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VOLUME 44 ISSUE 7

AUGUST 2014

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Just Released: 2014 Duck Numbers



Breeding Duck Numbers Up 8 Percent

Abundant precipitation boosts breeding pair estimates again

The US Fish and Wildlife Service today released its report on 2014 Trends in Duck Breeding Populations, based on surveys conducted in May and early June. Total populations were estimated at **49.2 million breeding ducks** in the surveyed area. This estimate represents an 8-percent increase from last year's estimate of 45.6 million birds, and is 43 percent higher than the 1955-2013 long-term average. This continues a three-year trend of exceptional water conditions and population numbers for many species. It looks like another good waterfowl breeding year for a good portion of the prairies and the boreal forest," said DU CEO Dale Hall. View all the data and get a species-by-species breakdown at www.ducks.org/2014ducknumbers.

News from the breeding grounds this year is great! Overall, the breeding population is up 8% with continued big gains for Gadwall, Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Shovelers. Mallards are up by 5% and are 42% above their long term average. Pintails were the only species to show a decline and are 20% below their long term average. This looks promising for a good fall flight!

Eric Schenck, Manager of Conservation Programs, submitted by John Mabery, USFWS

A Duck Hunter's Goodbye

Duane Hahnenkamp

As I write this article, it is the 4th July weekend and the summer weather is great but the rivers are back to their old tricks. The rivers are high, so everyone is waiting to see if the hunting areas are going to stay flooded most of the summer or start to dry out and grow some feed. I don't have that worry anymore since I don't have a blind and hope to be hunting in Colorado this fall. For your sake, I hope it starts to dry out and you have tons of feed in your hunting areas this fall, so good luck.

This article will probably be my last as a monthly contributor to the "Sentry." As it stands right now, my house is supposed to be sold and I have money down on a house in northern Colorado. I have less than 3 weeks to pack up my whole life, plus 40 years of duck hunting stuff and move. That's not easy to do when your basement and garage looks like the sporting goods section of Walmart. Anyway, I have a new adventure ahead of me as I start a new life in the open prairie north of Denver. New life and, hopefully, a new job and some great hunting is my plan. By the time you read this, I should be there and hopefully be settling in.

I just want you to know that MWHI has been a part of my life for 40 years now. I started goose hunting in high school around 1969 and the first time I duck hunted was in 1973. I joined MWHI in the spring of "74" because I was hooked on duck hunting and thought by joining I would learn how to be a better hunter or at least be more involved in the sport. Truthfully, when they told me that their meeting was at the Eagles Lodge, I figured it was a bunch of guys standing around the bar blowing duck calls and, of course, drinking beer. Well, I did get the second part right but was surprised how involved the club was in policy and management of the local hunting areas. I realized that Migratory was a club that knew how to get things done and was worth being part of if I wanted to help improve duck hunting in my areas. I served on the board for a few years in the early 80's, but resigned from the board when I took over the family business. Later, around 1990, I had more time and got back on the board. I believed in what the club was doing and wanted to help if I could. I think it was around 1995 that I became vice president and was president the next 3 years. I know I was far from being the best president the club ever had, but I was just trying to do as good as I could while still running my business. Because of business problems, I gave up the presidency in 1999 to John Gillespie, but stayed on the board for about 10 more years. I always made the point that the club should first try to get new blood on the board, but would stay on if they needed me. During those years I feel we had very good presidents in John Gillespie and Scotty Byrant. They and John Gineris have made this club the envy of other outdoor organizations throughout the state. I would like to congratulate all 3 of them on doing a great job and I appreciate all the hard work they have done for this club over the years.

To all of our members, if you really love to waterfowl hunt and what to be more involved in your hunting areas, this club is the way to go if you want to get things done. The guys on the board would love to see new people and can always use the help. My time has come to move on to a new life plus a different type of waterfowl hunting. After 40 years of duck hunting near the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, it's kind of tough for me to stand in water 30 to 40 yards wide and call it a river. To all of you, good luck on your duck season and more power to this club. After 40 years in this club, I want to say goodbye and thank you to the members I've known and worked with over the years. So, thank you all and see you in Colorado!

Duane

PS. Maybe I'll send Rosi some pictures and a note when the hunting gets really good.

Thank you, Duane, for all your help throughout the years!

Our best wishes, good luck and great duck hunting!

Carlyle Lake Report

Justin Wolfe, MWHI Carlyle Lake Area Projects Chairman, July 2014

- 256 acres of corn looking good at this time, most had anhydrous ammonia put on it.
- 132 acres of milo, just coming up, trying to get cocklebur and other broadleaves sprayed today.
- Approximately 60 acres Jap millet planted so far, about 100 acres to go on that.
- 147 acres of mix (millet, milo, buckwheat) to go. Most of the remaining millet/mix ground has been disked at least once. Will continue to plant these fields thru July.
- Moist soil production in most places is good.
- Can't get water out of Impoundments 3 and 4. Water trapped in lower cell.

Mississippi River F &W Area Registration and Blind Drawing Info

Kim Postlewait, IDNR MRA Site Superintendent June 26, 2014

Blind registration was conducted June 4th thru the 13th.
During that time, 839 people registered as blind builders on 299 blinds.

Post registration blind drawing was attended by 182 people drawing for blinds. 20 persons passed or the person had left the draw, and 133 cards remaining unopened.
A total of 45 blinds were available, 29 were taken and were registered by 57 builders.

Altogether we have 328 registered blinds and 896 blind builders.

Steady Climb for River Levels

Bob Crossen Two Rivers Outdoors 7.11.14

Water level predictions continued to rise since last week when projected water levels threatened the closure of ferries on both the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

The prediction from the National Weather Service indicates flood levels could reach the major flood stage, which begins at 32 feet. As of 8:30 a.m. July 11, the Illinois River at Hardin was 31.2 feet, with a projected crest on July 12 at 31.4 feet.

It is not until 31.8 feet that the Brussels Ferry service is interrupted, and the ferry was closed July 7. According to a post from the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office on Facebook, approximately six inches of water covered the road to the ferry.

At 32 feet, Water Street in Hardin begins to flood. At 32.29 feet the sales office at Hurley Dodge takes on water.

The Golden Eagle Ferry closed July 3 and the Winfield Ferry closed July 6 due to flooding. The ferries will reopen when the river falls to its normal levels.

To keep updated on ferry closures, visit gettingaroundillinois.com and check the Calhoun Ferry Company Facebook page.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

NRA Update on Gun Bills **1-800-392-8683**

Federal Senate Office **1-202-224-3121**

Federal House Offices **1-202-225-3121**

Illinois State Rifle Association **1-815-635-3198** www.isra.org

Illinois Senate Information **1-217-782-4517**

Illinois House Information **1-217-782-8223**

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Sen. Mark Kirk

Tel: 202-224-2854 Email: kirk.senate.gov



URGENT ALERT – YOUR ACTION REQUIRED ISRA, July 7, 2014

Municipalities planning to inhibit the lawful commerce in firearms, ammunition and accessories had better think twice in light of a ruling against the City of Chicago handed down by a federal judge last Thursday. In that ruling, the judge ordered Chicago to reimburse nearly \$1 million in legal fees to plaintiffs in a lawsuit decided against the city in 2010. The case in question struck down the city's ban on the operation of gun shops and target ranges within city limits.

The judge's decision to award reimbursement of legal fees in the Chicago case comes just days before the Niles, Illinois Village Council will rule on whether to approve a proposal to establish and operate a gun shop and target range in the village's industrial area. The village zoning board had earlier approved the proposal but pressure from a New York City based gun control group caused the Village Council to reconsider the proposal. The full Niles Village Council will take the matter up on Monday, July 7th.

"Bans on gun shops and ranges will prove to be expensive propositions for municipalities," said ISRA Executive Director, Richard Pearson. "Gun control groups ride into town and bully public officials into passing unconstitutional ordinances then quickly leave town before the legal trouble begins. When the smoke clears, the municipality is left footing the bill and the gun controllers are nowhere to be seen."

"The Niles Village Council should ponder well Chicago's experience," continued Pearson.

"Jeopardizing the village's bank balance so that some out-of-state gun control group can put a mark on the wall is not good public policy. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel could have patched a lot of potholes with the million bucks he has to pay out."

The ISRA is the state's leading advocate of safe, lawful and responsible firearms ownership. For more than a century, the ISRA has represented the interests of millions of law-abiding Illinois firearm owners.

How These Rare Species Are Making It Impossible to Keep the Border Secure

Genevieve Wood, Heritage Foundation

Genevieve Wood advances policy priorities of The Heritage Foundation as senior contributor to The Daily Signal.

Protected lands and rare species are hurting the U.S. Border Patrol's ability to keep the United States-Mexico border secure.

Much of the border areas in South Texas are considered national wildlife refuge areas, which are protected lands overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Lower River Grande Refuge, for example, runs for 275 miles along the Rio Grande River, which is on the border of Texas and Mexico. The Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge is a meager 2,000 acres, but the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge encompasses more than 97,000.

Why is this an issue? Because the majority of people illegally trying to enter the U.S., whether drug smugglers, human traffickers or those seeking a better life in America, are coming across these protected lands.

They choose to cross the border across to those protected lands because they know it's harder for the border patrol to apprehend them in these areas, thanks to rules made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, which is part of the Department of the Interior.

Border Patrol agents face severe restrictions on what they can and can't do on these protected lands – despite the fact that the areas are right on the border.

Agents are allowed to drive along already established dirt roads primarily running parallel to the Rio Grande River, but they can't create new roads through grassy areas or go "off-road." As a result, agents check the dirt roads for foot prints. If they do find signs that someone or a group has crossed, they have two choices: They can either get out and follow on foot, or they can drive to another road to see if that group is already past that point.

As you can imagine, those crossing illegally have figured out how to use the agents' restrictions to their advantage. Border agents are forced to "follow the dirt road" while illegal aliens and drug smugglers pursue whatever path gets them where they want to go.

Aside from road problems, border patrol agents and other law enforcement officials have trouble gaining access to the protected lands. When I traveled to visit the Texas-Mexico border last month, border officials told me that it is often private ranchers and landowners with property adjacent to these refuge areas who work closely with them to give them access, not the federal government. Perhaps that's because they have seen firsthand the dangers presented when armed drug and human smugglers are crossing private property.

I'm not suggesting we pave any wetlands or mow down trees. But there has to be a way to protect the species such as the southern yellow bat, speckled racer snake, and the "more than 900 species of beetles...that aids plant pollination" without making it so difficult for the border agents who are trying to keep illegal immigrants out of our country.

In 2008, after visiting the Mexico-Arizona border, Heritage expert James Carafano made the case that "going green on the border" and keeping border security out was actually *bad* for the environment.

"Illegal border crossers cut trails that speed erosion," Carafano wrote. "They leave mountains of trash that pollute the desert and disrupt the nesting and hunting grounds of birds and desert animals. They also wreck private property, endangering the livelihood of ranchers and others who work in and nurture the lands on the high desert."

Sadly, this is not a new problem. Back in the 1990s, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service fought the idea of putting up floodlights on the border near Brownsville, Texas, because they would "harass" various types of small cats.

Securing the border isn't easy – and although most people would like to see the border made secure, there's plenty of debate about whether walls, cameras, more border patrol agents or something else is the answer. But can't we all agree that protecting our border and American citizens is worth the threat of running over a few speckled racer snakes?



Illinois State Rifle Association

Since 1903 - Dedicated to Education, Safety Training and Support of Illinois Firearm Owners

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

ISRA Thursday Bulletin - June 26

BUILDING BRIDGES

A 30-something suburban Chicago man approached me recently and expressed his frustration that, although he and his family are eager to learn to shoot, opportunities to become involved in shooting seem few and far between. My first thought was that this fellow just wasn't looking hard enough or in the right places. But before I chided the guy for his lack of persistence, I stopped to remind myself that he is probably correct.

Getting involved in shooting was certainly easier for those of us who first picked up a firearm three decades or so ago. Just about everyone had a relative who shot, many schools and employers had rifle and pistol teams, and then there were also the Boy Scout and 4-H shooting programs in which to participate. Getting involved in shooting was easy for us - shooting was just one of those things that everyone did.

Of course, the gun grabbers and their aggressive agenda of domestic disarmament have ruined the shooting sports for most people. Corporate shooting teams have all but gone away. Few public schools east of the Mississippi or north of the Mason-Dixon Line have active rifle or pistol programs.

The gun controllers have certainly created a deep gulf between people who want to get into shooting and the opportunities for them to do so. As gun owners who care about the future of the sport, we need to build bridges of opportunity spanning the gulf of anti-gunner obstructions. The survivability of shooting depends on it.

I'm happy to say that the ISRA engaged in a bit of bridge-building this past weekend in the form of the Association's 12th-annual range open house. As in the past, hundreds of new shooters were among those in attendance. For many, the open house was the first time they've had the opportunity to interact with experienced shooters and learn first hand about the shooting opportunities available to them. More than one newcomer approached me on Saturday to tell me that the open house had pointed them in the right direction in pursuit of their shooting interests.

Where do you fit in to the picture? The answer is simple. The range open house is just one day per year. You, on the other hand, have the opportunity to build bridges for new shooters the other 364 days.

We're depending on you to recruit new shooters and help them launch their participation in the shooting sports. So, when you make plans to go to the range, take the time to ask a friend or relative who doesn't shoot if they would like to go with you. Lots of folks are just waiting to be asked - you may be surprised at just who takes you up on your offer!

Thank you for being a member.

Richard Pearson
ISRA Executive Director

RIVER DATA APP: A GOVERNMENT FREEBIE

A new tool for the classic outing.

Russ Lumpkin, Sporting Classics, July 1-15 2014



In the old days, at least back in the 1990s, wading anglers had to stand on river banks to check out water conditions. If the water ran too high and too fast to wade safely, they'd just have to turn around and go home, suffering a double-dose of disappointment from being unable to fish and making an unnecessary trip.

Nowadays, thanks to the capabilities of smartphones, anglers can get streamflow information from a variety of apps. Some of the apps cost a little,

anywhere from \$.99 to \$2.99, but a bigger problem is relevance: The information many apps provide is often two or three days old.

The River Data app, by Frizzy Artwerks in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Survey, is not only free of charge but also renders streamflow information that is up to date, usually within minutes or at least a few hours. River Data also allows you to create a list of favorites from nearly all the rivers and creeks in the country.

When the flows are perfect or near it, check the app to get a baseline in order to judge all future reports. From there, you can either concentrate your angling efforts or spare them.

- See more at: <http://sportingclassicsdaily.com/issue/july-1-15-2014/article/river-data-app-a-government-freebie#sthash.LQDQMup2.dpuf>

Facebook Removes Hate Page Thanks to Sportsmen's Efforts

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance, Posted on July 3, 2014

UPDATE: Facebook has now reversed its position regarding removal of this page after not allowing any new posts for approximately six hours. The page is again active as well as several similar pages. Sportsmen and women should remain vigilant in their support of Kendall Jones and all other hunters who are the victims of cyber-bullying. Stay tuned for more developments as they occur.

A page titled "Kendall Jones Hate Page" has been removed by Facebook after a deluge of complaints from sportsmen reporting it as harassment.

The page in question was created when numerous stories of 19-year-old hunter, Kendall Jones, surfaced after she posted photos of her recent African safari to her fan page. Photos of Jones with African animals she had legally harvested sparked outcry from animal rights activists who soon took to social media to harass and threaten the life of the teenager.

The "Kendall Jones Hate Page" served as a platform for the anti-hunting community to further post photos and berate and threaten the young hunter.

"I am truly proud of how our community rose up and helped dismantle this page." said Nick Pinizzotto, USSA president and CEO. "This is a huge statement from the hunting community that we will not stand for this type of behavior."

According to Facebook, the page violated the Facebook Community Standards for bullying and harassment. According to the standards, "Facebook does not tolerate bullying or harassment. We allow users to speak freely on matters and people of public interest, but take action on all reports of abusive behavior directed at private individuals. Repeatedly targeting other users with unwanted friend requests or messages is a form of harassment."

"It's a great day for the hunting community as they rallied around Kendall." said Pinizzotto. "Anti-hunters have taken their insults and threats to the extreme. They are showing their true colors by threatening a young woman who is doing nothing more than practicing legal hunting methods and helping to conserve wildlife."

Sportsmen's Act Stalls in U.S. Senate

U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance, Posted on July 14, 2014

Just days after the U.S. Senate voted overwhelmingly to proceed to debate on the bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014 (S. 2363), the measure hit a roadblock over amendments to the bill.

The bill, sponsored by Senators Kay Hagan (D-NC) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), counts nearly half the Senate as co-sponsors and contains the top priority issues for the sportsmen's community, including the USSA supported "Open Until Closed" language. This vital language spells out that hunting, fishing and recreational shooting are legitimate and important activities on the more than 700 million acres of federal land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The language will help stop frivolous lawsuits brought by anti-hunting organizations when federal agencies move to open land to sportsmen.

On Thursday, July 10, the U.S. Senate failed to invoke cloture—a move requiring 60 votes to end debate on a bill—because of a growing rift between Republicans and Democrats over the amendment process. The spat over amendments was brought to the forefront when Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid used Senate rules to block any amendments to the bill.

"Sportsmen should be disappointed today that this critically important package of bills was the victim of a long-running fracture over amendments between senators," said Evan Heusinkveld, USSA vice president of government affairs. "Hunting, fishing and the future of wildlife conservation in this country is not a political issue and we hope that the leadership of the Senate will allow this bill to be brought up with a clean and fair amendment process."

In addition, it appears that many senators see the widely supported Sportsmen's Act as an opportunity to advance politically charged amendments that may force vulnerable opponents into tough votes just months before a big election.

"The House of Representatives has twice passed these important measures, most recently in H.R. 3590 sponsored by Bob Latta (R-OH)," added Heusinkveld. "The provisions of this bill are simply too important to be bogged down in election year politics."

Beyond the "Open Until Closed" language, the Sportsmen's Act included many top priority issues for sportsmen and women including provisions to:

- Prohibit the U.S. EPA from regulating lead ammunition and fishing tackle.
- Promote the construction and development of shooting ranges on public lands.
- Allow for the importation of 41 legally harvested trophies taken before Polar Bears were listed as an endangered species in 2008.

July IDNR Newsbits

Natural Resources Advisory Board: The IDNR Natural Resources Advisory Board will meet on Friday, July 25 at 1:30 p.m. at IDNR Headquarters in Springfield. Agenda items include wildlife management updates, grant program information, the Illinois Conservation Foundation's Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center, and an off-highway vehicle trails update. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, phone 217-785-0075.

Renew Watercraft Registration by Phone or Online: Watercraft owners in Illinois are reminded that boat registrations (except for non-powered watercraft) are good for three years and have expiration dates of June 30. Watercraft owners can renew registration online at <https://www.il.wildlifelicense.com/vehicle.php?action=vehiclelookup> or by phone by calling 1-866-867-3542. When renewing, watercraft owners should have handy their Illinois registration number and hull identification number (located on the registration card) and pen and paper to record their confirmation number.

Non-motorized watercraft, canoes, kayaks and paddle boats in Illinois are no longer required to be titled or registered in Illinois. Non-motorized watercraft owners are now required to purchase a Water Usage Stamp for \$6.00 per calendar year for each of the first three vessels, and \$3.00 each for any additional vessels (plus an agent fee of \$.50 will be charged per vessel). The annual stamps expire on December 31 each year. Water Usage Stamps are available from all DNR Direct license and permit vendors. Check on DNR Direct vendor locations at this link: <http://dnr.illinois.gov/DNRDirectMonitor/VendorListing.aspx>

Concealed Carry License alternative application available

IDNR July 13, 2014

Illinois State Police (ISP) officials have announced that an alternative application option to apply for a Concealed Carry License (CCL) is now available for those individuals without computer access.

Applicants can contact the ISP Firearms Services (FSB) Customer Service Center phone line at 217-782-7980 and provide a FSB call taker with the same CCL application information that is currently required through the CCL on-line process.

The FSB call taker will need the applicant's full name, any previous names, date of birth, driver's license number or state ID, Firearms Owner Identification (FOID) card number, current mailing address, ten years of previous address history, fingerprint Transaction Control Number (TCN) (which is optional), training instructor's name and the Concealed Carry Trainer's Identification (CCTID) number. Applicants should have this information readily available prior to calling the FSB Customer Service Center phone line.

Upon validation of the FOID number and driver's license or identification card, payment in the form of credit card or electronic check will be needed and securely processed by the FSB call taker.

Once the CCL telephone application interview is completed and payment confirmed, the applicant will receive the application in the mail. Upon receipt, the applicant must review the application for accuracy, initial all required areas, answer the background check questions, and sign and date the application. The applicant must also attach a two-inch by two-inch headshot photo (shoulder to head) taken within the last 30 days and provide all required training certificates.

The completed application, photo, and training certificates must be returned to the ISP through the U.S. Postal Service before the application will be processed and a license issued.

The Illinois State Police is providing this alternative method to ensure that the public has options to participate in the CCL application process and to ensure turnaround times are met in accordance with the Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

To date, more than 78,000 CCL applications have been submitted and more than 60,000 are active across Illinois.

ISP continues to encourage the public to use the on-line CCL application option when possible for the most efficient processing method.

Completed CCL applications, photo and required training certificates can be mailed to:

The Illinois State Police
Attn: CCL Application
801 South 7th Street, 400M
Springfield, IL 62704

July IDNR Newsbits

New State Parks Guide: Illinois State Parks are great parks. Check out the new edition of the Illinois State Parks guide and head to a state park. The booklet is a great resource for information on visiting a state park, fish and wildlife area, recreation area, or other IDNR site. The Illinois State Parks guide is posted on the IDNR website in PDF format at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications/documents/00000715.pdf> To order a free copy of the booklet, visit the IDNR publications webpage and look for "State Parks Magazine" at www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications

Conservation World: Make plans now to attend the 2014 Illinois State Fair and visit Conservation World on the state fairgrounds, Aug. 8-17. Conservation World features nearly 30 acres of family activities including fishing, archery, and family entertainment, plus expert information on habitat enhancement, state parks, wildlife, fish, and forestry. Conservation World is open weekend days from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. and weekdays from 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. throughout the state fair in Springfield.