

The Waterfowl Issue

# SHOOTING SPORTSMAN

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## Alaska

Among all of the waterfowl in North America, the king eider has become the Holy Grail of hardcore duck hunters and waterfowl collectors. And if that is your goal, know that the hunt will be expensive, arduous and not for the faint of heart. More than 20 years ago a king eider became my quest, and I traveled to Kodiak Island in the dead of winter to shoot one. It took five days and I saw only two mature drakes, but I managed to accomplish my goal.

Since then a location has emerged where bagging a king eider is virtually guaranteed. But it is nearly 800 miles from Anchorage, smack dab in the middle of the same

waters made famous by the TV program "Deadliest Catch." That's right: Alaska's Pribilof Islands, in the Bering Sea.

The hunting takes place in December and January, when the weather is cold and windy and the seas rough. The up side is that the plumage of king eiders is prime. Kings are drawn to lines of custom-made decoys behind boats when weather permits or from shore when conditions are rough. Other species available are harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks and white-winged scoters. Hunters stay in a comfortable lodge on St. Paul Island. The hunts are booked by Ramsey Russell's Get Ducks (866-438-3897; [getducks.com](http://getducks.com)).