

Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge Spring 2011 Waterfowl Migration

Thursday, March 10, 2011 - Currently, there are no known huntable snow goose flocks in the state. Much of eastern South Dakota is still covered in snow. There are still over 25 inches of snow on the ground in the Sand Lake area, with less in the southern part of the state. Temperatures at Sand Lake were below zero last night, but with warmer weather predicted for the next week, some snow geese may begin to move into the southern part of the state.

Thursday, March 17, 2011 - Snow geese continue to push north of Hwy 14 in the James River Valley during the daylight hours then retreat south, at night, to find open water. Not big numbers, but consistent. Snow geese are feeding in the Faulkton area and have been observed in the area between Brookings and De Smet. The Madison area also has very good numbers.

Sand Lake has about 12 inches of snow on the ground. Through the next 4 days, the forecast for Sand Lake and the Aberdeen area shows highs in the 40's and Lows in the 20's.

Tuesday, March 22, 2011 - The first snow geese reached Sand Lake over the weekend, but numbers in the area remain low. Most of the birds remain south and west of Aberdeen. We have received reports of good numbers of snow geese between Redfield and Huron, and in the Orient area. Large numbers of snow geese were also reported passing through the Mobridge area yesterday.

Most of the snow cover remaining in South Dakota is in the northeast corner of the state. There are still 4 to 12 inches of snow on the ground in the Sand Lake area. High temperatures are predicted to be in the 30's today and only in the 20's through this weekend. Several inches of snow are predicted for the Aberdeen area tonight and tomorrow.

Thursday, March 24, 2011 - The winter storm that moved through northeastern South Dakota on Tuesday and Wednesday will likely stall the snow goose migration for a few days. As of today, no snow geese are visible in the Sand Lake area. Reports continue to indicate that many of the birds remain south of Aberdeen, in the Redfield, Clark, Orient, Huron, and Madison areas. Be aware that many of these same locations are dealing with wet and flooded roads.

Sand Lake received nearly 6 inches of snow from the storm. Most of the snow cover in the state remains in the northeast corner. High temperatures are predicted to be only in the 20's through the weekend.

Monday, March 28, 2011 - Some small flocks of snow geese were seen flying in the Sand Lake area over the weekend, but it appears the northern edge of the snow goose migration is located in northern Spink County. Over the weekend, large flocks of snow geese were seen in this area. Be aware that many of these same areas are dealing with wet and flooded roads.

The Sand Lake area is still covered in snow, and temperatures are only supposed to be in the low 30's through Wednesday.

Thursday, March 31, 2011 - The snow geese are on the move again. A few small flocks of snow geese arrived in the Sand Lake area Tuesday evening and Wednesday, with any more flying into the area this morning. Good numbers of snow geese were seen in the Groton area Wednesday evening. There are also reports of many snow geese moving into Edmunds County, west of Aberdeen. Some flocks have been reported moving into southern North Dakota yesterday evening. As of yesterday, there were still fair numbers of snow geese between Madison and State Highway 14, and in the Lake Thompson area. Be prepared for wet and flooded road conditions in the northeastern part of the state.

The Sand Lake area still has some snow on the ground, but temperatures predicted in the 40's Friday and Saturday may take care of much of that. More snow and cooler temperatures are expected for Sunday and Monday.

Monday, April 4, 2011 - There was a big movement of snow geese through the northern counties of South Dakota last Friday and Saturday. Large flocks were feeding in fields in the Sand Lake and Aberdeen area over the weekend, but thousands of snow geese moved right on through. Snow geese have been seen as far north as Bismarck and Jamestown, North Dakota. This morning, several smaller flocks were still seen in the Aberdeen area, but the biggest flocks appear to have moved on north.

Thursday, April 7, 2011 - It looks like the main push of the spring snow goose migration is over in South Dakota. There are still smaller flocks of snow geese moving through and they probably will be for several weeks, but the big flocks are in North Dakota. This will be the last report of the spring. The Sand Lake Refuge Migration Report will be updated around October first.