

Harsens Island Manager's Update

2016 Season - Week ending 01/01/2017



Weather

Very cold temperatures and lots of snow stuck around until Christmas day, when we had a warmup into the 50's and rain over the next couple days. This thoroughly melted the snow from the area, but canals stayed mostly frozen. We had mild temperatures in the low 40's for the split.

Waterfowl Abundance

Refuge numbers remained near zero until right after Christmas, when a few thousand ducks started feeding on the dry fields in the afternoons.

Hunting Conditions

Conditions for the late split ended up being pretty good, as all the snow had melted off and some pockets of water opened up. Temperatures were warm enough that holes hunters broke open stayed open for the hunt. Saturday was very 'ducky' with high winds and heavy cloud cover for much of the day, while Sunday was calm and sunny. Zones were difficult to reach as canals were still frozen and fields became very muddy with the warmer weather.

Hunter Numbers

We had 74 hunter trips for the late split, bringing our total for the year up to 7,541.

Waterfowl Harvest

Most of the hunters who managed to get gear out to their zones had outstanding hunts on Saturday. 48 hunters took 172 ducks and 11 geese during an all-day hunt Saturday, for an average of 3.58 ducks per hunter trip. Our totals for the weekend are 218 ducks and 11 geese in 74 hunter trips, for a 2.95 duck/trip average on the late split. This weekend brought our grand totals up to 7,701 ducks and 113 geese in 7,541 hunter trips, an average of 1.02 ducks/trip for the season.

What To Expect This Week

We will begin combining corn this week.

Upcoming Events

Late goose season will open on January 21st.

Other Comments

The use of spinning wing decoys is still prohibited on the area, and has been expanded to include all 'motion wing decoys'. The shotshell limit has been increased from 18 shells to 25 shells each.