

# INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



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### SPARE THE DUCKS THIS YEAR REDINGTON APPEALS TO SPORTSMEN

When the one month's duck season opened at 12 o'clock noon yesterday (October 1) in most of the Northern States many thousands of duck hunters were in their blinds. These and those others who shoot later have a fateful decision to make, said Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Biological Survey, which is the agency of the Department of Agriculture charged with the protection of migratory game birds. Will they, he asks, spare some of the ducks because of the unimpeachable evidence that many species are scarcer than ever before, due to the cumulative drought, drainage, and overshooting? Or will they cast aside all consideration for the plight of the birds and kill the limit whenever it is possible on every day of the month allowed for shooting? He predicted that if the real sportsmen are in the ascendency, many birds will fly back next spring to their nesting grounds in the north, but that if the contrary should be the case, the spring flights will be only a reminder of the mighty hordes the old-time hunters used to watch.

"The issue is drawn," says the Chief of the Biological Survey, "and in large measure the future of the waterfowl hangs in the balance. That balance may be swayed for good or ill as considerate treatment is accorded the birds or as heavy slaughter is the rule.

"By comparison with former seasons the ducks on their southern trek will find great tracts of waterless land. They will have to fly longer and farther and will concentrate on those areas-- for these are comparatively few-- that will furnish

needed rest and food. They will be found in very considerable numbers on the water areas owned by gun clubs, where they will be fed artificially if natural food is lacking. In many instances such concentrations will lead to the conclusion-- erroneous, of course-- that ducks are everywhere as abundant as ever.

"For the true sportsmen," Mr. Redington said, "the kill is only part of the joy of hunting. There is the thrill that comes of just being in the out-of-doors, the tang of the frosty morning, the glamor of 'blue bird' weather, the whirring of wings overhead.

"For the game hog we should have no consideration. Unfortunately for the birds and for those who are trying to protect them, there are altogether too many game hogs. They have the killing lust, and think little of the consequences. In any event too many birds will be taken illegally. The poacher is cunning in his onslaught against the waterfowl and it is hard to catch him. Local public sentiment, however, constitutes a powerful agency for deterring wholesale and unjustified killing."

State game commissions, appreciating the crisis throughout the country, have made Federal game protectors generous tenders of assistance in law enforcement, said Mr. Redington, and he hopes that by joint endeavor wilful violators will receive their deserts.

"If there is a heavy kill of ducks this year and if there is no amelioration of drought conditions next year, the birds may be placed in such a precarious situation," he warned, "as to endanger the future of the sport of wildfowl hunting. The verdict lies with the hunters themselves. May that verdict be one favorable to the birds in these days of their great trouble."

All must recognize, concluded Mr. Redington, the seriousness of the present crisis affecting waterfowl. "The future not only of the birds and of the sport of hunting them, but also of such occupations as guiding and caring for hunters and the manufacture of hunting equipment, depends upon the unselfishness of every man who this year shoots a duck gun."

Under the emergency regulations recently adopted by Secretary Hyde of the Department of Agriculture, the duck-hunting season this year opened in most of the Northern States on October 1; in middle regions it will open on October 16 and 20 and November 1; and in Pacific Coast and Southern States on November 16, except that in Florida it will not open until November 20. In all parts of the country the season is limited to one month.