



Region 2 (Continued)

Waterfowl Enforcement Training

By Sgt. Lane Kincaid

The month of September starts a new migratory game bird season each year in Louisiana. This new season is awaited by many. The hunters in Louisiana pursue many types of migratory game birds, which stop to feed and rest in the state during their long migration. The month of September brings with it the opening days of mourning dove season as well as teal season. Then in November comes the

opening days for ducks, coots, and geese. These are the migratory game birds that are mainly pursued by bird hunters in Louisiana. Other migratory game birds, which visit the state, are snipe, woodcock, rails, and gallinules. The state not only hosts an abundance of migratory game birds but it also hosts many other types of migratory non-game birds such as cranes, herons, ibis, killdeer, and grebes. These migratory non-game birds have no



Wing board used during wing identification class.

open season.

Enforcement of the laws, which pertain to

migratory game birds as well as migratory non-

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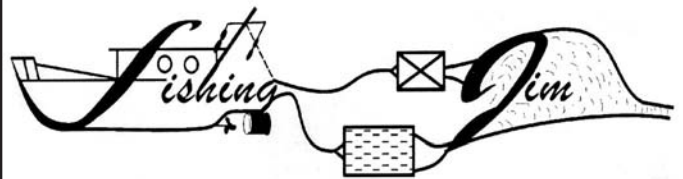
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game birds, is one of the many job duties of a Louisiana Wildlife Agent. It has been said that a person will shy away from things that they are uncomfortable with. Bird identification and migratory bird laws can make many newcomers very uncomfortable. The LDWF Enforcement Academy includes a 40 hour Waterfowl Enforcement Training Course which builds a strong learning base for migratory bird laws and bird identification before the wildlife cadet ever gets in the field. This course gives them the information that they need to feel

comfortable with migratory bird law enforcement.

The methods of instruction used during the course are lectures, instructional videos,

power point presentations, hands-on wing and duck identification, in-field identification, and in-field enforcement scenarios. The main goal is that the wildlife agent will be able to identify thirty different species of waterfowl, in hand and

in flight that frequent the Mississippi Flyway by wing characteristics, color, and size. The agent will learn enforcement techniques and regulations (50 CFR Part 20) used in waterfowl enforcement and will be proficient in the types of equipment used to successfully enforce all migratory bird regulations.

The course is broken down into several blocks of instruction. Violator Facts and Figures consists of what makes up a duck hunter, duck hunter philosophies, waterfowl hunter behavior, and waterfowl arrests by time of day. Puddle and Diving Duck Identification, is taught by hands-on wing



Cadets learning wing and duck identifications.

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Cadets interviewing hunters during in-field scenarios.

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and body identification, in-flight identification, power point presentations, and videos. Enforcement Techniques, include pre-season scouting, use of aircraft in waterfowl enforcement, weather considerations, establishing enforcement priorities, and migratory game bird baiting. Types of Illegal Equipment, such as lead shot, unplugged guns, and live decoys. Federal Law, which pertain to migratory game birds and non-game birds. These laws can be found in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act - Title 16 USC 703 and 50 CFR Parts 20 and 21. This block of instruction also includes Lacey

Act violations and court procedures. In-Field Scenarios is where cadets participate in staged hunting scenarios and apply what they have learned during the course. In this block of instruction cadets are critiqued and graded on how they handle each scenario. Finally, the cadets are given a test which consists of written questions and waterfowl identification.

There is a very apt statement, dead ducks lay no eggs. It makes no difference whether the duck died from disease, drought, predation, or was shot, it is still a dead duck, which can't contribute to future generations. The illegal kill of



Cadets performing license checks during in-field scenarios.

ducks is significant, and through the efforts of professional wildlife agents this illegal kill can be reduced. In doing so, these efforts will effect duck populations in a positive way. You, the sportsman, can also

play a very important role. Please report game violations to Operation Game Thief 1-800-442-2511.





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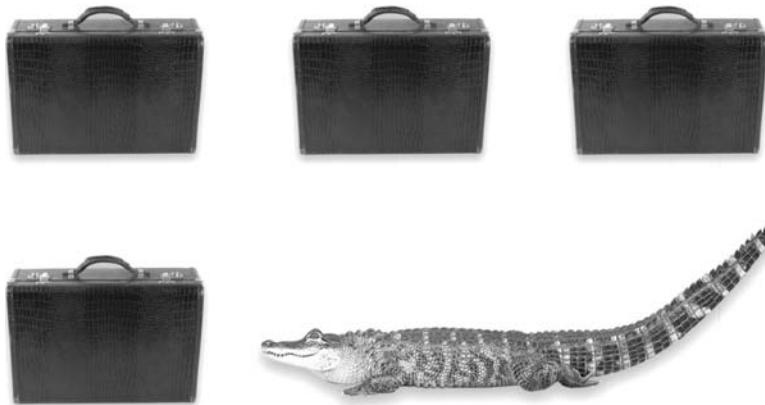
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