



DUCK HUNTING CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

BY JACK JAGODA



Suttgart Arkansas is about sixteen hours west of my home. This little town is reputed to be the duck hunting capital of the world and if you don't believe it just read the sign they have boasting their claim. My first trip to Arkansas was about fifteen years ago and I became instantly and overwhelmingly indoctrinated to the club of believers. Through the years I have enjoyed many spectacular shoots and the rest I would just as soon forget.

The hunting opportunities in most areas have changed through the years making it more difficult for many of us to remain waterfowl hunters. Some say the wildlife areas are holding the birds and offer them no incentive to leave. Others say the mild winters have the birds stopping short of the old wintering grounds. There are claims that the heavy fall rainfall has produced additional wetlands and feeding areas dispersing the duck population over a much broader area. No matter what, the uncertainty, cost of fuel, and precious lack of dispensable time has caused me to search for a viable alternative closer to home. Many of my friends have given up waterfowl hunting and turned to upland hunting pheasant, chukar and quail on preserves.

An old friend and a brother in the dog fraternity owns and operates Shady Grove Shooting Preserve in Remington Virginia. For many years Neil Selby has dreamed of creating quality duck hunting to complement his already successful bird shooting preserve.

Those of us in the hunting and fishing community are very private about our productive hunting and fishing areas, as well we should be. For the first time in my life I am going public with what I consider to be the finest controlled duck hunting marsh in the country. Let me first say that I have scrutinized this duck hole by the same standards I give every hunting area. As a retriever guy, my first concern is, can I get some good work for my dog. This of course is dependent on the number of ducks in



the area and my ability to take them. My dream has always been to find a duck hole within an hour or so from home with no limit on the number of ducks I can shoot. I would like the hunting season to last at least eight months out of the year. All of this must be at a price I can afford. And one other thing, I want my ducks cleaned, wrapped and put on ice.

This place actually exists! I had to pinch myself to be sure I wasn't dreaming.

When I first entered the marsh at Shady Grove it looked like any other duck hunting area. Then I noticed a huge tower at the north end.

From the top of the tower I could see two distinct flyways leading south into the marsh.





There are blinds in the marsh that are grassed, have a dog platform, and a full compliment of decoys. When you start blowing your duck call birds are launched from the tower and magically funnel into the flyway, giving hunters challenging passing and decoying bird shooting opportunities. It's the closest thing to a wild bird shoot that I have seen.

For those of you with limited time and funds, Shady Grove is the place to go. Basic hunts begin with a minimum of four hunters and 20 ducks and up to eight hunters with as many ducks as you desire. All you need is a gun, some steel shot and a reservation. Your well-mannered retriever is welcome and encouraged to participate.

Who knows, Remington Virginia may well be the next "Duck Hunting Capital of the World". For Reservations or Information call 540 439-2683

Deep Run Farm, is a retriever Training, Breeding and Boarding facility in Goldvein, VA. Jack and his partner Phyllis Giroux, DVM are living their lifetime dream. Visit them on the web at DeepRunRetrievers.com and feel free to email Jack at jmjagoda@aol.com with questions.

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General information about NAVHDA and forms can be found at www.navhda.org
or Call: Jim Channon: 804-3330309
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www.rappahannock-navhda.com

To participate in training for trials or to join the NAVHDA Chapter contact the chapter representatives above.

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