



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY



Human Dimensions Research Program Fact Sheet

FACT SHEET

Illinois Waterfowl Hunter Survey: 2006-2007 Season

Objectives of the study: To survey waterfowl (duck, goose, and coot) hunters annually to determine their activities, harvests, characteristics, and opinions in Illinois.

Methods: 4,579 potential waterfowl hunters who registered with the National Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) were sent mail-back questionnaires in February-April 2007. We received 2,471 useable responses for a 54% return rate.

Highlights of results: Key findings of this survey were as follows:

- There were 2,304 respondents who reported purchasing a 2006-2007 Illinois Migratory Waterfowl Stamp, of which 2,021 (88%) hunted waterfowl in Illinois in 2006-2007.
- An estimated 58,302 waterfowl hunters spent an estimated 1,194,801 days hunting during the 2006-2007 season, and they harvested an estimated 700,571 waterfowl.
- There were 12,378 September teal hunters; they spent 43,223 days hunting, and they harvested 28,016 teal. The Central Zone accounted for 56% of the teal harvest.
- During Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days, 5,447 adults took 8,024 youths hunting. The youths spent 11,903 days hunting, and they harvested 10,728 waterfowl.
- An estimated 50,437 hunters were active during the regular duck season. They spent 658,881 days hunting, and they harvested 507,464 ducks.
- During the September Canada goose season, 12,609 hunters spent 42,444 days hunting, and they harvested 14,578 Canada geese.
- During the regular goose season, 41,521 hunters spent 438,350 days hunting, and they harvested 122,294 Canada geese and 14,426 other geese. The North Zone accounted for 37% of the Canada goose harvest, the Central Zone 52%, and the South Zone 11%.
- Majorities ($\geq 95\%$) of hunters ranked the following factors as being most important to their waterfowl hunting experience: hunting during peak waterfowl migration, hunting with friends/relatives, seeing many ducks/geese, and hunting uncrowded areas.
- Majorities of duck hunters in the North Zone (64%) and in the Central Zone (64%) were satisfied with the regular season dates. Hunters in the South Zone were less satisfied.
- A majority (55%-76%) of the hunters supported reducing the bag limit for hen mallards to 1 bird per day provided other states did likewise. However, if research shows reducing the hen mallard bag limit would have no effect on mallard populations, one-half (51%) of the hunters prefer the 2-bird daily limit and one-third (34%) prefer the 1-bird limit.
- Regardless of how many or how few other states banned spinning wing decoys, a majority (61%-72%) of Illinois hunters did not support such a ban in Illinois.

For more information:

For full text of this and other Human Dimensions reports and surveys, please go to
www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cwpe/hd/