reduction in bag limits to 1 hen will not reduce harvest in a way that impacts the population, but would instead leave more "mud-stomped" hens in the wetland that were accidentally shot, and would do nothing but waste more hens.

I believe the single greatest impact is the lost habitat all the way from the PPR to the wintering grounds in the Midwest. The weather will always change and ducks and geese will adapt and shift wintering areas. A decrease in pressure would help. But we need for safe havens for ducks, more refuge.

"Clarification regarding spinners: I use them currently but would welcome a total ban.

Adapting AHM in the name of science has been a disaster.

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Promote lower limits, conservation ethics, the wonder of migration, and the beauty of waterfowl."

We need to lower the mallard limit and these social media hunters who don't know how to hunt the right way are a huge problem but don't know how that can be fixed

You left a ton of open doors here by lumping things together. YouTube is positive. Facebook groups are negative. Canada's impact isn't so much on the number they kill. It's the fact they kill so many of the juvies. Flooded corn is the devil's spawn because it becomes attractive at the exact time a duck would want to migrate and is still just as edible and accessible as it was the day the season opened.

Duck hunting has become a rich man's sport because of a lot of factors. Guides have driven up land and lease prices. Fewer ducks, at least in Louisiana, have caused a financial race for more and better places to hunt.

"Need to motivate farmers, especially Stuttgart AR area, to leave stubble in fields after harvest, and pull a levee to promote some water holding, for ducks to have more food in the fields (rice, soybeans).

It's already a problem (but good for the farmers) With the improvement of combines equipment and very little grain goes out the back with the thatch when harvesting. Need to kill a lot more snow geese. The conservation season doesn't seem to be helping reduce the population. The overpopulation of snow geese and their consumption of food that ducks need and their destruction of habitat that ducks need is terrible for ducks.

Even if you leave some crop unharvested the snow geese get in it and eat it, and stomp it into mud, before the ducks can utilize it."

The ducks used to be wild and have to spread out to find food. Now they are congregated in these duck parks that have large holding areas with abundant unharvested crops for food, including refuges. This is bad for the ducks for them to congregate like this, and it is bad for the hunters because we never see them because it stops the migration from going further south like it has for hundreds and hundreds of years.

"We can sit here and talk about reducing hunting days or reducing limits, but that won't fix the problem. I've seen more ducks this year than I've seen in the past 15 years. The problem now is simple: ducks don't want to sit on a tilled up dirt parking lot. Ducks want habitat, and those

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That have it are babysitting them unlike ever before due to the corporate mindsets these big clubs or outfitters have, throwing 12 guns on every tilled over flooded parking lot with no food or cover.

If people want more ducks, they need to get creative with friends and form llc's and invest in land ownership so as to grow land back into the great swamp. That's the only way to kill ducks now."

"We average about 350 ducks a year for the last 10 years. This year we only shot 71. I keep detailed harvest data with bird per hunter averages and such.

I think mud boats, air boats etc are too accessible to everyone now. The birds do not have an area to rest. If you are not "mad" at them, you don't have to go through the challenge of getting to them. Anyone with daddy's money owns one of these boats and nothing is off limits/out of bounds anymore. Birds are shot up and down the country with little rest. Geese have stopped migrating due to who knows what and thus the ducks stay north with them. Lack of water and lack of roost habitat is another big deal. Anyone who pays for water is shooting it, and not letting birds rest. Historically there were so many set roosts that no one was allowed in on but the almighty dollar has caused these to go non existent. Just look at the eagle lake vineyard area. The massive roost that has been there for years has duck blinds all throughout it now. Too many people getting into it with less and less habitat." Time to lower limits and reduce season length.

I think the best way to increase numbers in the central and Mississippi flyeay is to cancel the hunting season completely for 1 full year. I understand this will never happen but it would be the best and quickest way to increase true wild mallard duck populations.

outlaw spinners, corn, mudmotors and guides. go to 50/5. no corn on refuges. canada too. Trump can make it happen!!

Flooding unharvested crops and hunting over it is 100% baiting and is stopping the ducks from migrating. Also, should not be allowed to artificially de-ice water.

If you would've told me I wouldn't duck hunt a single time in one season 10 years ago I wouldn't believe you, but that happened this year. Waterfowl hunting in the Southern portion of the United States will be dead in 10 years at this rate if not sooner, and there is nobody that will do anything about it. Because there is too much money involved. A duck needs food and water and cover to survive and what better spot for them to hang

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out at than a flooded corn field in Missouri or Kansas. I wouldn't leave either! If I want to shoot ducks I guess I need to save up my 6 grand to go hunt with Habitat Flats!

Out of state hunters are killing AR green timber hunting by increasing the pressure so much that the duck do not even use the woods anymore

As I mentioned in my other comment, we need to put the brakes on waterfowl hunting to let the dust settle. The fowl need a break.

The intentional flooding of unharvested crops for hunting and the depositing of food for waterfowl for imprinting or for any other reason needs to be banned nationwide immediately.

Adding a (non resident public land only) license that is on a quota with a limited amount of days purchased preseason. In addition to a regular license if they leased or went with a guide on private land. The commercialization of farming "Big Farm" is taking a toll on habitat. Fall field preparation for spring planting is changing the landscape for resting and feeding waterfowl. Keep restoring river bottoms and add buffer zones along rivers to deter field runoff.

In order for waterfowl hunting to survive for our children and grandchildren, hunting over flooded agricultural crops that are not a bona fide agricultural operation intended for harvest needs to be immediately outlawed, and change the migratory bird treaty act back to the way it was prior to 1998. If this isn't done we have no hope.

Being able to leave corn standing year round and flooding it while hunting next to it should be illegal. Same thing as baiting. Heating ponds and using ice cutters should be illegal. Ducks don't care about cold weather unless their food freezes over and water freezes up. Outside of that they have no reason to fly south anymore when you have the two main necessary ingredients to live still up north. Congress needs to pass bills outlawing these practices.

"AHM has been in effect for a long time with no adjustments to the overall limit allowed to harvest. To me this means populations are steady and no changing. So over the last 30 years the duck populations have remained that strong? Convince me!

The other issue that hunters don't understand is growing corn to flood it for ducks. That is NOT a normal agricultural process (I live in farm country and know crops well). I know there are some that try to harvest some of their corn after removing the water at the end of the season to make it legal. This legal baiting should be stopped or just let all of us throw corn out in the hole and we will all be equal."

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It's become a money grab for farmers leasing land, manufacturers of expensive products and a fashion show amongst the young crowd. Sad

"When I was a boy my father used to take me to our local refuge. We knew everyone that was hunting in the designated pools. That was around 08-09 some of the best bird hunting that I could remember as a kid.

That isn't the case now, I feel that if we could restrict out of state hunting it may change the bird's behavior throughout season"

"Season dates should be left alone. Manipulating dates sparks the public/private debate that you always mention. Private has early/reliable water. Public, as a rule, doesn't get water until later. Truth: public and private need each other. Private needs public to fund large-scale conservation/gov't. policy and public needs private for philopatric realities.

The MS/Central Flyways AND Canada need the same limits! We hunt the same birds, yet you can cross a border and shoot more. I wish someone could explain this logic to me.

We need more opportunity!- meaning more huntable habitat that is not in a draw system (if it were up to the MO draw system-I could not be a waterfowl hunter) and less restriction on non-resident hunters. The more huntable habitat available, the less concentrated pressure. Theoretically, this would increase hunter harvest. We can't afford to lose hunter dollars or political pull.

Don't restrict gadgets- motors, mechanical decoys, etc.. I may not like them, but this is America. We don't want government intervening in capitalism. Let's give the birds more credit. SWD don't work as well during late season. Mud motors drive birds off of property. God is protecting the resource by giving them a brain to react to the stimulation. Let the hunter interfere with his hunt by doing these absurd things. Look at this differently- these are means of protecting the resource because hunters misuse them.

I'm not convinced by your podcast guests and the guests of other's podcasts that harvest has a statistical significance on population. Notice I did not say: ""Harvest does not matter"". Case in point: if you shoot the piss out of juvenile birds in Canada, then I don't have the opportunity to shoot juvenile birds in southeast Missouri or northeast Arkansas. Furthermore, if philopatry is as common as most scientist are now suggesting, it seems reasonable that you can shoot your birds out of an area and cause a lasting impact (seems plausible for southeast MO). The common theme among the

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guests across all podcasts is that the limiting factor is habitat-breeding and wintering (wintering habitat being limited by hunting pressure).

Social media creates a divide between the haves and have-nots. The public land hunter feels the need to show Rusty Creasey that ""it ain't all bad"" when the public land hunter gets a limit of birds on public land (which is admittedly more difficult to do-I hope we agree). Once one post is up, suddenly we have a measuring contest because young men are competitive. I don't know how to fix social media and young men's behavior though.

I am interesting in hearing from a climatologist. These past few seasons seem to have been impacted by a warming trend punctuated by a freezing spell later in the season. Old timers tell me they used to hang meat outside in October- would not dare do that now. It makes me wonder if the hardy mallards used to be forced southward prior to the solstice.

For the podcast, I would suggest having some guests with dissenting opinions. Brent, less alarmism and dismissiveness. There is a segment of hunters that don't come to the table because of it. I appreciate what you guys are doing and know that you want what's best for the resource. I think 90% of hunters care for the resource. It just may be that every bit of that 90% has a different solution to fix it! :) Appreciate you letting me voice my opinion."

Something has to change to better the amounts we are seeing

Flooded unharvested crops should go away. Spinning wing decoys should go away for a year or two then perhaps maybe reintroduce them. Seasons could be shortened perhaps. Seasons affect every hunter, bag limits don't. Absolutely need to bring back the breeding/nesting grounds that have been destroyed.

Think the goose season in the North including Northern Illinois should be closed by January 1

I'm from California so the Mississippi and central flyways are still new to me only hunted in Missouri one on a guided hunt ,but seeing big groups of hunter number from 10 or more is a bit rlover kill regardless of the bilag limits to should be no more then 3 to 4 hunters in groups

While hunter numbers may be down, most hunters put in more days per season than ever before. As well there is a huge issue of liter at the public places I frequent. Before these new school hunters that got started waterfowl hunting from duck commander and MeatEater the marshes were cleaner. Most newer hunters I find do not respect the game or land they hunt them on.

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My thoughts are covered in the first text box.

Thank you for providing this survey because more people need to become aware of the fragile state the duck population is in. Hunting has become commercialized due to guides and hunting industry. It is no longer about actually hunting, it has become about killing. We stopped punt guns and selling wild game, but yet we allow people to hunt 10-20 guys in a blind and every family group that comes in gets eradicated. Look at Southern Illinois, they used to have geese that migrated on time and weather. They no longer have any geese migrate on time do to being eradicated. What's to stop that to happening to the early specks in Arkansas that they allow an early season? They will be shot to extinction unless there are some rules set on it. There is no sportsmanship in killing 20-40 geese in 1 volley.

Do not let your state turn into what Louisiana has become. I don't think you guys understand how bad it has gotten here. We are no longer a place to even consider when thinking of a duck hunting destination, yet we used to be the Sportsman's Paradise. I watched surface drives completely destroy the hunting in Venice over the period of about 10 years once they became popular. That's something you can do in your own state to help out your own state. If early water is killing your trees then vote to keep it off until January. The state of the hunting in the MS flyway can be best expressed through that viral video of the two flatbills going at it with fists and splashing water on each other over who got the hole this past season. My group of 4 went from consistently harvesting between 500-750 birds a season on various public grounds in south LA between 07-15, to now not even seeing a duck and we have had to resort to purchasing a tract up north of us in Mississippi out of desperation, but that hasn't been great either. It's over for us down here but maybe Arky can be salvaged.

Social media has done a lot for waterfowl, good and bad. I think a lot people want to complain about heated ponds and flooded corn. I don't think that is the case for less migrating birds. I think the snow and cold plays the biggest part. The northern states seasons end before it gets cold, so there is no pressure pushing those birds out once it does snow. Once it does snow and the middle and southern parts of the states get birds the season across the board is out.

Make public land waterfowl hunting **GREAT AGAIN!**

Thank y'all for doing this! I'm curious to hear the results. Really enjoy the show and conversations that surround it. Y'all keep on keepin on! "Dead hens lay no eggs"
Duck seasons and limits are not the reasons for hunters not seeing or harvesting ducks. Flooded corn refuges, private and public, have completely changed the mallard duck! They have adapted to fly at night, feed at night, migrate at night! They have also learned to migrate around the seasons! Mallards push before seasons and after! They either move ahead of the season openers or stay as far north as possible, regardless of

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weather! If anything I believe making seasons longer may be beneficial by spreading out pressure and giving the birds larger windows to have to move around. Shortening seasons I believe would just concentrate more hunters all at once. Most waterfowlers only have a certain number of days they can hunt each year. Spreading it out would allow for less pressure day to day.

Thanks guys! Hotty Toddy from Mississippi

I'm 71 and still hunting, seen a lot of changes, some good some not .started at age 4 or 5. Belong to MVHFA local group in central Illinois n Ducks Unlimited . I feel as ducks are declining need too cut limits back just my opinion, and politicians would stop taking \$ from conservation efforts.

HABITAT IS KING

Reduce limits across the board and start in Canada. Ban spinning wing decoys across the entire flyways. Lastly pray the good lord helps Mother Nature bring a strong freeze to the Northland every December...not February like it has happened the last several years.

Appreciate the conversation you guys are trying to start here. In my opinion we need better data on what the population actually is.

The 2 greatest factors effecting Waterfowl hunting right now are game farm mallards and flooded food. We have driven our birds to be nocturnal by providing them with an unlimited food source that requires 0 effort to find. You can hold half a million ducks but if they only fly between sunset and sunrise, it does no one any good.

Great survey with lots of the right questions

Flooded corn and ice eaters are ruining it for everyone else.

Outfitters are ruining this sport. And states should not limit out of state hunters. States do own migratory birds

I love waterfowl hunting and I think it should be longer.

We're not saying the duck numbers we used to it all I think the season length should be shortened

There is no silver bullet to "fix" waterfowl hunting. It's going to take some of everything brought up in the survey to address the many issues facing the future of duck hunting.

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The Mississippi River flyway is dead. North central Missouri is the new wintering area. (Flats, Fountain Grove, Swan Lake, Grand Pass). Flooded corn is baiting. No more no less. Ducks don't dry feed anymore. And the boogie man is hiding everywhere. Weather plays a small toll. We spend the last 30 days of our season talking about how good the 1st 30 days were. We miss a ton of calendar "ducks" starting in the central Illinois zone in Illinois. It sucks! Everyone wants to late season and most of the ducks are migrated through. The rest of them never make it here. I hope something changes soon. It's a shame.

With the lower duck numbers in the south and social media the number of people that travel and hunt has increased. With that the pressure on birds has increased which leads to birds no migrating as the normally did in the past. Also has increased pressure on birds in the south. I believe that the pressure on waterfowl today is the thing that could possible change waterfowl forever for the south and birds need rest periods in the season.

Everything is habitat and climate/weather driven. We need to preserve what's left and incentivize landowners to restore grass and wetlands in the ppr on a large scale. Then we will be happy with duck numbers once again.

Strategically placed refugees, spinning winged decoys, mud motors, social media (pile pics) and the younger generation of hunters hunting in big groups I believe have significantly impacted the duck hunting. Of course there are many many many other contributing factors.

Hope this survey helps for research and education of others

I live in middle Tennessee along the duck river refuge , (new Johnsonville) you would be absolutely mind blown by the amount of ducks that are harvested in our little area , they never stop shooting , the bait plies are unbelievable, I also hunt the same area on a private family owned farm , on day one duck hole A knocked down 223 ducks and picked up 201 , duck hole B locked down 189 picked up 176, duck hole C picked up 176 , I could go on and on, they are ruining it , they do that 10 12 times a year numbers like that, they hunt 8 -10 people and never stop shooting , twra is aware but don't care , in 14 hunts duck hole D killed 1621, unbelievable honestly, the same thing happens in the public land of Camden WMA , one blind killed 137 , I know all of them, it's sad , I hunt in the same area along the duck river refuge, in the early 2000s we had the best spot , and still do have a good spot , we just can't hold a candle to the other places because we don't bait 2500 lbs of sunflowers and corn every week, they don't even try to hide it , I wish something would be done ,

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We are killing too many mallards plain and simple. Cut the commercial hunting immediately. The generation hunting now has never seen a reduced limit or anything but a 60 day season. Protect our mallards

"Unfortunately, the culture of the waterfowling community has completely shifted to "big groups, big piles". I can't blame the groups of younger hunters that only hunt 7-15 guys in a hole or in a goose field. It's what they've seen via media and then try to emulate the things they see online.

I've guided waterfowl my entire adult life, and we sure seem to be at a tipping point.

I live in Illinois, and most of the areas I've hunted for decades have seen a significant decline in mallard numbers. I'm blessed enough to travel a lot to hunt, and outside of one corridor in Missouri, and the Central Flyway, everyone is struggling

I've worked at a duck club for a LONG time. I'll be the first to admit that the insane increase in flooded corn in the flyway has had a huge impact on the quality of waterfowl hunters outside of those clubs.

It's become a duck monopoly, and the Missouri clubs own Boardwalk and Park Place. They have completely changed mallard wintering patterns, and everyone else is suffering for their profit."

"Your show rocks! Thanks for brining topics to the listeners that we would never hear on the mainstream duck talk. The people

You interview are very unique and offer a point of view that's seldom heard. Hopefully the weatherman's podcast isn't bothering you too much, he's full of crap!"

I do believe the spinning wing decoy to be the worst thing to have ever come along for the well being of the duck population. In Canada. They come to them like a bug to a light. If there was one thing in my opinion that has to be done. You got to get rid of the spinning wing decoy. " FROM CANADA AND USA. "

I live in Missouri. I think the general issue is here that Mdc and private landowners have done an over the top job of providing habitat and meeting most of not all of the requirements of a duck. Therefore teaching them to sit and fly late or don't fly at all. These ducks have now imprinted on these areas. I feel like flooded corn plays a big role in this as well as flood corn in refuges. I understand we have to have rest areas. But I wonder if we changed where they were year to year if it wouldn't help move the ducks down the flyway and make them fly more consistently

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Enjoy listening to the podcast.

You guys are doing a great job and I respect the effort for the resource. But, are also very spoiled when it comes to where you hunt. You have to realize that 99% of hunters aren't hunting on privately managed clubs like you. Therefore, please don't forget the differences in perspective between someone who gets to hunt a legacy club and someone hunting a gar hole they paid \$10,000 for.

There is a big difference between the % of hunters on public land (10%) and private land (90%), meaning my group hunts 100% public land and kills on average 300-400 ducks per season, which is not going to move the needle either way when comparing that to guides and big private land clubs up and down the flyway that harvest 10-15x more ducks than my group and the majority of the public land groups on Arkansas public land.

All these questions won't matter if we don't take care of habitat. We need wetlands on the landscape and almost more important for certain species, grass to nest in. Thanks for this survey. Hunters need to have a voice and use it for the betterment of the sport.

Seasons need to be closed for a few seasons. Let the birds recover and begin to take natural flight paths. The amount of food and ice eaters in the Mississippi flyway are drawing birds from the pot hole region and limiting available hunting areas.

We have to get the populations of ducks back up to where they need to be. I feel the number one problem with hunting today is the pressure on the ducks starting in Canada all the way down through the flyways. When I started 50 years ago, nobody went to Canada to hunt Nobody hunted the Dakotas. Ducks are educated by the time they reach the Middle states such as KS,MO,NE,IA,ARK,OKL,IL

The problem isn't big brand social media or anything of the sort. The biggest problem is weather. The second biggest problem is state run WMA, DU or Delta come in build these massive beautiful projects. Leave them to the state to handle and after 3 years they don't pump water anymore half of them don't plant crops and it basically turns into a deer hunting chaos instead of something for the ducks to use. I see more success on a half acre hole I plant and keep open water on than I do on anything DU has built around me. And I understand hunting public is pressures but even before and after season I visit to bird watch and photograph and there are no birds to be seen on these large money pits

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farm for waterfowl is a problem

"The question on flooded ag. I'm not saying it's wrong. My question is do we really need to have 100 acres of flooded corn on every farm? People have been flooding corn forever, but it used to be 5 acres here and there or if someone really went for it, they were leaving 20 acres. Now 20 acres is a drop in the bucket in west Tennessee. Our ducks behave vastly different than ducks in other regions because of it. I recently heard the stat that west Tenn has 7 times the amount of food needed to sustain our wintering population's duck energy day needs. Not saying it should be banned, but I wish there was a way to limit the amount left because it does have an effect on local duck movement/habits.

Spinning wing decoys work on breaking high groups of mallards, but you better have a way of turning them off before they start their second pass. If your neighbor is using several of them, you may have to use them to compete. I would love to never have to use one again, but in certain scenarios, you still have to. I would be in favor of a nationwide ban because they do negatively affect the behavior of traveling/traffic ducks. Just another form of undue pressure.

Pressure is the main problem we face locally. At any time during the season, I typically hunt around a large concentration of ducks within 2 miles of me. It doesn't matter if it is holding 20,000 or 100,000 ducks, on average, I'm only going to see 100 mallards or so a day. My point is, there aren't enough ducks in the population to get me back to seeing 1,000 a day even if we were at 10 million mallard mark. When the mentality of everyone around you is ""I'm going to hunt 60 from D to D"" and there is so much food that a duck already knows exactly where to find it after shooting hours, you find yourself in a tough spot. I don't see the corn going anywhere, so pressure is the only variable to manipulate. To be effective, it has to be large scale pressure relief, not just local. Just wish I knew what that silver bullet looked like. My fear is with a shortened season and the amount of food available, by the time these places are used up, the season will have come and gone."

"My name is Steven Jackson. I have been duck hunting the state of Arkansas for 28 years. All public. My dad and his identical Twin(76 years old) have been coming since 1990. They are extremely passionate about green timber duck hunting. They continue to chase the greenhead to this day on public land. I have not missed a season and neither have they. We will spend 10-30 days every year hunting public land in Arkansas. We have met and hunted with some of the best in the business. I can say we have never had a bad experience or run-in with anybody over the last 30 years!

Two things have had the greatest impact on duck hunting in Arkansas over the last 30 years in my opinion. The first is farming operations. They have drastically improved

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and this has decreased the amount of waste grain and habitat for ducks. Not much anybody can do about that because that farmer has to make a living!!

The second is the SWD. Since it was introduced in the late 90's early 2000 the mallard harvest and population has slowly been on a decline. The data shows this! So many mallards were killed during those initial years that the population has never been able to recover. Those years also allowed a population of ducks not to imprint on Arkansas, because they were being killed solely because of the SWD. So many hunters were introduced to duck hunting during those first few years because the SWD allowed people to be successful with little to no experience. All they had to do was go hunting and be around some ducks and they were going to kill them! What you are seeing now, is the offspring of that generation getting into hunting that has never experienced anything but a SWD. Add this to the number of mallards that are being killed in Canada each year over the SWD. The population can't recover. Before SWD were introduced, nobody dry field hunted in Canada because it was hard to get the ducks to decoy. They only shot over water because that was the only way to get ducks to decoy correctly. There is nobody that can say they are more effective hunting ducks in the PPH region not using SWD. It is a fact if you have two groups of people hunting a field in Canada and one group is using SWD and one that isn't. The group using SWD will dominate the group not using them. Obviously the use of SWD in Arkansas now, doesn't have the same affect as it once used to because they have been shot over them all they way down the fly. In my opinion, if SWD were banned in Canada and in the US the mallard population in two years would be on the incline. It would be a easy solution to put into place that would not affect the length of the season and limits. (I Do wish we would cut the limits and season length) Put this in place and have a couple good years of water on the PPH region and we will be back.

There has always been crowding on public lands even 30 years ago. There has always been private clubs with rest areas. There has always been flooded corn in Missouri. There has always been ducks in Northern Missouri in late January on a frozen river. There has always been influencers/forums/social media in some capacity. There has always been wet or dry years in Arkansas. Cold or hot years. The fact is the duck hunting in Arkansas has been on a slow decline since the introduction of SWD. All the juvenile birds are getting hammered over the SWD in Canada and Northern States and are never making it to Arkansas to imprint! We have had some really good years but overall it has been on a steady decline. The one change that need to be made is eliminating the SWD from duck hunting. It is just to damn affective on birds in Canada and northern states. The SWD is more affective than a duck call or decoy! We all saw how affective it was when it first came out and used in Arkansas. It was a joke and I remember my dad saying this is going to ruin duck hunting!! If you remember those first few years, just think it is just like that every year when people use them in Canada

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and northern States. Just my two cents from over 30 years of public land hunting in Arkansas. No matter what happens my dad, uncle, cousin and I will continue to enjoy the flooded timber on public lands that Arkansas offers. Just hope they don't take it away from us!!

Thanks

Steven Jackson"

"Ban spinners in US, Canada, and Mexico. We use them on sunny days in Louisiana with remotes to draw passing birds but would rather them banned altogether. Too many juvenile birds and hens being killed before they begin migration.

Wintering habitat is getting worse, too much fall tillage.

Early goose seasons in Arkansas and Louisiana need to be stopped."

"Disturbance and pressure have drastically reduced the quality of hunting in Arkansas. Ducks are almost solely feeding at night as a result. Unless we get some cold weather, which doesn't happen as regularly as it used to, ducks are stale. Unkillable. On top of that, there are too many fall plowed fields which used to offer food, cover, habitat for loafing birds."

I am from Canada so had only option to put down North Dakota for residence which is closest. With the commercialization of duck hunting in the past 25 years it exploded outfitting. The freelance hunters that traditionally came for a week have given way to these multi week duck camps for the most part. A high percentage of Canadian duck hunters retain and eat what they shoot, the sole purpose of hunting. The opposite occurs for non-residents who want to shoot and give away the birds. With Canada changing the non-resident policies within the main 3 provinces will help overall duck numbers and pressure.

"Overall, we know there are thousands of opinions and theories individual hunters have, but we all ask the same questions... Where are the ducks?

To most waterfowl hunters, specifically regarding the mallard limit, the limit is irrelevant because most hunters rarely even have the opportunity harvest a full mallard limit (in Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee), so changing the mallard limit in turn would not have an effect on the overall population (at its current estimate). It is possible that when the population does increase that we would need to lower the limit to be able to sustain the higher population numbers.

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I believe all mallard limits should be the same across all flyways and reduced to at most 4 in Canada and other States can kill more than 4. The pintail limit should be increased to 2 like it was in 2016.

To everything regarding the limit, the limit should be adjusted and set annually based on BPOPs.

Increasing nest success and brood rearing habitat will help increase the population, which goes hand in hand with increased wetland habitat in the PPR.

Social Media can be a very effective tool to increase awareness of a subject, IF the message is relayed correctly and appropriately."

Gosh this is where we can spill our guts huh... I generally think the bulk of the issue starts with a lack of duck population. I have low confidence in the numbers published and fear it's worse than we realize. I think outfitters and social media are killing what's left. Outfitters need restrictions. Seeing a picture of a goose guide in Ark or a duck guide in OK with 12, 20, 30 people lined up for a picture in a single field is outrageous. The new age of outfitters are on the take way too often. I'm totally fine with outfits that do it right, but it's too commercialized and puts too much pressure on the resource at times. You can't find a good lease anymore because these guys can afford to pay a farmer way more than the average Joe. The price of poker keeps going up and the dad that wants to bring his son hunting is now forced to book with an outfit and frame a picture of him and his son with 15 other people he has never met before. All those people that get pushed out of leases end up on public land which creates too much pressure in those areas. The habitat in Venice has not changed drastically enough in the last 10 years to cause the dramatic decline that I have watched in the last 3-5 years. Pressure has increased 10 fold. Residents hunt a lot down there, but droves of folks for AL, FL, and GA pile in too. Ducks want food and to be left alone. When they don't get a break they aren't going to stick around. Outlaw the surface drive down there and it would rebound overnight. I don't think all unharvested crops are an huge issue, but I do take issue with unharvested corn for several reasons and while the same rules don't apply for all crops, this may as well be baiting. I think the farm mallards are an increasing problem also that really scares me to think about. I have to think unharvested corn exacerbates that issue. There are a lot of issues that need fixing. What I fear is that it has become such a big industry that no one will stand up and overhaul things enough to make a difference.

"Duck hunting used to be phenomenal on public land when I started as a kid. But the last 5 years we found ourselves hunting more private. Mainly because the public wetlands had too much pressure. People hunting till 3pm just to shoot 6 ducks. And skybusting anything with feathers. So to stay successful we would rotate our private spots. We even started crane/geese hunting last 5 years to make that rest period even

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longer. But even the crane hunting has been pressured by mainly outfitters. So much to where the avg buddy groups can't hunt, because everything is a money game now. And you can't blame the farmer. But we went having 2 outfitters in the area we crane hunt. To 23 in one year. That's a entirelyly different can of worms. Got side tracked. I used to see thousands of ducks, any given time on our local wetlands. Now you might see 100 teal. Occasionally group of big ducks. At the end of the day my opinion is low duck population, too much pressure, and Lack of habitat. That's for central TX

I do notice a lot of ducks once we start moving NW to chase those big birds. Some soil conservation lakes holding thousands of ducks. One key thing they have, is no pressure. It's almost like there is magical line, once we cross it. Boom ducks everywhere.

I do enjoy listening to y'all's podcast, very eye opening. Keep up the good work"

I'm 26 and my family owns a large rice farm in NE Arkansas. I also hunt a lot of public from brookings all the way down to hurricane and black swamp. I think my generation 23-29 year olds are the problem. We grew up hearing stories about "the good old days from our dads and others... we are learning how duck hunting and social media go together. When the hunting shows flashes of being good I've heard of and seen way too many guys shooting over. "Making up for lost time"...stuffing ducks in logs and boat compartments. Shooting hens and leaving them out of the pictures. And they hardly ever get caught. My big hopes for the future is that we shorten the season and hopefully make quality better than opportunity. All opportunity does is add more days that make them resentful. If we get fewer but better days I think it could help with that attitude. I also hope that this social media dark age for duck hunting is coming to an end and we will learn to navigate it better. It seems like it is getting slightly better, barring a few outliers trying to be funny or going for the shock factor. Idk if that's overall as a whole or just my algorithm. People will grow tired of it eventually. My last hope is that the game farm genetics work themselves out like Dr Osborne talked about on his last episode. Days kill ducks. Fewer days would hopefully make better days and make enforcement easier. It would improve attitudes and ease pressure as fewer people would deem it as worth it. Ducks and public land are both finite resources. And the tragedy of the commons will keep running it down. This hurts me because I love duck hunting more than most I would say. I have since I went on my first hunt with my dad at 5. My family farm is special to me and I hope I hunt it until I'm old and gray and can't go anymore. But something has to change. Sorry for the rambling and I love the show. Thanks guys!

"Fix PPR

Move discussion from piles to more grass and brood habitat.

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More systems and programs to work with farmers."

Your survey didnt address a major problem with duck populations and that is predators and low nesting success as a major contributor to lower populations

Waterfowl hunting will be a thing of the past in 15 years. My son will never get to witness what I've witnessed in my 30 years of hunting. Sad, but it is what it is. Too much money involved to change anything now. We are being lied to about numbers. Outfitting is modern day commercial hunting.

The comment of 'get the ducks back on track' suggest that they are not. That is so subjective based on a ton of variables that many of use have no control over. Many of your questions relate to social media - if you or others have jealousy issues over seeing pile pics and other hunter success, that is more of a personal problem. There are many positives to social media, but those who hang their hat on how they are doing compared to their 'friend' need to be realistic. Putting daily pressure on your 40 acre marsh is not going to yield great results. Pressure management by far is the biggest thing hunters need to get their arms around. Happy to discuss more. Have a good off-season.

Another season showing the need for true snow cover in northern states. Yes, we had the freezing cold, but there was little to no snow cover from mid-state Illinois up into central Wisconsin and over into Iowa and Minnesota. Their eagerness to cling north and reverse migrate is very visible in the region of south central Illinois sheet water stump fields and northern Illinois power plant lakes I frequent.

"I've hunted Canada and there are too many young ducks killed!!

Bag limits are too generous. Season should end mid-January. Protect your breeding pairs.

Hunting in the Mississippi Flyway is too commercialized, too much gun pressure.

A 3 mallards, only (1) can be a hen limit. Makes sense"

Great work gents. Would love to hear an episode about the decline of honker hunting in southern Illinois and the reasons why!

Duck hunting has changed. I do not think that it can be corrected without a major renovation of our seasons, limits and increased regulations. In Tennessee, the TWRA does not have the ability to come on to private property without a warrant to check for potential violations(baiting) anymore. With this change the duck holes that are planted levee to levee with corn and are flooded for the ducks are now being baited as well just to try and have a bigger pile picture than the millionaire that overpaid for the hole beside them. This is common knowledge in the area of Tennessee that I have hunted for the past 48 years. It's sad to see this occurring. The ducks deserve better

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than to be shot over a wad of floating sunflower seeds. Disrespectful to the sport. Duck hunting has become more about who has the most money and can roost the most ducks and have the fanciest pit than the enjoyment of some birds responding to the call.

I feel like we need to shorten the season and drop the limit. It's been too many years of 60 days. It's never had a run like this in the history of seasons. Get rid of the spinners and mud motors. Hopefully the newcomers will quit and that will contribute to reduced pressure.

ban motors on state ground (or at least on a portion of them). Waterfowlers as a whole are the fattest bunch of slobs anyway so we need some cardio. bring back walking, canoes, kayaks, making it quieter in the woods and making some pockets of ground that are hard to get to.

Thank y'all for bringing this to light...ban all electronic anything, close season for 2 years so we can actually have something we can measure....no pressure, no dead hens for two seasons. Outfitters don't want to hear it but we need answers and all these theories do nothing except split the team further.

If the powers to be don't do what is necessary and quit being influenced by money my grandchildren will never know why duck season can be

"We need to go to 1 mallard hen

Outfitters need limits on how many clients they take at one time it's not hard to kill 0 to 70 yds when 12 guys come up blazing party hunting is illegal although everyone does it" I think we need to look into the BPOP and the actual total number of ducks!

There needs to be more awareness to climate change in migration and how social media is having a negative impact on hunting.

"I worked in Lubbock, TX for the last 6 seasons for an outfitter. I would say it is at the top of the list of the most highly pressured areas in the country when it comes to outfitting.

The pressure is just flat out insane. \$1,200 for a day rate to a farmer for a group of 12 hunters doesn't even make some blink an eye. A lot have been screwed over so bad in the past by fly by night guides/outfitters that no one, guides or a father and their son will ever be allowed to hunt that ground again.

Blatant trespassing that is a slap on the wrist because the fine is under \$300 and the day rate for 12 guys is \$1,200 and it isn't a felony.

Bumping/running/shooting birds off of feeds or no hunting fields, you name it.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There has to be a guide and outfitter system in place, and each state should use North Dakota as its prime example and baseline.

1. Guide and Outfitter License and Exam
2. Nonresident outfitters and guides licenses and fees should be greater than residents to conduct business in said state.
3. Mandatory Liability Insurance.
4. If you have a felony or any sort of wildlife violation you should be void from taking and/or receiving any guide or outfitter license/test.
(Prime Example: There is an outfitter in Lubbock who has killed 2 WHOOPING CRANES in Oklahoma that received felony charges and did jail time, who currently owns and operates a guide service.....)
5. Mandatory CPR/First Aid Certifications

There has got to be something in place.

Free lancing doesn't exist in Lubbock, TX plain and simple. Then you have the every day 30 gun salutes from the "big guys" and "social media stars" and people say pressure doesn't exist. I was a part of the pressure, it exists and it is real. The same goes for Prairie Canada and the Dakotas where I have guided and continue to do so as well as Kansas and Oklahoma where I grew up.

Hunting/Outdoors Brands and the influencers therein are a huge part of the problem relaying all of the wrong signals and information to the hunting community, especially our youth who are the most easily influenced and who probably more so many of them who don't have a mentor backed with good ethics, conservation and sportsmanship."

A few questions on mallards but the gulf coast we rarely see mallards they just don't come down here anymore. Also spinning wing decoys are generally only effective down here during teal and maybe opening weekend after that we pull all spinners and put them away for the season they have already seen a thousand of them by the time they get here and settle in.

Waterfowl hunters should be conservationist first. Until the majority are, I think hunting will continue to decline unless the government makes some significant changes.

"30 days. 3 ducks. 2 mallard of which one hen mallard
1 black duck
Etc"

Illinois only cares about the Illinois River area (just north of St. Louis) we need a refuge on the east side of southern Illinois

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In order to keep duck hunting from being a thing of the past we all need to come together and bite the bullet for a few seasons and shoot less birds to maybe return the duck numbers to how they used to be

This 24-25 season was unseasonably warm with not much water on the front end. I think this year was somewhat of an anomaly. Weather doesn't always cooperate. What no one really talks about is how our rest areas (Hollowel and Wrape plantation) doesn't hold 1/3 of the ducks it use to. Ducks are slowly but surely not using the woods like they use to do to mud motors. The game and fish (wardens) from my perspective are trying to create a crisis to help their case of making WMA's a draw. What I'm afraid of is that's what they want to help make their jobs easier.

Would love to see states embrace a wood duck season.

Flooded standing corn is not a normal Ag practice and therefore falls under the status as baiting. It is ruining duck hunting and dangerously concentrating waterfowl.

"Appreciate your approach to to the sport, and the information you share.

Not a duck conversation, but why aren't more people talking about the massive decline in the mid continent snow goose population? I'm not a goose hunter, but see the information that the state waterfowl biologist in Texas has shared. From my perspective, its surprising that the conservation order is still in effect up and down the flyway outside of Texas."

Flooded I harvested corn should be banned. I have access to about 1500 acres of private river bottom sloughs and there was maybe 200 ducks all year long on all of them combined this year.. it has gradually gotten worse the last 10 years.

The biggest threat to waterfowl hunting in todays world are uneducated, inexperienced so called hunters, influencers given a platform to spew their biased opinions to thousands of hunters when they wouldn't be allowed to speak at the local coffee shop.

"I believe there are more bird concentrates on few properties than ever. The major clubs have taken the lead of wildlife refuges and now have private refuges on which the feed and hold a lot of birds. When you combine this with warmer falls and you have fewer ducks migrating to the south and those that do are held by fewer people. As long as the rich few control the migration things will never be like people remember it being.

I think it's worth researching how much the influence of farm duck dna is impacting wild mallards. I wonder if it has made more mallards lazy and less likely to make a major migration."

Man what a survey. covered it all. I've been hunting central louisiana since about the 2012-2013 duck season. The 2 biggest things i haven't witnessed changes since then are

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1. the sheer number of hunters in my area and 2. the number of ducks after season opens. we always have birds before season, we did back then and do now but man they do not stick around liked they used too. the pressure in my area is concerning. every parking lot and boat ramp are full every saturday morning and even on week days From a kid in the 80s to today the duck populations have decreased just from observation every year. They should cut the season length and limit to 4 across the entire country. The prairie pothole counts are way skewed. You can't count bodies of water that dry up as productive waterfowl habitat.

Limits are too high and the season is too short. With the changing weather conditions the last 20 years, we need a more spread out season. The pacific flyway gets 107 days....all others should as well. Drop the daily limit to 3 ducks per day so people will get limits and leave the marsh earlier providing additional refuge to hold birds in the area. Truth be known...most hunters shooting 100 plus birds a year are not eating all of those ducks or are only eating the breasts and wasting the rest of the bird. Dropping the daily limit will make the harvest more valuable and fewer birds will go to waste. Many of these multiple choice questions were worded in a way that made them hard to answer. Very broad question and very Pointed, specific answer options. When it comes to negativity on social media, you guys are pulling the train, imo. Happy to share thoughts and hash it out if you Guys ever want to talk about things.

Hunt Iowa and Illinois mainly, then north central Missouri, we are mainly fly over up here, lot's of your questions don't pertain so much for us but keep up the great work down there, also very good friends with best conservationist of all the late Jeff Churan RIP buddy

Thank yall for putting this together, I sure hope receiving the data will help somehow the future of waterfowling. I sure would like our kids to have more quality hunting like it used to be, and also realize conservation is KEY to have the successful hunts.

Good job guys with the podcast.

I'm not big on taking surveys on stuff like this, and I am especially not big on getting involved with the podcast fad. But I feel obligated to take this survey and voice my opinions. The loudest ones in the room voicing for the most changes are the least experienced waterfowlers. 5% of the hunters will always harvest 95% of the ducks. Those 5% will find a way to get it done. They won't complain about season structures, low numbers, bag limits, and on and on and on. I get sick of hearing all the rookies piss and moan. Go put in the work and stop blaming your low success on everything else. One last thing, I don't understand the term "kill culture" I know when I go duck hunting whether it be solo or with some buddies I expect to kill limits. I don't wake up extremely early, fight the crowds on public land, throw out huge spreads, freeze my butt off wading in water in the winter months just to "hang out" if I wanted to hang out with

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some friends I can think of a way more comfortable environment. I'm not saying I don't enjoy being out there or being with my friends during the hunt but we are there to kill ducks. End of story.

"More focus needs to be placed on the ducks in Canada, as well the perils they face on their way down the flyway.

I'd be curious to see statistically, what percentage of the Early Season "Brown" ducks are hens. Additionally, I've mentioned this to you before, but I've watched clean farming in North Dakota firsthand, eliminate THOUSANDS of acres of former PPH nesting habitat. The farmers up North are currently incentivized to eliminate any and all standing water on their property to make room for more crops. Now, the real challenge is looking those same farmers in the eye and asking them to take earnings off the table to support our "sport". I'd be in support of increasing licensing/stamp fees ONLY if those funds were used 100 to support Waterfowl specific initiatives."

"Your questions are somewhat leading.

I don't necessarily disagree with some ideas you guys are floating out there but I do believe it's very apparent where this survey is leading."

I would like to see duck numbers return to previous amounts. I'm willing to do what it takes to see that happen. I don't know if the season length or limits is as big of problem as just the overall breeding habitat. But hopefully there are experts out there who will find the solution soon.

Number one priority is to reclaim as much breeding habitat we can in the PPR. More breeding habitat(as long as there is enough water) will produce more ducks generally speaking. How far south they go is a different story. Multiple factors come in to play there the largest being prolonged cold and snow cover/ice and availability of food and shelter. We can't change the weather and the longer ducks continue to imprint on places north of Missouri the less chance there is for seeing more ducks further south. Cutting harvest days, or by sex is only a stop gap measure to "hopefully" slow down population decline, though it may still not be significant until a population falls below a certain level.

"To be frank I find myself wanting more answers and I don't believe we'll ever know anything, but I think technological advancements and some forward thinking biologists are setting us on a path for new learning that will greatly outpace all we currently know or think we know about waterfowl and their migrations. That is exciting to me.

The two biggest questions I keep coming back to are the question of genetics and closing date. As for the game farm/genetic question: In a weird way I hope that is one of the major issues affecting duck migration. What I mean is I think that is a problem that is far easier to fix than changing weather patterns or habitat loss on the prairies.

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If these mutant mallards keep expressing traits that are not conducive to "traditional" migration habits, I believe waterfowl hunters will rally around that and we can either further regulate the release of game farm ducks or end it entirely.

The closing date question: I am admittedly driven by my own selfishness. The last 5 years I have leased in a historically good area for ducks in extreme southwest KY. It is an area that is well known in some circles but comparatively speaking to the Stuttgarts of the world still unknown and that is one thing that appeals to me. It is dependent on backwater from the Mississippi River. There are areas that can pump or hold water from rain events or shorter duration floods. We have leased a few different spots, or holes in this geographic area and now are fortunate enough to hunt with a group of people that have generational experience hunting this ground. Three generations totaling over 60 years (maybe more). What we have found and heard from those that know are obviously weather patterns are cyclical, but in this dryer/drought driven period we've been experiencing the last several years, late January has been the only time we've had enough water to hunt. Or at least enough water to attract the number of ducks into this area they "traditionally" experience. It is not "winter weather" that I am looking for but water quantity. I have basically lost at least half a season, if not more for 5 straight years. This season, the only day we shot full limits was the very last day of season (I know its not all about limits and I am not just about numbers, but merely as a measure of duck hunting success for this story). We had a local rain event the 30th and it helped water conditions. Again, this is from an admittedly selfish point of view. I answered this question in the body of the survey as wanting to close last Sunday in January. I think that is a fair compromise.

I hear and have always held the thought that the later we harvest ducks (mallards in particular I suppose) into January the more we impact pair bonds. I also listen to Dr. Schummer's waterfowl podcasts and in a recent episode he touched on this topic and said the only study (or maybe the only peer reviewed or published study) on this topic was not clear enough to indicate this idea is as rock solid as I have always heard and believed. If I understood and remember correctly he even said it was conducted on captive mallards. Say that to say if I am wrong in my current understanding, and the data is undeniable in that we are causing irreparable harm from hunting until January 31 then I will change my opinion and gladly support an earlier closing date. The closing day hunt I mentioned earlier I did notice pair bonds, but not exclusively. We saw and worked several groups of mallards also, I don't know what to make of that but I was paying attention to it throughout the hunt.

I know the weather changes so this may well be a moot point to me personally next season. But, in this current trend we seem to be experiencing in the mid south a closing date of, say January 15 would put me in a situation where I may or may not even hunt or have an opportunity to hunt. That sounds dramatic but that is what I've experienced personally.

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I really enjoy the podcast, thank you all for what you're doing. To be fair I also enjoy Dr. Schummer's and I have to laugh sometimes at the shots taken back and forth but I think each of you all genuinely want what's best for the ducks and the duck hunters so I consume and enjoy them both."

Good Luck

I think the majority of our problems are stemming from years of drought on the PPR, lack of habitat (huge increase in tiling in the dakotas and not enough incentive for private landowners to keep seasonal wetlands on their properties), pressure, and warmer winters. All of the finger pointing done about "ThE cOrN iN mIsSoUrI" short stopping birds and many other arguments are mouth breathing conjecture for the most part.

Change the waterfowl treaty act back to having to make an attempt to harvest crops and not being allowed to flood food. This is no different than baiting.

Kill mentality, influencers, and liberal season & bag limits up north are the top 3 biggest problems.

"I very much remember when I got into duck hunting, then fondly remember helping out a guide service in NEA in college for a place to hunt. I difference in birds between then and now is staggering. Furthermore, I have hunted some historic places/club over the years, as well as now, and the stories of the ""old timers"" are slowly fading with the ducks. One day those that care will only hear those stories in a distant memory. We have operated the last 10 years on the lonesome hen principle (long story, slightly tree hugger) where by we are done hunting when the ""lonesome hen"" occurs. Most years this has been within the first 15 days of January, historically around the second week of January.

Our blind holds 3 grown ups or four total with kiddos, even with the declining number of birds we generally still have what we consider great success. With that said, for context, consider the above, plus we dont shoot hens. Our long term average is 5 ducks per hunt, almost 100% greenheads and gadwalls. Only twice in the last 2 years have we harvested more than 8 total on any day. Typically 4-6 is enough for us and we are out of the bayou by 9:30-10 am. We will take pics and send them to individuals, but rarely if ever post on social media (my last bird pic on social was pre 2022).

Hope any and all of this provides information, I appreciate the effort you guys are making and slowly think its starting to ring true with more people. I still want to believe that the old timer stories are possible once again, and I wish for my Daughter (12 hunting now) and my son (4) to be able to see and enjoy it."

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Social media/culture has created the feeling of a 'bad hunt' if you don't have a "pile picture" every time you go hunting. Reality is if you hunt several times a season you have a couple great days, some good days and some slim days but it's not about the killing, it's about the experience.

"I don't personally believe things are as doom and gloom as some others do. I'm not pushing for a 30 day 3 duck total limit. As someone from Arkansas, I can only speak for here but I think our biggest issue is pressure, habitat and lack of waste grain. Ag fields are not flooded on the scale they used to be, and every puddle has a pit and a spread on it that's leased out for 10k a season. We need to be in the business creating more habitat, reducing pressure where possible, and stop creating more idiots that make the sport look bad.

Too many people trying to make money off of these birds and too many people out there without someone to teach them the right ways of doing things."

Love y'all's podcast

I feel that the sport is growing and if the data suggests it is not, the average hunter has become more effective. Between drones, phone GPS apps and mud motors, there is no hole unturned on public land. Although the public lands are a small % of land in each state, the public lands serve as the last of the optimal habitat for wintering waterfowl in OK at least. With this we need to see our organizations looking to make more ducks and then have the habitat to support these birds. This goes for wintering and breeding grounds. It is the only way to maintain a liberal season and limit if we keep having poor PPR conditions each spring. I will be curious to see what an optimal PPR spring yields, but until then, we need to see change before it is too late. Any true waterfowler should aim to do what's best for the birds.

"We have to work on improving habitat and we have to have Canada play ball; decrease their daily limits and push seasons back.

Like I said earlier, it will take everyone working together if we want to see the continuation of waterfowl hunting for our kids and grandkids to enjoy. Stop shooting every damn thing that flies in front of you and be selective."

Season should end earlier up north and stay open later down south.

Taught at a young age that scouting and understanding duck movements is the key to having successful hunts. Hunting the same area and spots over and over doesn't work very well. My success and enjoyment of duck hunting is providing habitat mainly through wet soil management in the off season and than scouting daily during the hunting season. Suggest Social Media put more focus on the severe drought conditions in breeding areas and the impact this has on the numbers of migratory birds we see in

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the winter. 95% of our efforts today should be on making the breeding grounds the best they can be for ducks under the current weather condition in the breeding grounds.

great job with the podcast

"Personally, I believe harvest and pressure are 2 things that can be controlled much easier and quicker than habitat changes. With that being said, I do believe fixing the issue starts in the PPR of northern US and Canada. The habitat loss over the years is staggering and not getting any better. Knowing that things like this take time to change, I'd like to see limits and total days allowed decrease. Will that help? We don't know unless we try. And we haven't tried anything new in many years. Yes I've seen the data that suggests harvest numbers are negligible when it comes to total duck numbers. But to play devils advocate, why is it then that we have a 2 hen limit vs 4? Why can we only shoot 1-2 pintails (depending on year) vs 6, etc? There must be a break over point somewhere or market hunting and punt guns would still be legal. It was determined way back in those days that the population was being decimated. So let's go to 45 and 4 or 30 and 3 and see what that does while we focus some efforts on fixing habitat conditions up north and here at home on the wintering grounds.

I also believe that the commercialization of this sport will ultimately be the end of it. So many businesses and investors are involved in waterfowl hunting now because of the almighty dollar. The majority of them (influencers included) are not using their platform to inform/teach/bring awareness. The threat of decreased season dates/limits would hurt the bottom line of waterfowl related companies. Which is why I'm hesitant to believe we will see real change. I hope I'm wrong, but money is power."

As a land owner, I would love to know what I can do better and that starts with gaining knowledge. I should be more attentive.

"Until the resource recovers: I am in favor of eliminating all out of state guides and outfitters completely, a 45 to 60-day season, end the duck hunting day at noon, maybe limit duck hunting days to Wednesday - Sunday only, reducing daily harvest limits to 4-ducks total and 2-whitefronted geese. Limit the number of Out of State hunting licenses sold.

The waterfowl resource is a natural resource and not a commercial resource and needs to be treated as such; or it will be lost. If AGFC relies on license sales, the it may need the State to increase its direct funding."

Some days I disagree with the podcast but it always makes me think. I just hate to hear we'll never see duck numbers come back. If they would of thought that in the 50s and 60s where would the wild turkey be. I know you can't always blow sunshine but I

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think we can with better weather conditions and maybe look at lower bag limits. Keep up the good work enjoy the show even if I disagree sometimes.

Always appreciate you guys touching on conservation & policy.

Thank you!! I appreciate you

Wish there would have been a N/A box to some of these questions. By not answering it leaves issues in order posted, creating misleading answers.

Great job doing what you are doing. It looks like from social media and texting to all my hunting buddies. 99% of the people are seeing the red flashing lights danger on the population. The number one point that always ends every conversation is , we all know the fixes it's just who will fix it and when. I think if we could find out and make public knowledge who needs hit with letters. Emails, social media call outs on how bad it is. Things would change quicker. It's harder to find Jimmy Hoffa than know who is in charge of making the regulations and who/ what they decide during these meetings and what data are they using to decide things are good enough to just keep doing the same 60/6. That's the puzzling part

"I've been hunting ducks since I was a kid in the 80's. I remember 30 days & 3 ducks very well. I think we should go back to that for now until conditions improve on the PPR. Doubt there will be enough nesting habitat for the population to fully recover to NAWMP levels even if the prairies get wet.

Enjoy the podcast and have been telling my hunting buddies about it. Thanks for having Dave Rave on. Wish Dr Mike would pipe down about harvest doesn't matter..."

Hope we can start to make a change in duck hunting and save the sport before it's gone

At some point we've got to start managing the resource. If something doesn't change, I'm afraid I won't be able to pass this lifestyle on to my grandkids. At this point I'm not sure I want to. It as poor as it's ever been and more expensive than it's ever been. At some point it's just not worth it. I'm not sure what my "line" is, but I can't be too far from it. Every year the lease payments go up and the experience goes down.

Waterfowl hunting is very much turning into a rich mans game.

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The podcast is way over my head when it comes to BPOP, May Pond, etc. I more so enjoy hearing from other hunters & the data observed in season. There's certainly a place for the numbers talk, just not my thing.

Lots of variables. Sportsman need to continue to carry the flag and sound an alarm when needed. Thank you for exploring these topics as they are a passion of mine. God speed!

"You guys are doing an amazing job. My uncles have been preaching what yall do and I'm glad I have this to listen to to educate me more.
Yall need to start an apparel shop and sell tshirts"

One habitat issue I feel like we don't talk about enough is the extreme agriculture profiting and over production of ancient wetlands. More incentive should be given to farmers to leave some of their ground AS IS. Just because we can till up an acre and plant doesn't mean we should. I think habitat loss, both in the PPR and even here in AR can be attributed to farming

"With seasons going down hill the past 5 years every camp fire conversation at every duck camp I was a part of this past season was a thoughtful discussion of concerned hunters that were desperately trying to understand what was going wrong and looking for answers on how they could help turn things around. Sadly most folks are lost with no answers. Problem 1 is hunters aren't educated enough about the situation to advocate for informed solutions. I only found your podcast this year and have been telling everyone i know. The education you're providing on the podcast is by far the best resource for concerned hunters trying to learn about the problem & understand it better - so we're making improvement on that front. Problem 2 is we need change and there are thousands of hunters who want to make it happen but they don't know how. From your podcast survey to the public timber project to other movements, I'm seeing more people actively looking for ways to get involved. We need serious organization & coordination amongst all the organizations, podcasts, hunting camps, etc. to make our voices heard and engage in a meaningful way to fix the problems in waterfowl. it won't be easy, we need change all the way from Canada to Mexico and we can only control or try to impact our individual states. But we are in Arkansas - the duck hunting capital of the world - and the world looks to us to set the tone and be the change leader in whatever way we try to improve the situation whether its through SWDs, season dates,

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hen bag limits, etc. We have to start somewhere. We must be the example for others to follow.

My final unrelated idea to share - we need to use the human resource of our hunters. What I mean is their physical labor and efforts. We have so many people who would spend a Saturday or a weekend working on our WMA's as volunteers or doing any other kind of work towards a project that would make waterfowling better. Imagine how many people would show up for a work day if the AGFC told everyone that if you volunteer and work on this weekend at the XYZ WMA then we will give these work week volunteers the exclusive hunting rights to this XYZ WMA on opening day, or a designated weekend during the season, or we'll give you double entries into a draw hunt or property. Imagine how easily you could assemble 1,000 people to show up for free and work on a project if you offered some kind of reward like that. I know men with shovels can't build a levee as quickly and easily as a backhoe can, but there must be some way that we can utilize this untapped human resource to plant/manage moist soil units, replant oak seedlings, clear debris from existing ditches or water control structures, etc. I'm sure the AGFC could find a way to put 1,000 hunters to work for 1-2 days in a productive way that would improve our habitat or hunting opportunity."

I would like to see changes sooner than later. If we wait too long then I am afraid it will be hard to get back to where we were before.

"As I have said before, it is complex, from public to private land, pressure, bag limits, season lengths, mud motors on refuges all day and into the evening, mechanical decoys, Canada/Mexico/South America.

One thing we know, history is a blueprint for the future...the tough decisions made in the 80s led to the boom in the 90s-early 2000s. Shorter seasons AND reduced limits!"
Habitat and pressure are the two major factors in my opinion
A lot of work has to be done to turn this thing around. This is not a chart going up and down. It's a downward trend. If something don't change I hate to see what it will be like in 10 years.

The nesting habitat needs to be the number one concern of all hunters. The number two concern is hunting pressure. Mallard habits have changed greatly over the years. There has to be a way to limit hunting pressure by stopping hunting at noon or before for a large portion of the season. Draws for public land would improve hunting quality.

CLOSING COMMENTS

I figured out a long time ago that I'm not a college football coach, lawyer or waterfowl biologist. I have some opinions in all of these areas, but I defer to the people who do it for a living every day.

A comparison survey of state and federal waterfowl biologists would be interesting.

"I hate to be all doom and gloom but it's scary to see "leading scientists" deny and fight everything. What's the harm in taking the conservative approach? After all the word "conservative" is in conservation. The point, in my mind, is to conserve resources not exploit.

You guys are putting wood on the fire, keep it going! There is a movement gaining momentum. Keep using your platform for good. God bless!"

"The mentality of duck hunters needs to change. None of us are doing this because we have to. Not even guides. There's plenty of ways to put food on the table these days. We're here to have fun, and enjoy it. Not to kill 87 limits everyday.

Glad these types of surveys/conversations are happening. I truly believe all of this begins at the PPR and habitat in general. Obviously we may be deep enough in trouble where hunting regs do need to be adjusted, season lengths, limits, spinners, etc. However, if habitat is improved then populations improve. And if populations improve, then there's not even talks about adjusting these other items."

Appreciate what yall do. I think the narrative on social media is pressure from out of stater these days (AR issue). However, I think that's a localism my ducks mindset and doesn't accomplish anything conservative wise - 5,000 mallards will die on opening weekend at DD regardless of who's in there. We need to get ahold of our limit guidelines in Arkansas. The Praries are decimating the hatchling population that we desperately need. Removing spinners, lowering limits up there and here, putting water down here on public rest areas that are state owned. There is no sense in Apple Lake at Dagmar being at 20% coming into season these days. That rest area, just 6 years ago, would be holding 10k plus ducks on opener. This year there might have been 500 in there. I don't know the answers for sure. I think Dr Osborne had great thoughts about converting some sections of these wmas into moist soil. Bottom line. We need resources for the ducks and we need to stop shooting multiple hens. Rambling over.

You guys are the tip of the spear. A voice of reason amongst a sea of false information. Don't stop doing what your are doing! Continue the advocacy and stick with the science. You all have more support than you realize. I suspect that you have a broad base of more mature listeners that have the economic power to power your mission. You guys should start a legislative impact effort and solicit donor support. I would contribute. The answer to the duck decline lies in the science and common sense.

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Hunting harvest is absolutely not compensatory and all efforts should be to reduce days and protect our hens so that when conditions on the praries return, populations can begin to rebound. From the experts on your show, you CAN absolutely stock pile ducks and more importantly hens.

Flooded crops have condensed the waterfowl population to much smaller ranges. Ducks don't spread out like they used to, and become patterned very quickly. I have been able to adjust and still hunt consistently, but it's made it much harder for the average hunter.

Appreciate this. We need more education for our younger hunters, if they knew more I believe they would conserve more.

"Incentive the PPR even more for the next Farm Bill. Have it make sense for the farmers to protect those areas. There's enough \$\$\$ to make that happen.

Promoting CRP around the PPR will only help duck numbers."

"I believe the climate has a natural cycle that has a major impact on waterfowl migration. The agricultural practices in many states have contributed to the lack of migration but is ultimately due to warmer winters that will ultimately cycle back in time. The most challenging question is what will the long term affect be on migration when the temperatures start to swing back to the colder side. My thought is the waterfowl will be hesitant to migrate further south due to ample food sources. Arkansas' title of "Duck Capital" could possibly be lost, but time will tell if it can be recovered over the next 20-30 years.

I do also believe that the extended season in Missouri is counter to the number of birds that stay in that state. The pressure will only start to climb and Missouri will see the same affects that AR has seen with the non-resident hunting pressure. I do believe that Missouri does do a better job of managing their public access areas and will ultimately cause a drastically increased commercialization of their waterfowl hunting."

Northern Missouri is holding all of the birds and giving them no reason, other than weather, to fly south which impacts hunters along the flyways in southern states. Pressure is the worlds biggest thing against a duck hunter with that over abundance of habitat to the north that they never get locked out of (and yes I'd do the same thing as long as it was legal but acre limits need to be put on food)

"Canada should have the same bag limit as we do. SWD's should not be used in Canada or in the US for that matter. The hatch year birds are 66x more susceptible than non

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hatch year birds. Mickey Heitmeyer gave a presentation to the flyway council a few years ago about the death cross, age distribution in the south. Everyone needs to hear that presentation. It's sobering and a great summary of why hunters in the south are struggling with mallard numbers. Wildlife management requires that we give more than we take. Too many hunters and outfitters today are only takers. Group sizes and pile pics will ruin this sport. Sky busting is a real problem. In the 1980's research showed nearly 70% of Canada geese had lead shot from non-fatal hits. Probably similar for the ducks now. Mexico is a shit show. They bait, they don't adhere to limits.

Some biologist actually believe that harvest has no impact on population, that's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. There's not enough objective info to keep some people from talking themselves in to some BS because they get pressure from outfitters. These same biologists now claim that we should open FWS refuges to hunting, like FDR didn't know what he was doing when he established them in 1937. Wildlife sanctuary doesn't mean that we hunt it.... they need the areas to be left alone.

We have to pull back on something. We can't keep putting this much pressure on ducks. We are raping the resource. I have 4 young kids, I want them to be able to teach their kids to hunt someday.

Too many paper ducks, not enough science to back up anything we are using to base our liberal seasons on.

I pray for our future as hunters and conservationists. I will continue to bleed to provide exceptional habitat, and to provide quality hunting experiences, but not to the detriment of the resource.

Waterfowling attracts the addictive personalities, they don't know when enough is enough. Discipline is the one thing money can't buy. Lord knows we need it to turn this thing around."

"Ducks being imprinted to sanctuaries is the number one reason people don't see any ducks anymore.

Mud motors are the number one issue on public land they need to be banned period.

Guide services need to be banned. Guide services 100% promote kill culture.

As long as we have a commission full of wealthy private land hunters, just like the ones running this survey, things will never change.

This survey was one of the most ridiculously biased surveys I have ever taken."

Arkansas public is overcrowded with duck hunters.

CLOSING COMMENTS

"Large hunting parties are damaging our hunting and the out of state hunters have a lack of respect for our fantastic habitat. Out of state hunters need to pay much higher fees and have limited hunting on public lands.

The game wardens need to get in the woods at wma's and stop the abuse of the rules."

I like the pod cast. Try and get more habitat related content.

It is beyond time to make a change. 4 duck limit with 40 days minimum. I know deep down it's the money that duck hunting brings in that has kept the rule makers heads in the sand for so many years when it comes to dropping back the dates and limits. I can somewhat empathize with that thought, but nothing in life is guaranteed and the duck population doesn't need to continue to suffer to ensure that your massive duck club purchase doesn't decline in value or your diner/hunter lodging in Stuttgart doesn't fail. If something doesn't change, that will likely eventually happen anyway.

Thank you for this survey. Thank you for caring about waterfowl!

I think they should lower the over all duck limit to 4 not 6

In my opinion, up north heating ponds and leaving crops in the field after season is what's hurting our hunting in Arkansas. Also, we haven't gotten the weather we used to get before 2016-2017. It doesn't snow and get cold and stay cold up North to force the ducks to migrate anymore.

"In my opinion, the largest issue regarding the less favorable hunting seasons (in Arkansas) the past few years is the number of ducks.

How do we create more ducks? We need more ducks breeding in the breeding grounds AND fewer ducks being killed down the flyways. We need to cut the number of days and the number of people allowed to kill ducks in some fashion. I also think Canada is one of the biggest contributors to fewer ducks. They shoot many juvy's before they get the chance to leave the breeding grounds. Juvy's are the future... just like humans. We need to protect them as much as possible."

"Lower overall mallard limit and 1 hen. Ban all electronic decoys public and private. Lower limits in Canada. Pour more money into PPR.

Ban hunting over unharvested crops!

Non-res draw system for Arkansas to reduce pressure."

Proud to be associated with Osage Basin Wetlands in central Missouri...feed them going south and feed them going north 🦆

There's many contributing factors as in a decrease in duck numbers. Lack of rest areas. Increased pressure. Disturbance. Milder winters. A decrease in limit and shorter season

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is something me and others are willing to sacrifice to see a better population. 28 years of waterfowl hunting I have definitely seen a change

Agencies need to act now before it's too late. I have hunted waterfowl for 70 years and we are definitely seeing a decline in Mallards every year. Need to shorten season reduce limits . Hunting needs to stop at noon most of the season. Needs to be a draw on all WMAs.

"In short, I believe there's a lot of negative things about the waterfowl industry that are blown out of proportion.

With that being said there are very real problems specifically in relation to the guiding industry that absolutely need to be addressed.

I think the season limit's need to be regulated by biologists that are actually doing field work, and not influenced by people's feelings on social media. I think there needs to be a nation wide understanding of putting more into the conservation of the animals we hunt, than we take. The belief that this "renewable resource" does not require the work of all individuals who partake in hunting is a false reality that unfortunately many hunters live in.

In summary, I think most hunters at the end of the day mean well in their ideology of the waterfowl industry, however they let a few loud voices dictate the way they perceive the industry."

"We have a serious problem. The duck population will continue to decline if we don't make some changes. We all have to become conservationists if we want to leave something for the future. The WMAs have a hunter behind every tree. Not enough areas for a duck to become comfortable in its environment to ever want to return. We are killing as many ducks with over pressure as we are with a gun. I believe we need to cut the limits on Mallards to include no hens. I'm seeing a 5to1 Drake Mallards to Mallard Hens and sometimes more. This will ultimately be the demise of Mallards over the next 20 years if something isn't done. There are some hard choices ahead of us and if we refuse to make them to protect what we've grown to love then it's on us. It's gotten out of control because of the all mighty dollar but we as ethical hunters have the opportunity to do the right thing as long as our voices are heard and not pushed aside because of money. Thank you for your time.

Brian Madar"

I appreciate you guys seeking to put some fact and science behind the opinions and conversations y'all have on the podcast.

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Landowners should have to drain fields and fill fields after season as season goes out

"Ducks Unlimited has become the southern waterfowl hunter's biggest enemy. Was Chairman of my local chapter for years and now have lost all respect for the organization as a whole."

Just want to continue to be able to hunt for years to come. If we continue to just kill hens the populations will continue to go down.

"FARM BILL!

We must protect the PPR. We've lost millions of acres in just a few short years to expired government programs, drought and standard farming practices.

If we can't protect this there isn't a resource to fly south..... doesn't help there are more hunters than ever before thanks to social media making it "cool"

Reduce pressure in afternoons on WMAs, maybe even as far as having no hunt days during the week.

In my opinion the season should not start until December 1st and end February 20th!! With respect to hunting over unharvested grain, I would be open to restrictions on leaving whole fields or some reasonable acreage restriction. It is one thing to be unable to get a combine into a flooded field during harvest, but 80 acres of unharvested corn on a zero-grade field is baiting. I think there is a way to clarify at the policymaker level, but I need to do more research.

Fix the hybridized mallard problem

Arkansas is in a steady decline concerning the duck population. Arkansas unable to withstand duck hunting pressure that currently exists. Worried about future!

"Close season federally no later than January 15.

No more than 1 hen mallard.

45 days max 30 would be fine with me"

Large land owners that own clubs have no place in decision making for Public Lands or rest areas...in the same County!!

"I've been duck hunting for as long as I can remember, but 12 was when I really started carrying a shotgun and holding my own. Since then, I've hunted as much as possible, traveling all over the country chasing these incredible birds. Now at 32, with a young son of my own, I want to make sure he has the same opportunities to experience and love this sport as much as I do.

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I truly believe reducing the overall limit to four birds, with no more than three mallards (one hen max), for a few years could be beneficial. I'd love to see the impact over five years and adjust accordingly. Party hunting is another issue. Personally, I don't see the need to hunt with 15+ guys. Maybe I'm just a hater, but I'd rather be in the blind or next to a tree with two to five close buddies—guys who appreciate the hunt as much as I do. I miss the days of hunting at Black River before the mud motors and big groups took over. Three to five guys in a hole, working mallards, picking out greenheads, and shooting ducks at 15-25 yards down in the hole instead of skybusting—that's the way it should be.

I'll admit, when I was younger, I was all about the pile pictures. But at some point, that changed. Now, I just enjoy each hunt for what it is—watching the birds work, seeing them do their thing without even knowing you're there. That's the trick to this game—making them believe everything is normal and just being lucky enough to be part of it. The kill is only a small part of it; what really matters is how you get that bird in range.

Same goes for turkeys, my other obsession. I wouldn't mind seeing Mississippi move to a two-bird limit and implement a tag system to help manage the population better.

At the end of the day, I just want what's best for the birds and the future of this sport. I know we can't control everything—there will always be people who push the limits and take advantage—but as long as I'm alive, I'll be a duck hunter. And I want to leave the best possible future for my son and every young hunter coming up behind us"

I think we need to do everything we can to increase the duck population. The trends are alarming to me. We need to devote public, private and conservation organization funds to saving and restoring the PPR. The season should be shortened on the back end to prevent shooting of paired ducks. We have to respond to the trends of duck population.

AHMP is flawed Needs to be investigated

42 years of hunting Dave Donaldson Black River WMA and can confirm that Hunting pressure in the form of too many people specifically non-residents, and noise from mud motors, modified outboards and boom boxes has pretty much ruined public land duck hunting in Arkansas—as in ducks don't use the woods like they once did. Need to control access in favor of Residents and eliminate the current regulations that create the 4 AM boat races. Also need to reduce party size and numbers of boats allowed on a given day. Example—over 1300 vehicles were at the 7 DD boat ramps each day of opening weekend—this doesn't count hunters that already have boats in the river. Also saw the

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same non-residents all season even though there is a 30 day limit which apparently is not being enforced. Reducing Hunting pressure on WMA's should be the top priority of the AGFC. Thank you

"I feel that a lot of birds were held in Missouri and other Northern States during the later season in Arkansas. We obviously had plenty of geese in Arkansas county and surrounding areas. Although, most people had a terrible season, due to the lack of ducks/ amount of people hunting public ".

The sportsmanship is nonexistent in today's hunting.

Jackson Mulloy"

A huge help would be predator control on breeding grounds.. we need to stop flooding unharvested grains especially the corn. Growing moist soil units is an excellent idea everywhere. Mallard limits should be lowered to 4 and only 1 hen. Maybe even a total duck per day limit decrease for a few seasons until duck numbers improve. But mostly I think evidence is clear... unharvested corn is changing things and has been for a long time

Even on a three year slide in duck numbers , it's still the greatest sport I have tried.

"I have enjoyed listening to your guess.

There is definitely a concern with seeing less ducks in Louisiana. It is a combination of multiple issues. I would start by decreasing limits and days which I hate to do , but I believe it needs to be done sooner than later.

I also believe the crops need to be harvested. We have too many hungry people in the US."

"I hunt in Saskatchewan every year, use spinning wing decoys and shot hens. On the flip side I own and manage a property specifically for ducks and spend a substantial amount of money on providing quality habitat for ducks. I am a bit conflicted now if I'm doing the right things for the resource and giving back more than I take.

Thanks for putting this survey together and I hope the results will make an impact."

Keep season length and reduce limits

Would hate to see a resource parish, but in the South, they are already considered a scarcity. Waterfowl used to be fun, but now, the limited success and poor results do not offset the level of effort and work required to take part in the sport.

I'm 24 years old and started hunting 50+ days in the 2016 season until this past year when I went 12 times because year after year it's a extremely noticeable population

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decline and it's not worth fighting all the public guys for a limited amount of ducks. It's unbelievable to me that I'm 24 and can see that just in the past 4 years it's gone so downhill and agfc is doing absolutely nothing to help. There's something money related behind them not changing frameworks, that is the only possible thing I can think of for how nothing has changed. We have to lower to 3 mallards and 1 hen it's just basic knowledge that a dead hen will not lay eggs so lower limit and all it can do is help. Once again this is coming from a 24 year old which is what blows my mind so much on how these older guys in the commission can't see how bad it's gotten and are not willing to change frameworks, someone is getting paid off to not change these liberal seasons it's so obvious because they (agfc) is doing nothing.

Commercialization of waterfowl hunting is bad. Constant pressure every single day from guide services. No rest for the birds. Hen harvest is bad reduce to 1. Very poor DNR surveys post season are inaccurate. Pile pics and "the cool dude" vibe on social media has attracted some of the worst people into the sport. Cook what you kill mentality is totally absent.

As an ardent duck hunter who travels to hunt (and has been traveling to hunt before social media made it cool) in various states on public land one thing I take issue with is social media influencers profiting by shooting videos and or taking photos of them duck hunting on public land. As a deterrent measure I believe all photos and videos taken on public ground that are intended to be used in a commercial manner should be taxed at a reasonable rate by the state in which they were taken. Additionally, each "sponsor" of the video should have to pay an additional tax for the profits they are deriving from the use of the video/photos taken on public lands. Furthermore, each location of all photos and videos taken, intended for commercial use on public lands, should have their exact coordinates listed as a footnote at the bottom of each photo/video/scene. Any person found to be producing fraudulent coordinates will be subject to a \$25,000 penalty. Social media influencers who use public lands to shoot their photos/videos should also have to register and obtain a license that is specifically for producing "content" on public lands. Finally, as a condition of becoming a properly licensed influencer who shoots content on public land ALL photos and videos taken on public lands, regardless if they will be posted on social media or put into production, are subject to review upon request by the state game and fish agency in which the photo/video was taken.

"One of the biggest issues I see that doesn't get talked about is clients hunting in Canada and not registering the birds they ""donate"". I think its a joke that people can go up to Canada, shoot limits of ducks, donate them, and Canada/US have no way of tracking those kills. Outfitters should have to log every bird that is killed throughout the year.

CLOSING COMMENTS

I also think its a joke that there are no limits in Mexico, and then we act shocked when bird numbers don't increase."

I truly think that the lack of weather and water the past several years has hurt the state of Arkansas and really any state south of Missouri. However, I truly believe that there is a decline in waterfowl numbers. They are losing breeding habitat by the day and this will never have a positive impact on the mallard duck. I think there needs to be something done quickly about the breeding habitats in the north. However, this is a long term fix and we will likely not see a change from one season to the next. Where a quick, visible change will occur is limiting the days in the field to 30-45 and taking the mallard hen limit down to 1 or 0 I think this will make the most drastic change. Put these two together and I think in 5-10 years we can get back on track to where we were. All I know is the track we are going on is not working well and something needs to change.

I believe everyone has the same common goal. I believe social media has put a bad taste in most sportsman's mouth due to the "limit At no cost" pics and videos. Expectations are impossible to reach. I truly believe in what yall are doing and I am excited to see where the future goes. I am genuinely worried about PPR and the pressure we are putting on these young ducks in Canada.

I don't think spinners work the same in the south as they do in the north. I've used them in Canada and I've seen what they do. It's not the same down here. They can be used to attract birds from a distance but Finishing them over spinners is almost more difficult once you get in the south. They should be banned on the breeding grounds for the first portion of the season. Let them use them later in the season when a large portion of the hatch year birds have migrated

"45 days

4 ducks daily limit country wide

No mud motors on wma/ fed land

Hunting ends at 12:00 noon

Restrictions on Canada and Mexico harvest

Hunting ends at 12 noon (Wednesday no hunting)

I know it's an unattainable wish list but it's mine anyway."

I am not a climate change denier and I don't think humans are the cause of the change we have seen over the last 40 yrs. Weather affects the hunting in Arkansas. Farming practices have changed and it is deleterious to our hunting in AR. Winter habitat with food has changed the migration. I would like to see harvest data confirming that hypothesis.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Without a major Farm Bill Set Aside program in both Canada and the US, the only way we can influence waterfowl populations is by reducing harvest. To reduce harvest, the best means is to reduce the number of days hunted. This should include having fewer total days, and eliminating zones and splits (what good is a 30 day season if you split your state into several days so that the hunters end up hunting 60 days anyway?). A habitat set aside program with a more conservative set of hunting regulations would be ideal.

Keep up the good work. I don't always agree with everyone's position on some topics but love being forced to think about things differently.

Hunting regs on WMA's has to change. Motor size restrictions on AGFC controlled water should be a max of 25HP. No mud motors on AGFC controlled waters. Out of state hunting on WMA's should be on a draw basis and the total number should be restricted. Violations of WMA regs should result in larger fines/penalties. White fronted goose guides should be having to pay a couple of grand each for speck hunting.

Thank you for doing this; I hope that good for ducks comes from it. I am blessed to have a 10 year old son that loves everything outdoors including duck hunting, but I'm not sure the sunrises, hot chocolate and breakfast in the blind will serve as fillers for ducks forever. For as long as they do and he's willing, I'll have him out there early and often.

We really need people to understand that harvesting hens and shooting at long range birds doesn't help the sport or the image of waterfowl hunting.

In the areas that I hunt, food and water are typically available from year to year. Some years are better, some are worse. The biggest noticeable change for us is late and shortened winter/snowfall and the explosive abundance of outfitters putting daily pressure on waterfowl and cranes. Most noticeable in the last 3-4 years. Notably in Texas, we had 2-3 full time guides in a 50 mile area, now there is 28 in addition to the freelancers. Money is being thrown and opportunities are being lost to the common man. I can't blame a land owner for getting paid to have a crop protected but most of these outfitters would be gone with proper regulations on licensing just as saltwater charters are required. We used to winter 500k-1m lessers on a yearly basis in a 10sq mile area of peanut and playa country. After a major 2012 drought they have rapidly declined in our area and we've seen specks replace them. We went from a 2 speck limit in the (5 bird) dark aggregate to 5 specks in the dark aggregate just this season. Speck numbers have been declining faster than they grew with the explosion of outfitters in 10 short years. In the 10 years of the speck explosion, we've gone from ~150-300k specks in a 10 sq mile area to maybe 15-50k depending on time of year with heavy heavy guiding pressure pushing them out quick.

I truly believe the main two issues are allowing flooded fields with standing corn in the upper and Midwestern states. Something has to be done to allow the waterfowl a natural

CLOSING COMMENTS

Must improve habitat at breeding ground!! Must reduce OVERALL number of ducks killed each season. The sport is becoming over commercialized and a big money game. Public property overcrowding must be addressed and better synchronized or ducks will continue to move to larger private land tracts that are better managed the wealthy.

Guiding operations have made it tougher and more expensive for me to lease land over the last 15 years. I think we need lots of rain in the prairies

Love your discussions and topics. My opinions align with you guys. Almost all of my long time hunting friends don't hunt anymore because of the lack of ducks. I will go to my grave duck hunting. I love to watch them and call them in with just decoys. I rarely shoot any more and still lease one farm to just hold ducks on. More drastic changes need to be made and the economic impact on a state needs to be pushed aside with the resource population being the focus. Born and raised here in Arkansas and still own my childhood home in the state and will continue to visit my haunts in hopes of seeing more waterfowl with my son and my grandkids. I want my legacy to be the love of the resource not the numbers I have taken.

"I believe the ducks are in far worse condition as far as Bpop than we are told. We all may have to sacrifice days for the long term benefit of the Bpop. I don't want 3 / 30 day season but I feel like that's where we should have been for the last 5 years.

Regarding the limit, I feel like we should all strive to eliminate shooting hens of any species. I know this is unrealistic as accidents happen and sometimes hen hunting mortality is an unintended consequence of shooting into a group of ducks, but, any effort to reduce and or eliminate hen mortality will help. The thought that hunting mortality doesn't matter is insane! Every hen we send back has at least a chance to breed, the ones we shoot will never get the chance. Overall my personal seasons the last 5 years have been trending down in numbers harvested, but remain good enough to justify the effort and expense. But I do feel like we are going to hunt out way into a Bpop disaster. "" Ballot box "" biology and season frameworks must address Bpop not opportunity!

I feel like the southern end of the flyway is headed north. Prime example SWLA, not entering into Arkansas. Arkansas and all other southern tier states will suffer the same fate as La, if we all don't act now.

Great work and message with the podcast. Keep up the good work.

Best Regards"

CLOSING COMMENTS

Re: shooting hens—needed a plain “always try not to”. I wouldn’t assume that “but will on a slow day” should be paired with “try not to”. Otherwise good luck with the survey, can’t wait to hear what you learn.

“I hope that people realize that even if we manage across a flyway, things are entirely different in Michigan than what they are in Minnesota, and different from Arkansas to Louisiana.

Seems like Arkansas has the loudest voice and their problems are none of my own. I care about Arkansas waterfowl and waterfowlers, their success and their season. I care about the wintering grounds. I don’t feel the same concern when it comes to the northern part of the flyway, our seasons, or our harvest.”

Over regulation is never a good thing. I support shell limits to keep from sky busting and ruining others hunting near. Setup a 200 yard rule

I’ve hunted the same farm for 20 years. It was duck central for years. Since the introduction of unregulated access to the “channel” of the Cache River north of the public ramp on Hwy 38, paired with loud mud motors, we don’t see the numbers of ducks on the farm that we used to. “Scouting” by boat should be limited to public land hunting hours (no afternoon joy rides), either by regulations or by common friggin sense.

I hear the comments that we are killing too many but everyone I have talked to says they ain’t killing shit. So is the big name club guys killing 1000s a year because they have food,water, and no pressure. Could they be killing populations along with the bad habit in the prairie pot hole region. Seasons need to be shorter if we are killing too many.

Weather and feed up north has substantially changed the migration of ducks...most never get past Arkansas and most teal stop in south Louisiana now...Louisiana will never be what it once was

“Season should End Jan 31, and count backwards not counting (December 24,& 25 NO HUNTING) with Start date being Dec1!

Or start last Saturday in November and have more days with no hunting at Christmas to balance to 60 days!”

“You missed soooo many important topics in this survey. Limits don’t matter. Season dates are fine: Hunters harvests don’t matter. The ducks are doing fine. What isn’t fine? I call it hunter satisfaction!!! Hunter etiquette. Hunter knowledge levels and their respect for the resource and others! That’s what we really need to talk about.

The problem with duck hunting today can be summed up in one sentence. New hunters should have learned to hunt from their grandfather, not from Instagram. My grandad would have slapped all the “Sitka Bros” silly for what they are doing on social media these days. #sickofsitkaanddivebombandsplitreed

CLOSING COMMENTS

I could fix all the problems in waterfowling tomorrow if I were king. It'd be easy.

I'd start by eliminating ALL electronic related items from duck hunting. Prison time, considerable fines and mandatory loss of hunting licenses for 1-3 years for any of the following infractions. 1. If you post, share or maintain any VIDEO of any live hunting (or scouting) scenario on social media. 2. If you are found operating a drone or trail cameras during hunting season for any reason. 3. If you are caught using any battery operated decoy or apparatus other than during spring snow season. 4. If you are caught with hunting gear and the opportunity to kill birds while on or navigating any piece of water after 2PM daily during duck season. 5. If you artificially pump water, heat water, agitate water, flood fields, or use other powered equipment for any non agricultural purpose or with the intent of altering the natural migration of waterfowl. 6. If you purposely farm any crop that is not for sale as a food product in order to avoid baiting rules for waterfowl. 7. If you post landowners names on an electronic map without the express written consent of that landowner. Boundaries are fine, but landowner names should not be available. 8. Non resident hunters shall only qualify for (2) 7 Day Waterfowl Licenses in other states. These 2 weeks may not be consecutive nor appear in the same month. These are just a start..... and I hate rules!



The simple fact is, modern equipment, electronics and technology has made killing ducks so easy, that random children on Instagram (who have no clue what they're doing) can have success. That easy success, combined with cluelessness has created an entire decade of awful hunters with no ethics.

If we eliminate all these tools, and make everyone go back to being an actual duck hunter again we would improve the hunting base. All the Sitka Bros wouldn't have any social media to stroke their miniature egos. So they'd take up golf, or whatever....I'd argue we have not added quality individuals to our new hunter enrollment since the rise of social media. We want people who have a strong sense of moral obligation, real knowledge of their areas, intimate understanding of the migration and birds behaviors. Guys who truly care about the ducks, not just their social media follows! If we get back to that? If we do, the ducks will return to their normal selves, because pressure will be reduced. Harvest numbers will decline and duck populations will go up. More important, the number of idiots hunting will decline. We don't need more hunters as DU and Delta say. That's all a BS lie to get your money so they can buy property, and then use your money to cut you off from hunting it! Like Divebomb taking kids money for decoys, then leasing hundreds of thousands of acres in multiple states to keep those same kids off that land! It's pure evil.

CLOSING COMMENTS

We need more quality hunters.

So much more I could say on this topic.d"

I believe we have a crossbreeding occurring in the mallard population with farm/barnyard species. Social media has its upsides but mostly is creating and promoting a trendy non-sportsmanship culture. The heritage of our geography, farmlands and history of hunting is sadly being replaced with shallow social media posts about retail products, Nashville bimbos and loud mouths with face paint and hoodies.

"I've always wondered why the central flyway doesn't open the season 72 days before the last Sunday in Jan. I'm specifically speaking for the southeast zone in Ks and eastern half of OK. Would much rather take the split dates off of the front end of season. Would love some biological answers to that

Overall, I've hunted waterfowl since 2004 and have been lucky enough to do so near extremely important state refuges. It's interesting to see how the presence of ducks in large numbers during season has dramatically shifted later and later and even after season for the vast bulk compared to most of December/Jan.

You guys keep up the good work! These conversations are important when used correctly!"

Something has to change. If everything is set for hunter satisfaction, the feeling of satisfaction is dwindling. It's disappointing to see less and less birds over the prior 5 years.

Forget the mallards that were in central mo or on the Missouri. It's been that way for years. I don't hunt Arkansas but with lower population I'm sure less made it to ark. West central mo was "ok" but we held less birds than normal. You guys and joe and Ira need to get on the same page. It's not good for the sport. Get on a podcast and hash it out! I enjoy the show keep it up.

Freelance in Canada the last 10 yrs lower Saskatchewan is in a major drought. Will need several wet years to increase duck numbers

No one on public ground has any manners, most guides/outfitters are trying to do the right thing and a handful of them have given the rest of us a bad name. Birds can't rest on WMAs with mud motors getting to every square inch of water. The weather has slowed down, it doesn't get cold up north until much later and AR doesn't get a push

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until mid January. Push duck season dates back 2 weeks from their current set. Make all WMAs 25hp and off ALL WATERS by noon. Get the entire flyways Commissions on the same page as far as feeding/resting/managing waterfowl. I could go on and on. The whole thing is a shit show.

The season is too long, and we are taking too many birds. We have to push back on the commercial interests that profit off the season and do what's best for the resource. I'm unsure if any survey will help. At this point I will try anything to help out a desperate situation here in Arkansas on public ground. It is an absolute nightmare and something has to be done. If we wait on the AGFC to make a correction then all we will see is them counting the money made on out of state license sales. PS ban all mud motors and led lights!!!

"It is not ""normal agriculture practice"" to flood unharvested crops. You take away the ducks instinct to fly and find food, water, and shelter because they have it all right there.

A first year mallard hen is 80% more likely to be shot over a spinning wing in a dry field in Canada. When you factor that with not being able to distinguish a hen from a Drake with very liberal 8 duck limits, I don't see how that makes sense to anyone. Plus have one game warden to enforce on 5 million+ acres, I've talked to several groups that openly admitted to shooting way over their limit on several hunts.

I will use a spinning wing while they're legal, but personally wish they were banned nationwide.

Season dates and bag limits used to change every year according to duck population. That quit before I started and it's been 6 ducks and 60 days my whole lifetime of hunting. You can't expect a resource to sustain with such liberal limits and seasons, especially when Arkansas hunter numbers have increased like they have. Even though the nation as a whole has seen a decline in hunter numbers, the central and Mississippi flyway have done nothing but sky rocket with hunter numbers."

Way too many pintails being killed in Canada, my hunting buddies go and most of the groups they shot into they were all hens. Season needs to be later so the ducks can get some color.

Canada's outfitters, freelancers, the kill culture, and stupid high limits are the absolute biggest problem

I hope this does some good but I'm not very hopeful. There is too much money gained off of the resource and is especially exploited by the game and fish commission in my state (Arkansas).

CLOSING COMMENTS

"Love hearing about moist soil and GTR health. Tips for private land and education for the public army when game and fish does a timber stand improvement.

In regards to pressure on public. How do these young kids hunt 50-60 days and not work? I would like to know partially so I can also not work during duck season. But I do think that is a big factor on public. Longer rest periods - 2-3 days or longer splits might help things. ? Interested to hear thoughts on that with yall and some guests.

Lastly would like to hear thoughts on the increasing price and popularity making private land a millionaire/billionaire club. Yes good but also tough for someone to buy a block or start a club with some friends haha.

Are yall seeing existing clubs pool their buying power to expand footprint or is it new people in the market? Curious"

.ake duck hunting great again

If we don't make some changes ducks will continue to decline.

I'm far from an expert but I think the states above Arkansas have stepped their game up and we are suffering because we haven't countered. We got to attract ducks and we have to hold ducks.

I want to see more ducks for myself and later generations. More importantly woodsmanship and hunter ethics need to be enforced and promoted.

Arkansas has too much pressure created mainly by too many non resident hunters . There is no early water in the state besides private clubs . Ducks never get a chance to use any wma before there is a hunter behind every tree . There is zero food planted anymore to hold ducks . We're 10 years late making these changes . We'll have to imprint ducks to come to Arkansas again . Missouri and surrounding states have kicked our butts in duck management. Ducks have zero reasons to come to Arkansas and stay with these current conditions.

Cut days to 45 with more breaks. First season can't hunt past noon to help keep birds around. Could drop limit but needs to be done everywhere

I know something is off with ducks in Arkansas. We use to consistently see ducks and be successful when fronts came and we had water now that is not always the case. It seems that things have been on a decline since the 2010s. Things are not like they were in the 1990s or 2000s. My dad said it was better back in the 70s and 60s. I am afraid it is due to a wide variety of factors. One weather it used to for the most part get cold and stay cold now it swings back and forth a lot. I remember breaking ice pretty regularly by mid December no later than the week of Christmas now it is early to mid January. Two pressure seems to be more intense. More folks duck hunting but the amount of people from out of state is just insanity anymore. I have launched boats in the White River NWR and have seen 60 trucks at some of these smaller ramps on a Wednesday

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and only 5 trucks are from Arkansas. I have seen them from as far away as Michigan. I think Arkansas is a victim of its own marketing towards duck hunters. I think limiting out of state hunters needs to improve especially on NWR. Three we are so mobile anymore advances in transportation has allowed us to get to areas that were extremely difficult to access in the past. Boats, atvs, and sxs are more advanced and way more common than they were 20 years ago. Also satellite imagery ducks can't hide from the eye in sky. I used to hunt oxbows, sloughs, and timber holes that no one knew about and were closely guarded secrets. We rotated these spots so they could rest. Then google earth came along then just about anybody with a computer knew of these spots and they hammered these spots just about every day and eventually a lot of these spots became unproductive. Four duck numbers are down close to what it was right before we went to 60 day seasons and six bird limits. I think we need to reduce limits especially on Mallards they are especially perused harder than the rest. Start with a reduced hen limit on mallards then if that doesn't improve things reduce the overall mallard limit. Then if that is not enough reduce the season length maybe to 45 or 50 days. I think a reduction in season length will also help to reduce the number of hunters and just overall pressure. I think the season length at 60 days has prevailed because duck hunting is big business in Arkansas and that has been a big factor in season length. I don't think there is a silver bullet to fix it but we probably need to make small adjustments to a lot of things but we need to be smart and methodical about what and how we change things.

Good luck

Mud motors need to be banned. Woods need to be flooded 2 weeks before season. Need to limit out of staters in Arkansas to a draw.

There is to much pressure on pump loc ground from out of state people local people can't even hunt anymore . The AGFC opened it up so they could hunt every day again and we never got a break from fighting to get a hole. We as residents payed for this ground and can't hunt it now thanks to y'all.

Need to change hen mallard limit to one and pintail limit needs to be 2. Black ducks need to limit of 1.

I think a lot of change needs to happen, but guide culture and the lack of ethical hunting across the board is ruining the sport. Too many guides act like they own the birds or the public land, skybust, and burn bridges with land owners that affect everyone. I've lost over 40 private and free permissions due to guides causing problems, locals being ignorant/rude, and nonresidents not respecting the land they hunt on. Enforcement of laws has been spotty at best, and I've seen over harvest and shooting birds out of season go completely unpunished in the last two years in wi and il.

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In my opinion, harvest and season length are not what is driving recent population declines and reduced hunting success in Arkansas. A combination of poor production/recruitment due to drought in historic areas of high production and warm/dry fall/early winter are the bulk of the problem. I do have concern regarding the capability of the PPR to return to historic production levels due to reported prevalence of drainage and tillage of pothole wetlands in Canada. The impact of ethanol subsidies on overall waterfowl population health and migration patterns does not get enough attention; it is huge!

I've seen the ups and downs since 1979. The point system, lead shot ban, spinners, hunting the drought of the 90's. With the advent of mud motors and social media the waterfowl rarely have a secluded place to rest except in the refuges. The birds arrive, word gets out and soon enough the birds are educated and go nocturnal or move on. Loud mud motors with blinding lights racing to the spot at ever earlier hours move birds from nocturnal use of prime habitat. I've heard at a boat landing a group of guys saying if they ever drop the limit they would quit duck hunting because it just wasn't worth it. Maybe that's what needs to happen. Or maybe a long season, but smaller limit. I think some people go out just to shoot. Shooting is fun. Waterfowling is one of the last volume shooting sports. The ducks are just targets vs a quarry to fool when you are actually hunting them.

Need to go back to SET dates for Out of State hunters during waterfowl season and reduce pressure on public land!

I feel that once your duck season is no longer in you should have to drain your water. These big outfitters and private land people hold there water and lots of ducks well after season is over. I feel this causes ducks not to go as far south as they once used to because they do not need to.

I have seen the main issue as I know at least one place in Arkansas that gets 4 grand a day to kill a limit of ducks over standing crops from corps. One also due north of that in the grand of Missouri that gets close to 2 grand a day over thousands of acres of standing crops. Even as Arkansas was locked up and the season in north Missouri was closed, these acres were still were still covered in ducks keeping the water open as there was no reason for them to leave.

I think that a non-resident draw for WMAs in the state of Arkansas would not only greatly reduce the hunting pressure and overcrowding, but it would also reduce the amount of dangerous boat races and every other problem related to overcrowding. This limiting of non-resident hunters is a method used by many other states to reduce hunting pressure for not only ducks but also deer and turkey. I am 21 years old and I have hunted Dave Donaldson WMA my entire life. In the past 6 years I have hunted 45+

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days each season. With the most recent change in regulation that enabled non-resident hunters to hunt any time during the season, not exceeding 30 days total, there was a drastic increase in pressure and overcrowding every single day of the season. There were few mornings that there wasn't a dangerous boat race. This made for a very challenging and dreadful season. Many mornings my boat would be one of few if not the only boat with Arkansas registration. In the past 6 years, I have had many encounters with other hunters and here is what I have learned: many of the non-resident hunters have no respect for other hunters and show no regard for others' safety. Nearly every conflict I have run into when it comes to overcrowding, setting up too close, harassment, and general disrespect has involved non-resident hunters. Almost every resident hunter I have met or encountered while hunting has shown good sportsmanship and respect. I believe that a non-resident permit draw for all Arkansas WMAs would not only benefit resident hunters like me but would also benefit duck hunting and the future of duck hunting. Something must change.

Water to corn or corn to water makes no difference to waterfowl, only difference is rich man brings water to the corn and the poor man brings the corn to the water. I don't claim to be an expert in waterfowl hunting, but it is a sad thing when I bring my boys hunting and we see little to no ducks due to the decline in the ducks that migrate to Louisiana, I am afraid that they will never get the opportunity to be on hunts like I got to go on with my dad

Flooded standing corn is one of the biggest detriments to waterfowl hunting

I think they should open season at least down here in Oklahoma and Texas the first of November and let us hunt through the middle of February and that'll help us down here cause we don't get any of are cold weather till the end of January first of February I think the WMA's in Arkansas should be where NON RESIDENTS have to draw a permit to hunt. Just like Iowa deer hunting, you have to gain points and draw a permit to hunt. Just like Mississippi turkey season, you have ti draw a permit to hunt. Both of these are only for NON RESIDENTS.

The 5 year seasonal frame work should be reduced to no more than 3 given recent changes in climate. Habitat destruction & Noise of surface and long shaft motors needs to be better controlled.

Limit out of staters on public wma's. A draw system for them. Most states limit nonresident when it applies to turkey and whitetail draws. Also, raise the price for nonresidents that do draw. It will make up the difference monetary wise with less hunters

"I am a young man, I am the Leflore county DU chairman and put on banquets every year. I have 2 small children, that I hope to get to take and enjoy this sport I love.

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My biggest fear is telling my children about the good ole days and it just be storytime, kinda like my dad and how he tells of quail hunting and abundant of quail that we use to have in Mississippi. We have to stand together and put our foot down before it's too late. Put ego's aside and try to rebuild a resource before it becomes a bedtime story to our children and grandchildren"

"A few things that were missed:

- Hunter access on thousands of acres of federal/state land that is tabbed as "rest" areas. Even if it were quota hunting to provide opportunities.
- Failure of state management on GTRs/wetland habitat. The science is clear that timber thinning benefits, but ignorance of the masses prevents this.
- Sky busting seems to be the new norm. Arkansas moved the shell limit on WMAs to 25 from 15. It is mind blowing how much of a difference it made. There is constant shooting."

With the changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty in 1998 that opened up unharvested crops to be legal it is just a matter of time before most average waterfowlers lose interest

I hope y'all get good usable data. I hope someone notices it. I hope changes that will improve duck season will take place even if they kinda suck at first. #3duck30 #pointssystem

Shorten season to October 1st-January 15th, lower hen limit to 1 mallard hen, ban spinners all the way to Canada. Make outfitters have "party limits" no more than 6 hunters etc.

"The way seasons are set and the criteria needs a serious overhaul now.

Pressure needs to be reduced on the birds. Limits need reducing until population numbers reflect late 1990's & early 2000 numbers that started the 60/6 seasons.

This is very important subject with a lot of hard decisions that will be unpopular but things have to change."

I think, allowing on harvested corn, not necessarily crops, but corn should be illegal it directly manipulates an entire fly away. It is absolutely stopping birds from naturally migrating south.

I have been duck hunting for 50 years in southeast Texas. Lots of money has been spent to protect habitat etc etc. The ONLY thing that has gotten better is the equipment! Hind site is always 20-20 but the bottom of both flyways has suffered

CLOSING COMMENTS

drastically. As far as season dates we haven't had hardly any ducks the second half for many years.

"I just finished my 45th duck season and remember the tough times in the 1980s when I was just getting started. During those years, we had hope that things would improve because of the drought on the PPR. Hunting did improve in the 1990s not only due to the drought ending but also as a result of strict limits and shorter seasons.

I have little hope for the future in my area (Mississippi Delta). Social media has completely changed the mentality of the average waterfowl hunter. The goal of a hunt has changed from killing with an appreciation for the beauty and complexity of the bird to killing simply for likes and views.

I continue to hunt because it allows me to spend high quality time with my 3 boys. Our area is eaten up with "duck farms" which I believe has had a devastating impact on migration patterns. They should be outlawed.

So much has changed - I am all for cutting the season back, reducing limits and regulating guide services. I am worried that our biggest problem cannot be regulated - the desensitization of the younger generation (via social media) to the true beauty of waterfowl hunting"

"Look at LDWF Commission minutes from 1968-1976 when Louisiana walked out of the Mississippi Flyway Council (MFC) for 8 years. The late Richard Yancey spearheaded such.

Already have the book mentioned below."

Some of these are really loaded questions that can be taken different ways. Some answers can fit under the same category/topic.

We can't change climate or Ag practices in the short term, but we can continue to improve the PPR and new wintering habitat in AR. Reduce hen to 1 to allow for a mistake. Change the public grounds to a draw. The craziness at the ramps and in the woods is not enjoyable especially for older hunters. I'd much rather have fewer hunts with quality (workable birds, not having to get to the ramp in the middle of the night, safer, etc) than what we have now. In my 50s, I avoid the public grounds at all costs, but 30 years ago, I loved hunting Bayou Meto, White River Reserve, and Cache River.

"Rest areas needed in every county.

Pressure is ruining duck hunting"

CLOSING COMMENTS

"There needs to be way more awareness on the game farm mallard issue. I hunt with many seasoned, well educated hunters who have zero awareness or understanding about this major issue.

We need more funding for waterfowl studies and better data for state and federal agencies to make more informed decisions on waterfowl regulations."

As well as everything else in the world today, the all mighty dollar rules the roost. Speaking as a former DU employee, even they are more concerned about making money than conservation.

Outfitters should not be able to hunt while guiding clients. Profiting off the resource and hunting while supposedly ensuring safety is not possible. Colorado does this and it works wonderfully well. The industry promoting distance shooting is a problem and promotes waterfowl disturbance through increased shooting, wounded birds and unethical shots. More research needs to be done to look at extremely high populations of light and dark geese recently. Snow geese are migrating early feeding out fields close to major waterfowl stopovers and seem to always carry strains of disease the past few years. Saw lots of mallards and thousands of snow geese dead this year from avian flu in Colorado. Hunting in Canada and the Dakotas should not start until late September or October 1st so people can ID ducks, hunt standard hours, and follow a sustainable limit.

I noticed on one of the last questions to increase mallard populations. I wish you would have included another option to increase trapping of nest robbing predators. I believe this would be a great option as well that we as hunters could perform. Everyone's quick to take a vacation to go kill ducks or or spend their weekend hunting. How about we take a weekend to trap raccoons or spend 5 days on the prairie in the spring chasing predators. Yes we can all make excuses, but really that would make a huge difference. Another thing I often think about is how big of a difference we could make population wise by creating potholes across our northern states of WI and MN. We have lots of large agriculture with areas that span hundreds of acres with no really appreciable potholes. Although some of this is not advantageous to nesting cover, there are quite literally thousands of acres where we could put small depressions in. Perhaps tax cuts to agriculture to start putting in pot holes on marginal land.

Commercialization era is worse than the market era

Most hunters are out to kill to brag of "killing the limit" and the vast majority do not even attempt to eat them or donate them.

At the end of the day I believe weather is the main issue and Canada should not be able to shoot the number of ducks they do. Think about it ducks are hatched and people are shooting thousands before they even get to go south.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Guides are killing waterfowl hunting in the MS flyway. I think we need some sort of control over it to rid of the wannabes. I've heard of putting a \$5,000 license fee each year and I don't think that's enough personally. If they can't come up with \$10,000 they aren't smart enough to be guiding especially with some of the dangerous situations we have in waterfowl hunting with guns and boating. I think we need more respect around the actual birds we shoot instead of the crazy pics and hooping and hollering. Young men need mentors in a bad bad way. Older men need to step it up and be the example. We are seeing issues in Arkansas with both in state and out of state issues on people arguing over spot and became a problem us as water fowl hunters should see it as we are all here to do one thing make memories-cooter lake hunting club
Thanks for all you guys do with the podcast and your social media. Raising awareness and getting people engaged is a very positive start.

"Duck dynasty did more to bring people into our sport than any other social media influence. But they came without mentorship, and they don't savor the experience unless there's some kind of thrill involved. Flat bills, alpacas, whatever you call them it's no longer a pleasant experience to hunt on a WMA because of them.
THE NUMBER ONE THING IS BIRDS NEED A PLACE TO REST IN THE AFTERNOON
CLOSE THE WMAS COMPLETELY DURING DUCK SEASON AFTER 1:00. IF YOU'RE NOT ON THE TRAILER WHEN THE CLOCK TICKS ONE YOUR BANNED FOR 5 YEARS."
I think we are at a serious tipping point. I have hunted the same coastal marsh lease for thirty years and it's not getting better. We tend to live and die by blue wing teal and gray ducks. I am really concerned about my son being able to have the same opportunities that I had to see skies full of ducks as I got to witness when I was coming up. Don't get me wrong I think the switch to sugar cane from rice in our area has a large impact as we don't have as much duck ground to support the numbers as we did in the past. I honestly think that we should go to a 30 and 30 season for a few years country wide to try and stop the skid. We aren't just ONE GOOD COLD FRONT away from being covered up in ducks. We need to be more proactive and not wait to be reactive.

Pre Covid the hot topic of discussion was an aging mallard population and the impact of spinning wing decoys on juvenile birds. Specifically in Canada and the dakotas. Ban the SWD across the board. All hunting must end at 1 private and public nationwide.

Hello, I like your podcast, I'm 61yrs old been hunting a small duck club in St Charles county Missouri since 1975 when my dad and 9 other s bought it. Ten hi farms on your onx.We had 3 good seasons in a row. Even if it too good I'll still go as much as I can.
Thanks Jeff Eisenbath

"Echoing what I noted before. Everyone looking for a silver bullet and nothing is changing.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Small adjustments likely win

4 mallards, 1 hen

45 day season (but don't take all 15 days from Jan)

Draws for non residents hunting Public so they can be managed easier, if hunting private then let them shoot them out

Higher stamp fees for non residents and higher guide license fees. Not trying to kill the economy but every other state charges higher for their resources and reinvests that money into the resource."

we don't see mallards in louisiana anymore, 90% of the harvest in north louisiana is green wing teal. we also see lots of pintails. seasons have gotten progressively worse but the farms i hunt have increased pressure in the last decade (from lease blinds to day hunt, someone is hunting every day). i am unsure if its population decline, added pressure, climate (ie they aren't migrating as far south), ag practices or what it all is. i have kept harvest logs for the past decade and the numbers don't lie.

I primarily hunt and guide in the pacific flyway so some of these issues are not that focused towards us or what I see

Main factor is weather no matter how much we want to blame other reasonings. Think total limit should go to 5 for a 3 year minimum and see what comes of it also

"Corn" is crack to ducks... has been and always will be.
We have trained ducks to hop from one refuge to another.

We created this mess, time to fix it.

We have to try or history will repeat its self (Canada goose in Louisiana)
Change in migration"

"Limiting harvest restrictions in Canada can only help the total duck population.
For conversation: say there are 500 outfitters in Canada. They shoot 2000 birds each. That is 1million birds that could have continued migrating south. Say half of these were juvenile or hen mallards. You can't tell bc they are brown in September and October. Potentially 500k birds that survive the season for another year."

Protect breeding grounds. Stop liberal limits, protect the resource. Stop hot cropping rest areas.

Where I primarily hunt, biggest concern is drought. Wet years hunting is great, this year was good, last year was top shelf.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There are basic changes that can be made to help over duck populations that seem common sense and to help with pressure. They would anger a portion of the community but it feels like we're at a tipping point on bird populations that if nothing is done we will come to regret the inaction in a way that none of us want.

Appreciate the survey, passing it along to all of my friends. We've gotta change something because seasons like the past few WILL drive less stupid people (unlike myself) away from the sport and we'll end up with the same crappy habitat situation with less conservation dollars.

This was a very well put together survey that asks the tough questions. I really hope something can be done to help change the course we are on.

"As someone that has been duck hunting my whole life, I hate seeing the current state of the sport. I worry about the pressure that is put on the birds and how it never seems to slow down. If we could make one easy change to the sport, I think it would be to ban the spinner. Interestingly, I was listening to a podcast that an AGFC employee was a guest on. One of the topics on the podcast was the 1999 and 2000 season and the host was asking the guest to speculate on the reasons why the 1999/2000 harvest was so incredible. The introduction of spinners never came up as a reason, and this was a prominent AGFC waterfowl employee listing all the reasons those seasons were so good. Considering the recent change on the public lands here, it makes me feel that this issue is being completely overlooked or intentionally ignored, which I don't see how is possible when you see the videos in Canada of hatch year birds getting destroyed over 10 spinners in a dry field. I wish more people would come around on the issue of spinners, but they seem here to stay to the detriment of the birds.

Thanks for the podcast. Love listening."

By far the best waterfowl survey I've ever been apart of. Spreading the word should open lots of eyes.

I think the main thing affecting our duck populations is climate change. It's the same with the duck as all other bird species but it's so politicized that I don't feel like anyone wants to hear it.

"Why can you hunt dove with lead shot in the same field you duck hunt? Dove limits are 3-4 times as high as waterfowl. Most likely equates to 3-4 times as many rounds fired.

"Experts" tell us we have to stop hunting at the end of Jan to not disturb pairing, but then we find out multiple drakes will breed with a single hen, even cross breed. How is this pairing?

CLOSING COMMENTS

White Front Geese need to be bounty hunted for a few years to decrease the numbers."

There are tons of factors in today's waterfowl world. I appreciate the survey.

I think Canada needs to lower their daily limits and most lower states (I hunt Arkansas and Alabama mainly) need to shorten their season and neither should open in mid-December.

In my opinion, the biggest problem I see in AR is pressure and changes in farming practices that limit food resources in harvested fields. Planting and leaving crops has always been around. Canada should not be allowed to use spinning wing decoys and the limits should be drastically reduced.

Climate is the biggest factor for changing migration patterns because it's affecting all migratory animals. Warming isn't evenly distributed, the further north the more temperatures are increasing. Unless we get cooler temperatures in the future, ducks will continue to migrate shorter distances, later in the winter, and return north earlier. So other than rules on limits and pressure, I feel like there is very little humans can do to stop it now.

Thank you for your service to this way of life.

I would sign up for a 30-day staggered season with a 4-duck limit (any combo of species) or a 45-day season with a 3-duck limit (any combo of species) immediately. I think a shorter season and smaller limits would work wonders for the amount of pressure and growth of population. I think it would also weed out a lot of hunters who do it for the clout, not the love of the sport/outdoors. Regardless, if the season stays 60 days long, I believe a 3-duck limit of any species should be implemented nationwide. I think pressure short-stops the birds more than weather. They had warm winters years ago, and we still get cold winters for example this past season. A bird would rather freeze and survive for 2 weeks than face thousands of kill-hungry hunters who don't obey the laws south of Missouri.

Our current mallard situation is a multi-pronged problem that needs to be addressed by all hunters on all issues. We need to restore a culture that places the resource first and harvest second.

This survey was a great idea, hope it gets things turned around, good luck! There's a lot of contributors to the decline of waterfowl hunting in some states. It's gonna be very difficult to get it back to the way it used to be, just a sign of the times, imo. But we need to do a better job of keeping what we have and take care of the resources God has given us for as long as we can using the time He gives us.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Conservation organizations should be telling more of the truth and doing more with their dollars. Duck hunting has gotten to be big business and I'm not sure it's about the ducks as it is about the bottom line.

The public land hunter in the state they live in should not be regulated on the days of a given season they can hunt. There has to be a benefit to living in a state and paying taxes year around in that state. Non residents should be subject to a draw if the residents of that state decide they are creating an issue. Also, private land owners and clubs need to accept responsibility for their part in the issues of the state, the burden should not rest completely on the shoulders of public land hunters.

"Hunters are the problem. Constant bickering. No common courtesy. When they show up to the boat ramp it's like walking into a bar full of angry frat boys. People need to care less about what camo someone is wearing, what products they use or don't use, what state they're from, and be glad they get to go hunting.

We need more protected public land that is accessible, wayyyyy less guides, and we need to prioritize the working man's opportunities to get out and go hunting. Taking away nonresidents opportunity to shoot ducks is extremely hypocritical when Central and Miss flyway guys are the first to come shoot our turkeys and catch our fish. We should look at creating more opportunities and protecting what we have instead of taking opportunities away from like minded people."

"Elon needs to dig his hands into all of this.

Discussions topics within my group

1. CORP.Eng- why do they wait to release massive amounts of water until duck season is over? Not just this year- have seen this as a trend in past years

2. Protecting our resources-

Increasing out of state licensing as well as limiting the presence. We all put in for draws to deer hunt in other states. And will pay. The duck hunting should be the same.

3. 10% of the hunters do 90% of the gunning."

"There are many things as a community that we all can do to help keep this passion that we have a reality for future generations.

One thing I almost never see is volunteer opportunities to help improve habitat or anything else.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There are many issues and many ways to try and fix them.

Unfortunately most people just want to argue on social media.

The fighting needs to stop. This includes the fist fights at ramps and in hunting holes."

Game farm mallards in the Atlantic flyway are having a huge effect on the wild mallard population/habits and must be outlawed.

I own my land i do my habitat work i turn old wore out farm ground into habitat for all wildlife. I believe this party hunting 8-20 guns together is a huge problem something you've left completely out of this survey how many people have been made into duck hunters after being invited to stand in the trees with way too many people an kill way too many ducks i personally believe 30 ducks is a plenty for any sized group odds are 2-3 guns are doing all the killing regardless. I hunt small 2-4 guns 6 max. We shoot green spare hen's we don't volley off 6 guns on a pair of ducks. I've been fortunate to see what i wanted to see every duck season but the social media makes you think you should see an do more the boats the camo the shells the guns it's all for show and a dollar. It will never stop cause there's too much money involved in it. Correct me if I'm wrong but I'm sure you whoever you are are making your fair share off this resource a the drama behind it. JAKE JOHNSON MCGEHEE ARKANSAS. I think you made this survey to find an answer you wanna see. Correct me if I'm wrong.

"The ONLY thing that matters is that Federal data shows duck numbers are down dramatically over a decade. It doesn't matter why. The obvious answer is to cut harvest through lower season dates and limits until numbers recover.

Talking about WHY is 100% an excuse used by hunters, outfitters, sellers of products, and government that gets tax dollars to selfishly avoid doing the right thing that will also cut their money and season length--cutting season dates and limits. They want to focus on the why's so they can use them as a red herring to propose the why's as a solution and extend the amount of time they are getting money from exploiting a mismanaged resource instead of actually addressing the problem directly and cutting the money off suddenly.

The reason it's so obvious cutting season dates and limits is the answer is because we have 100% control over those two things. All the reasons commonly discussed as ""why"" like climate change, unharvested crops, dry pothole conditions--at best we have a vague understanding on how those things affect ducks, but regardless we have very little control over them compared to season dates and limits. Talking about the

CLOSING COMMENTS

why's is a big circle jerk that's used by people who don't want to cut off the money teat or selfishly don't want to shorten their season as hunters."

Quit allowing 20 guns in a single hole and make all wma a draw.

As a hunter and conservationist, I want to have full faith in our state and federal game managers but they sure make it hard to. For example, with AHM being in place and there being little to no change in seasons and bag limits with large fluctuations in population and habitat, setting seasons based on old data to pander to outfitters and guides, Pintail limit increase, Canada/Mexico regs, not requiring outfits/guides to keep accurate harvest logs for their use when estimating total harvest, snow goose conservation season. All their actions point to them managing mostly for hunting opportunity and not what is best for the resource.

"Sorry for the long rambling, all over the place closing comments. Chalk it up to listening to the shows and saying, boy I should send off some thoughts from that and never doing it.

I have a perspective of a northern MN hunter. A yearly trip to North Dakota the last few years but 95% of my hunting is on water in wild rice. 41 years old and have been hunting the same area since I was 12, tagging along with my brother since I was 9 or 10. So I've gotten to know the area and birds well. With partners/family that have hunted the same area for well close to 100 years so there is lots of passed down knowledge.

For proximity we are about 15 miles north of Rice Lake National Refuge, a 3-4000 acre shallow lake managed for wild rice beds and ducks. That is to say ringbills are king around here with the Refuge on good years holding from 5-800k ringbills at peak (middle of October).

So all that to lead into a few thoughts about duck hunting's present and future as I see it from my parts of the swamps.

Most of our spots and area are relatively small water. Long and skinny, less than 500 yards wide in many spots.

A few things I have noticed that IMO are bad. We have more non-locals or weekend cabin owners hunting than in the past, and along with this they are bringing bigger boats and surface drive motors so they can power through the rice while running spot lights. I feel this is actually caused by people who didn't grow up hunting the area

CLOSING COMMENTS

seeing everyone from the south (ie ads and social media) showing everyone using rigs like that. Along with that they are running around before shooting light thinking they need to go super far from the landing to get birds (you don't have to) and with the water being so skinny/narrow the light and sound disturbance pushes the birds out before legal. These rigs are running 5 plus miles to get to spots that in the past you would launch a small boat or canoe from a road and paddle or use a 5 horse.

It is amazing how much less disturbed the birds are by even a 25 or 30 horse outboard vs the surface drive.

In the past most people paddled canoes or if they were big time they'd run an outboard which I feel was/is way less disturbing to birds.

In addition these rigs are also ""scouting"" in the evening which also kicks the birds out of every little corner.

In fairness we tend to hunt very much during the week and especially in the evening. I realize many people think nobody should hunt after the morning and I see that point further south. I do not feel that hunting this far north in the evening is adding extra pressure on birds that at most might be here 7-10 days (probably less). Being able to get out after work and hunt greatly increases our opportunities and while I know days kill ducks vs limits, I would argue that getting out and getting 3 or 4 mallards or 4-6 teal early or some ringbills and getting out before that last 30 minutes before sunset still allows the birds to rest as the majority of the flight into the rice beds occurs in the 30 after sunset.

I also say that hunting in the evenings is fine as realistically in our area of MN we are frozen out most years by the first full weekend of November. We are not an Ag heavy area and while the bigger lakes are open they are open due to depth. Sure we could bust loads of ice to gain open water and chase goldeneye but most birds are gone by then on most years.

That is also why I have no problems starting around the 24th of Sept. Yes I know what Lee Kjos and Dave Rav have said about brown ducks, etc and it is valid. But as mentioned above I can literally have a 30 day season, last year we were locked up tight by Halloween! Also while not everyone does it, the way I hunt wild rice is to get birds close, like 25 yards is damn near to far so it is much easier to pick apart those chest feathers on a mallard. (gotta get them close cause trying to mark a duck at 25-40 yards for man and dog is real hard with rice that can be 4' above the water and so thick that a 10' circle is a big opening).

CLOSING COMMENTS

That said usually a large portion of that early harvest is bluewing and wood ducks, oddly the last two years I have not shot the number of wood ducks I normally do, yet this year I was limiting on mallards while it was unseasonably 70 plus degrees in the evening. Also the last few years there has been a very noticeable uptick in wigeon and pintails, birds we never saw 20 years ago even. Not sure what brought this around.

We have also on my personal lake started raising lots of goldeneye the last 10 years or so.

Overall I know the duck numbers have dropped significantly from when I was 16-18 years old, the evening flights just aren't as large. However as mentioned we have birds we didn't really have before and on good years the ringbills are as thick as ever, not so much with the bluebills that the old timers chased.

This past year according to many on FB in MN never got birds, they were all still up north. What I can say for myself (hunting many mornings and or evenings) the 2024 and 2022 season had a constant small stream of fresh birds almost for the entire season. This year it was like that until the last 2 weeks really when they acted stale and got less in numbers (first couple weeks of November). 2023 was cut short by early and fast ice.

Spinners, I will use them. Somedays they work great and somedays they are terrible and work better in the canoe or boat. That is to say I'm not sure they are the evil that they are made out to be. Sure when they first came out around here the birds couldn't stay away. And yeah during early teal they work great. But I have in my hunts seen them go both ways seemingly an equal amount of times. Becoming a big fan of water motion, but jerk rigs are real tough in the wild rice so I use splashers or floating spinners.

In summary, surface drives and bright lights bad. Spinners whatever. Late September opener is fine for my area and me.

Season length I love 60, but aside from traveling to North Dakota a 45 day season would be about right for me with historical ice dates. Limit wise, yeah I love getting 6 ducks or 4 mallards. Makes me excited cause I have plenty of 0-1 days as well. That said I wouldn't cry if the total limit was 4 ducks. Heck to be honest if I go out in the morning and get 2-3 ducks I'm gonna go again in the evening cause I can get the dog 2-3 more birds and I just never know when the birds will decide the moon and wind is right to leave my area. But if the daily was 4 birds, well I wouldn't feel the pull to go out for say 1 bird. So I guess that might bring less pressure, even though I'm not overly worried about pressuring the birds up here.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Keep up the good show. Sure would love to hear you guys and Ramsey Russel talk." Amended submission . Maybe the batteries should be ban altogether. Get rid of spinners and force people to become better hunters. Put an end to outfitters leasing land. Owners of the property makes sense but this leasing ground bologna is going to run the blue collar , school teacher etc right out of the sport . This Canada outfitter killin needs an overhaul . 3 mallards 1 hen might slow that down . This business of killin needs to slow down . Hate to see the common hunter penalized who maybe only hunts 10 days a year . Reduce the limit of hens to one is a no brainer. Canada killing 8 hens is insanity. Get these stupid mud motors quieter or fine em for running around between 7-noon. The one crack a public land guy gets you gotta hold your breath hoping no one shoots. Now you gotta hold your breath hoping someone doesn't fire up a mud motor a mile away !
excellent survey!

We are approaching the point of no return. I have young kids and am in the business to make money of the hunters. Has to go to 30 and 3 for it to make a difference. Coming down from the USFW

Thank you for doing this survey, I hope yall get a very good response. It tells me I don't know as much as I should about duck hunting. I think a lot more people are open to adjusting dates of season or adjusting the limit to help conserve waterfowl. I think the people that want season extended are just uneducated on how that affects waterfowl in a negative way. Yall do a great job of putting out good information backed by tests/history.

I give you guys a hard time for doom and gloom sometimes, but I am glad you're doing your part to bring attention to the issues. It's not all bad, but it's certainly not great.

I appreciate what you guys are doing. We are at a point in time where there can still be a course correction to save the resource and waterfowl hunting. Im not sure we can ever get the population back to the 70s,80s, or 90s levels. The spinning wing decoys are decimating the first year birds before they ever make it half way down the Mississippi flyway. I am told a new study will be introduced for action on the detriment to first year birds this year. Hope it is not shot down as before.

Whatever changes are made need to be made across the board. Only changing things in Arkansas does nothing but punish us when the rest of the states just continue as is.

Pressure is reducing birds when we go west to western Nebraska compared to our regular Iowa hunting. The natural patterns of birds and reaction to decoys and calling is so different it's undeniable the pressure gets to the birds.

CLOSING COMMENTS

How hard would it be to go to a 60 day to to hunt 30 model? With today's technology there is no reason why someone couldn't go into an app or call a number and register to hunt the day(s) the day before. It would take immense pressure off if ducks by spreading hunters out over the 60 day season, while giving hunters a large window of days which to choose to hunt. -Game warden runs license number, guy is or isn't registered. If he is good, if not suspend license for the year and take gun or fine him \$2000 or tie him to a tree at the ramp and bull whip his ass for everyone to see. Word would spread and people would start following the rules. The problem needs a solution "outside the box," and I believe this would fix it. That is our local solution, but there is another huge problem. We've all seen the videos of 100's of thousands of mallards on the Missouri. Somebody is feeding them somewhere, ducks don't sit on a river full of ice with moving current without something to eat close by. I don't know what the solution is there, but as long as they are being stopped short unnaturally, hunting on Arkansas public land will remain spotty at best.

See my other reply. Thanks.

Thank you for being proactive on the recent negative trends in waterfowl as a whole, and a voice for people and waterfowl on social media that does solely revolve around killing. I feel like conservation minded hunters too often take a back seat to people trying to kill everything that moves instead of sustainable harvest trends.

Get rid of electronic decoys. Reduce mallard harvest. Cap guides or hunting parties to 8 or less. I don't understand how anyone enjoys "shooting" standing shoulder to shoulder with so many people. We outlawed punt guns so you can't shoot 20 ducks at once, but we are fine with 30 rounds going off at any flock of ducks or geese that get in range.

2 Problems. PRESSURE + CANADA

"I could write a book. Y'all are all over it and, maybe, off on some. But what do I know? I believe we have effectively given ducks little reason to imprint in Arkansas for the last 25 years. They're shot at the entire time they're here unless they've learned to imprint on places that provide early food and water.

Factors Impacting the overall health:

Sodbuster/elimination of wetlands protections in Canada and US

Early season mass slaughter of juvenile hens to robo ducks.

Factors impacting Quality in Arkansas

Pressure/ Lack of time to be left alone in Arkansas.

Mass traffic on traditional areas, mud motors, people hunting all day, etc.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Our season should be 30 days as a default: traditional week before Thanksgiving, then a break until the second Saturday in December, then run out the rest of the days. In alternate years, after the traditional opener, the season would start back on 1/1 and run until MLK Day.

Have a 45 day season every 5 years and 60 no more than every 10."

"Sure do appreciate your platform and stance on all things waterfowl related! Haven't heard anything that I disagree with so far and encourage y'all to keep doing what you do. Keep pushing 3n1 and keep our days!

God Bless,

Matt Smith"

Keep up the good work.

I mainly hunt in Alaska now where the duck hunting is still very consistent. I do make a 2 week trip to North Dakota every year and my family still lives and hunts in the Midwest. Every year for past 7 or so years the amount of ducks has been on the decline. Not just mallards but across the board.

The number of guide services and duck impoundments have multiplied at an unsustainable rate. It is modern day market hunting. A farm that may have had a father and son hunting (moderate harvest rate) now has (8-10) guys hunting it daily with a much higher harvest rate. Current waterfowl legislation states waterfowl are a common resource. Therefore, the amount of acreage of flooded unnatural food should be reduced per landowner. If not, hunting for the masses will be a thing of the past. People are flooding 100s of acres and not hunting it, just to hold birds on their property. Glad y'all are doing this survey and keeping your foot on the gas to try to make some positive changes. There is definitely something wrong if for no other reason than the winter duck distributions have turned into bulls eyes as opposed to birds being spread across the landscape. Seems like that has accelerated a lot just in the last decade.

Basically between hunting pressure all the way down the flyway to the few birds that actually make it down to the south it becomes really hard to have a good hunt that is worth your time. Along with agriculture and not needing to continue moving farther south the ducks stay in the same areas in the middle or northern states. We didn't shoot a mallard in Louisiana this year or the past 3 seasons until January. A few grey ducks but mostly teal and wood ducks and pintail for the majority of the season. I believe that hunting standing crops should be considered baiting as I can't dump a 50 pound bag of corn (which I do believe is wrong) in the water without getting fined, yet someone can hunt a 200 acre flooded corn field. The middle and northern states farm ducks and cause the southern states to suffer. But more than this I think hunting pressure is a

CLOSING COMMENTS

huge factor because if everyone is running around and scouting then hunting an area the next day then this doesn't offer ducks a chance to sit and rest without being disturbed. Also, Louisiana doesn't have many large reputable refuges where ducks can go and not be touched EVER. It is basically you having to find a spot so far away from anyone and maybe having a possibility of having a good hunt.

There are a lot of variables that are affecting waterfowl hunting across the nation, but in Arkansas specifically. I personally believe that the pure number of ducks is the main issue right now. If you look at the numbers, and I know y'all have, there is literally almost 10 million mallards less right now than there was just ten years ago. If we can find a way to produce more ducks, then I believe that the hunting would improve tremendously. I believe that the best way we can do this is to improve the prairie pothole region, reduce hen harvest, restrict juvenile hunting north of the border, and reduce the number of days. I hate restricting days of opportunity, but I believe a 45 day season would be beneficial to the population.

We need some 30 day seasons to get the population right. It will suck but it's what we need to do to preserve this great sport for our grandchildren.

Another reason I think pressure has gotten bad is because of the amount of hunting land that has disappeared from urban sprawl. So all the people who used to hunt what is now neighborhoods or Amazon warehouses, now have to turn to public land or leases, which in turn, crowds the public land and drives up lease prices.

In my group's opinion, the very liberal limits in Canada and up north are hurting the population more than anything. Along with unrealistic unrealistic population recordkeeping. Obviously they're just guessing on numbers and have no idea an actual accurate number. You do that for a few years and the population becomes off by up to 1 million ducks.

Thank you for having intelligent conversations about waterfowl hunting and waterfowl conservation/environmental conservation. This space and this community needs it. Starting a draw system for nonresidents in Ar is what is needed to lower the hunting pressure. Lower hunting pressure means more birds in more places. More birds in more places means reproduction

If we can change the culture to stewardship, conservation, and memories waterfowl will be restored

"Glad I took the survey. Many questions don't allow many options. Not scientifically done. Leading questions and limited reply options.

I defer to biologists and don't ever look at year to year changes either flyway wide or in my personal hunting experience. Only look at long term trends.

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In many areas there are insufficient loafing areas or refuges - with all the housing developments along rivers (Tennessee, Ohio, Cumberland as examples) and intense year round fishing to the point that ducks are often driven out of these areas that used to hold a lot of waterfowl."

Special regulations for the commercial duck shooting operations. Ban the use of these flush with the ground multiple person terrestrial Sinkboxes! Artificially flooding unharvested standing commercial grains (Corn, Milo) is not a normal agricultural practice and should be prohibited on commercial hunting properties!

Wish duck hunting would go back to the OG days when people killed ducks and other hunters congratulated them. Mud motors serve a great purpose and are convenient but in public lands it makes it too easy and pushes ducks out because people feel they aren't scouting unless they jump up a bunch of ducks for a snap chat video.

We need to make changes so that we are able to enjoy this resource for years to come. I want my kids to grow up with the same passion for waterfowl hunting that I have. Pressure is killing the sport and there are many reasons for that. I would be in favor of a 45 day season, 3 mallards one hen, draw system for OOSH's on state managed land on the weekends at least, and provide more "quality" habitat including food sources and more flooded areas. Too many state owned WMA's have no water early season and therefore the pressure builds on the areas that do have water. Take DD Black River as an example. The only place with early water and where all of the hunters were the first split. Flood Rainy Brake/Shirey Bay GTR, flood Hurricane, provide habitat for these birds early so they can get away from the pressure. Incentivize farmers to leave habitat, but don't expect them to do it for free. A quick google search tells you that Arkansas has more than 3.2 million acres of public ground for hunting. Obviously not all of that is in waterfowl flyways or conducive for waterfowl habitat, but we should take the ground that is and use it to protect the resource while we still can. For other game species in other states, there is a draw system in place for OOSH's. I don't understand why everyone gets up in arms about the thought process of going to that system for ducks in AR.

I could tell the survey was written from a biased perspective since you all are from the south, but the things that you guys deal with down there don't affect me clear out in western Nebraska. We didn't have many mallards this season but I think the population is down, but I also know Montana held a lot all winter. I still had one of my best mallard seasons ever though. The rest of duck season was great too, and I had an excellent early season in October. Our big issue here are guides continuing to lease up ground and expand their operations. The one question about where I do most of my hunting should have had an option for "private-with permission" or something like that.

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I hunt mainly private, but the only options were leased or owned and I don't do either, but I chose owned. Maybe 10% of my hunting is public land.

The question about Canada hunting I find ineffective at this stage. We have no harvest data to rely on no statistics on numbers of hunters. We just believe it's a lot more and it probably is.

"Protect the hens at all cost

Educate the so called influencers about conservation"

"I have only been a waterfowl hunter for a few short years, but I try to be as informed and open-minded as possible - hence how I found your podcast. It seems that I have only hunted in ""the bad years"", as they say, and have yet to experience one of the ""good years"". With all the complaints I have seen online and heard, I think we should collectively take some medicine and shorten the season and lower limits. Nothing drastic, but I would think a little will go a long way.

I don't think banning non-residents entirely is a good idea, and I believe that is a dangerous precedent for other states that we enjoy hunting in. Maybe NR season opens a week later. Maybe there is an extra split for NR's. I don't know the answer. However, I don't see how lowering limits and possibly season dates, marginally, will hurt anyone or anything. Smaller pile pics may hurt influencer and guide ego's, but they will get over it! I don't hunt public, so I have no opinion on mud motors and turtle boxes lol.

Thanks for the insight and knowledge shared through the podcast. I've really enjoyed it and learned a lot. Looking forward to opening day to 25/26 already... Thanks guys."

"I am 44 years old and have hunted Ducks every year since I was 5. It has been a steady downfall since 1999 to me. The spinners came out in 98 and those first years I think we did damage to the overall numbers.

Now across the North and Canadian Prairies, Spinners are used where no skill in calling or hiding is needed to kill thousands of ducks. it continues on in dry fields across the Northern US, where 25 years ago, this did not occur. The spinning wing decoy has been one of the most lethal items to ducks. Ban spinners nationwide, it flat tricks too many young ducks.

On a local level, I believe Jody Pagan and the Moist Soil implementation of the Hallowell Rest area has been more detrimental to ducks using the grand prairie than anyone realizes. Since 2010 when the new levys went in, ducks have slowly stopped

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using it. When i questioned Naylor and the DU guy, both say more ducks use it now than ever. We all can see with our own eyes ducks dont flock to Hallowell in the evenings like they used to. Bring back buck brush and some hot food to attract ducks to the best WMA in the world. I don't understand the AGFC not trying something to attract ducks to the area. Slicks, you guys, 5 oaks, white oaks all do it. Why does the AGFC not try something in Hallowell? most years only a fraction is flooded, and the moist soil farming is nonexistent. It is never manipulated more than once.

Mud Motors are another problem. The noise scares ducks off for miles, the way folks run them in the woods. There is no need for those giant machines, they hurt my ears from here!

The water level in the WMA's is downright pitiful as well. In Bayou meto they blame tree health on lower levels. Why does the AGFC only timber harvest on the high ground in upper vallier and Beaver dam. Both these areas are the high ground that only occasionally flood. If the tree health is the concern, start at the lowest elevations for harvest. It makes no sense. The last several years agfc has been letting the water fall out of the woods all December and January, then come February its 5 feet deep in the woods. The trees are dying because of the spring floods, not the damn winter floods. It is all broken, and the hand picking of AGFC commissioners is as wrong as it can be. Adams owns an electronic decoy company and all the sudden, all electronic devices are legal on wmas. WTF

Lower the shell limit back down to 15. The agfc does the opposite of what the public guy wants, and has for years. The Gar Lyle Land trade at Goose lake is when i lost all respect for AGFC. AGFC will cater to you if you have a big pocketbook, and that is a travesty."

"Thank you for putting this on. Let's hope everyone is answering the corrections accurately no just trying to enter the drawing.

Hen limits and buddy ducks need to be studied closer. I manage about 600ac of waterfowl habitat in Delaware. I talk to you about what we are seeing until I'm blue in the face. Habitat, pressure, weather etc."

Prairie pot hole region is the main concern for me. Leveling of marshlands are more detrimental than anything happening in USA

I would love to see you guys get back to more guests. I agree with your views but think you've beat the one hen mallard thing to death. Anyone who is still listening probably agrees with you or your never going to convince them. I would love have some more episodes on how to manage waterfowl properties and someone on like "the duck farmer"

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Something needs to change and it needs to change quickly. The USFW needs to quit sitting on their hands on the future of waterfowl and work with both Canada and Mexico on reducing the season and limit for 4-5 years and see if there is a difference. I bet there will be a HUGE difference

I believe the declining mallard population is a result of several items. Those being hunting pressure, mud motor/sxs pressure, length of season, bag limit and conditions on the PPR

Thanks for getting this conversation going. I believe there are more concerned waterfowl hunters than govt realizes. I also believe most waterfowl hunters don't really understand waterfowl ecology and the real issues.

"When you asked what the cultural problems are, every single one of them could be number 1.

An unmentioned problem on duck numbers is the fact that this "kill culture" causes people to kill over their limit.

Limits are set for a reason, and if everyone was actually following them, then the numbers wouldn't be as bad as they are.

Also, if light geese are as bad as everyone says, you should be able to hunt them conservation style earlier (while they're still in the Louisiana/arkansas/MS area) or with a special permit during regular season, there should never be limits, and conservation season should only require a federal stamp in every state.

Currently the licensing rules are random based on which state you're in for conservation (look at MS,AR,and Illinois)"

Duck numbers are on the decline and have been for a decade. I freelance hunt from Canada to Texas every year the last 15 years. We have a problem and limits/days will be changing to more conservative real soon.

"I think the biggest threat to waterfowl is drought. Overwhelmingly. Other factors we cannot control such as cold fronts and freezes before the solstice, crop failures, acorn production etc are also large factors in hunting success.

The biggest threat to waterfowl hunting is lack of access with any reasonable opportunity for success/ability to learn. In my home state until very recently there was not one single NWR open to waterfowl hunting. None. And there are still too many that

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are not open to any sort of managed hunting. They become massive rest areas. Access is not only impacted by over hunted public land but largely due to outfitters leasing, trashing places, and leaving a bad taste in the mouth of land owners. Coupled by the drive to make piles and shooting at unethical ranges with large groups to create a “wall of steel” to kill birds at any cost. It ties directly back in to lack of mentorship and lack of any barrier of entry in the US for outfitters (generally). There is a serious lack of game wardens that understand laws and are willing to combat baiting (huge problem in my part of the world).”

Overall, I am confused with why it feels like there’s so much more pressure on the birds these days if license sales claim to be way down over the past 20 years. Personally to me it seems like there’s a lot more hunters than there was 10 years ago. Another thing that I think is adding to that is there is less places to hunt so it feels like it’s more crowded on those areas. I feel very passionately against the “kill” and “limits” culture. Never has and never will make sense to me. I think people could do a better job of not shooting Mallard hens and also shortening our season by 15 days would make a huge difference. Respect for the resource is key.

I generally believe the season should be shortened and the limits for both mallards and total bag should be less. No one cares about anything except killing a “limit”, mostly due to social media. I personally would be good with a 3 mallard (1 Hen) limit per bag. Or 4 scraps. Regardless total ducks would be 4.

I wish AGFC would put water on the half the WMAs in mid October to provide more habitat for early migrators. Even if they make some of the WMAs completely rest areas. Rotate which ones get early water annually for timber health. I believe Arkansas is still a mallard ducks preferred place to be in the winter over all other states. Need to have she’ll limits on public land. It shouldn’t take more than 1 box to kill 6 ducks. Stop educating birds, and teach other hunters to pick ethical shots.

Duck hunting in North America, especially Arkansas, will not survive under its current model. It’s not an easy fix and changes must be made from Canada all the way down the flyways. The best days of duck hunting may be behind me and that’s a realistic fear, especially for future generations.

”I truly believe some of the biggest challenges for waterfowl in Arkansas stem from issues right here at home. One major concern is farmers working their fields before the birds arrive, which is having a greater impact than ever before. With increased hunting pressure and fewer untouched areas, ducks are becoming more concentrated, making it even harder for them to find safe resting spots.

While I understand the importance of preparing fields for the next season, I believe the state should offer better incentives for farmers to maintain healthy duck habitats. Another major issue is the relentless hunting pressure throughout all 60 days of the

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season. This constant pressure, especially on mature birds, is pushing them to seek refuge elsewhere—yet Arkansas has fewer and fewer places where they can truly rest. If we want to protect our waterfowl populations for the future, we need to find a better balance.”

Appreciate the podcast and the conversations you have...agree or not they are conversations that bring to light the issues in the sport. Waterfowl are very adaptive animals...like the Canada goose, snows, Brant and others the mallard is adaptive too...so don't think the reduced population is the reason for the changing hunting in the south. The Canada goose population exploded and they stopped migrating and their habitat didn't change north to south at all.

”Hot topics of debate looking back on my season.

-5 day early speck season, can't hunt over water in October.

-Outfitters need to have a license required separate from guide license to increase barrier of entry. Significantly higher rate to out of state money grabbers who give back nothing to the local resource.

-limit number of guns per blind to reduce party hunting.

-restrict afternoon goose hunts for second half of season to prevent unnecessary pressure on late season birds.

-Remember that when we had birds like the “good old days” three folks were standing in a hole not 25, can't blame the ducks for not wanting to die just create a safe space for them instead of complaining because your neighbor did first.

-mandatory Outfitter bird log on AGFC or similar app to keep track of hunter success, kill numbers, high pressure areas, and record who is abusing and who is giving more than taking.”

”I love waterfowl hunting, and was introduced by my dad and his close friends. I still get to hunt with my dad today, and now my friends and kids. The two biggest issues facing the sport we love, are (1) waterfowl habitat and population decline, and (2) social media impact on the misinformation related to #1 above (as well as the cultural changes that are brought on related to hunting - Hunting should not be a competition for who looks the coolest or kills the most birds)

I appreciate your podcast and think we are aligned on almost all aspects of hunting. Thanks for the work you do to advance the best interests of waterfowl hunting.”

Let's use the science and the data to manage the resource. The ever changing landscape has to be acknowledged.

Appreciate your efforts. I think the killing efficiency of hunters has increased greatly. Guides, especially the dry field hunters of central flyway are nothing more than modern

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day buffalo hunters. Give nothing back to sport. Not talking about services that own and create habitat that they hunt. Those give more than they take.

I'm in Indiana... (The Fulton Farm on IG.) Our season was excellent, but we saw the great cold snap in early January and that helped. We leave standing corn, plant tons of moist soil, have added tons of Wood Duck boxes on our farm... all in hopes of helping the ducks. We might shoot 200 in a good year, but we feed/winter tens of thousands. I'd still gladly give that up for a rebound year. I've posed that question... what kind of rebound would we see if we completely eliminated ONE entire season nationwide? I know that's a stretch, but it's worth the conversation.

Something needs to change but like I've stated money runs the show and there's too much to change the seasons. We as hunters will eventually ruin a renewable resource. There's not just one factor that plays there's millions and we can't pinpoint just one. I hope there is change but I don't know if the folks that are over the framework want to have a conversation. Talked to a local game warden from Alabama a few days ago and ask what's the plan and they know there are less birds even here on our delta but he said there's no plan to change anything.

I'm ok with decreased bag limit. I like the liberal season because it allows for more flexibility for when I get to hunt

Shut down outfitters/Guide services guide services and open up sanctuaries and refuges, take away hunting improperly harvested crops, and non harvested crops. Open more public land. There's no lack of habitat, people say that as an excuse to plant crops to hold birds. And yet populations are still suffering. The average hunter should suffer any changes last, anyone profiting should go first.

Waterfowl numbers are depleted, season days need reduced plus limits decreased.

Waterfowl hunting has been apart of our culture for generations. Wreckless hunting has led to a decline in population. Pressure reduction, habitat preservation, and a conservation mentality are the only way duck numbers will ever reach a consistent and stable level. A duck in South LA and a duck in Central AR are 2 totally different birds. Pressure drastically affects birds across all flyways.

"We have not covered anything about the management of state owned ground after duck season. Water control is killing state owned lands and is not being addressed enough.

I have also listened to your podcast and seen your social media posts and part of the reason I don't listen more or support is because of the negative light shed on public land hunters. Not all of us are bad and a majority of us would do what it takes to turn this around."

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I'm of the opinion that something needs to happen on a federal level and the only thing that I think is enforceable is a shorter season. Not enough game wardens to police smaller limits or banning spinners. Most people follow the rules but I don't see enough people obeying them to matter, at least in Arkansas

I believe people need to stop believing ideas that have no data to back up the claim. There are more than one issues that are hurting waterfowl and we need to stop fighting with state agencies especially those who have no real basic knowledge about the resource.

"Do away with SWD.

Reduce seasons to 45 days

Thursday - Sunday

Ducks have no where to rest anymore"

Two points I would like to make is 1st climate. This is something out of everyone's control but probably the most driving factor of this equation. When is the last time we have go a cold front/ snow cover up north in late October into early November. 2nd the harvest of hen mallard ducks. It's very clear that the hen's population is down and male duck don't lay eggs. I could go on and on but want bore you. Thanks for what you're doing with this ever changing topic.

Anecdotally duck numbers have been on a severe decline for the last four years. Habitat has been on the decline for the last 50 years. Duck Hunting is super important to my life and I would like to see it continue for many generations to come. I am deeply concerned about the future of Duck Hunting. In Minnesota about 10 years ago they made things more convenient to get more people involved and that really felt like the wrong move to me. If there was more focus habitat and habitat improvement that that would bring more hunters rather than a making things more convenient for the sake of hunter numbers. I also wonder about the impact of avian influenza on the duck population. I think it's harder to see dead ducks than it is snow geese because ducks aren't as concentrated on the lakes with ice the way that snow geese are

Really enjoy yalls podcast, never miss an episode. Favorite duck hunt podcast by far, keep it up!

Game theory tells me that things are unfortunately not likely to change. There will always be bad actors, and a higher level of state supervision is not the answer because it unfairly penalizes the good. I hunt a small piece of private land and I'm very fortunate in that regard, but the antics of other hunters near me, both private and public, are somewhat discouraging. I'm not passing judgement, but pressuring birds is

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having a negative effect on the whole pursuit in my opinion. Social media is a cancer on our society. Full stop. In my eyes it will only continue to degrade everything it touches, particularly the arms race of duck hunting gadgets, which we all unfortunately must engage in if we want to be successful in the field. I don't have the time or patience to put out 15 mojos/other motion decoys. I'd go on but I have things to do and I've frustrated myself enough already in writing this.

I truly hope someone steps up to reduce the pressure these birds are facing. Our kids future in this sport depends on it.

"Thank you for conducting this survey, which I hope will gain traction in the waterfowling community. While I do not regularly listen to your podcast, I am aware of the the work you all are doing to try to raise awareness on these crucial issues and often see your posts on Instagram. Our values and opinions as it pertains to preserving our resource seem to align.

As background, my family has lived in Memphis and used it as our base for duck hunting for several generations. My great-grandfather was a regular hunting partner of Wallace Claypool's. My dad and granddad have been involved in various conservation and wetland restoration efforts primarily in the Mississippi Delta for years. I joined them in the blind before I was old enough to shoot and have hunted in the MS Delta for functionally my entire life. That to say, duck hunting has been one of the core tenets of our family for a very long time. We like to think that we try to do things the right way.

I am not as well-versed in the ins and outs of prairie pothole habitat management or the scientific effects of seasons and bag limits as others. I pay attention to the habits and patterns of the ducks in our corner of the world and have seen some noticeable changes.

However, the most troubling issue I have seen in the past few years, which I admit is probably not the most pressing issue, is the culture that has been spawned around waterfowl hunting by social media and over-commercialization of the sport. While I will never fault anyone for trying to earn a living, the blatant pillaging of the sport by profiteers on social media trying has created a ""Win at All Costs"" mentality among hunters that incentivizes behavior disrespectful to the sport and the resource, such as posting videos of water swatting, boat races, and pile pics (many of which are fake and comprised of the dubious ""Fridge Mallard"").

While I do not understand the motivation behind sharing with the entire world that you killed 12 mallards this morning, I suspect some of this behavior stems from a wave of

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new hunters created by social media who simply don't know any better. Organized team sports provide opportunities for coaches to instill ethics and sportsmanship. The decentralized nature of duck hunting does not afford new hunters this opportunity, and I'm not sure what the solution is.

The big brands and guide services that benefit from highly-polished social media posts (you them and I know them) trickle down to the new hunter and creates a false sense of reality for this new hunter. In the mind of the new hunter, if you aren't killing a limit of ducks every day, your hunt and your season is a total failure, and you will often operate outside the bounds of the law and sportsman ethics to get that next Instagram reel or pile pic to post. In my opinion, this mindset has warped the sport into a total rat race, where killing is prioritized over all other values and respect for the resources.

I apologize for the long-winded response, but this topic has been on my mind for several years. I appreciate the outlet to share my thoughts."

Thanks for the survey! I hope this goes viral!

I believe an opportunity to increase hatch success and numbers could be completely correlated to trapping grants in the PPR. There are direct relationships to turkey and other bird success in areas that have good habitat and have trapping history. I believe a bounty on critters and predators (raccoon, possum, skunk, coyote, fox, bobcat) in certain states and regions would increase hen and nest survival in those area.

"Our waterfowl numbers are dropping due to many factors.

- 1) Almost everyone who waterfowl hunts owns a boat, leaving almost nowhere for the ducks to rent.
 - 2) Large Planted and un-hunted waterfowl wintering properties
 - 3) Canadian farming practices is one of the main reasons for the Northern Pintails decline!
 - 4) Mud-Motors! Great for mud but not for waterfowl!"
- Flooded corn isn't baiting.

I know waterfowl needs to be managed on a federal level, but I do think a lot could be gained if each state prioritized their residents over non-residents. I think if each state along the Mississippi/Central flyways limited non-residents more (non-resident draw for public land, increased stamp prices, limited season for NR, etc.) would even out the pressure instead of making AR a funnel. Also if you can flood a private corn field and hunt it, why can't our tax dollars pay for corn to be planted on public? Just sayin!

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Changes have to be made and made now. I do not want days reduced but I would like limits reduced to a maximum of 4 ducks. 100% of monies raised per DU & Delta need to spent on the ppr. The wintering habitat is taking care of itself by private and state habitat, west Tennessee is full of state, federal & private refuges. Decisions have to be made that will benefit waterfowl populations. I would like my grandchildren to be able to hunt also.

Reduce hunting days and lower limit on mallards. Stop hunting over standing crops.

I work all off season on our farm to create better habitat for all wildlife just to have a chance at harvesting a few birds! I want there to be more birds in the future for my kids and future grandkids to be able harvest and enjoy the sights of waterfowl.

"There's a lot of good going on right now in waterfowl culture and unfortunately a lot of bad. You guys align with my views on the sport and are a force for good so thank you. Duck hunting is so much fun yet so many people act like it is this grind that is so hard and they are so mad at the ducks and the weather is never right and the water is never right and there's no ""new ducks"" (while wearing flat bills with their hood pulled up over their hat with a grimace on their face in front of a pile of ducks). Maybe that's just how most 20 year olds will always be so I try not to let it bother me (it still does).

The pendulum swings both ways and I think culture got too focused on numbers and piles and killshots and boat races and acting tough, etc. Social media is a ""look at me"" tool for people and it always will be. But it can always swing back the other way and you guys are a big part of that.

Canada needs fixing, culture needs fixing, farm mallards need to be addressed, I think limits need to be reduced, I think days need to be reduced, and we need the good Lord to provide rain up there if that is his plan. But the world will keep on turning and I'll show up every November whether the limit is 1 or 6. People that are mad at the world will stay mad at the world, but I'll be happy as a lark sharing a pit or a tree with my buddies or my 11 month old son when he is of age."

Duck farming is a huge industry now and it's all done within the areas that are major flyway hotspots. I think that the manipulation of environmental factors like keeping water open, planting crops specifically for waterfowl w/ no intent of harvesting, refuges on property engineered to hold birds, pumping water to flood crop specific areas are just a way for the rich man to manipulate the system to stack the odds in their favor. It's against the law to buy a 50 lb bag of hen scratch and spread it on edge of a pond but you can plant 250 acres of corn in an engineered levee system , pump water, and hunt birds. All these laws were setup by the government seems like if your rich enough to manipulate the system then go ahead but the poor man better abide by the regulations.

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Again....PRIVATE waterfowl sanctuaries are ruining public land hunting. We sit and watch ducks fly in and out while the money folks enjoy themselves. Our tax dollars are used to manage a resource and that resource is hoarded by those who have plenty of money.....fact

We recently (in the last 4-5 years)had some windmills put in within the general area that I hunt (30+ of them) and it seems the hunting has been negatively affected by this. It would be interesting to hear more about studies done regarding waterfowl migration and windmill impacts (if any).

Pintail limit of 3 is ok. As long as only drakes

I've hunted in the lead shot days in the 30 day 3 duck days and every season in between I'm in Eastern Kansas so we have pretty much always get our migration of mallards. The limit of 5 drakes and up to 2 hens is a bit high 1 hen is plenty none of us are hunting in our sitka waders blowing a 150 duck call are depending on a hen mallard to feed our families lol at my small marsh we try not to shoot any but it happens we sure don't target them and won't shoot one just to fill a limit. This is a awesome survey hopefully it works out for you guys.

"We need a lot of things to change.

Rethink how the bird surveys are done.

Pay Farmers up north to not disturb area that are key to breeding.

A big effort in predator control

Stop allowing the practice of flooding a corn field to hunt in it.

Ban ice eaters

A shorter season (30 to 40 days) with a 3 duck bag limit."

Like the plan for 1 gen Mallard.. Pintail should have only gone up 1 as a test. Pressure needs to be reduced and season cutoff should be mid January length i think is fine but add more splits to reduce pressure.. i understand it takes opportunity but opportunity should come after resource! Think of the northern states having a slightly later start but extending a bit more with an extra split somewhere in there that pressure should help us southerners with better weather pushes from the extended pressure. Love the podcast listen to every episode!

I believe we need to lower the total bag limit of ducks per day to 4 a piece and leave everything else like it is: the days to hunt, the species and number of birds the same. Lower bag limits equal more happy hunters, especially in a day and age where you gotta "we got the limit".

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Canada needs smaller limits and their season doesn't need to open til oct 15 , central and miss flyway need smaller limit. Season needs to end by January 15.

Fixing the younger generations ethics would go a long way in correcting a lot of what has put a black eye on waterfowling. Needing to have the biggest, fastest, careless approach is what waterfowling has become. The must be first and everyone gets a trophy mentality needs to be fixed for waterfowling to continue longterm.

"The prairie conditions in Canada are horrid obviously leading to decreasing duck populations. It is extremely frustrating that it takes the regulatory agencies so long to change limits/reduce the harvest.

Additionally, commercial guiding seems to be a near step adjacency to market hunting. Also, live decoys were outlawed years ago. Motorized decoys should not be allowed anywhere. Just seems common sense to me."

AGFC need to strongly focus on waterfowl conservation efforts. Arkansas isn't doing nearly enough in comparison to what the surrounding states are doing, and it has really started to show over the past few years. For me personally, this was the best season I've had in many years, but that's NOT the case for our state as a whole. I think I just got lucky with how things went this season. I still believe the duck hunting will just continue to decline for Arkansas if some changes aren't made ASAP.

"Shorten the season (45)

Explain wny not to shoot hens

Reduce limits

NATION WIDE BAN OF MOJOS

All are needed we can't control weather"

Keep up the great work

Seasons and limits needs to be revamped so save the future of duck hunting.

I would like to know what the number of out of state hunters using WMA's is versus in state hunters. I saw an increase of out of staters in the areas I hunted this year. I think everyone should have an opportunity to hunt. If I want to go to South Dakota and duck hunt while I pheasant hunt I have to put in for the lottery. That may be something we should talk about for a public land out of state lottery.

I personally plant food plots for some wealthy clubs in our area. These patches of 20-40 acre corn fields hold the majority of birds in our immediate area. I have seen it first hand during the second split this season. We couldn't find a duck anywhere. I drove to the corn fields and they were all covered in birds. If this is so effective in our area it has to be that much worse in the northern states. Ultimately this has to hinder the

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migration. A buffet of corn eye level with a duck standing on ice. Why would they ever move?

large duck clubs on the languille around Forrest city colt Caldwell Palestine and wynne with rest fields/ corn fields or large acreage of water on the languille river mainly from I 40 to hwy 64 has enough pumped corn fields(all relatively new in the past 5 to ten years)that don't get hunted to hold an feed massive amounts of fowl an they do every year those ducks imprint there I personally know most of the people that own them the only difference is now they don't leave it as often like they use to because pressure is at an all time high. Every body of water that's In a ag field in this area is leased an hunted mostly by out of town people that aren't always ethical hunters. When I was a kid I could drive by section 16 or by your place the Byers place and always see multiple fields with ducks during the season with half as many fields holding water as there is today. Take a ride through those areas today and it's a different story. Same with blinds up an down the languille from I40 to 64

Waterfowl hunting , predominantly duck hunting is favoring the hunters that can control the controllable. Food , water , and cover. The hunters who are hunting larger tracts of land will continue to see a standard level of success in my opinion. Pressure has to decrease and habitat needs to increase. Hen Mallard limit needs to be 1. "I believe habitat and predators have more affect on duck populations, followed by shooting too many ducks and hens especially mallards.

I believe Hens imprint ducklings and shooting them kills that opportunity to imprint on your location in ducklings."

The waterfowl "industry" isn't helping the quality of waterfowl hunting. Maybe the restrictive regulations will help get rid of folks and their business but the "pile pic" fad is exhausting.

Na

There should be more discussion about how private land hunters are affecting waterfowl hunting and the population. Everyone wants to point out the problems with public land hunting (which they should) but no one talks about the hundreds of thousands of birds killed by outfitters and private land owners. The feds also need to reduce the limits across the board, Canada shooting 8 mallards is a problem. Moist soil unit experiments have failed. It's simple chemistry. Corn provides more energy for migrating waterfowl than rice and native grasses from moist soil units. The biologists do not see it this way (from a few conversations). I'm afraid they are biased by their paycheck and forces higher up the employment ladder. Land I have hunted for

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years witnessed record low harvest numbers this season while our adjoining neighbors murdered them. The only difference was they had flooded corn. Anecdotally, I also believe there is something to be said about ducks hitting flooded corn over geese. The geese do not seem to like the stalks or tight vicinity. This decreases food source competition and even less incentive for mallards to move. The working father (myself) can never afford the acres and input to provide this hunting style for my son. He got disinterested (10 years old) this season because we simply didn't see the numbers. The last thing we need is to lose a generation of hunters while the rich guides and private clubs charge premiums to hunt a wild bird. Making flooded corn illegal, more regulations on Canada (liberal season, bag limits, AND shooting hours), and decreasing mallard hen limits are the biggest bang for our buck. Otherwise we face an increasing disparity in the fabled waterfowl tradition in Arkansas.

The culture has changed. Product developments have been great but has led to many more hunters. I think a combination of improved breeding habitat, pressure management, number of hunters in Canada, and hot cropping are all issues that deserve much more attention.

Liberal limits and liberal seasons along with climate factors as well as farming practices have gotten us where we are today. You're not going to change the climate or farming practices so focus needs to be given to limits and season length. Cut both down. The only folks who are going to complain are the outfitters but at the end of the day their livelihood depends on ducks. So let's do what we can to strengthen duck numbers throughout North America. Oh, and you're going to need to get Canada and Mexico on board.

I was fortunate enough to experience the late 90's and 2000's as a teenager with ample time to hunt, anyone who saw these hunting days knows how bad our current conditions are. The basic root cause of issues most see are simply overall duck populations, increase the duck numbers across the board and they will eat northern food faster, migrate faster, and migrate sooner. As much as I prefer to kill mallards my field hunting and mixed bag success has dropped significantly over the last 10yrs. Where did all of the teal, gadwall, shoveler, and blue bills go? I own property that borders the bald knob national wildlife refuge, there aren't ducks on it anymore..... Having success on a river during a hard freeze shouldn't be the only way to get numbers and make a season. People need to stop blaming the heated ponds and other nonsense and conspiracies, hopefully the large number of ducks that never left the Illinois and Missouri rivers this winter will help increase our counts for next year. Until then I hope for a 3 duck 30 day season

CLOSING COMMENTS

Any rest area, owned by the AGFC, should be planted in corn or something other than what is being done now. Hallowell looked like the Dead Sea this year. Also, the White River Refuge needs to plant all rest areas. They need to do everything they can to in draw and hold ducks. Also, guides should not be allowed to run multiple groups and hunt morning and afternoon. There are many guide service around Stuttgart doing this daily. The pressure here is insane. A duck has no where to rest. Something has to be done about the amount of pressure.

Duck numbers have dwindled since the 90s. We've had some okay seasons here and there, but overall it's been a steady decline over time. We keep doing the DU thing and preaching habitat, but we keep doing the same stuff and getting the same "less ducks" result. Let's change it up. We had the points system in the 80s and early 90s, then it was a 5 duck limit with a shorter season, then around 1999, we had the peak duck population so we increased the season to 60 days and 6 ducks. Fast forward 25 years and seasons are getting worse, but we've still got the same liberal season and limit. What would it hurt to ratchet this back for 2-3 years just to see what happens? This fall will be my 30th season to hunt mallards in timber. I'm ok if I can't shoot as many ducks for as many days. I think lower limits and shorter seasons will thin out some of the "killers" also.

If we don't do anything we're gonna be screwed

In my opinion waterfowling has seen a significant increase in hunting pressure from new hunters. Many of which are young and naive to what may be considered poor practices. With the added influence of social media, it has put unrealistic expectations and pressure on this particularly younger group to go out and kill, post the pile, repeat.

"I hunt flooded rice in MS. None of the rice is still standing and all that's left is stubble. I believe this is how hunting over flooded agriculture should be. The standing corn that is flooded in northern states discourages migration.

Controversially, I think ice eaters should be banned along the entire flyway. Once your water is frozen, your season is over. If you want to hunt later, drive south."

Glad someone is raising awareness of our issues. I feel like if it wasn't for you guys we'd all still be in the dark wondering what is going on

"We hunted the same ducks for 60 days in one of the best areas in the state of AR... IT WAS the worst season in AR history and ours in 50 years!

There is simple answers to every situation. This isn't hard to figure out. We all know what is going on. For goodness sakes we have been saying it for 10 years!!!! THERE IS NO GOOD NEWS FOR AR.... PERIOD!

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Unless u are a millionaire go away!!! Get out now. Sell ur stupid mud motor all ur Shitka and Chenaynay and go home. Find a new hobby! Y'all are all gluttons for punishment.

The \$\$\$ wins. We have all been lied to for years. Make it 30 days and 3 ducks. 1 hen! BPop is the same it was in 1986... so why don't we have the same season restrictions... MONEY!!!!!!

Get rid of the robo duck forever!!!!

To hunt in AR public for out of stater is a DRAW. And out of state license is at least \$500!!!

We don't protect the resource!!!! 8 brown ducks a day in Canada per man over 12 ROBOS! Where is the sport in that. A 6mo old mallard has no idea!!! Look on social media... 500 mallards landing on 12 ROBOS in a dry field! All the time! They get here... NOT A CHANCE IN HELL!

There ain't one goose guide N of AR anymore!!!! YA WANNA WHY!!!! MONEY! They all guide ducks!!!! Leave corn shoot the hell out of em.

There isn't one biologist on the planet that can convince me at 6.5m BPop we don't kill enough hens in 1 damn season in the MS flyway to make a difference!!! THATS CRAZY TALK!!!! Along with predatory animals, and farmers tilling up all the breeding grounds, we will be lucky to ever recover from this!!!

GROW MORE DUCKS AND PROTECT THE ONES WE STILL HAVE!!!!!!"

"As a side note, I'd be interested to see Arkansas zone the state for waterfowl. Something like West, NE, CE, and SE. this is a similar approach to Kansas. This way the state can sell out of state permits based on zones. It's really tough when guys can come for Dave Donaldson hear bayou meto is hot and just pick up and move. It's crazy how quickly pressure can consolidate these days. That didn't use to happen a couple decades ago.

There was a weekday driving through Brinkley where I don't think I saw a single Arkansas license plate. That's fine but their ability to lift and shift that pressure is very much an impact. I've deleted social media years ago, but that presence and technology is definitely making this issue much larger each year.

There's a guide in Texas I've known for 9yr. He went from call me on a weekday I'll take care of you. To \$400/4 people/2days minimum. He's now \$1,500 single bookings 2day

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minimum. This isn't sustainable. I think the reality is that the regulators won't change anything and what will kill this is what killed it in the 70s. It's just not economical.

What scares me the most is a hunter life cycle. You have 20-35yr old driving a lot of the public pressure and as life forces those guys out of the woods, there's no room for the 8-16yr to gain the exposure we had in the 90s. There's not a chance in hell my dad was getting me up at 2am to get me in a public spot. We'd launch in college around 5:45 to hunt public. You can't do that. That all consuming style of hunting isn't sustainable for the current guys and it's prohibitive to the younger generation. The sport is going to kill itself.

I'd like to hear yall talk more about the central flyway. I think a lot of that uptick in quality hunting is based on wigeon, teal, and pintails. I think based on breeding, migration time, and adaptability this speaks to some of what Arkansas is seeing. There's this misconception that the central flyway is strong but to me they are just overstocked with ducks that are more adaptable to this environment and as we pound them out, you're now out of probably some of the most resilient stock of birds. It's scary that in the 1900s we saw a reaction to market hunting and in the 1930s we saw a reaction to more conservation and loss of habitat. Everyone keeps saying we've been here before but no one stops to realize what we DID when we were here before." The hunting today compared to when I started in 2000 is like a night and day difference. We used to have SO many more ducks and duck species in west central Minnesota. Every weekend was an easy limit. We barely even see any ducks now, 25 years later. It's drastically declined and anyone telling you different hasn't hunted for very many years.

Spinning wing decoys allow new hunters to be successful which is good. But also makes some complacent to getting better at hunting overall. Canada needs to lower limits and push season later to reduce the hen harvest of all species. There's no need to kill 100 plus birds with majority being hens. It's why believe the male to female ratio is out of balance especially pintails.

Thank yall for all that you do for the sport! Dead hens lay no eggs!

"Waterfowl population surveys don't seem to match the overall sentiment of what waterfowlers are seeing and are harvesting. Restricting season limits and days may help or would only make pressure worse during those times. But may weed out bad actors from the sport.

Pay to play hunting is killing waterfowling as we know it"

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"1. Drop the limit of hens to 1 or better yet zero.
2. Delay the start of the duck season to allow for more definitive color ID.
3. Social Media has become outfitter driven. Or the majority of posts are outfitters promoting thier buisness (big kills) to make more buisness (more clients = need more kills).
4th and probably most important, we need to get back to a wet spring cycle in the Dakotas and Canada."
Thanks for doing this!

Thank you.

With less than 10% of the mortality rate of waterfowl being contributed to hunting I really think we should focus on how we can deal with other issues concerning duck mortality as well.

I appreciate what you guys are doing with your podcast and this survey! I hope both of you can be the leaders for change in our sport. Whether it is sportsmanship, pressure management, getting this info the Feds to affect the seasons/limits, etc. What you are doing is awesome! I really hope this is beginning of some much needed change in our sport so we can get the population back to where it needs to be and raise the quality of hunting.

Pressure and weather are the 2 biggest factors impacting how ducks navigate Arkansas. Only one of those can we control. Introducing SWDs back to public land had an immediate and extreme negative impact on how ducks used the public land woods and served to further educate and stress them more than the powers that be probably anticipated (IDK who in the hell voted to allow those back). A new farm bill with strong funding pools for programs in the PPR and winter water in the south are also necessary. "A few of the questions I believe the options are set to be answered almost forcing the person answering to answer a yes/no but tying that directly to a reason they may not believe in or agree with.

As for outfitters, as a guide, I am all for the registration, insurance, exam, first aid, etc. However, I think that there should be a completely different bracket with little or no excessive fees for those doing it on property they own. Something has to be done for the guys who have virtually zero barrier of entry ruining the areas like Arkansas specks, and central flyway because they're roaming free and essentially attempting to kill the mass of every waterfowl movement/ migration."

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Mexico has no limits. It doesn't matter how we restrict the seasons or limits on this side of the border. If we kill less, they are just going to kill more in Mexico because ducks are considered a nuisance to farmers there.

For Arkansas 45-50 day season with several splits. Open Saturday before Thanksgiving close Sunday after. Couple weeks in December. 25 days in January. Same days for rest of continent including Mexico and Canada. Adjust days for your region. Limit of 5 ducks. 4 mallards. Kill a mallard hen that's your limit on mallards.

I've hunted Arkansas since about 2010. Everyday of the season up until around 2019 there would be a constant flow of migrators high all season long; that's no longer the case. Now it seems to be tied to cold fronts more than ever, and sometimes they still don't seem to show up. Driving around checking out the landscape the fields that would traditionally be "loaded" with ducks are fewer and further between. It has really been disheartening to see the tail off of a population over the years and more specifically the past 5-7

"Need to ban wood duck harvest on public land in Ar! Would improve hunt quality without limiting ability to go hunt!

Why did AGFC take steps backwards on public land, especially Bayou Meto, going back to 4 mallards, going back to 25 shells, allowing SW decoys again? Big step backwards!!!"

There needs to be a major study on the federal level on the effects of Aflatoxins in all these unharvested corn & milo plots, It affects ducks ability to produce a full hatch of eggs OR none at all, possibly killing them if they eat enough of it. I am convinced that is a major factor that everyone has overlooked.

I've hunted waterfowl for 62 years and am saddened by the lack of respect for this grand tradition. So many "shooters" only care about a bigger pile than the next guy or a band. All for the wrong reasons! Gunfire starts in September and ends in April. Birds are getting pressured for 8 months! Conservation season needs to be ended. Kudos to Texas for not allowing it anymore.

Ive been doing this a long time the things ive seen change the game the most is unharvested crops, and the circus !!! The circus is on any given public land in Arkansas any day of duck season at ever boat launch there can be anywhere from 20 to 60 rigs ... 90% of these rigs have circus lights on them lit up like a chicken truck with a light on the front that can shine 3 ft up a knats ass at 100 yds and a turtle box blaring out some ghetto shit and a mud motor screaming like a harley ... i remember not too long ago these same spots putting in of a morning and bumping ducks up as we went along every morning then the last 10 or so years along came the circus !!!!! Been going down hill ever since now we never bump ducks on the way in and we rarely see ducks use these areas during hunting time ...

"Folks need to recognize 2 things.

Hip needs an overhaul and we need to check all game.

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The farm bill needs support to grow more ducks as well as provide more habitat. 1 great hatch and we could be back over 10mil MCM."

"The pressure is what is affecting the ducks, they are nocturnal and stay on ground that isn't heavily pressured, they stay in large groups and all do the same thing, you don't see the small groups milling around anymore

The numbers show what the spinning wing decoys have done from the 99-00 seasons the number has steadily declined, there is a lot of young ducks that get killed and never migrate

There are idiots on the river near me all day and night

The "no scouting" rule helped a little but the shot chasing starts before 8am now

Nothing is enforced on the refuge

Of course this is only my opinion"

"Canada to Mexico needs to get on the same page as a flyway, they are all the same sucks we need to all do what we can regardless of state, work together.

Limit hens to 2 per group

Limit mallards 24 per group regardless of size. Satisfaction should not be an issue and still can kill plenty of other ducks.

Draw hunts or have a max limit of hunter depending on size on a first come basis.

Outlaw game birds, let them shoot white ducks or raise wild mallard eggs.

Allow to change limits and season during the season depending on how the year is. Each year is different, why keep everything the same?

Have better programs for farms to leave harvested crop stubble and putting water on fields in the south. Arkansas and MS to start with, try to get more wintering further south.

Ms public land needs to do a lot more. Way way more"

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good work

CLOSING COMMENTS

i know there is a lot of complaining about ducks not coming south of missouri or kansas now but it seems we're just in a warmer weather pattern in a few years it will probably shift and they will push further south. i think there needs to be more education about keeping water on fields after the season for ducks migration back north.

Waterfowl hunting has been in decline for 15-18 years, we all can agree on that. The limits absolutely needs to be lowered, here as well as Canada. The hunting of waterfowl over unharvested crop is absolutely ridiculous. It's no different than pouring corn out of a bag and we all know it. The ones running guide operations over unharvested crops should be ashamed of themselves. All they are doing is killing thousands of birds a year for \$\$ and posting pike pictures to social media like they've really accomplished something. This has to be stopped. In my small world I know at least 20-30 people that are going to g to Canada in October and killing hundreds of ducks and geese on a 3 day hunt. You can't tell me it's not affecting numbers. 3 month old birds landing on a spinning wing by the hundreds. This being said I have no faith that any changes will be made. There are simply too many people making money on the backs of ducks and geese.

Blaming outfitters for what is going on is blasphemous. Habitat and conditions drive populations.

Canada hunting is becoming extremely popular. Ducks getting pounded up there. Reduce mallard limit to 3 and 1. Shell limit on Public land to 15. White river / BM Hunter here. The number of ducks you kill isn't it for me. I want to see ducks working the trees and finishing down. Public land "scouting" and access needs to be prohibited after 12. No mud motors on public land in Arkansas.

We need to change what we are doing. Can't keep doing the same thing over and over and expect different results. Seasons and bag limits needs to be decreased. Gets back to the way it should we can always extend the season or bag limit

I appreciate the effort put in place by the Standard Sportsman group to increase awareness and act upon this issue.

They fixed the duck problem in the 80s & 90s by going to 30 day 3 duck limit , 60 days is too long especially with staggered dates ducks get shot at 5 months out of the year too much pressure and not enough ducks left by the time they get down here ,

Hunters need to band together!! It is so infuriating the other group vs other group. I also think social media has ruined the perception of duck hunting. Also I have meet more nice locals in AR than everyone perceives there is! :)

Until you fix the hate culture that these kids (less than 30 y/o)resident and non resident alike have brought to public land duck hunting the overall hunting experience will continue to decline on public land. I don't know how you do it either because it's not the

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AGFC's job they can't enforce respect. It's a cultural issue with that generation and I've never seen anything like it. These OOS hunters that get on social media and consistently taunt the residents including talking about having sex with their wives and other morbid comments has to stop before someone gets hurt. NR hunters while I don't have a problem with them being here need to be limited. Every other state limits NR hunters for their trophy animals but not Arkansas. I personally watched the NR hunters shoot out Bayou Meto as public duck hunting got exposed on social media. There would be 70-80 tricks at any given accessories on the WMA daily with 80% being NR tags and I truly believe that's the reason Bayou Meto no longer holds ducks. I really feel the WMA is ruined and what you've seen the last few years is the new normal and I blame that on the NR hunting pressure. Now that they've ruined Bayou Meto they're working on ruining Dave Donaldson and Clarendon. I was a Clarendon and Biscoe this year on a Saturday and I saw 3 other Arkansas boats as opposed to 50 or so NR boats. The NR pressure is the reason ducks don't stay on public anymore and the AGFC is too incompetent to fix it. In fact they went backwards with their rule reversal this season.

"In my state

10 days the week of thanksgiving

Remaining season come in day after Christmas through Jan.

Limit out of state to 20 days 4 5 consecutive day permits.

No hunting state wide past 12 noon."

Good work on getting the word out about the ongoing issues in our sport and for trying to brainstorm ideas to improve it.

My concerns are with the migration first and population second. I feel that if we push our opening day back here in Arkansas far enough to allow our rivers time to rise and open up the majority of our habitat it would allow the early migrators to build their numbers in the state and when we start shooting them they will be able to find refuge without having to leave the state. This could restore the migration to what it once was. It makes zero sense to open our season when only 15% of our habitat has water because we push the birds to refuge areas in Missouri where they form a wall that prevents other ducks from migrating South.

Very good survey. Thank you for what you do to improve our sport!!

Ducks and geese do not migrate anymore because they are being fed all over the north they have ruined waterfowl hunting in Illinois

Great survey. Thank you for putting this together.

Enjoyed the survey and the approach beyond spectator you two take to waterfowl hunting.

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I feel like there's a lot to look at the past couple seasons and what they've been. I've tried to understand what it could be on why it's gotten worse over the years, but for me I think its adaptation up north and not having to fly south due to open water and food. I agree with moving to 1 hen. Unharvested crop should be utilized for rest areas, and I think Arkansas at some point (if they already aren't) should pay farmers to plant crops and not harvest for bigger rest areas.

All of North American including Canada and Mexico should all play under the same book. 4 Drakes and 2 hens. Also I would be a dramatic impact if all of North America had to quit using spinners. It's only going to continue to hurt duck hunting

"Guiding is ruining waterfowl up and down the flyway. I believe guiding is ruining this sport and lifestyle and an alarming rate with the kill focused only mindset. I believe they are exploiting the resource and it is worse than market day hunting, due to the fact that no one is consuming this resource. Sure you hear guides say they donate them and I'm sure some do. However in Kansas and Oklahoma I know of multiple outfitters that have steel fire pits hooked to gas line that are used to incinerate uncleaned birds. The outfitters believe it's cheaper to burn them than pay guides to clean them. The guides in Kansas are taking over the private ground at an alarming rate and forcing people to hunt public. The public ground is being over taken by non residents forcing resident waterfowlers to simply not hunt anymore because they have no where to go. We are losing hunters at a record rate. This is ridiculous in multiple ways. Guides are pillaging the resource in Canada with SWDs in the dry field and only care about the money while killing every hen that decoys. One particular outfitter killed 10k plus birds in Canada this year and runs an outfit here in Kansas as well. The culture of waterfowl has to recognize that this exploitation is the root cause of the problem and it's masked by brands pushing their products and using these guides as walking bill boards. We have to do something now before it's too late.

Ban guiding unless it's privately owned ground by the resident guide and heavily regulated

Ban spinners

States should impose a non resident restriction with a 25% allocation using a draw system.

Care about this great resource and be conservationist."

"The ark duck counts are consistently going down every year, mallard and total ducks. How can "everyone" sit by and not throw caution into the wind? I know why it's money. I understand the duck stamp sales continue to go up. But look at who is buying them.

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The ark resident continues to decline. The ahm model is not working there is absolutely no adapting!! What is the reason when the matrix is setup in a way to have a 98% chance of liberal seasons. Why is that not being discussed? There needs to be a charge lead immediately from a non biased educated front for change. No organization is going to do it they know what it may mean as far as funding or revenue.

Let's drain the swamp expose the numbers and make a change! Just look at Rex Hancock he lead the charge to save the cache river when other organizations stood by until he finally raised enough awareness that others joined in. Just think if that one man would not have took charge what would've happened to ark duck hunting. Yes it's going to be tough, yes there's going be others say u don't know what ur talking about it, but they are wrong! The system is broken and time for change is now. So let's do it!!!!"

"Keep the good work going on the podcast.

Bobby Hayes

Duck Lander Call Co.

Ps, those ducks on that Mo river video that circulated this year is nothing out of the norm for that time of year in that area."

I am not sure what needs to happen, but the waterfowl landscape is changing rapidly and I hope more respect for waterfowl and conservation happens, instead of just politics and money that this industry is now consumed by

Keep up the solid work, fellas.

Much of the culture issues was a lack of proper mentorship. More focus on backfilling that issue on social media would be best for the future of our sport. It's not about the kill. Need less arguments and attacks of the science. Need more across the table discussions from those with knowledge. Social media and Podcaster should foster that learning environment instead of taking shots at the other side. The infighting only makes our passion and culture look bad.

Lots of factors impacting duck hunting today. It needs to be an organization started so we have one big voice. Thank You

"With changing weather patterns it's hard to say what dates will be better for south Louisiana.

I think all these people that are buying property in Arkansas and Missouri that holds thousands upon thousands of ducks will ruin the southern migration for years to come. All these young birds that only go as far south as Missouri will never go past that unless we have artic winters that last for weeks on end and have no other option. From what I've seen the ducks would rather fight to keep open water in flooded corn fields then migrate to warmer conditions. Farming practices in south Louisiana have also changed and not for the better of ducks.

In my opinion we are seeing more cases of bird flu due to the amount of birds being held on small locations. Disease spreads fast in close quarters."

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Pretty solid questions, I am a standard sportsman fan because of the logical side of thinking. There are waterfowl podcast considering “experts” but there’s only so many times I can roll my eyes when these duck hunters call themselves conservationist but will be quick to be defensive when something isn’t catered towards their way of thinking or mostly speak with complete confidence with no clue. People listen to these podcast and take it as facts. I appreciate you guys deep diving to cite sources backed by research.

“We need to do something, as it seems the sport will continue to struggle. I think 30 + years of liberal framework has taken us down a hole that we might not be able to recover from and affect the sport going forward. Most of us don’t get to hunt everyday anyway, so reducing down to 45 days might not hurt or efforts, but would reduce pressure on the birds over a season.

I think state commissions need to become elected positions with a 1 term limit. It seems in Louisiana that commission members get there from their politician friends and don’t take into consideration the wants of the whole public, just their “rich friends” considerations. Recently we saw ours vote on something effecting the waterfowl season and they just voted on it without even getting the state biologist’s recommendations and the public comments that he brought to the meeting.”

Do somethingp

I like where this is going, while I might not personally agree with everything, everyone might be saying it’s nice to have a platform for sportsmen to voice their opinions

Look forward to every show.

Curious to see what changes if any will help with the waterfowl population and their migration.

normal ag practices should return. no more flooding of corn . now more state or federal all sanctuaries. all federal and state land open to hunting 3 days a week

“Happy to share thoughts but please do not share any of my data submitted directly quoting me or without personally contacting me.

The heart of the problem lays in the PPR and the breeding season. Hunters account for less than 8% of duck mortality. Protecting them during the breeding season is the best way to increase population. Population drives hunter success. There’s never been a successful duck hunt without ducks, but there has been without ideal water conditions,

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agriculture, etc. There can be as much water, food, best hide ever etc if there aren't any ducks that doesn't matter.

I don't believe that flooding agriculture is stopping migrations or anything of that nature. Water has gotten into agriculture naturally for years and with loss of habitat and development along major rivers I believe water on agriculture is good for waterfowl. What I do not "like" is ice eaters, that is not natural.

At the end of the day you can not stop a migration, it's a naturally occurring process but we can directly impact the number of birds that make it into the fall flight, and that again is what drives our success as duck hunters no matter where we are in the flyways.

As for guiding, I have no issue with it. I do believe there needs to be more regulation on it and consequences for those who do not follow rules. And many of the guides I've spoken with that do it the right way have no problem with a little more effort needing to be put in on their part, it will separate the knuckleheads from the ones who are doing it right.

We are also losing duck hunters by the year. And hunters contribute the most to conservation. There needs to be a lot more #TakeAKidHunting and less #Limits. I love killing my share of birds and all my buddies with me to do the same, but introducing people into waterfowl hunting, or hunting in general through good mentoring is setting the next generation up for success. 85% of students in the wildlife biology field have never been hunting before and they're going to be the future leaders of OUR passion. The more kids and students we can positively introduce into hunting and show the working relationship between hunters and nature the better.

Any further discussion feel free to reach out to me. Good survey. Thanks."

Overall, this situation is death by 7,000 paper cuts. Not one issue fixed will solve it all unfortunately. I believe pressure is the biggest take away.

I think AHM personally needs to be thoroughly looked at. Here is my take. If harvest doesn't matter why do we literally have bag limits on every hunt-able thing in this country? What do we have to lose knocking the bag limits down for say 5 years? To me absolute nothing. I'd personally rather see way more ducks when afield. Shoot 3-4 duck limit and eating breakfast by 9. Lot of the not seeing mallards like we used to I believe strongly has a lot to do with weather. Plus a down population. It hardly snows here or locks up before the winter solstice anymore. Southern Illinois doesn't see the geese we once did. Could the mallard be the next goose? Hard to say but it needs to be looked at before it's too late.

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These tough years will weed out the weak blood thirsty unethical jump shootin sky blasting killers. It will open up room on public and private. The sportsmen that are happy with one bird that worked perfectly followed by one ethical shot will continue to hunt and hunt right. Allowing more opportunity for those who put in the time and effort. Teach a kid to navigate the woods. Teach a kid gun safety. Teach a kid right and wrong. Teach a kid how to hunt ducks. Long live the waterfowler.

Thank you. Would love to talk more as love habitat management with conservation at the forefront of the mission.

It is my belief that duck numbers are a direct reflection of the habitat. Available, and quality habitat is what fuels duck production so with what the ducks currently have available to them, duck numbers respectively are right where they should be. The PPR and prairie Canada are not a prairie anymore. They are nothing but row crops. You want more ducks you have to have more grassland....period. I don't think you can regulate yourself out if this one.

We killed more on 3 for 30 it's quality not quantity. Then we got the hell out of there and let them fatten up for the flight back. Season should be 3 for 30 in December only. We also need the wmas wet by thanksgiving to catch ducks. They can start the drain the day after youth. There will still be plenty of habitat for fly back when there is ZERO pressure.

This is an awesome survey. Coming from a family background of waterfowl hunting, I grew up duck hunting as a hobby and family activity. Going hunting with high school friends to now hunting passionately, I see issues within the waterfowl industry that are a huge negative and have little to no regulation. None that weren't listed on this survey but issues that not enough hunter's think of or care about. A lack of influencers that have a huge impact on the younger hunting generation rarely if at all ever promote conservation and ethical ways. My knowledge is not very reliable when it comes to migration issues due to very recently trying to educate on what others have proposed and stats that have been recorded.

"I worry about all of the very un informed opinions i hear on a regular basis in regards to game agency's and Conservation Organizations. Not that we shouldn't scrutinize when one of them is doing something wrong but false accusations of malice is just maddening to listen too.

Then we have a mysterious group called the flyway council calling all the shots with no one holding them accountable? We don't even know who they are or how they are selected... very strange."

"Control the Controllables!!

-Stage earlier flooding of WMAs/Refuges

-Less days - 45-50 w/ several short splits to reduce pressure

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- One hen
- Limit non resident permits on public land
- Draws on all public
- No mud motors on public
- No PM access on public
- Maybe a limit on hot crops as a percentage of total acreage?? I know they are good to an extent, but I can't help but think the dramatic decrease in natural duck activity in the last 10-15 years isn't heavily influenced by large unharvested tracts. They wouldn't be as critical if we can reduce pressure and in turn increase available habitat."

Fix Canada and the guides and all the #s will be just fine. Take AMERICAN guides out of Canada.

"Dead hens don't lay eggs.

Raising the limit of pintails from 1 to 3 when the population is down 11% from the previous conservative season has zero benefits except for guides who have to put their ""sports"" on limits of birds. It makes no sense what so ever."

No mention of predation. I heard/read a study somewhere about the amount of successful broods from a set of wetlands in the breeding grounds before and after trapping was begun — crazy difference in brood success. Don't make my lie on the numbers but I want to say it went from 0 successful broods to 500 in 2 years. I think your podcast mentioned the effect of squeezing the birds into a smaller area makes them more prone to sickness and not finding enough adequate habitat, but I don't remember y'all mentioning possible predation. For a coyote, that would be like hitting the lottery

Would like to see non res licenses go up and have certain days for them to hunt. Put that money back into creating more hunting land here in Oklahoma. Also would love to see all hunting on public lands cease at 1 pm

Leasing guides are ruining the sport.

"I think the US regulations, as a whole, are pretty decent. Personally, I think bag limits could be cut back. However, I think the main problem is in Canada. Spring snow goose season goes until end of May. Ducks see white spreads from the fall until the summer. I feel like that is one major issue for lack of migration. While they're nesting, they are hunters like chasing. Realistically, they get MAYBE 4 months of not being messed with. The American outfitters begin guiding in September, follow the migration south into the central USA, and back north into Canada. It's become a "work around" for people to market hunt in today's world.

I'm willing to discuss more and you guys are free to email/call/text. Have a good day and good luck in future endeavors!"

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I have just never understood how all limits on waterfowl are not the same from one end of the flyway to the other.

Arkansas finally had a bad enough season to where some of the things I hear you all saying others are waking up to. There is not a white or black answer to some of your questions- some social media/ influencers are bad, but many that I see truly do things right way for example. There is so much money in duck hunting, idk what will cause it to change— from the State, brands, etc. it is more commercialized than almost any other activity I see- and i fall for it myself. It is an arms race for clothes, guns, decoys, machines etc.

Thanks for keeping the conversation going guys!

We could give up a week of the “October lull” season for a week in February.

Social media has destroyed the way hunting was. Duck hunting seems to be the worst because of the drama and ruthlessness involved

End duck hunting after 12pm. Give the birds rest.

“So..there were a couple questions which had to be answered loosely due to the options given. With that being said, I’ll try to go back and touch base on them:

I hunt mostly public ground, both state and federal ground all over the state.

I think that the commercialization of the waterfowl world is killing it. This is being done by the rise of social media, which fueled by the influencers and kill culture-which is due to the average waterfowl age of the run and gun individual less than 30. Which leads me to me next point, all the old guys got out because the hunting has gotten so bad and are unwilling to participate in the ridiculous activities necessary to secure a spot of hallowed ground-fill in the blank with black river, white river, cache river, bayou Meto, etc. this reduces the mentorship available thus continuing the downward spiral and continuation of what we see now. This is the biggest issue that I see, but it’s driven by the lack of ducks, which is driven by the PPR issues (droughts, decreasing habitat etc.) and continued through AHM guidelines that are anything but adaptive.

On top of all that, because of the kill culture, commercialized sector and mobility of waterfowlers (and I know that this is a double edged sword as I promote for our company, but I try to do it with my conscience in mind) and Arkansas being a destination state, a bucket list, the pinnacle of duck hunting one might say, we end up with every single-and I mean every single boat ramp and block of woods being chaulked full of boats and people.

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In my mind, a duck needs 3 things:

1. Food
2. Water (for resting and drinking)
3. Rest

It's like the fire triangle-if any one single element is removed, then the entire system ceases to exist. Ducks are constantly jumped from public ground due to the amount of people scouting (which is necessary) but can be done without blowing all the ducks out with mud motors etc. I fear that the lack of rest on Arkansas legendary ground as well as the lack of food will eventually lead (and may already have) to ducks "de-printing". There has to be a way of controlling the amount of people using OUR ground-and I have some opinions on this as well, but my kids are fighting and my wife has been giving me the evil eye for the last 10 min while typing this, so I must digress.

Thank you guys for having open ears to current issues and I hope that we can make a difference. If I can do anything to further expand on this topic, or do anything that can help the waterfowl community-please don't hesitate to reach out.

Jeremy Brogdon
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Very impressed with this platform. I've never been more dangerous talking about these subjects. I know that I'm talking honestly, but also hearing others opinion. Thanks again for all your hard work. My ending statement is I think we can control what we can control and the biggest of those is pressure in the state. Outside of that until we get better conditions on the prairie everything will be tough. If the good Lord wants to give that back, we will see increased numbers and hopefully these tough years will keep people more conservative if we get served good times again. Remember at the end of the day that this shit is still way better than work or changing a diaper. 1st world problems.

I think the standard sportsman podcast is really making a difference in the hunting world. The podcast (especially the episodes with Dave Rave) have been shared throughout my local hunting community and really got the attention it needed, hats off to you two. Y'all have talked about it, but I think having Phil Lavretsky on would be great. When I first heard about him I got in contact and sent him ten mallard wings from the Lake Charles, LA area. The genetic results are shocking. He has the only science backed reasoning as to why Mallards don't come to Louisiana anymore. Hurry before Arkansas mallards disappear like Louisiana mallards did!!!

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Love the podcast, BUT one topic I believe you two should talk about is incorporating conservation education into mandatory hunter safety courses. In Iowa, we learn the rules and regulations and how to safely hunt, but there's nothing in the class about adaptive harvest management, or about conservation, or about the impacts of hunting on an animals population. Most people take the class around the age of 12 and it would be a great opportunity to instill the "resource first" mentality into our next generation of hunters

Too many people in the woods, not enough ducks.

"I saw the limits of the early 90's and I see where we are now. I'd duck hunt if it was a one bird limit because I love it. There again, I'm not doing this because I'm hungry. For what I spend on gear I could eat steak every night and still have money left. I eat my birds and enjoy them. This whole thing though is about tradition, passion and sport. Who needs 6 ducks when the numbers are down? Why kill any hens if you can avoid it? Do outfitters not understand they're little chewing off their own hands by striving for limits rather than an enjoyable hunt and conservation? Have we lost the older generations that donate more? Do the young guys donate more than a membership fee to DU or Delta each year? Have we as a culture forgotten in 30 years what's it's like to have very little ducks? Is industry so worried about making a dollar that they're willing to sacrifice more

Birds so that limits are larger and season longer for more profit? Could we not all be happier with a shorter season, lighter limits but ultimately more ducks to hunt? Why do we continue to hunt past Jan 15 when we know the facts?

It just seems to me we put greed in all facets of life before the resource. Without a healthy resource, literally none of this matters."

There's a disconnect between reality and what information is shared with hunters. These people work for us. The feds nor state agencies whom we pay for with our licenses and fees need to be held accountable for better transparency.

To me it feels like we're starting to slide down a slippery slope in the PPR. Between the harvests, farming practices (tilling to the edge, drain tiles, etc), and relative drought it makes me wonder if we are doing irreversible damage to the population. Despite being a DU member/volunteer, trying our best to manage pressure on our farm, and provide as much food and rest area as we can- it feels as though we're somewhat helpless due to the rate of destruction we believe there to be up north. Also, why don't we just outlaw releasing game farm mallards??

I really appreciate how you are encouraging people to learn more about the big picture. I hope you'll keep expanding your world beyond the state borders and remember that social media typically represents/skews towards the worst. Many of the

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people who can make the biggest difference for good in waterfowl aren't involved in the social media craziness at all. Your point of view, energy level, and commentary is overweighting the voices, comments, and behaviors on social media. Develop your message and stay focused, thank you so much for what you are investing in our wonderful tradition and culture of waterfowl.

Mega duck farms/ private refuges hurt the public hunter. On flip side they do provide ducks with the resources they need. Money sure has affected the sport as well.

Thanks for all yall do!

Need to do someone more about snow geese especially in California

I am for changes to the season limits and amount of days allowed to hunt. I want to do what I can so that my son and future generations can enjoy this sport I love.

Even though I don't agree with some of the things said on the podcast, I appreciate your guys using a voice for conservation and raises a lot of questions that I believe need to be answered.

"- I hunt a lot of different ground from the coastal marshes of Texas, East Texas timber, Oklahoma and Texas lakes, and Kansas private ground.

-Throughout the season I had spotty success in all.

-I believe that what is impacting duck hunting success is increased outfitters and decreased duck numbers. Numerous times this season when bird numbers were good, I saw numerous social media posts of outfitters with 15+ man limits of ducks in the central flyway. While I think this is awesome for them and their clients, on the other hand I know this means that there are more ducks not flying back north. Can I blame them? - No. Would I do the same thing if I could or the opportunity presented itself? - Yes. Have I shot limits before with groups of 8 or more? - Yes. I think something needs to be done about this and the whole social media duck hunters. Growing up learning duck hunting from my dad he never spoke about or showed me pictures of him and his hunting buddy's killing more than a 3-4 man limit back in what I refer to as the glory days. Now a days if an outfitter doesn't post a 10 + man limit of ducks and geese are they even a credible outfitter? A potential solution I have to this problem is to create a law of some sort that doesn't allow a group of more than 6 hunters to hunt the same field or blind etc. in the same day. I think this will limit large limits taken at once and require outfitters to pressure spots that they may say wait another week to hunt. While this will get pushback from the outfitter industry I think it would allow for them to make a sufficient living with 6 guns a hunt, and help duck populations and add additional pressure from outfitters and force birds to move off of spots that wouldn't be hunted.

-One other issue I have is that people are creating these giant private refuges and imprinting property. While I can't blame them I think it changes the duck migration and think something needs to be done about them.

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Thanks for putting this together and I am looking forward to the results that can be shared. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out!"

"I think we can all agree, it's time to try and change something to better waterfowl populations. What can we change? There are hurdles at each opportunity. But we have to start some where.

I think the thing that makes most sense is at the state level lower the limit. 5 total and 3 mallards. It's a start. I know the data claim it won't do anything. We can see if anything changes, even a little. It won't hurt. I don't think it will hinder new hunters or old. We would have to stick with it.

My theory on a good portion of our lack of population in Arkansas is our lack of quality habitat in Arkansas. Wild theory I know..... why come here as a duck to just get shot and starve? I'd like to see our friends at Osborn lab do a random survey of rice fields and see how much waste grain they find at different periods during the whole fall, spring, and winter. We know what they will find, and it's not rice for ducks to eat!! What can we do to change this? Ehem... Farm Bill? I hate to give money to people, but I can't think of anything better. Any ideas? Farming and ducks hunting unfortunately don't mix as well as I'd like. Ducks= work with little profit for a farmer. Most of the farmers I know are tired of ducks. Even tho they glean a good bit of income off of them. The farmers that care for the ducks do so for profit which in turn is actually great for ducks and hunters. The geese are another huge issue, but what can you do about them? The lack of rice and geese, making even less rice available to ducks are a bigger issue than we think. Obviously, lots of factors all over the place. Some food plots I know of got eaten out by Dec 15th and lots of food plots were heavy with feed and lack of ducks late. That being said year over year for 20, 30 years these ducks come to feed and find none.... There's your problem...

Bigger problem PPR. Did some one say Farm Bill??? Again? I mean, what else can we do other than. Give delta and DU money.

This was a great opportunity for a duck therapy session. Thanks.... 🙌🙌 I could go on and deeper, but I guess we all could. Thanks for caring guys hope you read what you already know! 🙌🙌"

Far too many things to mention on the current state of duck hunting. I feel birds have become patterned to stay farther north with changes to habitat north of us. Hunting the river valley also the fact we don't get water on public wma lands until after Thanksgiving is detrimental to our area. And more and more large tracts of private refuges have changed how birds use an immediate area and they simply don't move as they once did. We need resting areas for birds but some point we have taught them how to simply refuge hop and after all isn't it a hunting season and as much as I love

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the sights and sounds and all that is duck hunting without shooting some ducks it isn't the same.

I've never heard it mentioned as an option, but maybe a possibility with changing world we're in now. Within the current 60-day season, there are roughly 20 weekend days and several holidays. If we went to 30 day season, I'd love to hear talk of the feasibility of generally same start and end season dates, but sat/sun only plus holidays and Christmas-new years which would be roughly 30 days. Solves the problem of losing winter habitat in short season, keeps weekend hunters actively involved, and drastically reduces pressure on resource.

"If I could waive my magic wand.

Lower the bag limit to 5 total, 3 mallards of 1 a hen.

Open up sooner, like Nov 1. but add more breaks in season. To keep the season at 60 days.

I'm never for taking days away, once it's gone it's too difficult to get back.

Waterfowl Game farms need to go."

I'm beyond confused when providing food and habitat, yes unharvested crops, became a scape goat for a having a sub par season. If people want to say "the big clubs are holding all the ducks" great but you reap what you sow and trust me we saw the 50% less ducks in the flooded corn this year. I'm an advocate for the 1 hen rule because it's great practice and could help the population in time but believe it is not impactful as people think given a shotgun is not in the top 5 causes of waterfowl fatality. I've put a lot of thought into why it's seemed to have gotten worse the last few years, but haven't read or heard anything I truly believe. Planning to tune into the podcast to learn more. Some of the lickert style questions regarding "ranking the degree of effect of ____ were ambiguous. Were they asking about a positive or negative impacts? I felt like the questions could've been interpreted either way, but the way I answered reflected my opinion on the NEGATIVE impacts.

"I don't have a strong opinion on a lot of this. I live in South LA and have also hunted Arkansas since about 2006. Louisiana has a huge pressure problem, we shoot everything that a duck will land on from sun up to sun down. There's very little chance to rest. Our limited access area on WMA's are overrun with kids who don't understand the rules and have little to no enforcement. This multiplied by our habitat loss makes

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the place really hard to hunt. I'm fortunate enough to be able to travel all over so it doesn't affect me as bad as others. I gave up a long term lease in Arkansas this year and swore off going back. I have felt like Arkansas is just like Louisiana in growing pressure now.

I like more splits for more rest. More places dedicated to giving the birds a break."

Duck hunting has become a money making industry and it really seems as if the powers to be will milk a resource for all the money it can instead of genuinely caring about the future of a sport and trying to make it better.

"Mother Nature got it right a long time ago. Louisiana has been screaming about this for many years now and it's sad that an entire culture is being forgotten due to something I firmly believe was avoidable. I'm afraid This is the beginning of the end for Arkansas as well. I see too many similarities for me not to feel that way. Examples would be increased pressure, loss of habitat and increase of habitat north of y'all. Louisiana basically went through the same exact thing starting 20 years ago. I just hope we can manage to put Pandora back in the box before it's too late.

The sport has become so money driven it's sad that something so enjoyable and accessible just 15 years ago is all but a distant dream for most. A rich man bring water to corn but when a poor man brings corn to water it's a problem. Make it make sense to me.

I go to Alberta every year for an extended period and hunt several states annually. My 8th year going and in 80 plus days afield I've heard 37 other shots. I have in fact kept an exact count lol. Pressure has increased near the major cities. As a child I never thought I'd have to leave Louisiana to kill a limit of mallards but that's what it's come to. Hell just to see some mallards.

I understand that it's not about what happens to me individually. The whole culture needs to be rewired. If you guys ever want to do a show with the perspective of a guide from coastal Louisiana I'd be more than happy to discuss some things I know to be factual and other things that are opinion."

I enjoyed this survey

Going back to the outfitters. I think they are ruining duck hunting. It's a bunch of out of state hunters coming in every day lining up 12+ to a blind and shooting ducks. They lease up all the land and locals don't have a place to hunt anymore. At least charge them an outfitting fee.

I appreciate the time and effort TSS puts into the waterfowling community. As a generational duck hunter, it's heartbreaking to see the state of waterfowling from all

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aspects. It's time for change that puts our resource first. I probably missed it, but I would like to hear on the podcast how we can get involved/who to contact to voice our concerns for the betterment of the resource.

I would like to see a full and total ban on commercial sale of wildlife and hunting by the way of guiding. Commercial guiding is no different than commercial market hunting. Once a commodity value is placed on wildlife, it is now livestock and only prized for its commercial value.

In my opinion, for the state of Kansas which I am very knowledgeable in. The outfitters are the problem, plain and simple. For example, My family farms and ranches, luckily for me, which gives me and my friends more access than the normal group. One of my good friends and his dad own and operate a large row crop operation to which I have first dibs on any waterfowl hunting. They own a field that is 3/4 mile from the local reservoir where 99% of our ducks/ geese stay anytime it's under 32, and probably 50-60% at all times. This particular field had roughly 10,000 dark geese, and 5,000 ducks in it in early January. In the 3 days before we hunted it from the time they began to use it, 5 different outfitters, offering day lease amounts ranging from 500-3000\$. All were given my contact to which I told them that I am hunting it and they may not. There is 1 "outfitter" (non resident, they live 1,000 away in off season) that is "located" within 30 miles of this field. 13 other groups, I assume multiple more were "outfitters" that just didn't say they were, also asked permission. 5 years ago, me and my group, shared this 30 mile loop where we do 99% of our hunting with roughly 2-3 other groups and maybe 1-2 outfitters a couple times per year. This is a prime example of what I mean when I say outfitters are the problem.

I think the best thing for the waterfowl population would be to shorten the season to 45 days and to limit out of state hunters through a license lottery.

Truly think big changes need to be made and things need to be addressed. It's a slippery slope

Thank you for the podcast and being a voice. keep up the good work first of all. As a farmer in NEA I grew up in the black river bottoms with some great mentors teaching me the rights and the wrongs and the respect for others in the woods. From the first day I stepped foot in the bottoms too today is such a dramatic change that sometimes words can't describe. You'd have to be there to believe it. Non resident, over crowding all the noise including music, fireworks, and yes mud motors all disturb waterfowl. Very rarely can you idle around and jump mallards out of the woods anymore. Changes need to be made on the state ground in a major way. But none of that will matter if a stance is not taken on the population of waterfowl is not addressed. Not tomorrow not wait and see needs to be taken now before it is too late. I am however fortunate to have a field I get to hunt. It gives us a place to go and get away from the crowds and enjoy the sport we all love and God has created. Unfortunately the lack of waterfowl is

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declining every year slowly there also. I worry about the state of waterfowl and the lack of stance by the Feds and the state to take action it's concerning to the future. Thank you for the survey and for the voice

Arkansas - 45 days , end Jan 15th, 3 mallards - 1 hen
I have seen the decline of duck hunting happen in my life time.

Divebomb better start dumping money into conservation and getting better messages out. I don't know that there is any single group that has done more harm to our sport through their social media.

We need to increase white front goose because they will become an issue like snow geese, lower mallard limit is crucial until the numbers return.

Kids are fucked, gotta get them educated on what hunting used to look like and the etiquette that came with it.

Shortened season in January across the board lower the hen limit

Waterfowl hunting's one of the greatest things you can do and I think it's a shame that the community has been so greedy and kill crazy that we can't admit we have a problem.

I think waterfowl hunting currently isn't in the best place but I also don't believe it's the worst. I believe that with a few changes in seasons and limits, pressure, and a bigger emphasis on conservation we can easily turn it around.

"I personally believe the Prairie pothole habitat will come and go with climate. I admit this may be an inaccurate belief as I do not have a very deep knowledge of the region and its history. The largest impact to help duck numbers would be making it where it's not the cool thing to do anymore. Federal government needs to break the lacy act out on 95%+ of modern day outfitters. I guided for 8 years, my opinion is the bad far outweighs the good in most all circumstances. Selfishly would love to see 70% of hunters leave the sport tomorrow. Pressure has gotten absolutely absurd.

When I was a young kid nobody wanted to go duck hunting with me, I would have to beg my friends. Now I have lost "friends" for not inviting them frequently enough.

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Social media did that along with side x sides and 4 wheelers making it easy for the lazy man to participate."

I was at our house and lease in Stuttgart youth weekend. I saw more ducks, especially mallards in the fields and a fair more in the timber than I saw all season. It was as extremely warm, 80 on Saturday. New ducks or a lot of private timber, fields and rest areas were already drained? Interested to hear your thoughts. I talked to a few places like slicks, trying to get a couple 12 years olds on a good mallard shoot in the timber and he said he dumped his water as soon as season ended and had none left to hunt. Noticed BM was rising with no rain really the week after season, which means a lot of clubs dumped there water as soon as season ended. So all those mallards literally in every field around Stuttgart I think were now there due to this. I think high dollar clubs, like Yalls sorry, are holding way more ducks than we know and what AGFC is doing with not having water till late December at best is making it worse on peasant hunters, with unknown long term impacts. PS, looking for a youth hunt next year for 13yrs olds!

If you are going to shorten the season then start it later and have a split in Jan but go all the way to the 31st

As a concerned conservationist who had pledged private property to a habitual Ducks Unlimited Conservation Easement, I am wide open to reduced limits and season dates. For a trans-continental bird, it makes little sense to me that we should have such variance in bag limits, particularly in Canada.

"We have a multi-faceted issue no doubt. I hunted southern Illinois for honkers growing up and heard about the glory days of Ballard County and NW Tn before that. Now there are none in all 3. Im so terrified it's going to happen to the mallards too. It's really two different topics, migration and population.

Why aren't they coming south? Is the habitat TOO good in the central (including private rest areas filled with food)? Not cold enough in the fall?

This plus the numbers being down is really concerning. A lot of arguments can be made as to why they're down but there is really only one way to get them back down. Moderate season/moderate limits. It sucks but it's got to happen, will we wait too long?"

My closing comments are these; everyone has an opinion. People who can afford to pay to hunt God bless them. Habitat Flats and top tier guides services along the Platte River that charge extremes amount of money to so be it. I spend a lot of money on hunting. Some people I hunt with expect limits every time they go out hunting. It's called hunting for a reason.

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"I think the breeding ground conditions are the primary issue, and an upcycle that brings back a lot of the lost production will help with the localized hunting problems.

I'd hate it but could deal with shortening the season a little. Hen limit needs to be reduced immediately.

Pressure is terrible, and Personally, the private refuge bullshit is killing my land. Here in Tennessee govt. rest areas (with bushhogged corn) were already a problem. Now I have a guy leaving 700 ac of corn in 900ac of water, and hardly hunting, right across the river from the federal refuge. Birds are never leaving the 2 areas, just flying back and forth across the river, but I don't really know anything that can be done about that.

I just recently found your podcast and have been catching up. Great job. John" Kinda hard to say what the real problem is, I think counts could be more accurate with a team of video drones and AI on the imaging to count each bird individually and not do rough estimates.

Party hunting over un-harvested crops or honey holes should be restricted. Ice eaters should be banned. If neither can be done, lowering the limit must be done.

I appreciate you setting up this survey and giving duck hunters a chance to voice their opinion. Mallards are a main concern of mine because I have watched them decrease in numbers over at least the last 5 years. This year mallards were almost non existent in the area in Arkansas we hunt.

Limits in Canada are the main issue for me right now. It doesn't make sense to me why the limit should be that high, especially when you're hunting a lot of the young birds that haven't ever seen a decoy. I feel like there's a new YouTube video everyday of people going to Canada and stacking up 50-60 mallards and you can't hardly tell the drakes from the hens. If we're gonna start somewhere then I think it needs to be there. If lowering any limits is in the cards for states like Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, etc I think the overall mallard limit should be reduced and not just hens. My thinking is that the Drake to hen ratio is too high, so if the hen limit is gonna be lowered then we may as well lower the Drake limit as well and see if we can close that gap a bit.

"I believe that we need to trust the science behind the way that seasons and regulations are currently set. The policies can be adjusted and tweaked when necessary. But, there is no conspiracy between conservation organizations and government entities to falsify waterfowl populations for financial or personal gains.

Weather is not the only factor but, I would say it is the largest factor influencing how far south waterfowl migrate. The next largest factor is the change in farming practices (NOT UNHARVESTED CROPS). More corn (due to genetics), farther north than has ever been grown in history. As long as waterfowl has access to food not covered by snow and open water they will not fly to the southern latitudes."

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I do believe social media is helpful and harmful in certain ways. It should be focused on what we as hunters/conservationists can do to help to improve duck populations. We always wanted colder weather to move ducks and geese south. I feel this year was a lot colder than the past years and we had about the same and maybe fewer ducks and geese than last year. Maybe they've adapted themselves into staying north longer with the previous mild winters.

I'm not happy with how the matrix for season framework was changed right about the time that the pond count and population called for a moderate/restrictive season. Changing the target mallard population to 8.5MM from the previously higher number seems like an influence by money/economics instead of science.

Good job guys. Keep it up. Will spread the word.

There needs to be something done about the mallard population and it starts north of the border. However, people need to stop complaining about their "terrible season" on social media. Should enjoy the outdoors and be thankful you have the opportunity to hunt.

I think we need to go to more conservative seasons and reduce bag limits.

"I firmly believe that unharvested crops, specifically corn, is the root cause of declining hunting in southern states and ducks number in general. I also believe the problem is extending passed mallards to other species.

Ducks have become domesticated to the food source, and now with the growing acres, simply have no reason to leave despite frozen fields and daily pressure. After multiple generations of imprinting to this habitat, the problem multiplies.

These properties are not holding a few thousand ducks, they are self reported to be holding 100's of thousands in some cases. All the while southern state duck populations are reducing by the same amount.

Hunting over bait was made illegal many years ago because it was far too effective and deemed not fair chase. With the commercialization of the industry, what used to be called bait is now conservation. If feeding ducks is good for the ducks, then why can't we all dump a sack of corn in the water to kill our 6 birds and feed the rest?

Lastly, I do feel pressure and loud obnoxious mud motors play a part when the ducks do come to an area, but how can it matter when they never come here in the first place because they are holding on corn?"

I believe the birds are evolving due to degradation of wintering grounds in the south. Specifically food sources and quality of habitat. The ducks are holding out on ice to eat the good stuff up north and are more aware of "non hunting" dates and areas. They know where they can avoid pressure, or they figure it out pretty quickly.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Filling this out again. Not sure it went through the first time.

Love the podcast and appreciate the content put out each week.

Appreciate the survey and what it stands for. I believe there could be some deeper diving into farming practices, pressure and corporate hunting farm practice. IMO 3 things drive the migration: food, pressure and money. Money can't be regulated so big acreage with lots of resources will always stay at the top of the game. If you want to see a widespread natural migration you have to regulate the allowed food and the allowed pressure. Just wanted to give some final food for thought. Thanks for what you're doing.

Thanks for doing the hard work and opening other hunters eyes and ears to conservation.

"Coming from a 95% Arkansas public land hunter, pressure is the worst I've ever seen. Had to park half a mile from a ramp opening weekend for an example. Many Arkansans don't even bother to hunt their once beloved public areas due to the influx of hunters from out of state.

Allowing motion decoys on WMAs in Arkansas makes zero sense. The new shell limit does not either. What was the point?

To help the current state of duck hunting in Arkansas, my hunting group believes the following:

- 1.) 3 Mallard limit in the state and pray other states follow. No more than 1 hen.
- 2.) Shut some WMAs down a day or two during the week. No hunting. No "deer hunting" (duck scouting with a bow in a boat) No access period.
- 3.) 30 day season soon and maybe on a reoccurring schedule in the future.
- 4.) Cut Non-Resident licensing with a limited draw by 20% and raise the cost of license to make up for it. Could also do draw limits for WMAs in specific time frames.
- 5.) Find a way to work with farmers and not burn fields after harvest.
- 6.) Ban mud motors on WMAs. Ducks have nowhere to hide and rest anymore.

We are abusing Arkansas public lands. Time to try something new. Can't control the flyway but can control making better decisions for Arkansas' waterfowl future.

Thank y'all for doing the survey!"

Until we rebound in duck numbers, which I believe will happen with proper management, seasons need to be maximum 45 days and end no later than January 15.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Spinning wing decoys need to be outlawed. Canada and U.S. need a reciprocal agreement on limits and seasons.

Thanks for caring for the future of waterfowl!

For the good of the resource, I really appreciate what you all are doing. Keep up the good work!

I think we need to start changing things up related to the season dates, bag limits, and pressure. I understand it would be difficult to see results in a year but make the changes for maybe 3-5 years at a time and just see what happens with the population. I firmly believe if we continue on the track we're on we will cause unrepairable damage to waterfowl as a whole, if we haven't already. Having people like you guys on this podcast are the type of people we need on boards and commissions helping to make the decisions. I don't think the people we have now in these positions have the full understanding of how things really are.

Respecting the real science about climate change and the effects on waterfowl populations is imperative to the future of waterfowl hunting. The reality is there is nothing you can do to force the ducks further south if they don't have to. Migration habits are changing, wintering habits are changing. I'm looking at thousands of birds outside my window sitting on the open pockets of the Missouri River. There are no hot tubs and flooded corn here. Just birds who have no reason to push further south right now. Seasons are closed all around us. The birds arrived after season closed and are wintering and likely imprinting this area. They may never push further south in years to come.

I personally think that crops should have to be manipulated. Sure it would be epic for a few weeks, but eventually the crop that is not eaten will rot and decompose and will no longer be a viable resource. That in turn will force ducks to move along a more "natural" migration. Doing this would eventually send ducks far enough south to be able to eat the proper amount of insects and invertebrates needed for egg production that I don't think we currently have in our "duck farm system". As far as pressure there absolutely needs to be a reduce in hen harvest from Canada to Louisiana. Less bag limits are a necessity. I think that 85% of our duck populations (whatever that may actually be) depend on PPR and Hatch there is no doubt that our hunting days need to be reduced. Hunting into late January needs to stop. Shooting paired up ducks is never a good idea. The hen has to burn way too much energy in another courtship to fully recover for a productive nest up north. I am a duck guide but I am a conservationist as well. I want to see things change for the better to ensure my children and theirs will be able to joy this great sport the way I do. God Bless waterfowl!!!

Season dates from North to South need to change. As the Farm Bill has created many more Northern wetlands & winter food sources that did not exist or the ducks had not yet imprinted to but now have. We have to adapt our seasons accordingly there are

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100K's of mallards that are sitting unmolested with plenty of water & food & no reason to go further South. Mallards have adapted & changed but our regulations I.e. season start/stop dates in the states have not.

My main thought in the decline of waterfowl hunting in the state comes down to pressure. If the pressure could be limited by changing dates to a shorter season and/or a smaller bag limit I would support it. Many of the hunters I hunt with share the same view point as me even with as much as we love the "kill" and "hunt" of it all, we see the need for drastic changes to keep the sport that older generations and people in the same age bracket as me (23-28) were able to enjoy growing up.

In addition to the listed options for issues affecting waterfowl hunting success, pressure is also one of the top factors. It will be interesting to see the results of this survey!

Leave the Ooser's out for a few years...If they want to come to AR & spend \$800 a morning at Tad & Biff's lodge so be it, but get the squated truck losers from AL, GA, and SC off of our public ground for a few years... They have no tradition...they constantly cause problems/ pressure because they just don't get it... Those jamokes can stick to the deer woods, Wood duck roost's and off-shore fishing they got back home.

The amount of out of state hunters that can hunt public in Arkansas has to be limited. It has gotten out of control. I didn't put in at a ramp (state or federal) that had more than 40% in state plates. It's a circus. It gets worse every year.

I can only speak on AR but still have my opinions about the rest of the flyway. But, as far as AR is concerned we make it WAY to easy for out of staters to set up shop here. We should have a \$1000 out of state license fee and use all that extra money for waterfowl habitat . We literally have camp after camps full of people from other states . And I guarantee if the fee went up to \$1000 they would still pay it .

"Everyone wants to point to (one thing) that is the problem. In reality it's multiple reasons why duck hunting is more challenging today than 20 years ago. For me the pressure has always been there. But I think there's absolutely nobody in a position of power than care about the public lands. I think the private land big money clubs are paying off the game and fish commissions to purposely hurt the public lands. To us that hunt public land it's very obvious what has happened. But the thing they want to blame it all on is pressure and that simply just isn't true at all. To me it's 1. Duck numbers
2. Not having habitat to hold ducks when private property's are planting and not harvesting for ducks

3. Not having water on our public land (designed by game and fish)

95% of the ducks are held by 5 % of the people

CLOSING COMMENTS

It's a shame "duck farming" is allowed. It alters the migration from the top to the bottom"

"We need more people like you and a few others that are trying to be an advocate for the sport so that my young 2 year old daughter will be able to enjoy the sport that I love so much! In this current media kill all and pile pic influencers that only want to post pics of limits ,hybrids and bands. It's not going in the right direction. Brands are pushing this just as bad! Seems like most are only concerned about moving there market share forward and not concerned if there's a duck here in 10 years. But once again thank you for standing up for true sportsman and please continue to push for a better future.

One thing I wish you would have asked is the whit front early season and party hunting. This has to stop in my humble opinion. Nothing good about this for the sport or waterfowl as a whole!"

While duck populations and migration patterns do concern me, my two greatest concerns are the changes in duck behavior since the spinning wing decoy was introduced in the late 1990s and the number of juvenile ducks killed in Canada and possibly the northern prairies in the U.S. Ducks are much more difficult to call now in Arkansas than they were through the mid 90s. While I don't know of scientific proof to my assertion, anecdotally the ducks in Arkansas seem to be older on average. Also, the drake/hen ratio seems to have changed with drakes outnumbering hens by a wide margin. I have duck hunted all my life around Stuttgart and my family has hunted on our farm since my great grandfather completed our reservoir in 1927. I understand that duck populations and hunting success are cyclical. Hunters have learned, forgotten, and relearned many lessons about duck hunting, land stewardship, and conservation during that time. I am concerned that we are in a period where we have collectively forgotten many of those lessons and have negatively impacted our sport and the resources most of us love. I sincerely hope this year will lead to an awakening among waterfowlers and a re-dedication to conservation.

Bills related to hunting should be more publicized and duck hunters shouldn't be getting out at morning light and should be out at least an hour early on public. People who are true waterfowlers will do what is best for the birds at the end of the day. Their voice should be considered and no one else's.

Thank you for your podcast. I appreciate your voice in the waterfowl space. I agree with most of your views on the podcast. I would love to hear some positive podcasts in the mix.

Im all for trying to reform duck hunting as far as sportsmanship, ethics, etc that could go a long way in itself in conservation

"The season needs to be cut to 45 days. There is far too much pressure on the birds.

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I live in the prairie pothole region. Most people do not understand how much the remaining habitat has been degraded. It is not capable of producing the birds it did 30 years ago. The loss is increasing at a faster pace than ever before. I do not understand why the government seems to refuse to acknowledge it when setting seasons and limits.

I question where we are headed. More and more people want to be known as killers and governments gloss over everything because they want the money. The traditions of the sport are being lost. Who is looking out for the birds?"

With the mallard population as low as it should be the liberal limits should end I would like to see a 3 bird limit across the board. That would put a stop to pile pics, it would deter people from hunting who only want to kill kill kill. It would stop a lot of interstate travel and would weed out the true waterfowl's from the guys that only like to go when there's 200 birds on a baited pond.

I'm hearing some people on the Advisory Committee are asking the AGFC to consider moving the 4:00 start time to 12:00 Midnight. This is just stupid! The racing will continue. It doesn't matter when the start time is. They would spend 60 straight days on public if it was allowed plus older hunters aren't going to do the 12:00 start. They just won't go. 4:00 is bad enough. AGFC needs to stop pushing Arkansas residents out of the sport.

So help us God.

"We got to do better. This isn't a game now. We are talking about the extermination of a lifestyle and culture.

I'm not even sure this is recoverable. Can we close the season for a year ?"

I am also a huge believer that all goose hunting seasons other than resident Canada season should coincide with duck season dates. When it's closed, it should all be closed and allow for no pressure times for all waterfowl to have a break.

Appreciate the work you guys do and information you provide.

I think Canada hunting is 80% of the problem. They are hunting 4 month old birds that decoy to goose silhouettes and a spinner. One guide service harvesting more birds in season than 15 prestigious private clubs combined is not helping anything.

Not enough hunters consider themselves conservationists. We don't have to agree on everything but we do all need to talk about it. I am in favor of lowering the limit and taking a way a few days if for no other reason than it will draw all hunters attention to the population problem

CLOSING COMMENTS

Get rid of crowd hunting in guide services. Let DU rest areas be shot more. Ducks won't move if they are safe.

Interesting survey. I'll run a spinning wing in sunny conditions or to pull birds from a distance and turn them off while finishing birds. I'm pretty excited about the pintail limit being raised. I've seen large numbers the past few years. We mainly shoot mallards teal and pintails in that order. Glad to see being able to have a limit of 3 greenheads and 3 bull sprigs

Need to improve our rest areas! And make all WMAs a first come first serve rule with a minimum distance between each to group be at least 150 yards.

"Started to say I'll keep this short, but I can't.

I've cited as many papers as I can. I'm sure more are out there.

Please publicize how to get in touch with people on the flyway committee. I haven't had much luck finding out who is even on that committee at the federal level.

Unless I'm mistaken, we should've been at restrictive (3/30 for miss flyway) the last two seasons by the pre 2017(?) ish guidelines. They used to only set season by Canada ponds and bpop but moved the goal posts even more liberal by revising the chart when they started counting both Canada and US May ponds. Even using the combined ponds on the old chart, we'd still be at 3/30. That's egregious.

I want things to be done by science. Here are 5 more things I'd like to see addressed.

1. The first is a concern among a growing number of waterfowl scientists (Doug Osborne, Dave Rave, and others) that mallards in the bpop survey are not accurately being counted due to a change in drake to hen ratio from when the bpop was created. I propose that a scientific study is to be funded on the prairies to field-validate the counting method and sex ratios for the bpop mallard estimate which is input into the AHM formula. There is also some speculation the May pond count is being overestimated due to drain tiling drainage after the ground thaws.
2. With wintering waterfowl counts at or near historic lows in relation to bpop surveys in Louisiana, it is time to remove the spinning wing decoy up and down the flyway. Mickey Heitmeyer, The Super Hens part iv 2006 correctly predicted almost all effects we're seeing today from spinning wing decoys, almost 20 years ago. Reference his Figure 1 in part IV of his paper. He showed that swds increased harvest of hatch year birds and shifted harvest northward. Similarly, M.L. Szymanski and A. D. Afton 2005 cited hatch year birds as being more susceptible to SWDs than non hatch year ducks and "use of SWDs by northern hunters may result in a partial redistribution of annual mallard

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harvests if naive ducks are harvested upon initial exposures to SWDs, and those ducks that survive become habituated to SWDs, as suggested by our results.”

3. Game farm genetics mixed into wild mallard genetics have been presented by Backner, Masto, Lavretsky, et al 2024 and band recovery data shows these game-farm crossed mallards don't migrate as far south as wild mallards and migrate later. I propose an immediate moratorium on the release of game-farm mallards based on Dr. Lavretsky's work.

4. I'd like to propose the shifting of duck season dates back to as close to the winter solstice as possible for all states. That way, states would be hunting their “wintering population” as mallards keep stopping farther and farther north for the winter. This would allow southern states' “early mallards” to migrate without having been shot at for 2 months. Recent transmitter data could be utilized to determine the dates based on an average date of migration.

5. It is my opinion that flooded standing corn is not a “normal agricultural practice” and allows ducks to stay farther north longer by having high-calorie food available even with frozen water and snow on the ground since the ears stick up above the frozen water and snow. It is also mine and others' opinions that flooded corn leads to more night feeding behavior by ducks. Data should exist from transmitter-carrying ducks that could be compiled into a study or a new study commissioned on mallards that are now wintering in the Midwest to see how flooded standing corn is utilized to allow them to remain north when ice and snow is present.”

Days kill ducks, reducing days afield and reduction of mallard hen limit to 1 is needed to preserve the remaining population. We can't control weather but we can control guns going off killing ducks.

The duck hunting has changed so much in my hunting time that it hurts my heart that my children and nephews will never get to see what I have in waterfowling

Thank you for collecting data.

Thank you all, this awareness is making a difference and will help move the needle, no doubt.

Again, my #1 critique for your show would be to be more positive. Especially to younger hunters. You guys come across as talking down to folks and to the common man.

Everyone was young once, I have listened to you explain the stages of a hunter several times on your show. Everyone goes through the “kill” phase. Encourage young guys to enjoy that phase. They eventually get through it and lean more towards conservation after they have experienced those “kill” years and realize there is more to this sport than that. But it is very frustrating to listen to your show, especially as a “young hunter” who is a professional (lawyer,) and leave it feeling like you believe young hunters don't have the ethics, hunting morals, etc. that you guys preach about. You can do better.

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Canada limits hurt populations, can change limit in Arkansas but if other states don't do the same, specially Canada it won't have any affect.

Thanks for what yall do. I enjoy listening to the podcast.

We need to educate the rednecks that show up and hunt in our areas that sit all day and hunt past 10am might get you an extra duck or 2, but it's putting way more pressure on these ducks. Let them have the land after 10am except for certain occasions, hunting a spot longer than 4 hours is adding way more pressure. Also these guys think "if it flies it dies, if it's brown it's down. Like come on man, try to be a good steward. Leave the hens alone. Treat your lease property like it's your property as best you can. Also make Canada the 51st state and stop them from messing up the PPR and give more money to WRP and CRP.

I believe we need to lower duck limits and until better duck population come.

More widespread food, decrease overall duck limit to 5, 3 mallards - 1 hen. Delete Mondays from the season. Duck Season dates stay similar to now. Spec season open earlier and end jan 1 to decrease duck pressure

I'd love to be able to wake up in the morning with a realistic expectation of seeing mallards flying overhead and working them into the decoys and catching the show. Even if you didn't kill a duck you had a good chance of seeing lots overhead and with a little luck could get them the next day if you put in the effort. Now you never know if you're going to have 30+boats ready to run at 4am to go to the 1 or 2 holes that have a few ducks. I hunted with multiple groups where I was so embarrassed by the way they shot at anything flying by that I never joined again. They would just say it's tough and you got to get them how you can, sad really.

AR, public ground (where I hunt mostly), pressure is the number one issue that needs to change. Relentless shooting, boating, disturbances. Why would ducks keep going back to that. Lack of imprinting likely happening on public ground. Getting away from people on week days is even getting difficult. Mudmotors are not good for the resource. The noise is awful.

"Spinning wing decoys in an field are a cancer to duck hunting! Was very good friends with Art Ladehoff, inventor of Big Foot decoys. We hunted a field in 2001 with a guy who put a spinner out and ducks came into the spread. Big Art said when we were done, "gentlemen we just witnessed the beginning of the end."

I believe he was correct. Sorry I could go on and on!!"

Good luck with your survey. Us older folks remember when duck hunting was unbelievable some years, some years it wasn't but it was still pretty darn good, this last

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year was eye opening. We had habitat due to lack of hurricanes and the ducks never showed up in numbers like we've had in the past. I'd like to attribute it to "lack of migration" but we used to shoot limits of ducks and get sunburned while shooting ducks in S. Louisiana, like I said earlier, something just ain't right.

I feel like I could be considered one of the most hard core waterfowl lovers out there. I've spent my own money to put up wood duck houses on public land, when the manager refuses to replace old ones. I did grow up in this generation that has enjoyed liberal limits but in 23 seasons, 12 of those hunting 30+ days, I've only killed 5 limits on a morning hunt. Two of those were in Arkansas. Thank you guys for doing what you're doing!!! I don't feel like it's talked about enough. I know there's not a silver bullet and it's a spider web of complex issues but we need to start small and keep adjusting from there

Thank you for soliciting this information. I hope it brings stronger discussion and helps our duck hunting improve. There's a lot of negativity out there and strong opinions!

I appreciate you guys trying to talk some sense into other hunters and educating them on the stats and how regulations are decided! Keep it up! Just wish the regulators would get on the same page before it is too late.

Keep up the great work.

If we really want to help the population of birds across Canada and USA the amount of conservation in the Canadians PPR and in the dakotas should be massively increased to keep farmers and other property owners from turning low areas into farm land or houses. Farming practices have changed over the years and have greatly affected duck'a including pintails. If we want to see a substantial increase in birds we need to shut the season off for a year or two and focus on more conservation! I personally think the number of ducks allowed per day is pretty spot on being if they lower the bag limit more we will probably see a huge decrease in hunters. If pressure is an issue on public land I don't think out of state hunters is the issue. I think public lands should have a draw system where you have to apply to get access to the land every season. It's about the only thing that makes sense to me. It's no different than applying for an elk tag in the western states. I hope and pray someone somewhere can figure out these things to fix our amazing outdoors that God gave us! We should try to put in more than what we take.

The limits up north are way too high and hurt our migrating population down south. In reference to the Farm bill, we need our representatives to understand its importance to this resource, and the consequences we will face with out them keeping some of it's

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important programs. We need a new one passed. It makes a difference in affordability on setting aside desperately needed habitat.

The duck hunting culture is not what it used to be. It's just a big cock off now. The mallard population is declining every year. We need a culture change and ARKANSAS NEEDS TO TAKE CARE OF THERE Resources. Why is it an Arkansan can't deer hunt in Iowa, the deer capital of the world, but out of stators can come duck hunt the duck capital of the world.

Great job guys

The gray is becoming more black and white between the concerned hunters/conservationists and the law-makers and regulators. We need the laws to make sense as far as doing what is best for the resource. Liberal seasons, liberal hen limits, SWD's, over-pressure and accountability north of the border need major overhauls. More and more I get the impression that the people are in charge feel like they are pandering to economics and not wanting to make any moves that might jeopardize Hunter numbers. In reality, Hunter satisfaction is low and we're doing very little to protect a fickle and finite resource.

"Mostly hunting the coast of NC on public, open water for divers. Although I am tuned into some of what is happening in the PPR, Mississippi, central flyway, etc. there are some things I don't have enough of an understanding about to comment on (mallards, snow geese, etc.)

In our region, baiting, pressure, unethical practices, and climate/migration seem to be key issues IMO.

In general, I think we (and mostly the decision makers) need to err on the side of forward thinking and stewardship."

To impact mallard population we have to look to the PPR and minimize habitat loss there.

The problem in my opinion is the amount of ducks that are getting killed north of the border. How can it be right for hunters to be able to shoot 8 mallards a piece a day in a setting like that when they are young and dumb. When seasons open up there, ducks are not plumed out so you don't know if your shooting drakes or hens which is another big issue. It is just simply not right to me that a hunter can go afield to Canada and take double the limit of mallards that your normal Mississippi flyway hunter can. The majority of our ducks aren't making it south because they're getting killed as soon as they hatch on the prairie.

Enjoy what the good Lord has blessed us with. If you can still get out and hunt, you are better off than a lot of folks. Harvesting birds is always a bonus in my book, perspective

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from a 50 year old newer waterfowl hunter. Trust the science/experts to do what is in the best interest of the ducks.

"I'll email you guys soon ..

Seeing so many things in Alabama that are a reflection of what you guys are seeing..on a smaller scale."

I appreciate the concern you guys have for the sport but the one thing I have to say is some of the answers almost need to be a free written response

I feel that guide & outfitters should do a check in daily as we do for deer and turkey in Missouri to keep a tap on there harvest. Canada does not need to start hunting till sept 20th and lower there bag limit. We seen in 80-90 the southern Illinois gold rush to Canada geese, I feel the same issue has happen to Arkansas. To much PRESSURE! Pressure is king, lower the pressure if we want to keep going.

I hope the resource isn't being sacrificed in the name of money!

"You needed more "other" options on the questions. All of your season date options left the door open for you to still argue season should close earlier.

State, federal, and private sanctuaries are a big factor in the poor man's perception on how a season goes. There were more ducks in the state this season than most folks realized.

Battery powered decoys should be banned continentally."

We are headed down a path of no recovery, but the main area where there is conflict and headache is Arkansas Kansas and Oklahoma. People north of us and in the central ohio area could give a shit less in my opinion.

Outlaw spinners in Canada, give the young a chance to actually migrate South.

Huge fan of y'all's show. I was introduced to duck hunting by my grandfather and uncle. I have been hunting on the Grand Prairie since before I could shoot a gun even as an out of state hunter. I have slowly watched the duck hunting decline in Arkansas County. I started listening to your show and I now spread the word as much as possible. I think y'all are making the movements we all need. Keep it up!

The only thing that improves populations is better habitat and rain on the prairies.

Shooting less wont give you more. Stop trying to reduce opportunity for people that don't have the luxury to hunt everyday on prime arkansas farms.

Keep up good work. Your pod cast was recommended on message board. Nice to hear scientific backing to what I have been seeing/thinking for years

"As you guys have noted. We really need a shift in culture. People need to take pride in there areas and the birds we get to hunt. I've started using the #smileanotpiles in the response of seeing so many people just post a picture of dead ducks. And to shift the

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focus off of killing. And hey I love to kill ducks, I get every frustrated when we set the stage and don't execute.

I think where are all your buddies you hunted with? What is it really about if you guys are not in the picture and it's just the ducks?

Take some pride in duck hunting as a whole. Pick those ducks up, weather it's 4 or 24 and take a pic with your buddies, smiling, happy. That's what it's about in the end. Take some pride in your accomplishment.

Like you guys have also mentioned. I wish we could step back and look at every objectively. From climate to habitat to spinning wing decoys. Let's be allowed to ask questions and look for answers. So many are pre disposed to favor one thing or another. Even researches and biologist. If we think something is harming the population, let's take a deep dive into it. It's just so hard nowadays with so many things driving a perceived division in our world, even if at the end of the day we all kinda want the same things.

Another thing I would like to add. There is always take about how pressure is so high, yet hunter numbers are down. Some even call for less hunters, which is the last thing we want to do. People need to realize we need numbers, we will be out voted if we don't have enough people on our side. If you look outside or duck hunting bubble, hunting at a whole is being attacked on every front. Don't think for a second we are safe, even in Arkansas. What I believe we are seeing is an increase in hunter hours. And that is making up for lack of hunters. We have so many people whose full time job is to be duck hunting. Content creators, guides, people in the industry in general, have non 9-5 jobs that allow them to hunt more. I just don't think that existed like it does today even 30 years ago. Maybe not even 20 or 10 years ago? Add that to technology that allows more access to more places and pressure goes up."

"Hunters harvests in the Mississippi flyway don't impact duck pop declining.

I do think the central flyway should have a decrease limit as their duck populations increased the last 3 years.

Biggest factor is later winters = a later season needed. Winter is now Jan and Feb. seasons need to be later.

Also, I think out of systems needed to be restricted to 30 days max in hunting Arkansas on private and public."

"Really appreciate y'all putting this out and the message you're trying to get out. Keep up the good work fellas.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Chris Rosier"

"As a follow up to the donating to conservation organizations question, I have been feeling more inclined to donate to the research being done by Dr. Osborne and Dr. Cohen. I appreciate the transparency that they have with sharing the results of their research and tracking studies. I believe the data that they are gathering could be extremely useful in understanding our management of waterfowl (seasons, bag limits, etc.) and the potential impacts of changes that we make.

Maybe my tin foil hat is showing, but I find myself having a difficult time in trusting that the funds through conservation organizations are making the impact that they should."

I feel like pressure on public land in Arkansas is getting to a point where the ducks will no longer use them. Almost 100% of what we harvest are traffic birds. Something has to change or it will be a thing of the past

I appreciate all you do to shed light on the important conservation topics. Please keep up the great work.

"Cason and Brent,

Great job on this survey guys! Really appreciate the efforts here to try to get folks to consider reform before this resource is damaged any further. Let me know if there's anything I can do to help. I'd say we agree on most everything regarding the issues mentioned here. Also, enjoy the podcast and listen to ya'll every week.

Thanks."

The state of waterfowl hunting and the culture needs to be looked at and changed for the future.

"-Although I put yes for unharvested crops to be considered baiting, I don't entirely mean that. I do feel it isn't 100% fair chase. You should never be allowed to plant a "food plot" for a migratory animal. And the cowards flooding it up to the next ear of corn is another example of everything wrong w the people who hunt ducks. They're all in it for the wrong reasons. With that said, it's gonna be hard to draw up something telling a man what he can/ can't do on his own land.

-I don't feel it's our #1 issue, but it's ignorant to say the habitat flats of the world aren't harming duck hunting for the rest of us. Between Grand Pass/ Swan Lake golden triangle refuges and Tony's place, they held over 1 million mallards pretty much all yr (easy to find MOs numbers on it). That's 16% of the MS Flyways mallards on ~12k acres.

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That has NEVER been normal. Ironically they all flood corn to hold birds. Now compound those numbers, if North Deltas got 60k mallards, White Oaks got 80k, if Five Oaks has 25k and on and on and on, it's easy to see why everyone's bitching. Half the MS flyways mallards are held up on 30k acres, maybe.

-None of this will change or get better until the duck numbers totally plummet. Too much money. Feds love corruption and money. There's too much money being made in duck hunting. The machine has been created and progress ain't stopping. At least the poor folk will get to get in on the fun this yr when we decimate pintails completely in south TX and south LA.

-Last thing, we have to develop a new and improved way to count ducks. The current method used to count LA's duck is old and outdated. So much has changed since they first came up w this method. I'm not entirely sure how the BPOP gets counted but I'm certain it's outdated w the destruction and changes to PPR. We (USFWS, State WLD, etc) have to do better. Using LA for example, it's comical to believe our bird numbers. It might not even be half of what they tell us. SWLA has 4 major refuge complexes, I did my own count this yr on them (totally illegal, but totally worth it bc I'm now able to call out their BS) after the joke of a January survey came out. I'm not saying there's a grand conspiracy theory on it, or that they're miscounting on purpose, bc I don't believe that. I just believe their method of counting ducks is no longer useful.

-Ban any battery operated decoy, or spinning wing anything, cut the season to 45/4, hell, even if it goes back to 60, leave it at 4, no one needs 6 a day anymore, call out the greed in the sport, call out the soy boy "influencers" trying to make a buck off a natural and LIMITED resource. Do all that and you'll see hunting improve.

Good luck and good hunting.

-JV"

This year was rough for ducks. Two years in a row now.. Hopefully this isn't a trend.

Concerning!!! Out of State and In-State Outfitters leasing land for profit to kill 20 gun limits of ducks and being sponsored by the hunting industry is out of control.

"We need to drop to a 4 duck total limit (2-3 mallards with 1 hen).

We need a 30 or 45 day duck season in Arkansas for the next 5 years. The season should have a first split over the Thanksgiving holiday with various splits through the last Sunday in January.

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I'm from Southeast Arkansas. Out of State hunters come in and lease all of the flooded rice acres in our area (as is true for the rest of Arkansas) for big \$\$\$. These practices started in Southeast Arkansas approximately 10 years ago, which directly corresponds with when our seasons began progressively getting worse each year. These out of state people pay so much for the leases that it takes a lot of out of state members to pay for these leases. As with anyone, each of these members are subject to various work schedules, etc. This means that someone will be hunting the same blinds in the same fields every single day of the season. There is simply nowhere for a duck to be a duck because there are a group of hunters hunting the same blinds everyday because they have to get their monies worth from the lease payment. Historically, in Southeast Arkansas, you had your weekend hunters and a few clubs that hunted more. Today, everyone hunts more than they used to hunt. Even large landowners used to not hunt as much as they do today. Pressure.

I would like to see a 30 or 45 day season (spread over the timeframe of the current season with more splits) to force these people to go home and give the ducks rest.

Outlaw mud motors.

SWD - Arkansas has already set a precedent for banning swd in the past. Let's do it again. Statewide. Public and private.

Clubs will argue against shorter seasons. Supply and demand will save the clubs. The small clubs that don't survive will be gone anyway in a few years with how bad seasons are getting in Arkansas."

With the advances in IT, we have the wherewithal to satisfy Federal reporting/comment/consent requirements to proposed changes and/or regulations. The practice of basing season frameworks off of last year's data must end now. To those who believe the timeline should stay the same due to the financial concerns of Water Fowl-related businesses, I say looking out for resource will ensure you are able to stay viable over the long haul. At the end of the day, this is a matter of culture. Change the culture and the decision makers will follow.

Things need to change for the good of the resource and the sport. It's overdue.

"Limiting Arkansas to 30 days and 3 mallards

Will not fix the problem. Needs to be flyway changes not state changes. I don't want to be the only state trying.

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AGFC water management is absurd on WMA's. It has eliminated winter habitat and could impact migration memory of ducks. Early/consistent water is key. AGFC should put a campaign to de-water WMA's with as much focus as they did not flooding them."

I think social media and influencers have ruined waterfowl hunting by glorifying killing birds and not promoting conservation but instead their products. They use there platform to make money and not spread awareness like they should. I like social media to show off photography and sometimes pile pics but now we have people taking awful videos of them literally committing crimes and posting it on the internet or them blasting a poor teal in half at 5 years with a full choke for a little internet fame. It's sad what the waterfowl world has become it use to be able conservation and preventing birds but now it's all about the more birds you kill the better you are than other people or pile pics or shitty unethical shot cams

Thanks for all you guys do. Hope it makes a difference. Duck hunting is fast becoming a turnoff for me

"Shooting yearling birds in Canada, lack of habitat, lack of consistent cold weather and liberal limits are decimating populations. We need coordinated changes in regulation and updated data collection/analysis to drive decisions.

The best things about waterfowling aren't things and will continue whether a large number of ducks are in your instagram picture or not."

I feel quality access has the greatest affect on the future of waterfowl hunting. Anything that inhibits quality access should be met with disdain by someone who loves waterfowl and the opportunity to chase them. There is no doubt Outfitting & companies that support outfitting effect quality access.

Changing weather patterns has been the biggest driver of migration pattern changes in my opinion. We see water open later and later every year by me. Couple that with lack of snow fall the last few years and the birds have no reason to move. I see a lot of early season hunters, but by the end of the season my group is one of the last ones out there. "I'm all for a shorter season with a 3 mallards 1 hen limit.

I say ban swd's but it makes me a bit of a hypocrite because I do like my pulsators lol. I also liked it better last year when non residents could only come on certain 10 day blocks."

DU and Delta waterfowl along with social media is ruining the sport. Climate, access to open food and water up north when it does freeze, and outfitters are the also factors. By the time the birds get here in Texas, they've seen it all. Guides running parties of 8-10 people are also educating/killing majority of birds in our area. Something needs to change in the near future.

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The majority of waterfowl mortality does not occur during the hunting season. Increased focus on nest predator trapping and breeding habitat management will be more effective than any limit change.

Waterfowl is a strong passion for me, i guide for an outfit in NEAR and love to hunt the public woods on days off. Duck numbers have seemed to decrease the last 5 plus years but pressure has more than doubled in the same time period. I have two young boys and im afraid if something does not change then they will not get to experience the same arkansas waterfowl hunting that i did.

"In Oklahoma, out of staters have taken over and no longer allow ducks to rest. They will hunt and scout all day long constantly pressuring birds from areas. Lack of snow and no cold temps until January the last few years have really killed season. No pushes of fresh birds and what is around gets stale in no time with constant pressure."

Like everything today duck hunting has lost basic common sense and values. it needs to be drastically pulled back to basics with conservation, fair chase, sportsmanship front and center. It is becoming something I'm embarrassed to be involved with. If we can't control the PPR habitat and Canadian limits. We should cut our season and limits in half and those who truly care about the resource will strive to enhance habitat here. I'll proudly give up years of strict guidelines to make it what it once was. We need public draws. Why does Iowa get to protect their greatest resource (trophy bucks) and it takes me 5 years to draw a tag there. While our resident experience on our WMA's has diminished due to out of staters. Y'all keep preaching. The word is getting out

"Why do you people only care about Mallard hands? If killing hands is the problem and going to increase the population, then you should support decreasing the limit of all hands to zero. Why not teal and God wall? You can kill six of them, doesn't seem to be affecting them.

Guide services need to be banned. Even on their own private land. Guide services are one of the most detrimental things to waterfowl and the ultimate commercialization of the industry, which is what is going along way towards killing duck hunting behind sanctuaries."

There were tons of ducks but they are more nocturnal and go to the uncut food Don't know the answer because if it wasn't for the food there would be no reason for the ducks to be here at all The geese basically wipe out what little is left Over all it was a very good season

Hopefully waterfowl hunting can start to improve for future generations of hunters.

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Shortening the season to 45 days, cutting out 1 hen, and increasing nonresident fees would reduce pressure. In turn, reducing some social media flunkies that just post for street cred! Maybe they would turn back to their onlyfans page instead of grip and grins on instagram for likes from other flunkies.

"Stop early speck in Arkansas

Stop commercial goose hunting in the afternoons

Reduce season days

Reduce limits"

"Flooding crops is a non issue.

It's not stopping a migration.

Is Arkansas stopping the migration to LA?

Is the rice and flooded timber stopping ducks from migrating? Is this not the exact logic that is used for flooded corn?

Flooded corn acreage is minuscule and useless compared to the millions of acres of dry Ag ground throughout the Mississippi and central flyways. That's not counting the flooded moist soil pools as well. The abundance of food and refuge north of Arkansas mixed with warm winters is not a good mix for southern hunters.

The argument is truly pure ignorance."

"I have followed you guys since the beginning.

I have all of Brent's books.

I have hunted a few miles from the Byers farm my entire life (I'm 38).

What I don't like about your podcast and socials is that you put down the little guy who doesn't own land IMO.

Also Cason when are you going to bring up stuff about your grandfather. I know the stories."

20 years ago, most folks likely only hunted their home state. Nowadays I would bet the average duck hunter hunts in 3-5 states, and hunts way more. We may be "losing hunters" but today's hunters are more driven than ever to harvest as many birds as they can. Similarly, we have a growing problem in the commercialization of waterfowl hunting. These guides that have a "we pay X% to conservation" is a scam. On average, if a guide charges \$250/day/person, that's \$25 a day, and \$125 for a 5-day trip. Multiply that by 6 guys per group, and 8 weeks a year is \$6,000. Tell me what that gets us to move the needle for conservation purposes? That hardly buys enough property to produce half that for replacement ducks taken by an outfitter. We have an epidemic in duck hunting, and if we don't do something soon, our future is screwed.

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Outfitters seem to be taking more of the resource than the average person. They provide folks with opportunities to hunt but maybe should be subject to lower daily limits or limit on number of clients.

Thank you for doing this survey, I truly hope you get good data from it. I think as a general, hunters are not far off on their ideas and I hope this can prove it. I would like to comment on some of my answers that I gave. I do have a degree in wildlife, and I am still learning everyday about natural resources. My opinions are that for a hunting season, ducks limits are not going to do much for the population as a whole. Hunting days are what is going to help the population. As well as stop hunting at Jan 15. Even if you stick to shooting drakes only that hen is having to search for a new mate. Which gives her less time to get the breeding grounds. Which puts more stress on her. We also still have to have wet breeding grounds in order to help the waterfowl populations have a successful hatch. I think the wintering ground habitats are becoming increasingly better every year. Not just in Arkansas but in other states. Which is awesome, but unfortunately due to the drought north. We have not been able to see what we want in duck numbers.

"INCREASE HABITAT! Stop deterring new people into the sport, instead fight tooth and nail for every acre of viable wetland for waterfowl reproduction. We need a "build it and they will come" mentality.

I love duck hunting especially on the Mississippi in western Wisconsin. You can go from getting bit by mosquitoes in September muck to breaking ice in November. The places you see and the lessons you experience are what matter and ducks are just a bonus."

I said my piece on the what's going right in waterfowl today. Canada needs to be looked at severely. I hunt in Canada and don't want to see it go away but also understand the amount of pressure and how easy though birds are to kill.

Really good survey, hope it helps cause it needs helping
Pressure (on public and private land) in Arkansas was at an all time high from my perspective this year. From opening day to late December near my camp on the cache river there was not a single duck being held on fields (many of which are proven and pricey). Why would there be? Every drop of water, both public and private was being hunted relentlessly. On the public ground I hunt, oosers camped the ramp every day from the moment season started until it ended. I'm not anti-ooser but it's a statement of fact. They never left. They hunt, take out, eat and park back at the ramp until the next morning. Most of them, get their drones out in the afternoon and buzz the woods to look for the handful of ducks that weren't shot the day before (this is done nearly every afternoon on wmas, and OFTEN on NWRs). The pressure is immense. On state grounds, every slough, creek, ditch, bayou has been mulched and marked into highway. You can launch on a wma and boat on plane for 20 miles without fear of hitting anything. If you're having a slow day, you hop in the boat and just ride all over to find

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the 6 ducks that weren't shot at the day before. There's barely an inch of real estate for them to exist without being disturbed. It also can't help at all that for 90 days you can shoot 7 brown ducks over spinners before they make it south. I don't know what the answer to solving the issues are, but I know that if I was a mallard duck, I would do whatever I could to stay the heck away from Arkansas.

Keep up the great work! Something has to change hope we do it before it's too late! I respect both of you, but you failed at having appropriate answers for at least a third of those questions. My true opinion is as not able to be made known. Also, influencers, which you guys are by the way, were portrayed as negative throughout the survey. Influencers are a good thing if they do it right. You both have your hearts in the right place but maybe show some more grace and less shame for those that are trying to do things right. To get the right answers we have to start asking better questions. Delta Waterfowl Podcast Episode 50 is a great starting point. Glad you guys are doing the survey and I think you will get good information out of it. I do hope you try it again next year and improve on the questions and answers.

I think waterfowl hunting is in a good spot, population needs some improvement though. The future is bright as long as everyone can get along

Pressure, habitat and weather drive the migration. States that manage pressure and have habitat will keep ducks until weather conditions push them. Arkansas has way too many hunting. All states need more refuge for ducks to rest. Guides need to manage their properties instead of trying to cram as many hunters in each day. If any of you guys would love to talk call me 919-352-2034 I can sit here and type all day on duck hunting issues. And thank you for caring about the resource! And I absolutely love the podcast.

"Enjoy the podcast but yall are too negative most of the time. Keep it going but don't be negative Nancy all the time.

All the young birds getting killed in Canada in Sept and Oct is a huge issue, spinners in grain fields wipe out the young birds and hens seem extremely susceptible to them."

Great that you guys are starting the hard conversations

"I've had poor years due to water levels, temperature, etc. The last three to five have been poorer than normal. And add in additional pressure each year, with poor bird numbers. It's a pretty bleak outlook.

I don't know what will get it changed. I've talked to all the wildlife and parks commissioners here, half of them are guides, and see no reason to limit pressure, address limits or season changes. The public lands managers, for the zones I hunt, agree with the commissioners. I've taken some of the ducks unlimited guys hunting, they don't see any reason to change anything. It's baffling.

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I do hope it changes, before it's too late. I was planning on one more good dog. Not sure it's worth it, with these last couple years. I'm rapidly falling into sixth stage of hunters."

As to the state of waterfowling we need more land access with restrictions as to the tools we can use. (Ex. Shell limits, motorized vehicle restrictions, etc) As for population, we need habitat restoration in the PPR and all the way down the flyway. Without places for hens to nest, it doesn't matter how many go back in the spring. As to this survey, I felt like the questions were pigeonholing me into specific groups.

"I believe that the dry conditions and loss of habitat in the PPR is an huge concern. Harvest of waterfowl in Canada needs to be regulated and reduced.

Outfitters are putting too much pressure on the birds.

Most public land state and federal needs to go to a draw system and have more no hunt days."

Thanks to all who is trying figure out what is going on with the migration and possibly the population counts could be a issue also because something is definitely going on! Thanks for what yall do. I enjoy listening to the podcast.

They really need to reduce the mallard limit. I remember hunting during the point system days and I saw more ducks then than we do now and it seems to me that waterfowl hunting has become big business

I personally feel like we'll see Mallard populations high again. I just don't know that they will ever migrate to Arkansas like they have in the past. I think we're under estimating the value of our WA and acorn production that they have produced in the past. I think the mallards have figured that out and they're just staying farther north where there's a better food source plus global warming warming plays a much bigger roll in mallards staying farther north later. I grew up in northern Missouri and it would be snow covered from 1 December till 1 March. Every year. Now you'll get a snow and it melts in two days. Ducks in my opinion and figured out hey we fly south in January we're facing 12 gauge gun barrels and damn near every field. You have warmer weather and no pressure to the north., And I think north of the Missouri river is increasingly a wining ground for a lot of mallards same in Illinois.

I hate Willie Robertson and YouTube. \$100+ for 1/2dz decoys? \$20,000+ duck boats? Are you kidding me right now?

Thank you for doing this. Looking forward to hearing what the consensus is.

As a layman I believe we should be heavily investing in habit conservation , reclamation and addition in the PPH on top of reducing overall pressure (Read - Season lengths, limits, equipment restrictions, etc.) I have never seen anything but 60/6, but

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want to align with whatever is best for waterfowl stabilization and growth so I can pass it on to younger folks or any kids I may have in the future.

Keep up the good work on the podcast! Don't forget to mention the Mississippi delta! It's right across the river from y'all and at times holds proportionally almost as many total ducks as the Arkansas delta (half the size) yet y'all basically never mention it! Thank y'all for bringing a common sense approach to the topic and trying to conserve our sport. It baffles me how many seemingly intelligent people say absurd things like, "harvest doesn't matter," and "standing crops don't affect flyways." I appreciate the illumination and hope this conversation continues to make a real change. Thanks guys.
-Brandon Bailey

PPR is the biggest issue with population I see right now. I don't necessarily think lowering the hen limit will matter much, how I view it if the PPR can support 100k breeding hens, and you send back 300k that doesn't do much good especially since they are short lived fowl. We have restricted harvest on pintails for years and no population increase, which personally tells me they are going back to the ppr and dieing, not hunters effecting them. I do like your thought process you send more back and it's wet the population will bounce back better, but I think it should be up to hunters to restrict their hen harvest which I think many will take the green head over the hen any day. Also think the guides have put undue pressure on the birds which is effecting hunting for all due to constant pressure. Being in the Great Lakes I think the game farm mallards is becoming a bigger issue, so hopefully something happens there. Last climate 100% is an issue and is effecting migration, in northern Indiana by December we always had ice and were fishing, now very rarely do our lakes freeze over for ice fishing, so why would the ducks go south.

Something needs to be done about habitat and pressure. As you guys say all the time I don't care about opportunity if it's not a quality experience. I strictly hunt public here in Florida a lot of it is horribly mismanaged if there were more places that held birds people would spread out.

I think as far as season dates, a liberal standpoint is outdated and been abused since the late 90s. We've seen populations decline for years consistantly and that has to do with a variety of reasons my opinion is directed towards habitat in the PPR which is hard to have any hands on action within Arkansas however days kill ducks not limits IMO and shooting ducks all the way through January isn't conducive to raising the population as well as being able to kill 2 hens. I'd dare say the majority of hunters in Arkansas don't care if it's a hen or drake and will shoot hens if they are in front of them.

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The limit needs to be 1 and only because accidents happen or else I think shooting hens should be outlawed

Here in Oklahoma waterfowl is directly impacted by poor climate conditions, outstanding amount of out of state hunting pressure, hunters hunting ALL DAY constantly pressuring birds during daylight hours.

"I'm an outdoorsman. I enjoy deer, turkey, duck, and squirrel hunting. I've grown up doing all the above. Duck hunting is the only sport where my peers are killers and not hunters. I'm an older style hunter but I enjoy getting to the ramp at 5 am and enjoying my days I do get to hunt. The rat race to prove to a small group of people (the duck hunting community) that you are a "killa" is pointless to me. The prom queen doesn't care if you kill 4 mallards or 40 - 99 percent of the time.

I'm passionate about the sport but you're not supposed to kill them every single day. But the inconsistency and change of behavior for ducks has made that a staple for today's average hunter. We need to get back to a hunter and outdoorsman mindset instead of influencer/guide/killer.

Last comment: videoing and promotion of any brand should be outlawed on public ground that was paid for and maintained by tax dollars!! It's not fair to the public for you to make a profit on their land (guides are banned for that reason)."

Thank you for bringing this discussion to the forefront.

"Food + water + rest, when managed properly, still kills ducks, even in bad flyways. Pressure on our public GTRs in Arkansas is not sustainable long term. Also, gone are the days where one can rent 80 acres and kill ducks. The people still having success in Arkansas are properly managing hundreds to thousands of acres.

Oh and will someone please study the effects of not having consistent early December water on our public GTRs and its long term effects on the philopatric mallard population in Arkansas?! I am of the opinion that the GTR management plan is taking us backwards due to that simple fact of no consistent December water. Just my opinion- everyone's got one.

Thanks for all you guys do to promote the right way to duck hunt."

"Reasonable changes to many facets of modern day waterfowling are needed. You can't just make changes by public surveys alone. There should be some emphasis on public input when making reg changes but also be able to weed out the BS. Spinning wing decoys and increased shell limits on places like Bayou meto wma should have never been considered. The old guys like Joe Morgan made good reg changes. Get in the woods quietly and get your ducks and get out. The agfc completely scoffed at this for 2024. The loud mud motors, turtle boxes etc should never be in the woods public or

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private. The wood duck limit on the true gtrs should be 1 on matter the state limit. The agfc wants us public land users to follow the science when it comes to water management and forest management, but won't follow science on regs such as setting seasons, limits and such. We are not idiots. Most of us see this for what it is worth. The "look at me" generation has to be managed in some way- not sure what that's gonna look like.

Public land has had pressure since building the reputation it has- that's not gonna change. However, most residents did prefer the resident only days to what was changed in 2024.

My hope is some sensible changes are on the horizon. A Rex Hancock type of guy is needed now as much as he was in the 1970s."

This is a passion of mine, I've seen great times, there are a lot of hunters now. When i started money was different, and we toughed it to hunt. I'm fearful for the sport, and the birds the migration has changed. Seems like birds wait storms out. I believe the limit is the easiest and quickest change we can make in a positive direction. And lowering the limit may get rid of the ones that are only about the kill. I've had some low number hunts that i will never forget.

"Habitat has been and always will be the determining factor in duck populations. We, as hunters, should prioritize that above all else in the duck factories.

That being said hunting these days has gotten too easy. We need to make hunting harder to the point that someone willing to do more work will more often times be rewarded with better hunts. I'm talking about elimination of all motorized craft on WMAs (boats, ATVs/UTVs, e bikes, etc). These devices allow for easier access to areas that may have once been natural refuges for birds. I have seen firsthand the benefits of making access more difficult, whether by Game and Fish organizations or weather conditions. We also need an outright ban on SWDs, drones, and cell cameras. We as hunters should also demand change from the hunting industry itself. These brands/influencers/gear manufacturers take so much. They should give back through helping fund public access and/or habitat. We also need to demand a current Farm Bill with expanded CRP acres (excluding CRP Grasslands)."

I think lack of weather is the main contributing factor to the decrease of wintering ducks down south, even in Missouri we see large number of ducks after seasons. Also the big refuges as well as farming practices have changed the landscape of ducks and what they use in central Missouri. I used to go to farm ponds and kill ducks regularly 10 years ago but now those hunts are few and far between. Seams like the ducks stay up in the golden triangle and that is where my opportunity lies to hunt mallards in large numbers.

Reduce days, reduce pressure, don't limit oosers, reduce limits, increase habitat, lobby to reduce Mexico and Canada, eliminate Tamies, and educate, educate, educate. We

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need to be a louder voice than those against us. Work with the landowners and outfitters that want change to make sure all of our voices are heard against those padding the pockets. Work to get the right people in front of Delta and DU to lobby for change. Finally, Education is the only way to facilitate change.

Just a side note on killing hens. I personally don't shoot them anymore, I do however not stop my kids from shooting them

I am optimistic for the future of waterfowl. I think everyone can agree that waterfowl hunting has changed in the last decade and I seem to find myself in more conversations about how can we improve hunting success however that may be defined. I think private clubs are starting to do things to improve their individual success but I think things on a larger scale can be improved as well. Have to bring widespread CRP enrollment back like 90's!! Corn for ethanol is bullshit and needs to end.

Y'all ain't got the time for all of it.

I'm a waterfowl hunter that's hunted the most prime areas in Northwest TN and the Prairie of Arkansas my entire 40 season hunting life. I remember 3 duck limits and 30 day seasons all the way to 6 and 60. I have witnessed first hand the demise of this incredible sport of duck hunting in the greatest North American flyway due to repeat declines in new duck production, reduced breeding ground habitat, excessive pressure throughout the entire flyway (especially in MO, IA, TN, AR, MS), LEGAL BAIT (unharvested corn) and MOTORIZED DECOYS. The USFWS and many other research groups acknowledge the declines in population and harvest numbers while continuing to promote legal bait, long seasons and very liberal bag limits. If this continues, the resource as a whole will disappear when the entire time leading up to it changes could have been made for the betterment of ducks, their habitat and hunter success as a result. Waterfowl in the MS flyway have become nocturnal creatures utilizing flooded corn fields at night and early mornings prior to sunrise. Man has altered the natural desire/requirement for ducks to seek food because of the abundance of legal baiting. Ducks rarely fly during daylight hours as they have private farms and refuges with plenty of legal bait causing them to stay put and not naturally seek food to survive. Hunter success is directly impacted by this and when combined with lower duck numbers, the future of duck hunting is in major jeopardy. I'm hoping for changes especially in the legal use of standing corn to attract and harvest ducks, eliminating the use of any motorized decoys in North America, reduced season and bag limits and focusing on the future of what was the most enjoyable sport of my lifetime.

Oklahoma public grounds have gotten out of control due to everyone's instagram horeshit stories. When a certain influencer sleeps in his truck for days at a time or has fanboys do their scouting it's not good for anyone or the resource. These kids see one

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strap on instagram and start doing the same shit. Not enough birds to support the constant flow of out of stater.

Keep doing what you're doing. I really think people are catching on and taking what you're saying to heart.

Ready to see some changes ushered in to increase duck numbers and limit out of stater freelancing all 60 days of season

Hope you get a great return on these, some excellent questions raised.

The sport has changed so much. I hope we can get it back. Ducks act so differently in my neck of the woods than they used to.

Dropping limits cannot hurt but I don't think it will improve "hunting" all that much. Habitat is the driver of production - flat out. Pressure is what's driving poor hunting - liberal seasons and reduced wintering habitat has led to more and more private ground success. Those who have the ability to control pressure or own land near refuges will continue to be successful unless frameworks change. I.E shell limits, banning scouting beyond a certain hour, moving areas to draw only, shortening seasons.

Too liberal season dates and bag limits. We want duck hunting to get better, not progressively worse. I appreciate you guys leading the charge.

I am hopeful we are in a cycle and things will improve for my kids who love to hunt but I do not see that happening if major changes do not take place immediately. The current way is not working, time to change. I have little faith in the data that is being presented and its direct correlation to the reduced numbers.

"We have to control what we can control-part 1. No spinners, season lengths, bags, out of state pressure, Canada overhaul, flywaywide changes including being a little more cautious on next in line species like teal, pintail, gadwall.

Second, there has to be an uprising of new group of conservationists with some big money guys behind it and visionaries leading it to get nation and agencies to wake up. Du and delta are working against us (particularly delta) which is a shame. However we need to pull same direction so after the renaissance victory has occurred, they need to either become part of DU or work alongside DU. At this point I feel delta is almost criminal with there unwillingness to admit in the slightest there is a problem , while rationalizing pitiful brood rearing in PPR. Hen houses are not proven beyond shadow of a doubt to be working . They may be great but there is not enough data supporting whole picture.

We are going to have to relook at every study for last 100 yrs on ppr, north breeding and habitat and rework some studies to find what is optimal for different regions (it's a gigantic area and not all same grasslands) and then get that model into private/public

CLOSING COMMENTS

management to save hub and spoke areas 600-2000 acres at a time while re-attacking lands already ""in place for waterfowl"" as I'm pretty sure we have awful results on many of ""wpa"", refuges etc. There is a way to improve, but it's gonna take a lot deeper dive and effort than anyone is giving currently.

I am on board."

Thank you Brent and Cason!

Thanks for providing the survey. Keep preaching conservation and reduced pressure. Doing it the right way and giving back to the resource. Many hunters didn't have a mentor. Mentor the masses through your discussions by discussing the ramifications of poor behavior.

Good luck and thank you for doing this. You CANNOT be a capitalist and a conservationist at the same time....and that's what is currently trying to happen....when the \$\$\$ gets to certain levels the resource will always suffer....i personally am afraid the pendulum has swung too far the opposite direction. If I had it my way there would not be any for profit business allowed in the way of a natural resource. If guiding had to continue then for every dollar earned that guide would need to show and document an additional dollar spent on giving back to the resource in one shape form or fashion.... "however I can help, I'm there.

very worried we're at a tipping point.

life-long waterfowler.

kjos"

Good work, Brent

I've never seen a wild duck cry.