

THE WILDFOWLER

JUNE 2018

A PUBLICATION OF THE ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM AND THE BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

If you haven't been by the museum, you are missing the "Blooming Show"





Upcoming Guild Events:

06/08/2018 & 06/09/2018
5:00pm until 8:00pm each night
Beer and Bourbon At The Brickhouse
Friday Night "The Shadow Brothers"
Saturday Night "Blackwater Jam"

06/06, 13, 20, 27/2017: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum
Meets every Tuesday

06/18/2018: Board Meeting
6:00 pm

09/03/2018: Labor Day

09/04/2018 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild
Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm
Speaker: Jack Cox, Painting Demo

09/18/2018: Board Meeting
6:00 pm



DECOYS WANTED

WE BUY WOODEN OR CANVAS DUCKS, GEESE, SWANS & SHOREBIRDS...
 WHAT IS YOUR DECOY WORTH? IT COULD BE WORTH THOUSANDS!

WE WILL PAY YOU **CASH** FOR ANY OLD DECOYS AND HUNTING ITEMS



FREE DECOY IDENTIFICATION
AND EVALUATIONS
of Single Decoys or Entire Collections
BY MARK CROMWELL
(757) 721-2746
Member North Carolina Decoy Collectors Assoc.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Back Bay, Virginia was once known as "Hunters Paradise." Both men and women came to the area because of the great flocks of waterfowl that migrated here to feed on the lush and abundant aquatic vegetation. By early 1900 the area experienced an economic boom. Jobs were created; boat builders, decoy carvers, cooks, guides, maids, butlers, carpenters and superintendents were needed to manage large hunting lodges. General stores were constructed at Pungo, Pleasant Ridge, Creeds and Munden Point as demand for supplies for the sportsmen and residents grew.

Wealthy businessmen from Norfolk, Suffolk, Maryland, New York and Philadelphia, arriving by train would be picked up and delivered to various locations in the Back Bay area. Occasionally they would again be picked up by wagon or carriage and eventually arrive at the hunt club.

These were exciting times, the sportsmen were relaxing away from the hectic day to day routine, dining on imported wine, fresh wild game and the locals were enjoying a more rewarding financial existence.

However, good things have a way of declining; Back Bay as everyone knew it was beginning to slowly die. The aquatic grasses were disappearing. Without the grass, shoreline erosion increased, bay water became silty and sunlight could not reach the bottom. Without the grass the waterfowl declined.

Many studies on the Back Bay water quality have revealed pollutants, sewage (animal and human), elevated PH, etc. but no one could actually point to a source or a remedy.

Mother Nature has played a very interesting part in the decline. Originally there were two inlets connecting the Atlantic Ocean and Back Bay, these inlets provided a daily flushing of tides to bring needed nutrients and salinity to the bay.

Man has played an equal role in the decline by changing the natural geography, sand fences were installed by the Conservation Core along Sandbridge and False Cape area cutting off the yearly over wash from the Atlantic Ocean. Construction of the Locks at Great Bridge in Chesapeake, construction of the Causeway (Marsh Road) in N.C., construction of Corey's Canal in N.C. and the list continues as man thinks he knows more than Mother Nature.



Today we are still hoping for the Golden Age of water fowling to return, we should all be concerned with the problems of water quality of Back Bay and we should contact our local, state and federal representatives. As everyone knows the Chesapeake Bay receives millions toward its recovery and it has shown great improvements, however our lowly Back Bay receives nothing.

The City of Virginia Beach does not provide any testing for water quality, the DEQ has two testing stations in Ashville Creek and they only test PH and suspended solids.

Ashville Park a new subdivision near Pungo flooded last year during the hurricane, those residents complained loudly to city hall (rightfully so) and the city will spend over \$11,000,000 (million) to rectify the problem.

Currently a large pump has been installed to pump water from the subdivision into Ashville Creek a tributary of Back Bay, there are no plans to test these flood waters to determine if any pollutants (fertilizers, chemicals and run off from roads, etc.) will be entering the bay.

The flood waters will enter Ashville Creek at Sandbridge Rd (Lotus Pond) just east of Newbridge Rd. How these flood waters will affect the Native American Lotus and the water quality of Back Bay, only time will tell, and then it may be too late.

The pump has a capacity to pump 8,496,000 gallons per 24 hour period and the pump will run as long as the storm continues.

The developer of Ashville Park located in California will be coming to the City to develop an additional 100 homes in Ashville Park subdivision, we must turn out in force and let City Council know they must vote NO to this proposal. If we truly love Back Bay, this proposal needs to stop. We need to petition the city to install testing locations through the Back Bay watershed to determine what pollutants exist and where are they entering the bay.

City council will be voting on this proposal June 19, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. Building # 1 council chambers, second floor. If you want to show support for Back Bay, please come out and let City Council know this project needs to stop.

AL Henley

President




NAME THE KESTREL

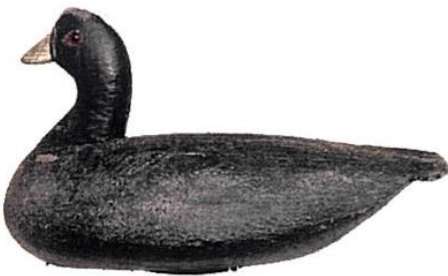
We have partnered with Alton's Keep Wildfowl Rescue to help raise money to feed wildfowl while they are being rehabilitated in their center located in Suffolk. The contest closes on June 1, 2018.

Go to our website awhm.org/name-the-kestrel and for a \$5.00 donation you can submit a name for the rescued Kestrel at Alton's Keep Wildfowl Rescue and Rehabilitation! All submitted names will be considered by our committee and a name will be chosen on June 1, 2018. All donations will be used to feed and care for rescued wildfowl and operation of the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage museum.





**Free Decoy
Identification and Evaluation**
 By Jeff Tinkham
 President of The Atlantic
 Wildfowl Heritage Museum
 Call (757) 721-7131 or
jeff@tinkhamlaw.com



COLLECTOR'S SHELF

The common wisdom is that this large canvasback was made by Bailey Barco (with help from Robert E. Henley) in the 1930s while he was a guide/marsh guard at the Princess Anne Club (near current day Sandbridge). The profile of this decoy's body is similar to the swan bodies made by John Williams. Thus, some collectors attribute these large decoys to John Williams (who lived on Cedar Island and at Munden Point). The decoy is in a bone dry condition, yet weighs 9 pounds. Due to their weight and tendency to roll over in rough water, they were not favored by the club. Barco's canvasbacks are highly collectible and represent some of the most significant decoys from the northern part of Back Bay.



For more than 2 years, I have been writing the monthly Collector's Shelf article. This will be my last one, and I hope that they have been informative. If anyone would like to see my decoy collection, I would welcome the opportunity to share and discuss them with anyone who has an interest. I also enjoy doing free decoy identifications and valuations for anyone who might have old decoys. For those of you who would like to start a collection or expand the number of decoys that you own, please contact me. Our wooden and canvas decoys comprise not only a part of our local history, but also should be appreciated as folk art sculptures.

For a free evaluation or identification of your decoys, contact
 Jeff Tinkham at 757-724-7131 or jeff@tinkhamlaw.com.



Understanding Waterfowl: Nesting Chronology

A number of factors influence when waterfowl settle down to nest in spring



Reprinted from Ducks
Unlimited Magazine

By Tanner Gue, Kaylan Carrlson, and Stuart Slattery, Ph.D.

We have all heard the expression "timing is everything." As humans, we use a variety of information to help us plan for the future. This is true whether you're a farmer watching next week's weather forecast in anticipation of planting a crop or a stockbroker monitoring market data to make buying and trading decisions. Or maybe you'll use a moon phase calendar to help schedule some vacation time for deer camp or a long-awaited fishing trip. Good timing can maximize reward while reducing risk, effort, or both. This also couldn't be more true for North America's waterfowl.

Unlike tropical nesting birds, which have long nesting seasons, most of this continent's waterfowl migrate north to nest in temperate or tundra latitudes, where the window of opportunity to reproduce is relatively short. Given the importance of the [nesting period](#) in their annual life cycle, waterfowl need to have good timing. In general, ducks and geese nest when food resources and habitat conditions are optimal for egg formation and brood rearing.

Like people, waterfowl rely on certain cues to prepare them for important activities. For example, as day length increases in late winter, waterfowl sense that it's time to start "packing" for their long journey north to the [breeding grounds](#). They prepare for the trip by consuming large quantities of high-energy foods such as moist-soil plant seeds, invertebrates, and agricultural waste grains. The objective is to put on fat, which waterfowl use for energy during their long journey north and during the breeding season. Once the birds have acquired enough fat, and day length reaches a certain duration, they catch the next favorable wind toward their breeding grounds. Along the way, they visit staging areas that have an abundance of food, where they stop to feed and rest. Waterfowl rely on these stopover areas to refuel and acquire additional energy and protein reserves that will be used for nesting once they reach the breeding grounds.

Not all [waterfowl species](#) begin the [migration](#) north at the same time. Most geese and some ducks, such as mallards and northern pintails, seemingly race north in early spring, right on the heels of the retreating snow line. The Canada goose is one of the earliest-nesting waterfowl species in the [Prairie Pothole Region](#). In fact, it is not uncommon to see breeding pairs of Canada geese standing on frozen wetlands, claiming their territory and waiting for the thaw. In North Dakota, for example, Canada geese may initiate nests as early as April 1. These early-nesting species tend to be larger bodied and rely heavily on stored nutrients to help them through lean times.



There are several biological advantages for waterfowl that return early to the breeding grounds. First, by arriving shortly after the spring thaw, dabbling ducks can feed in expanses of sheet water formed by melting snow. While deeper potholes and marshes are still frozen, these temporary and seasonal wetlands warm quickly, supporting multitudes of tiny invertebrates that provide breeding hens with the nutrients required to successfully nest and produce eggs. Nesting early also gives female waterfowl the opportunity to renest if their first attempts fail and to raise their broods before temporary and seasonal wetlands go dry in summer. Of course, a significant disadvantage of this strategy is that early-nesting waterfowl are more likely to encounter cold temperatures and spring storms, which can result in nest losses. In addition, early nesters must rely on residual vegetation from the previous growing season for nesting cover, which can leave hens vulnerable to predators, especially on intensively cultivated landscapes like the prairies.

Mallards and pintails, which begin nesting in late April and early May, are followed by canvasbacks and northern shovelers, whose peak nest initiation dates range from mid- to late May. Next are blue-winged teal, the majority of which begin nesting in late May. Gadwalls and lesser scaup are among the last to get started, as many females of these species don't begin nesting until early to mid-June.

Late-nesting waterfowl species tend to have smaller body size than early-nesting species and rely more on nutrients acquired on the breeding grounds than on those stored during spring migration. These birds also have less time for renesting and brood rearing than do early-nesting species. On the other hand, late-nesting species are less likely to suffer nest loss due to inclement weather. Moreover, as spring progresses, upland nesting cover is typically lusher and there is a greater abundance of alternative food sources for predators such as skunks and raccoons. Several studies of upland-nesting ducks on the prairies have found that these factors are positively related to nest survival.

When waterfowl begin to nest can also vary considerably among members of the same species. For example, female wood ducks in southern portions of the [Mississippi Alluvial Valley](#) begin laying eggs in late February to early March, while those that migrate north to Minnesota may not initiate nests until early May. These differences are largely due to the availability of food resources needed for egg formation, which are simply available earlier in the South than in the Upper Midwest.

Age is another factor that can determine when waterfowl nest. Older females often arrive on the breeding grounds in better physical condition and nest earlier in the spring than first-year birds. Of course, weather and habitat conditions on the breeding grounds can also have a significant impact on waterfowl nesting efforts. Late spring thaws and dry conditions can make wetland invertebrates inaccessible or hard to find for breeding ducks. Without an abundance of these high-protein foods, the birds may delay or forgo nesting altogether.

Clearly, a variety of factors influence waterfowl nesting chronology, including species-specific traits like body size, diet, and other ecological requirements. Environmental conditions, however, such as the timing of the spring thaw and the availability of habitat on the landscape, can also have a profound impact on waterfowl nesting activities and the success of those efforts.

Tanner Gue is a biologist and Kaylan Carrlson is director of conservation planning in DU's Great Plains Region. Dr. Stuart Slattery is manager of Boreal conservation science and planning with DU Canada.



MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I hope and pray that each of you have had a wonderful Memorial Day weekend. It is so important that we take the time to stop and remember all of the men and women who have given their lives that we might enjoy the freedom we have in this country. The Museum has started its summer schedule and will now be open seven days a week, 10:00am – 5:00pm Monday through Saturday with shortened hours on Sunday 12:00noon – 5:00pm. With the summer hours we also welcome back two part time employees, Joe Leo and Dorian Stewart. Please come visit with us and meet these two exceptional people.

As you can see from the pictures in this newsletter, the garden is just starting to bloom into its full glory. A lot of hard work has been put in by the members of the deWitt Cottage Garden Club. The gardens have been cleaned up, expanded, and had new plants added. If you have any desire to garden, please consider joining the deWitt Cottage Garden Club. It is an opportunity to learn how to garden in a hostile, saltwater environment from Master Gardeners.

We have some exciting new things happening here at the museum. On June 8th & 9th we will host a social event on the grounds of the museum called **Beer & Bourbon at the Brickhouse**. There will be live music both nights with beer provided by Back Bay Brewing, bourbon provided by Tarnished Truth Distillery, and barbeque provided by Donkey Dawgs. We anticipate this will be a great fundraiser for the museum. On September 29th we will again present our second annual **Heritage Festival**, hosted by Back Bay Brewing. Again there will be live music and food. The Heritage Festival provided a much needed fundraiser for our museum last year. In October we will have our annual Fall Barbeque here on the museum grounds; an actual date will be announced in July.

As we come to the end of our fiscal year, June 30, 2018, we anticipate that we will end the period with a little surplus this year. That hasn't happened in a while and it is a direct result of the hard work your Board of Directors has invested. It is my pleasure to serve this organization and the fine individuals on our Board of Directors. I am proud to represent this group throughout the city of Virginia Beach. I enjoy all of the relationships I have developed and renewed since being selected as the Director of the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum. I could not have been successful without the help of each and every one of you. I am especially thankful for all of the volunteers who give so generously of their time and skill. Thank you all!

If you have not paid your membership dues for 2018, you will be receiving an invoice during the month of June. All memberships run from January 1st through December 31st of each calendar year.

This past month our Treasurer, Roger Shope, and his wife Barb took a trip down the Mississippi on a paddlewheel boat just like Mark Twain. Roger's keen sense of observation never fails to amaze me. "Lynn I finally got to see my first canvasback."



Annual Fall Raffle Winners May 1, 2018



**1st Prize Beretta Lioness 390L Limited Edition
12 gauge Shotgun (2002)
\$3000.00 Value
Cotton Markert of Virginia Beach, VA**



**2nd Prize (\$2000.00 Value)
Hand Carved Goldeneye Drake Decoy
By World Class Carver Harvey Ackiss
Chris Gifford of Virginia Beach, VA**



**3rd Prize (\$1000.00 Value)
Remington 11-87 Sportsman Camo 12 gauge
Shotgun Ron Davis of Virginia Beach, VA**



**4th Prize (\$1500.00 Value)
Hand Carved Shoveler Drake Decoy
By World Class Carver Al Brandtner
John Picklesimer of Virginia Beach, VA**



**5th Prize (\$1500.00 Value)
Hand Carved Hooded Merganser Drake Decoy
By World Class Carver Al Brandtner
Pam Crosson of Chesapeake, VA**



**6th Prize (\$1500.00 Value)
Hand Carved Wood Duck Drake Decoy
By World Class Carver Al Brandtner
Chris Gifford of Virginia Beach, VA**



**7th Prize (\$1500.00 Value)
Hand Carved Pair of Canvasback Decoys
By World Class Carver Al Brandtner
Doug White of Virginia Beach, VA**



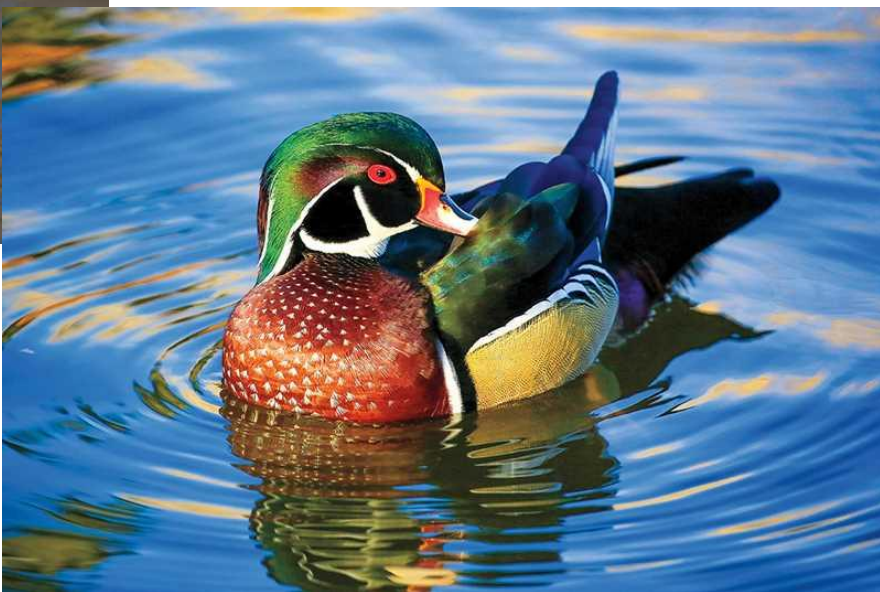


1st Place Over All by Michael Kleinwolterink Yale, Iowa



Over All Runner up

Scott Denny Green Bay, Wisconsin



Best Waterfowl

Brent Gale Parker, Colorado



B³ Bourbon and Beer at the Brickhouse



9/2/200

FRIDAY, JUNE 8 & SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 2018
FROM 5-8 PM

Let's go Bryant

Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum at the deWitt Cottage
1113 Atlantic Avenue. Virginia Beach, VA 23451

BEER AND BOURBON TASTINGS FROM LOCAL
BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES
LIVE MUSIC AND DELICIOUS FOOD

TICKETS AND SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE!!!



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Al Henley, President Wayne Jarman, Vice President
Jim Mehne, Secretary Roger Shope, Treasurer
Mark Cromwell Jeff Tinkham
Parke Atkinson Jason Seward
Tom Richards William Walsh, Jr., Curator
Fletcher Bryant, President Emeritus

MUSEUM CARVERS

Monday: Elaine Polizos
Tuesday: Pete DiPietro
Wednesday: Roy Carlson & Ed Morrison
Thursday: Hank Grigolite
"The Boathouse Boys" Carving Club: Al, Jamie, John, Pete & Charlie
Friday: Susan Moritz
Saturday: Gentry Childress & Ben Purvis

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Tuesday: OPEN
Wednesday: Archie Johnson 10a-2p
Thursday: OPEN
Friday: OPEN
Saturday: OPEN
Sunday: OPEN
Museum Grounds: Nancy Lekberg, Lori Bagley, Lois Stickles, Jacky Richards, and Lena Lindsay

MUSEUM STAFF

Lynn Hightower, Director Ann Smith, Gift Shop Manager
Joe Leo Dorian Stewart

MUSEUM CONTACT INFORMATION

ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM
1113 Atlantic Avenue
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Telephone: 757.437.8432
Facsimile: 757.437.9950
Website: www.awhm.org
Email: director@atwildfowl.org

You can now pay your dues online at awhm.org !

Please understand that we depend on every dollar to operate the museum. If you have not paid your 2018 dues, please give serious consideration to sending them into the museum right away. Beginning March 1, 2018, any listed member who has not paid their dues will receive an invoice from the museum director requesting payment of their annual dues

2018 DUES

\$35/YR INDIVIDUAL
\$100/YR BRONZE
\$500/YR GOLD

\$50/YR FAMILY
\$200/YR SILVER
\$1,000/YR PRESIDENTS CIRCLE



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD 2018 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

NAME: _____ AMOUNT PAID _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ [CELL] _____

January 1, 2018 kicked off our Annual Membership Campaign. Each member is encouraged to find one new member to join the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild. Our very existence depends on growing the membership of the Guild. Please encourage everyone you know to become a member!

Please pass this newsletter on to any potential new member!

