

Arkansas Duck Hunting With A Side Of Ice (Part 1 of 2)

**Wanderings
from the
Woods
& Water**

**by Jay
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Arkansas Duck Hunting with a Side of Ice! (Part 1 of 2)

It's the morning of December 5th, one day before we leave for Arkansas, the duck hunting capital of the world. The crew and I couldn't wait to start shooting ducks, but that afternoon, the guide calls to make sure we are still coming; he said they are getting ready to get slammed with a major ice storm. He gave us the option to reschedule or cancel. Rescheduling or canceling was not an option to four guys who had been planning on this trip for a year!

I guess crazy was the word of the day for December 6th. We headed out around 5:00 a.m., Arkansas or bust. The drive wasn't that bad, just lots of rain.

Then we hit Memphis, the land of bridges. That's when we started hitting ice. Yes, bridges freeze before roadways!

The closer we got to our destination, the thicker the ice was on the road. The driving was rough. A few times I think my passengers might have been a little nervous. I was only nervous for about 95% of the drive. I don't think I ever got over 45 mph after we hit the ice. The truckers sure are nice in Arkansas, because one passed us doing 80 on the ice. He immediately threw up his hand to let us know we were number 1 with him.

We were a few miles out when we saw a field that had to have at least 100,000 snow geese in it. I am here to tell you, it is 10 times more

difficult driving on ice while watching thousands of ducks and geese. All these ducks and geese had us wound up and ready to get after them.

We arrived at the guide's house where we sat on the front porch and watched thousands and thousands of waterfowl flying around. The temperature was dropping drastically. The guide said with the temperature dropping down in the single digits, we would not start hunting the next day until noon. Those were tough words for guys that were about to bust from excitement.

We made it out on December 7th around noon. We hunted a pit blind in a flooded rice field. The temperature at noon was around 16 degrees. The flooded rice had a lot of ice. The guides were impressive on a 4-wheeler breaking ice. You just had to be there watching the abuse they put the ATV's through busting ice.

The guides got the water open and the ducks were starting to fly. The years of dreaming about going to Arkansas to duck hunt, the year of planning our trip, and the nervous excitement leading up to the hunt; I was finally in the blind with three of my closest friends in the world, Matthew Plowman, Kelby Browning, and Mike Tipton. Matthew and Kelby are like sons to me, and Mike is like a brother. I was finally in Arkansas, the duck capital of the world!!

Read next week for Part 2 of Arkansas Duck Hunting with a Side of Ice!

Until next week, get out and enjoy God's creation!



Seth Lainhart with a giant!



Left to right: Mike Tipton, Jay Bicknell, Matthew plowman, and Kelby Browning after a frigid morning in Arkansas.



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Stickeler's Puzzle

STICKELERS [sic].
by Terry Stickels

Match former country names on the right with current names on the left.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Mali | a. Bohemia |
| 2. Czech Republic | b. New Granada |
| 3. Cambodia | c. Zaire |
| 4. Colombia | d. Democratic Kampuchea |
| 5. The Democratic Republic of the Congo | e. French Sudan |

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Gifts of the Spirit

Gifts aren't always material. I received the love of nature from my father, who also loved it. He was an artist and taught me how to appreciate nature through an artist's eye. It has been the best gift I have ever received, and I am grateful to have it.

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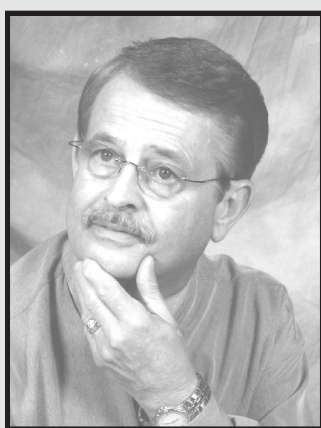
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