



Ramsey Russell's
GetDucks.com

Offering the World's Best
Duck Hunting Experiences





Company Profile

Enjoy the best duck hunting experiences on earth. Real duck hunts for real duck hunters. Relax. Simply oil up your guns, pack your bags, step into your favorite pair of boots - leave the planning, stress, and details to Ramsey Russell's GetDucks.com. GetDucks.com is a professional sporting agency specializing in worldwide wingshooting and hunting adventures. GetDucks.com provides serious bird hunting experiences on 6 continents. GetDucks.com places emphasis on trophy waterfowl species, unique locations with proven wildlife abundance. Crafting the perfect hunting experience to fit your schedule is what we do.

Each destination is individually visited and meticulously researched to ensure you are hunting the best locations at the most ideal times. GetDucks.com works with many professional guides, hunters, and quality service providers in the prime destinations of Argentina, Mexico and much more. This range of locations allows GetDucks.com to deliver for your enjoyment the widest possible diversity of trophy birds species for fulfilling game bird of the world collections. GetDucks.com offers the perfect variety of mixed-bag wingshooting opportunities available, plus a range of amenities and conveniences that will not only satisfy but will exceed your expectations. GetDucks.com utilizes a network of field experts to include USDA-approved taxidermists and full-time travel agents.

GetDucks.com maintains professional diligence, personal integrity and superior industry expertise that are the hallmarks of its success. On these principles lay the foundation for hunting experiences that will produce deep satisfaction and enriched travel experiences. GetDucks.com leads the flock in providing personalized planning, delivering superior service, maintaining customer satisfaction, and providing attention to detail.



"Words do not give justice to the quality of people you deal with at GetDucks.com. Best I have ever booked through, and I have used a few in my 64 years on this planet. Most others are much more involved in selling than in delivery of the package. Anita and Ramsey deliver the goods as if you were family."

G. Shaw, Sr.

About Us

Ramsey and Anita Russell, Owners

Ramsey Russell's creed is "Life's short get ducks." A certified wildlife biologist by training, he's also a lifelong wingshooter. After nearly 2 decades of delivering outstanding services to the global hunting community through GetDucks.com, Ramsey is recognized as the foremost authority in worldwide duck hunting destinations. Ramsey resides in Brandon, Mississippi. His work and dedication have taken him to the world's best waterfowl hunting areas. Although a worldwide hunter and guide, his favorite times are spent at home in Mississippi hunting with his family, close friends, and favorite retrievers.

Ramsey and Anita have been married for 25 years. Together they form the perfect partnership in life and work. Ramsey's training and experiences are essential to building the best collection of quality duck hunting experiences in the world; Anita's attention to detail, planning, and communication are integral to success. GetDucks.com is a home-grown, family-operated, indie business - experienced enough to take care of you expertly, small enough to always treat you personally. Recognizing the personal nature of hunting trips, Ramsey and Anita make themselves available to assist before, during, and after hunt travel.

Explore GetDucks.com for a wealth of information about worldwide duck hunting offerings.

Contact us to book your next duck hunt or to discuss topics of interest not presently listed.

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/Getduckscom



/Getduckscom



@ramseyrussellgetducks

It's Always Duck Season Somewhere



Throughout US



Argentina Combo Hunt



Netherlands Goose Hunt



Peru Cinnamon Teal Hunt



New Zealand Duck Hunt

"Fondest memory: 25 ducks with 30 shells. "In your face" action. Ramsey Russells GetDucks.com was very easy to do business with and had great communication."

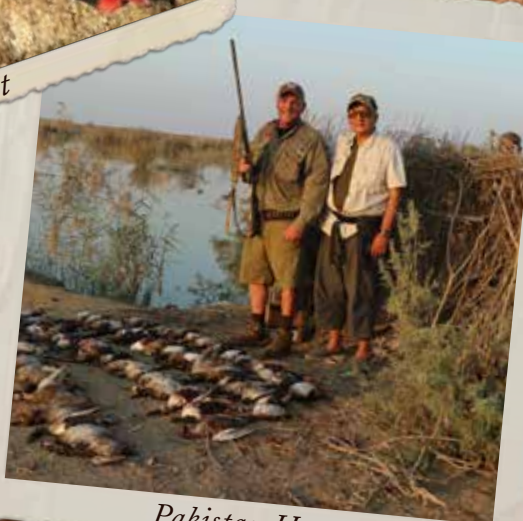
K. Ulrich



Sweden Hunt



Mongolia Hunt



Pakistan Hunt



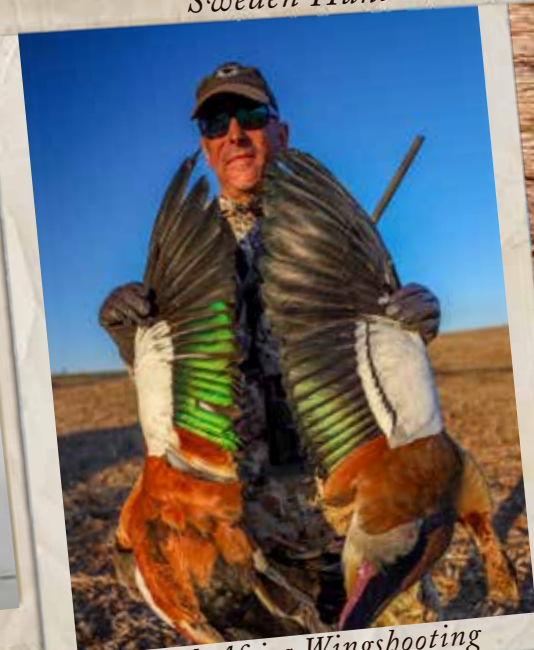
Azerbaijan Hunt



Argentina Duck Hunt



Australia Hunt



South Africa Wingshooting



Alaska King Eider Hunt

The Best Argentina Duck Hunts

Experience REAL Argentina. Authentic experiences, hot barrels, heaviest straps, excellent value. Proven packages for ducks, more ducks, or combo hunts. Real hunts for real hunters. As genuine American duck hunters, we know.

Argentina Duck Hunting

Options for high-quality duck hunting throughout Argentina include special package rates and customized packages available only through GetDucks.com. For serious wingshooters, vacationing families, hunters checking off species, whether first-timers or every-timers – GetDucks.com has your Argentina duck hunting covered. Duck species include: Rosy-billed Pochard, White-faced Whistling Duck, Fulvous Whistling Duck, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Brazilian Duck, South American Knob-billed Duck, Yellow-billed Pintail, White-cheeked Pintail, Speckled Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Ringed Teal, Silver Teal, Red Shoveler, Chiloe Wigeon, more. Mid-April through August.

Rio Salado Duck Hunt - Massive, remotely located wetland offers high-volume shooting for highest diversity of duck species. Guests hunt solo, alone with their guide, in the wildest and most pristine shooting environment in Argentina. Wild birds in a truly wild place, harkens the golden age of American wildfowling, well worth the distance.

La Paz Wingshooting Combo - Enjoy a full-on combo for ducks, doves, decoying pigeons, perdiz and optional dorado fishing. Vast property holdings, world-class shooting. This long-time client favorite offers the perfect sampling of Argentina from a single great location, fun family atmosphere with nearby non-hunting activities, too. Highly interpersonal guest services, some of the very best meals in Argentina. We never stack guests to the rafters. Enjoy the week exclusively among yourselves with as few as 4 hunting guests.

"Your expectations as you head out each morning are often surpassed by the days results. When your hunt ends and limits fulfilled you always come away amazed at the number of birds you witnessed that day. You return to your cabana exhausted and fulfilled ready for a hot shower. It's then followed by a fine meal and local Malbec, a fine cigar, and buddy time."

B. Hanson

"Epic Argentina duck hunting...ducks like the sky was falling. Yes got to do perdiz and pigeons and then hunted fox, killed 9 in 2-3 hours. The extra days with Diego were far and away the wildest shoots ever."

S. Knowles, Editor, Wildfowl Magazine

Las Flores Duck Hunt - Fast-paced duck shooting convenient to Buenos Aires. Nobody but nobody delivers in-your-face rosy-bill shooting like this operator. Regardless of weather and water, liberal limits are the rule, never the exception. A true hunter himself, he has delivered liberal limits daily for decades. Hunts are conducted withing 25 minutes of lodge, in blinds accessible to hunters of all ages.

Los Ceibos Combo - Enjoy daily combinations of excellent hunting for ducks, doves or perdiz just a few hours easy drive time from EZE. And leave the waders at home if you prefer, not needed to bag generous duck limits here. Very easy hunting conditions, non-hunting guests activities nearby.

"Duck hunting combo in Argentina at GetDucks.com's La Paz Lodge was incredible!! Duck hunting was a blast! On the last day of dove hunting we broke the lodge ALL TIME RECORD for the most doves killed in a single afternoon (4,553) UNBELIEVABLE!! All staff are world class!!"

W. K. & Friends



Mexico Wingshooting

South-of-the-border fun for ducks, brant, white-winged doves or ever-popular combination hunts. No overnight flights. World-class shooting. Trophy species. Unrivaled hospitality. The good ol' days are NOW!

Obregon Mexico Duck Hunt Combo combines the best of trophy Mexico wingshooting. All-inclusive hunting packages include ducks, black brant, white-winged dove, quail and trophy bass fishing. Guests are lodged in exclusive 9-bedroom lodge with open bar and superior guest services. Excellent meals of delicious beef, fresh seafood, wild game and Mexican specialties are served by attentive waitstaff. This top-seller books out early each year! January through February is primetime. Duck-dove combos November-December. White-winged doves September-October.

Baja Pacific Black Brant Hunt is popular among avid waterfowl collectors or hunters looking to expand their wingshooting horizons. Pacific Black Brant migrate from the Gulf of Alaska and western Russia to Baja Mexico's San Quintin Bay each year, where an estimated 40% of the entire world population overwinters. Locally-available seafood consists of shrimp, clams, oysters, and crabs. Inclusive package. Limited weekends January – February.

Mazatlan Mexico Duck Hunting is a South-of-the-border duck hunting experience that surpasses all others. With over 30 years of duck hunting experience in the southern half of Sinaloa Mexico's west coast, the staff is professional, knowledgeable and endeavors to provide you with the best duck hunting vacation imaginable, in an area that also provides perfect winter beach vacation for spouses or the entire family. It's called a "honeymoon duck hunt" for very good reason. Morning hunts, return to resort by noon, plentiful activities or do nothing but simply relax. Mid-January through February.

"Mike and I had a great trip. The Pacific Black Brant hunting in Mexico was a blast. Thanks to you and Anita, everything went smoothly. I'm sure we'll be in touch about future hunting trips. Thanks again."

D. Enoch

"Beautiful scenery and excellent quality of shotguns. Ramsey, you went out of your way to ensure we had a great time while duck hunting in Mexico."

M. Perkins



Mexico White-Winged Dove Hunt proves once and for all that the good old days are NOW! Much closer than Argentina, most guests are drinking frosty cervezas by 3 PM, not boarding a plane for an overnight flight. Shooting volume amounts to 15-20 boxes per hunt, and shooters soon learn that mourning doves and eared doves are little white-winged dove wannabes. Perfect for groups of friends or family, corporate outings or entertaining important clients, this ALL-INCLUSIVE package offers tremendous value, includes everything but ammo and a few discretionary extras. September to early November.

Sonora Lodge Mexico Duck & Dove Combo is a NEW all-inclusive package developed by popular demand. Morning ducks, mid-day siesta, and afternoon doves. World-class shooting, convenient drives. Well-appointed, 5-bedroom lodge reserved exclusively for groups of 4-7 hunters. Late-December to early-March.

"Mazatlan was the best duck hunt ever! Great staff, great accommodations, great duck hunting, excellent hotel and local restaurants recommendations! Shooting action was fast and close. We were able to observe many species of shorebirds, seabirds, songbirds and raptors as well. I could not ask for a better overall duck hunting package!"

D. Markway

"Excellent attention to detail. Great birds with excellent plumage, many species, and comparatively close to home. The bluebills canal hunt stood out. Great shoot with great friends. Obregon Mexico was unlike any other duck hunting experience. You guys at GetDucks.com under promise and over deliver."

L. Godfrey

"The Baja Mexico brant hunting trip was an outstanding success. Everyone seemed to be overjoyed and were able to fulfill and exceed their goals and expectations for the trip. Again thanks for a spectacular hunt. It was three days of full limits, bands and we even managed to add some ducks."

K. Green

"I rate Mazatlan Mexico duck hunt as excellent because the hunting and lodge are as advertised. My wife says that the lodging exceeded her expectations. The bird boys were great and put every effort into getting you a trophy specimen of a bird you are after. Ramsey Russells knowledge of traveling to and from the area and what to do took a huge load off of my mind."

R. Nelson



Azerbaijan Hunting

Located between the Caspian Sea and Caucus Mountains, massive wetlands in Azerbaijan provide excellent duck hunting in a small part of the world that few have experienced. Red-crested pochard, ferruginous pochard, common pochard, tufted duck, garganey, and common shelduck are among the unique species opportunities. Eurasian wigeon and common teal are found in very good number. Guests are lodged in comfortable homes convenient to large hunting area. Local cuisine is excellent. Hunting is 1 guest per blind until about noon each day. Skillful guides use traditional hunting methods, decoys, mojos and e-callers to lure birds near expertly built blinds. Five-day package and day tours of beautiful Baku on travel days. February through early-March.

Alaska King Eider Hunting

Alaska King Eider hunting in the most practical place in the world to bag King Eiders. King Eider tops the life-list of most duck hunters and collectors. The pinnacle of North American duck hunting experiences, a King Eider hunt is never easy, but our guide staff has the experience, equipment and the right locations for you get true trophies of a lifetime. Trophy species include King Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Harlequin, and possibly more. Hunts are limited to only 30 guests annually. Late-December to late-January. **BOOKS OUT 1-2 YEARS IN ADVANCE!**

"Ramsey and Anita were very informative and helpful throughout all stages of the trip. It seemed more of a working friendship, great help with everything including getting the birds back to the U.S., and a reservation mishap was easily resolved within 5 minutes thanks to their being on-call. Good food, great new friends, and lots of ducks."

D. Myska

Peru Duck Hunting

Peru is a hidden treasure in international wingshooting due to unique species, low hunting pressure, diverse habitats and spectacular scenery. Duck hunting in Peru's pacific-coastal estuaries entails duck hunting for the greatest density of Cinnamon Teal in the world plus white-cheeked pintails. High-altitude wetlands among the Andes Mountains include: Andean Geese, Puna Teal, Crested Ducks, Sharp-winged Ducks and more. May through September.

New Zealand Waterfowl Hunting

New Zealand waterfowl hunting is an excellent stand-alone trip to extend your wingshooting horizons, and may be combined with big game hunting and fishing for a completely customized experience. The natural habitat for New Zealand's upland game birds and waterfowl is spectacular. Indigenous species and unique wingshooting opportunities top many hunter's lists. Trophy species include: Paradise Shelduck, Pacific Black Duck, Austrasian Shoveler, rail-like Pukeko, Mallards, Canada Geese, and Black Swans. Upland offers wingshooting opportunities for: California Quail, Ring-Necked Pheasants, and pigeons. New Zealand big game hunting is unrivaled in the abundance of world-class trophies and the diversity of big-game species. May through July.

South Africa Duck and Bird Hunting

South Africa duck hunting provides an excellent wingshooting experience as a stand-alone trip or as a complement to your Africa plains game hunt. Africa bird hunting includes a diversity of waterfowl and upland species, offers avid wingshooting travelers an authentic taste of Africa and a refreshingly challenging shotgun adventure. Trophy species include: Egyptian Goose, Spur-winged Goose, African Yellow-billed Duck, African Shelduck, Red-billed Teal, Hottentot Teal, Cape Shoveler, White-faced Whistling Duck; African Pygmy Goose, African Black Duck, White-backed Duck, Helmeted Guineafowl, Swainson's Francolin, Orange River Francolin, Redeye Dove, Laughing Dove, Cape Turtle Dove and Rock Pigeon. June-July. Depending on preferences and duration, hunts take place among Mpumalanga, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. June-August.

Russia Bird Hunting

Russia bird hunting is a trophy hunting adventure with waterfowl and upland species not commonly available in the US. Takes places late-Spring north of St. Petersburg near the Arctic circle and adjacent to the White Sea, the backdrop of this hunt is one of the most remote and unspoiled boreal forest habitat in the world. Trophy species feature Capercaille and Black Grouse, may also include Tufted Duck, Eurasian Teal, Eurasian Wigeon, Smew, Goldeneye, Common Eider, Goosander, Snow Grouse, Hazel Grouse and more. Mid-April to Mid-May.

"South Africa is a beautiful and interesting country with an abundance of wildlife and a spellbinding history. And the wingshooting? A typical day might involve an early hunt for Egyptian and spurwing geese, a mid-morning hunt for driven guineafowl and francolin, a break for lunch and an afternoon shoot for hot-gun doves or pigeons. I can easily describe this experience as a "trip of a lifetime" but I don't think that it was our first and only visit!"

J. Crews



Netherlands Goose Hunting

Netherlands Goose hunting is available only through GetDucks.com. An immersive experience that's very popular among both hunters and non-hunting guests, that tour while hunters are afield. Nowhere on earth more practical to collect barnacle geese. Species include Greylag Goose, Barnacle Goose, White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, Egyptian Goose, Mute Swan, Mallard, Wood Pigeon. One to 3 hunters only. March, August and October.

Sweden Goose Hunting

Sweden goose hunting is available only through GetDucks.com and represents some of the highest-volume goose hunting on earth. Species include barnacles geese, Canada geese and greylags. The afternoon mallard shoots are spectacular. Pheasant tower shoots can be arranged with additional days. Non-hunting activities available for spouses. This 3-day package is all-inclusive from Copenhagen, Denmark.

Australia Duck Hunting

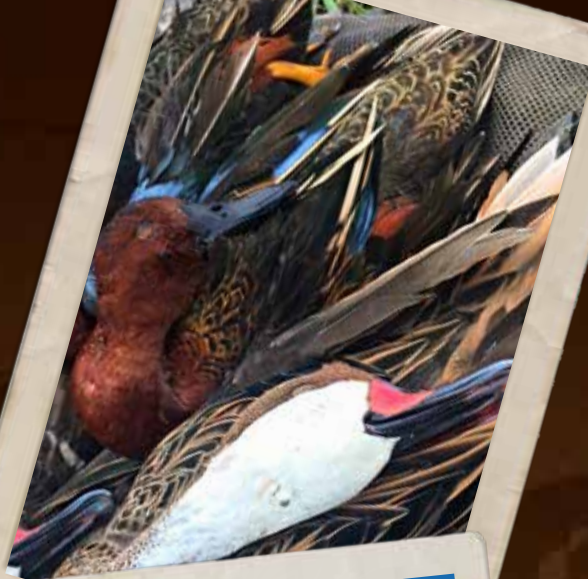
Australian duck hunting perfect for 1-3 hunting guests and available exclusively through GetDucks.com. Hunts take place primarily in Victoria, but also in South Australia, New South Wales and Northern Territory provinces. Common species include: Pacific black ducks, grey teal, chestnut teal, maned duck, pink-eared duck, hardheads, Australian shovelers, mountain shelducks, and more.

Córdoba Argentina Dove Hunting

Córdoba Argentina is widely recognized as a location for the greatest remaining volume shotgunning on earth. An estimated population of 40 million eared doves continues to build and to expand despite 2 decades of unlimited dove hunting. For a standard 3-day package, GetDucks.com guests will enjoy superior wingshooting, unrivaled services, authentic lodging amenities, chef-prepared meals, and conveniences. Enjoy private group-use of lodges for as few as 4, to larger parties with as many as 16 hunters. Never mixed groups so relax among your own people. Year-round shooting.

"Always has an unbelievable number of rosybills, more than anywhere else I've ever duck hunted in Argentina."

T. Denmon, MOJO Outdoors



"Mongolia duck hunting was an awesome nomadic hunting adventure on the vast Asian steppe. A wandering duck hunter's dream trip, we got the waterfowl species I was really after. This was my 4th duck hunting trip organized by Ramsey Russells GetDucks.com (previously Alaska king eiders, Netherlands goose hunting, Pakistan duck hunting), and am already looking forward to the 5th. No telling where in the world we'll go next!"

J. Hattner

Mongolia Bird Hunting

The off-the-beaten-path trophy hunting adventure of Mongolia bird hunting begins in Ulaanbaatar. Limited to fewer than a dozen guests each year, guests stay in traditional ger accommodations and hunt daily for waterfowl endemic to Asia. Species include: bar-headed goose, swan goose, ruddy shelduck, common shelduck, Eurasian wigeon, greylag goose, garganey, Eurasian green-winged teal, tufted duck and more.

Pakistan Duck Hunting

Pakistan Duck Hunting offers a unique glimpse at duck hunting in one of the most unlikely places on earth. Hunts are conducted on a private estate that has been specially prepared for excellent duck hunting. Hunters shoot solo or in pairs, and each guest is accompanied by a personal staff. Shooting volume is substantial. Species include common green-winged teal, northern shovelers, mallards, northern pintails, possibly red-crested pochards, marbled teal, eastern spot-billed ducks. Duck hunts are typically 3 days. Additional days may be added for driven francolin or big game.

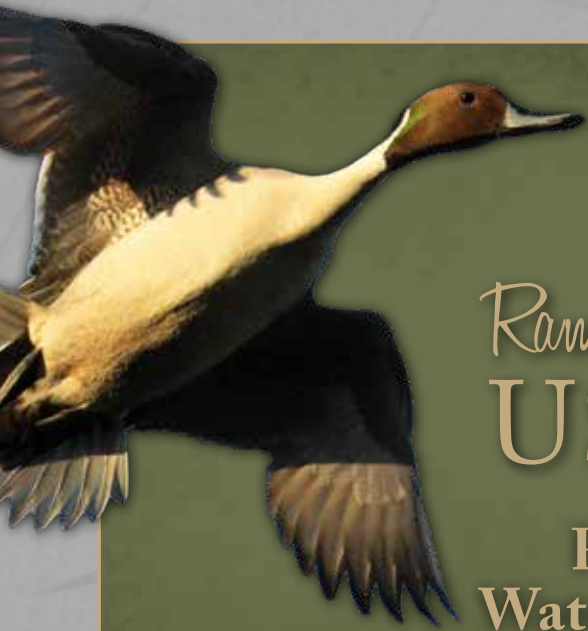
And More!

GetDucks.com is constantly scouting the world's foremost habitats in search of the best-available hunts and must-do wingshooting experiences. Visit GetDucks.com for our latest updates.

"We had a warm welcome, a wonderful dinner and an amazing day of hunting under the sun and gentle winds. Unforgettable from my end! Thanks again and you can count on me for a warm recommendation to anyone who asks."

E. Bastoni





Ramsey Russell's US Hunt List™

Find the Best Guided
Waterfowl Hunts in the U.S.

USHuntList.com The Next Great Hunt Is Closer Than You Think

Alberta Canada Duck and Goose Hunting

Alberta Waterfowl Outfitters \$2600 for 3-day package

Alberta Canada waterfowl hunting the likes of which you've always dreamed. The Alberta Waterfowl Outfitters experience entails mostly dry-field hunting for mallards, pintails, Canada geese, cackler geese, snow geese and more specklebellies than you'll find elsewhere in Canada. World-class amenities and hospitality. Contact: Brennan Hudson 409.926.6042, email hudsonoutfitters@yahoo.com, www.albertawaterfowl.com.

Arkansas Duck Hunting

Commander's Corner \$600

One of the Arkansas's most coveted properties — smack in the middle of a federal sanctuary, swarms with ducks each day. Duck camp atmosphere, excellent hospitality. Spacious dry blind easily accessed by ATV. Contact: Harrison Banks 318.547.1655, email harrisonobanks@gmail.com, www.cdduckhunts.com

Arkansas Spring Snow Goose Hunting

Dirty Bird Outfitters \$200 or less daily

Great spring snow goose hunting in the Arkansas Grand Prairie. Young, hard-working guides do the heavy lifting; guests simply show up and enjoy. Group and seasonal price incentives: an affordable opportunity for groups of family and friends. Contact: Matthew Piehl 701.290.6582, matt@dirtybirdoutfitters, www.dirtybirdoutfitters.com.

Chesapeake Bay Maryland Duck Hunting

Black Duck Outfitters \$200-250 daily

Takes place in the legendary Chesapeake Bay region and can be customized for sea ducks, divers, puddle ducks, snow geese and brant. Few places conjure nostalgia for the good-old-days of American duck hunting like Chesapeake Bay. Contact: Todd Sauerwald 410.336.7078, info@blackduckoutfitters.com, www.blackduckoutfitters.com.



Delaware Sea Duck Hunting

Fowl Intensity Outfitters \$225 daily

Specializes in the scoters and long-tailed ducks that have long over-wintered in this historic waterfowl region. Atlantic Brant, American black ducks, Canada geese and mallards for which Delmarva's Eastern Shore is famous. Contact: Brian Rogers 302.745.7269, fowlintensityoutfitters@yahoo.com.

Kansas Duck and Goose Hunting

Big Kansas Outdoors \$350+ daily, package options available

Located smack in the middle of the Central Flyway, this young, energetic and experienced team has proven they've got what it takes to produce limits of ducks and geese in short order. Mostly dry-field hunts from comfortable A-frame blinds makes for enjoyable experience. Contact: Ben Webster 620.200.4372, email bpweb25@gmail.com, www.bigkansasoutdoors.com.

Kansas Waterfowl Hunting

Summer Duck Outfitters \$400 daily

Combined with ducks to include the central Flyway's 5-mallard limits, Summer Duck Outfitters is high-quality Kansas waterfowl hunting that is ideal for friends or families that want to enjoy quality camp times exclusively among themselves and experience real-deal waterfowl hunting. Contact: Joe Summer 803.275.4927, email duckman563@gmail.com, www.summerduckoutfitters.com.

Louisiana Duck Hunting— Coastal Marsh

SWC Sportsmans Lodge Venice Louisiana. \$500 daily.

Located one hour south of New Orleans. Top-shelf amenities, excellent meals featuring world-class creole, perfect southern hospitality — and only 3 short steps from the blind! Coastal duck species hunting on 10,000 acres private property, packages may be upgraded to include inshore and offshore fishing. Excellent blue-winged teal (September) and big ducks (November – January).

Contact: Bart Haddad 601.466.0152 or email at southerncharters@aol.com.

Mississippi Duck Hunting

Tallahatchie Hunts \$1,500 3-day package, \$700 Duck & Quail Combo,

Day hunts \$500-350

Hospitality, private lodging, and enviably consistent duck hunting on the best duck hunting properties in Mississippi. Flooded timber and agriculture. After morning hunt, all guests enjoy world-class, southern breakfasts. Contact: Mike "Catfish" Flautt 662.375.2116, catfish@tallahatchiehunts.com, www.tallahatchiehunts.com.

Missouri Duck and Goose Hunting

Pure Hen Duck Calls Southern Duck Lodge \$1,200.

Three-day package in bootheel region. Waterfowl trade among Big Lake Refuge, Arkansas, Reelfoot Lake, Tennessee, and the Mississippi River, feeding in abundant regional agriculture. Flooded agriculture and wooded potholes. Mallards, gadwalls, pintails, green-winged teal, shovelers and speckle-bellies predominate the bag. Includes lodging, home-cooked meals and professional guide services. Contact: Parker Watkins at (573) 724-2476, email purehenduckcalls@outlook.com



Nebraska Duck Hunting

Prairie Rock Outfitters \$575 daily, group discounts available

The best Nebraska duck hunting available. Hands down. Think skies full of bull greenheads and big Canada geese floating slow-mo into decoys. Western Nebraska receives little relative hunting pressure due to limited public hunting opportunities. A staggering 25 miles of North Platte River duck hunting habitat accompanied by 325,000-acres exclusive landholdings ensures high-quality hunts. Also produces impressive numbers of trophy mule deer and white-tails each season. Contact: Ryan Livingston 308.262.5966, email prairierockoutfitters@gmail.com, prairierockoutfitters.com.

New England Sea Duck Hunting

RPM Outdoors caters to individuals and small groups of waterfowl hunters for the extremely diverse array of waterfowl species available in northern New England. Their emphasis is targeting trophy specimens of sea ducks, divers, ducks and geese in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Contact: Reilly McCue 802.233.6621, rpmoutdoors@hotmail.com, www.rpmoutdoors.com, northtexasoutfitters.com, northtexasoutfitters@gmail.com

Oklahoma Duck Hunting

Salt Plains Outfitters \$450

Duck hunting here is about 2 things only: providing the best mallards hunting in the State of Oklahoma and delivering superior client experiences. It's a simple plan that works well. Over 50,000 prime acres under wraps. Include excellent lodging, stocked kitchen, local restaurants. Contact: Grant Wisenbacker 936.827.2647, saltplainsoutfitters@gmail.com, www.saltplainsoutfitters.com.

Ontario Canada Goose Hunting

Ryan's Outdoor Services \$1,700

Major Canadian waterfowl migratory corridor formed by sandwiching a massive grain agriculture landscape between the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers. Epic numbers of big migrator Canada geese the likes of which few have witnessed, and mallards. The 3-day package includes excellent lodging and memorable chef-prepared meals. Contact: Ryan Reynolds 613.453.8224, ryan@capitalwaterfowling.com.

Saskatchewan Canada Waterfowl Hunting

Northern Skies Outfitters \$2,362 - \$4,095

(3-day to 6-day packages)

All-inclusive waterfowl hunting packages for honkers, ducks, snows and cranes in Saskatchewan Canada. Package includes professional guide services, spotters, cabin lodging and home-cooked meals, bird processing, ammo (3 boxes daily) and licenses. Long-time, year-round outfitter delivers. Contact: Mat Schauer 952.212.4828, mat@northernskiesoutfitters.com, www.northernskiesoutfitters.com.



Texas Duck Hunting - North

North Texas Outfitters \$200 - \$250

Superior guided duck hunts only 1 hour from Dallas. Extremely professional guides attend to all details regarding your hunting enjoyment and success. Relax, enjoy the morning, and let them do what they do best—land ducks and geese on the end of your gun barrel! Contact: Dakota Stowers 903.815.9842, email northtexasoutfitters@gmail.com, northtexasoutfitters.com.

Texas Blue-Winged Teal Hunt

Rocky Creek Retrievers \$400

Very best September blue-winged teal hunting in the world plus first-class lodging and meals, guests travel from all over USA to enjoy this excellent experience. As featured on MOJO TV and Wildfowl Magazine. Contact: Steve Biggers 281.610.8226, email sbrcr01@aol.com.

Texas Coastal Redhead Hunt & More

Run-N-Gun Adventures \$1,425-\$1,875 packages, \$175-300 daily.

Trophy redheads — greatest percentage of the entire world's population overwinters on nearby Laguna Madre and surrounding areas — and pintail. New 11,000 square-foot lodge is magnificent. Long-time outfitter delivers excellent duck and goose hunting, camp atmosphere only 80 miles from Houston. Contact: Daniel Kubecka 979.240.5312, Run-n-gunadventures@hotmail.com, www.run-n-gunadventures.com

Texas Goose Hunting and More - Panhandle

Sea to Sky Outfitters \$250 per morning, upgrades available

Best-kept secret among die-hard goose hunters familiar with the region's plentiful overwintering waterfowl and relatively low hunting pressure. Expansive agricultural landscape of hot crops punctuated with countless shallow playa lakes is a hunting mecca for geese, ducks and cranes. Contact: Orin Lonadier 318.510.0521, email olonadier@gmail.com, www.seatoskyoutfitters.com, www.run-n-gunadventures.com

Wyoming Duck and Goose Hunting

WyoBraska Waterfowl \$1200 day up to 4 hunters

Enjoy spectacular decoying mallards and Canada geese, and hard-charging retrievers in pure wild beauty. Fertile agricultural lands and myriad freeze-proof wetlands amid the legendary North Platte River Valley over-winter enviable numbers of mallards and BIG Canada geese, but putting birds on the ends of gun barrels is only part of the equation. The hunt day is yours. Hunt for the entire day or until legal limits are achieved, assured that your comfort is top priority. Contact: Michael Kahler 307.575.9206, email reservations@wyobraskawaterfowl.com, www.wyobraskawaterfowl.com.



**"bask in the stoke you get
off your buddies when
it all comes together".**

one trip at a time - @ramseyrussellgetducks



Trophies of a Feather

BY RAMSEY RUSSELL

The best three hunts in life are the first, the last and the next. Many hunters may even say that their favorite duck is the next one over the decoys, but the universal aura of wildfowling is seducing free-to-go-anywhere-in-the-fenceless-sky-they-damned-well-choose birds to within about 100 feet. It's how the game is played.

Great hunts don't happen by accident either. Understanding waterfowl's life habits is paramount; skillfully using tools of the trade is essential. As our understanding grows, so too does the world around us. Waterfowl are migratory and we eventually find ourselves compelled to new areas, to species unobtainable in our own back yards. There are 50 waterfowl species in North America alone. And suddenly it becomes a real big world.

The rules of the game remain the same, but the playing fields change while hunting waterfowl worldwide. From 16,000 feet in the mountains to below sea level in levee-protected settings, and from the river red gum swamps of the South Pacific to ravaging seas near the Arctic Circle, there exists a spectacular variety of waterfowl.

Many people go their entire lives never knowing that it's not just about dead ducks. We hunters know better. Destination hunting is not only about a trophy; it's about the immersive experience of playing the game. It's the simple reminder of what we've experienced that those feathered trophies shimmering in our game rooms most represent.

Since first exhibiting at SCI Convention years ago, we've enjoyed many great duck hunting conversations among client-friends at campfires and dinner tables around the world, usually about hunting the bread-and-butter mallards, pintails, honkers and woodies that we all cut our teeth on. Following is a sampling of unique gamebirds that sparked such friendships.



King Eider

King eiders epitomize the pinnacle of North America waterfowl hunting experiences. Relatively rare among North America waterfowl collections, they are as spell-bindingly beautiful as the remote marine environment from which they originate. It's the where and the when that these sea ducks are hunted that earns the crown.

King eiders are circumpolar, ranging throughout the arctic, wintering to subarctic marine climates, but the most practical place on earth to hunt them is a 40 square-mile volcanic island located 850 miles northwest of Anchorage. King eider hunting occurs in January, as the birds retreat from ice further north to feed in the biologically productive Bering Sea, diving as deep as 150-feet while feeding on marine invertebrates.

Getting to this corner of the world is daunting to those unfamiliar with travel to remote Alaska where it's rumored that wind originates, especially during the winter. That's just part of the adventure. The somber environment is cold, windy, awe-inspiring. It's humbling. The sea spray isn't so bad after realizing it simply turns to ice on contact.



When the wind blows too hard – and it will – eiders are hunted from rocky points where they're sometimes pushed close enough to the shoreline for shots from hunters hunkering down against the stark island ambiance of gale force wind. And when it gets quiet, as it eventually will, pure magic awaits. Lines of decoys drifting behind

continued on page 178



boats, ebbing up and down massive slate-gray swells of saltwater – now you see it, now you don’t – then out of nowhere and just a couple feet above the water a king eider or three rocket over. Your name is called. You shoot. Hopefully cheers and fist-bumps follow. There are king crab legs and prime rib for supper. You’ve earned it.

Logistically, only a limited handful of seats in the boat are available each season. King eiders are singularly the only reason otherwise sane hunters venture into the Bering Sea in January — that and the memory of having experienced such an epic adventure. Associated species include harlequins, long-tailed ducks, white-winged scoters and occasional Pacific common eiders.



Pink-Eared Duck

“Pinkies are tiny buggers,” explains the local guide with a Crocodile Dundee accent. They look like diminutive shorebirds while streaking over the decoys in tightly bound knots. Zebra-striped with raccoon-like eye patches, a spatulate-shaped bill that has specialized, mandibular flaps for feeding on plankton, and distinctive carotenoid pigmentation that renders their conspicuous pink ear patch, these diminutive ducks look exactly like what you’d expect in the land of duck-billed platypuses and koala bears.

Duck hunting in Australia is on one hand as familiar as hunting back home, right down to decoying Pacific black ducks that respond amazingly well to mallard-style calls during flooded

timber hunts and English-speaking camaraderie. On the other hand, it’s as other worldly as kangaroos busting deer-like through swamp thickets, forest canopies seething with raucous, sulphur-crested cockatoos and bacon cheeseburgers topped with sliced beet root and pineapple.

Australia has a surprisingly rich tradition of duck hunting to include hand-carved decoys and duck calls. Duck hunting season spans nearly 10 months from mid-February through mid-December to encompass Southern Australia, Victoria and New South Wales provinces.

During wet years on what is otherwise the driest continent, limits are generous by U.S. standards. Other species include grey teal, maned ducks, mountain shelducks, chestnut

teal, hardheads, occasionally Australasian shovelers and, in the Northern Territories, magpie geese, plumed and wandering whistling ducks. Several other game bird species endemic to the South Pacific may be hunted in nearby New Zealand to include black swans, paradise shelducks and pukekos.



Barnacle Goose

Dark skeins of barnacle geese rise from a distant river roost, forming a dark cloud that drifts in the direction of awaiting hunters, cold from laying in wait. The flock numbers several hundred and loosely moves as one toward the decoys, their diminutive barks sounding like as many lap dogs, growing incessantly louder as they descend into the decoys.

Birds fold like love letters at the volley, and the black lab has scarcely recovered the last prized

bird when someone hisses, “more geese coming this way!” The scene repeats itself throughout the morning until what appears to be a half-section of geese of have amassed in the distance, making the ground writhe like heat shimmers, outcompeting the hunters for late-morning stragglers. The action-packed morning provided plenty of shooting action, it’s time for lunch.

Once considered a brant goose, the highly-attractive, mid-sized barnacle goose is more

closely related to cackling Canada geese as evidenced not only by its prominent white cheek patch but by its gregarious nature, feeding habits and bark-like calls. The best places to hunt barnacle geese worldwide are Sweden,

where the migration peaks in mid-October through mid-November, and in the Netherlands, where migrating barnacles overwinter but where, due to an anti-hunting sponsored 10-plus-year cessation of “goose hunting season,” barnacle geese have taken up residency, proliferated like resident geese are apt to do and are now conservation-hunted under government-issued depredation permits.



Proximity to water and abundant agriculture are ingredients for prime goose habitat. In addition to barnacle geese are greylag geese, Canada geese and, in the Netherlands, a few Egyptian geese. Adhering to common European traditions, there are no conventional limits in either country, and the bags can be relatively considerable.

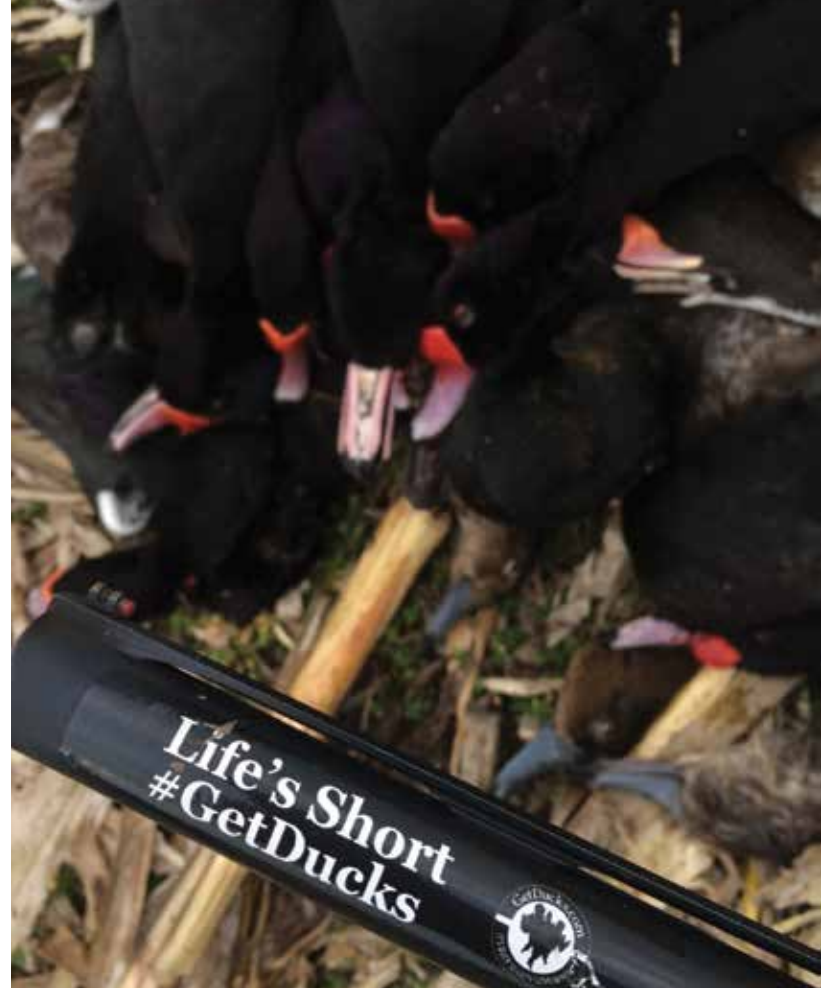
Rosy-Billed Pochard

There may be sexier-looking ducks, but beauty is in the beholder's eye and no species best embodies the essence of real duck hunting than Argentina's rosy-billed pochard. The prominent blood-red knob at the base of the drake's bill seems to glow like an ember at times.

Large-sized and gregarious, rosy-bills are strong-flying, agile, their wings tearing through the air like ripped paper, responding to calls and decoys like frat-boys to free draft beer. Where first-timers and ardent collectors want to put their hands on all of Argentina's different species, old salts simply ask, "when do the rosy-bills show up?"

Argentina's most ubiquitous species, rosy-billed pochards are hunted over natural marsh, lakes, rivers and flooded agriculture. Associated species are geographically or habitat dependent, with greatest diversity occurring on truly massive marsh complexes located in remote areas to the north, where the time-honored skills of traditional scouting, calling and blind building consistently produce much better results than the shortcut practices commonly used elsewhere.

The usual suspects of Argentina duck species include Chiloe wigeon; brown and white-cheeked pintails; speckled, silver, cinnamon, ringed and Brazilian teal; white-faced, fulvous, and black-bellied whistling ducks; black-headed ducks; red shovelers and more.



Ramsey Russell owns and operates *GetDucks.com*, a full-service agency specializing in worldwide duck hunting and game bird adventures. Wading the world's greatest wetlands, always searching for the next great duck hunting adventure, is his commitment to clients and personal life mission. Australia is among the newest additions to a growing line-up that encompasses 6 continents. It's duck season somewhere. Visit Ramsey Russell's *GetDucks.com*, SCI Booth #4921-4925.



Western Capercaillie

After leaving the cabin about 10 p.m. and walking two miles down a winding bear trail, you stand waiting in a half-million acre tract of ancient boreal forest at sunset. Listening intently. It's so silent that you imagine hearing exhaled breath crystalize into frost. Or maybe you're not imagining things. Twenty kilometers from the Arctic Circle, it's only dark-dark for a couple hours in May, but it takes a few hours for the sun to slowly creep over the horizon. It's then that capercaillie cocks sing on their lek.

To an old duck hunter's ears, the four notes sound like a marble dropped on wet table, bouncing twice and then dribbling through the puddle. Perched, the capercaillie sings with its eyes closed. Between notes two and three, a gland in its inner ear swells rendering it momentarily deaf. The hunter-guide duo then deftly two-steps towards the call. *Crunch crunch*. Then don't move.

Their eyes are opened, keenly searching for incoming hens. When everything comes together, the distance is closed to within 30 meters; the bird can be seen and cleanly taken by shotgun. But it could take nights of the most wonderful black forest adventure imaginable. At times they can't be seen, the forest canopy is just one contiguous ink-black shadow backlit by sullen sky. Or the bird flushes. Or is missed. Or maybe on the third morning an eager bird anxiously sings later into the morning. Crouching and holding your breath you peer around cover, see him clearly perched atop a hemlock like a Christmas angel, his iridescence sparkling in a single beam of sunlight. A smile creases your face as you begin pulling the trigger.

Capercaillies are the world's largest grouse, and one of Eurasia's most prized game birds. While the birds are often rifled or hunted using pointers during the winter, spring capercaillie hunting consists of stalking prime breeding birds as they call.

Nowhere is their density higher or the hunts purer than in parts of western Russia. It's an exhilarating adventure for a noble species. During the spring months, associated game bird species include black grouse that are hunted by traditional ground-blind methods. Hazel grouse and snow grouse (willow ptarmigan) are also commonly taken.



Cinnamon Teal

The richly-colored cinnamon teal, its bright, chestnut-red body contrasting beautifully with sky-blue upper-wing coverts and gold-and-black tertial highlights, is probably the foremost requested species to someone like me who has met with duck hunters, helping to organize trophy duck hunts worldwide on a daily basis for the past 15 years. Rarely are cinnamon teal the last one needed to complete a gamebird collection.

With distinct breeding populations in North America and South America, cinnamon teal are interesting as well as beautiful. Unlike most North American dabbling duck species, cinna-

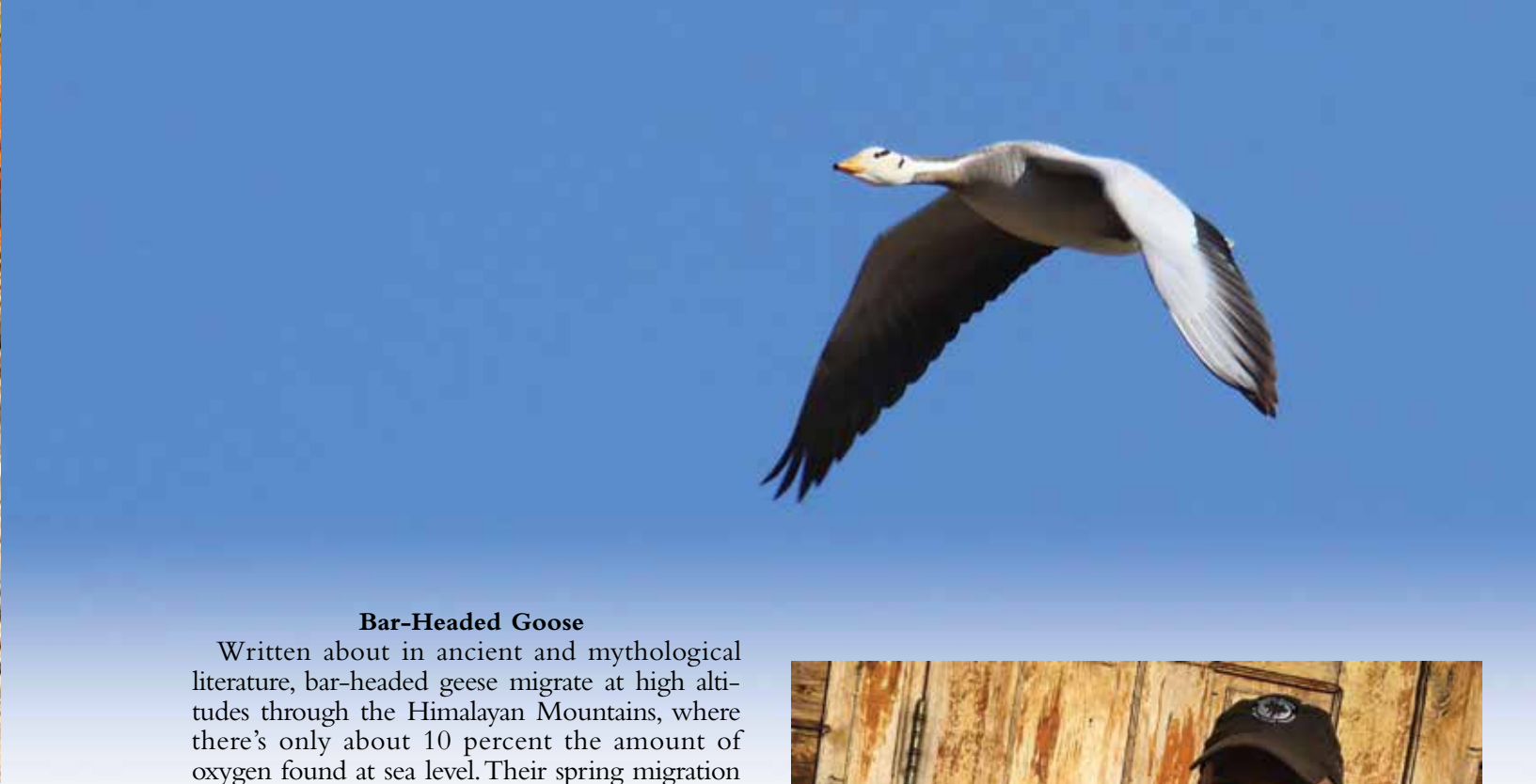
mon teal only rarely breed in the midcontinent prairie-parkland region. A significant amount of North America's cinnamon teal is thought to breed in remnant marshlands of California's Sacramento Valley. Most overwinter south of the border where they are hunted with great success and in prime plumage.

Cinnamon teal are never seen in sizeable flocks on wintering grounds such as North America's green-winged teal or Argentina's speckled teal. Whether it's a function of their discreet preference for deeper, muck-bottomed marsh habitats where they share a similar diet to shovelers or a behavioral dynamic is unknown.

As would be expected, cinnamon teal comprise a relatively small portion of the bag in Mexico and Argentina. By contrast, the greatest density of cinnamon teal on earth is found in coastal Peru, where massive flocks assail the decoys along a thin sliver of coastal marsh habitat sandwiched between the Pacific Ocean and the stark, Atacama Desert.

Where the beautiful but otherwise ordinary cinnamon really earns its place in a unique game bird listing may be in the company it keeps. In addition to the normal line-up of Pacific and Central flyway species, associated species in western Mexico include the Mexican duck, a non-migrant that is very closely related to the mallard that exists in greatest abundance in Mexico's Yaqui Valley, and the black brant, which primarily overwinters along the Sea of Cortez.

In Peru's coastal marshlands, white-cheeked pintails accompany cinnamon teal in the hunting bag, and at higher elevations within Peru's Andes Mountains are puna teal, crested ducks, sharp-winged teal and Andean geese, all of which are usually spot-and-stalked.



Bar-Headed Goose

Written about in ancient and mythological literature, bar-headed geese migrate at high altitudes through the Himalayan Mountains, where there's only about 10 percent the amount of oxygen found at sea level. Their spring migration from wintering grounds in southern Asia, principally near the Pakistan and India interface, take them through some of the most unique places you'll ever hunt waterfowl.

The remote grassland steppe of central Mongolia appears as beautifully uninhabited as ever. More than 40 percent of the country's population lives in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Nomadic *ger* and horse culture traditions persist. There are three million citizens, 30 million head of livestock and not a single strand of barbed wire to be found. And where there's water, agriculture or both, there exists impressive numbers of unique waterfowl such as the elegant bar-headed goose, which can be hunted nearly nowhere else on earth.

Breeding pairs of bar-heads seem to key in on tiny, alkaline springs nestled among secluded pockets of sand dunes where they feed on protein-rich fairy shrimp. Finding them takes scouting and a little luck. Ruddy and common shelducks, swan geese, Eurasian wigeons are endemic Asian species commonly taken in association with bar-headed geese. Depending on migrational timing, other possible species include garganey teal and eastern spot-billed ducks.

Binoculars, patience and improvised game plans are important elements for successfully hunting in the cultural absence of a waterfowl hunting tradition. Finding waterfowl among a landscape as vast as Mongolia can be like finding the proverbial needle in a haystack, and must then be hunted using bare essentials because no matter what you packed, most of your tool box is sitting back home 6,800 miles away, which is really one of the most beautiful aspects of the entire experience. Of any hunting experience. It's how the game is played. 🐾








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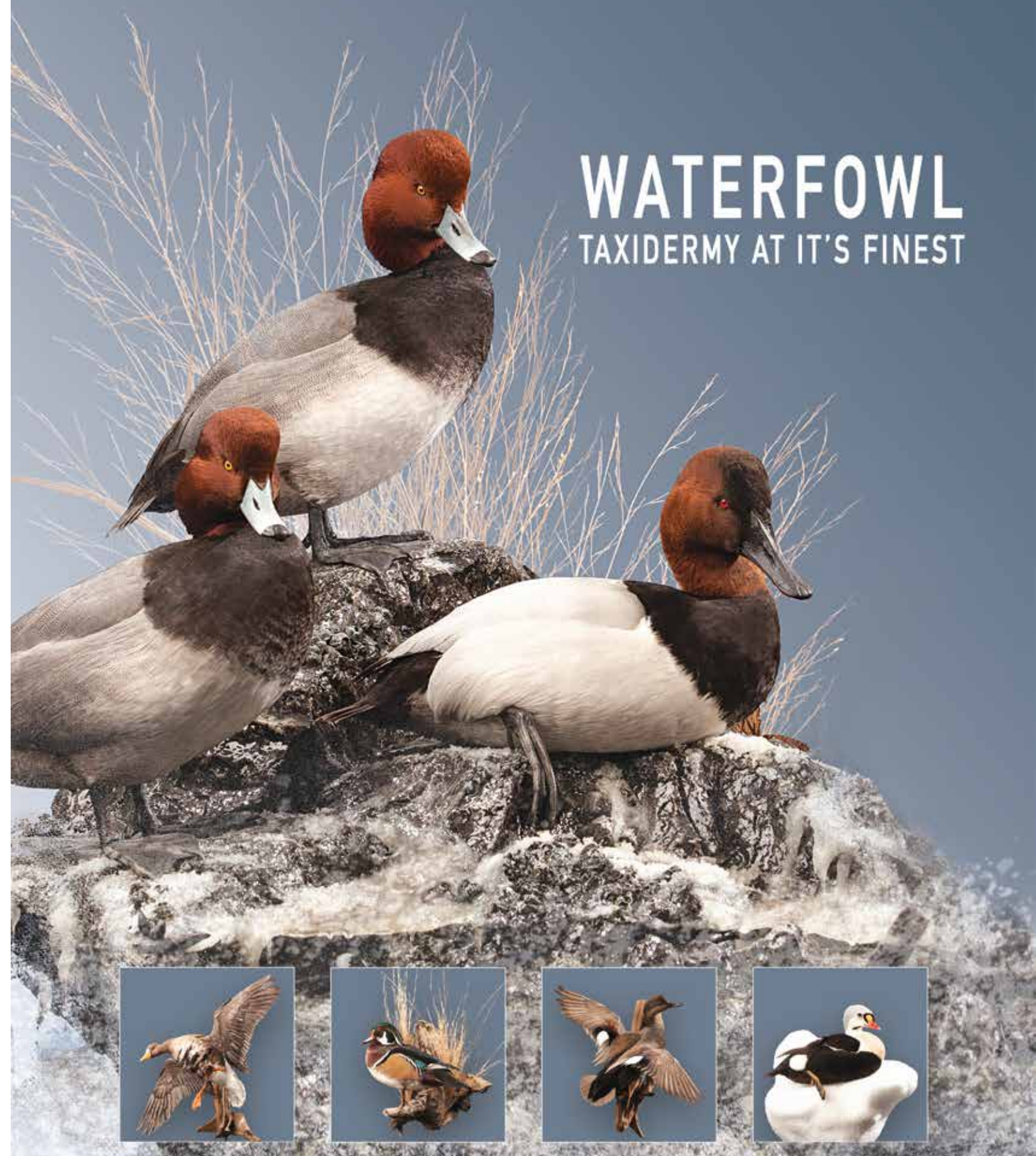


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BY ALEX ROBINSON

THE FLYWAY RAMBLER



Russell slogs through a red gum swamp in Victoria Province, Australia.

RAMSEY RUSSELL IS A SOUTHERN SALESMAN, AN ENTREPRENEUR, AND AN OLD-SCHOOL DUCK SLAYER. HE'S ALSO OPENING NEW HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES AROUND THE GLOBE FOR AMERICAN WATERFOWLERS

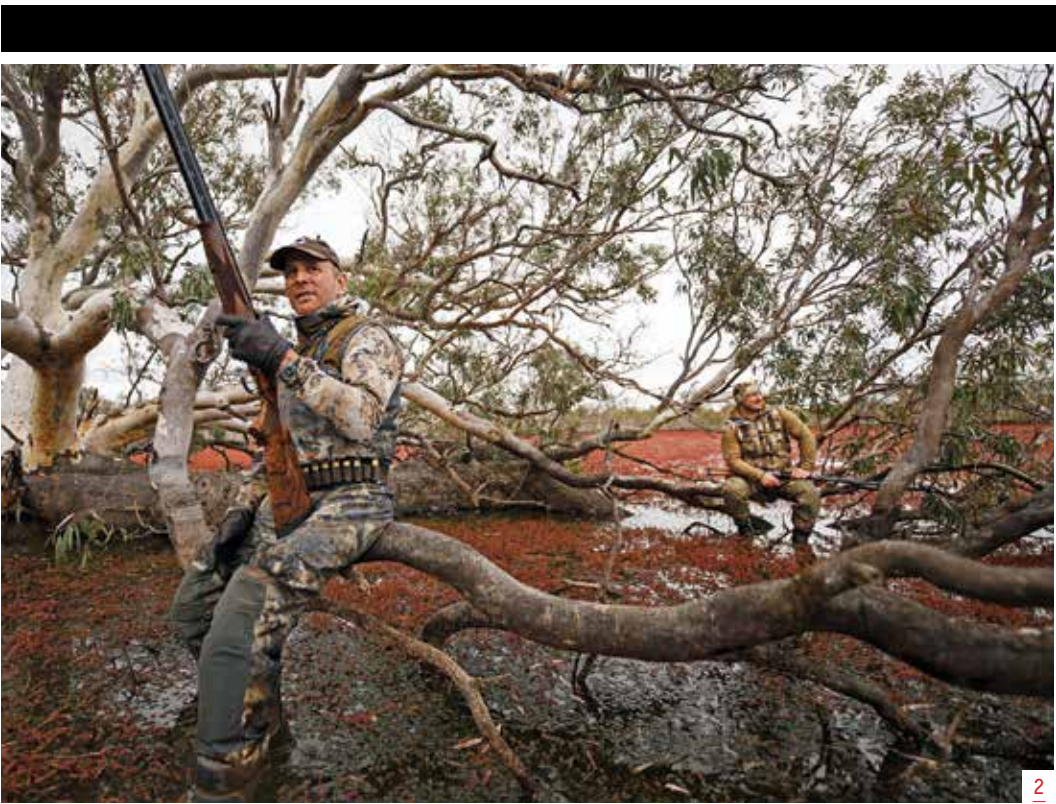


“IF I COULD BE REINCARNATED, I’D COME BACK AS A USED-CAR SALESMAN,” **RAMSEY RUSSELL** SAYS TO ME.



1

(1) A pink-eared duck in Australia. (2) Hunting flooded timber for Pacific black ducks and grey teal in the land Down Under. (3) The author (far right) with Russell and his dog Cooper after a successful hunt in Mexico. (4) Push-poling through a massive wetland in Azerbaijan. (5) Waiting for Barrow’s goldeneye in coastal Alaska. (6) The guide staff, who are servants to a feudal lord, in Pakistan.



2



3



4



5



6

It’s 5 a.m., and we’re barreling down a dark highway in Obregon, Mexico. Russell, 53, is explaining how it would be easier to sell used cars than the international waterfowl hunts he deals with in his current gig as a booking agent (though he hates that term). I’m pretty sure he’s only halfkidding. “People go in to buy a car, and they know what they want,” he says. “Me, I’ve got to sell the experience.”

Later that morning, a handful of other writers, some reps from Benelli, and I enjoy the most epic pintail shoot I’ll ever be a part of. Drakes in their breeding plumage, long sprigs trailing behind, float out of the clear-blue sky and cup into a decoy spread set along a tidal beach. Tucked into a mangrove blind, my hunting partner and I take turns shooting until we have our limits, then we sit back and watch the spec-

tacle of teal, wigeon, pintails, redheads, and shorebirds whip down the shoreline. By the time we get picked up for lunch, we’re sold on the Ramsey Russell experience.

We’re here on the west coast of Mexico hunting wintering ducks thanks to Russell’s connection to Frank Ruiz, an outfitter who turned his family home into a hunting lodge.

Russell sends his clients to outfitters like Ruiz all over the world. Classic wing-shooting destinations such as Mexico and Argentina are entry-level trips for Russell’s hunters. Think more exotic: shelducks in Mongolia, garganey in Azerbaijan, barnacle geese in the Netherlands, red-billed teal in South Africa. Russell hunts all of these destinations before he sends clients to them.

Not all of his trips are high-volume shoots like the one we experienced in Mexico. On

an Alaska king eider hunt, for example, you shoot only a few ducks per day. What all of Russell’s hunts have in common, though, is that they are a blend of adventure travel and species-collecting expedition.

And the trips are not as expensive as you might think. An average hunt costs about \$6,000, which isn’t chump change, but it’s still cheaper than almost any international big-game hunt, Russell reasons on our drive back after the morning shoot. His mission is to create a passion (and a market) for adventure waterfowl hunting. He wants to foster a shift away from the posh international hunt clubs.

“These are duck hunts for real duck hunters,” Russell says. “You’re not traveling around the world to smoke fat cigars and eat edible art. You’re going to hunt. If you want all that other shit, take your wife to Italy.”

LIFE IS SHORT

Like any great outfitter, guide, or booking agent, Russell can cut up with a group of new hunters as if they’re old buddies. He knows that if a hunt isn’t going well and tensions are high, a good joke or witty story can save the day. Over the years, he’s developed an arsenal of quips:

“My favorite duck is the next one over the decoys”—for when pintails aren’t working, but shovelers are dive-bombing into the decoys.

“I’d agree with you, but then we’d both be wrong”—for defusing an argument with a client.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: ED WALL (INSET)

JOHNNY FELTOVIC (ALASKA)

“It’s like walking through the pages of *National Geographic* with a shotgun”—for selling the idea of a hunt in a far-flung destination.

Russell was born in Mississippi, where his grandpa taught him to love hunting and fishing. He was tagging along on dove hunts at 8 years old. Soon enough, he was immersed in the world of duck hunting Mississippi River backwaters. Then, when he was 15, Russell was nearly killed in a freak accident. He was cleaning a paintbrush with gasoline when a water-heater pilot light caught the fumes and erupted in a fiery explosion. Russell suffered second- and third-degree burns on three-quarters of his body, but he beat the 8 percent chance of survival the doctors gave him.

Most of us save the concept of “bucket-list trips” for the twilight of our hunting career. We’re only willing to roll the dice once we acknowledge that time is running out. But Russell faced his own mortality when he was a kid. During a long, torturous recovery, the teenager forged a saying that became his personal creed and would later become his business slogan: “Life is short, get ducks.”

Eventually, Russell earned a forestry degree and landed a job with the federal government. When he worked up enough scratch, he started traveling to hunt waterfowl in Canada and Argentina. He made

“THESE ARE DUCK HUNTS FOR REAL DUCK HUNTERS. IF YOU WANT ALL THAT OTHER SHIT, TAKE YOUR WIFE TO ITALY.”

his first international trip to Saskatchewan in 1998.

Russell has the ideal temperament to captain a crew of duck hunters. He’s intense enough to make sure everyone brings their A-game (“Turn off the damn phone and play for keeps”), but he’s also experienced enough to know that the whole point of the thing is to have a good time—and he’s unabashed about his love for shooting ducks (“Hell yeah, shooting ducks is fun, and hell yeah, it’s conservation”). So, Russell had no problem recruiting buddies to go with him abroad. He started bringing so many other hunters along that an outfitter convinced him to open a

part-time booking-agency business. Then, in 2010, Russell went full-time with his site, getducks.com.

GREENHEADS INTERNATIONAL

Russell has learned some straightforward lessons during his world travels: Don’t drink the milk in Pakistan, and keep your firearms documentation on your person when you go through customs in China.

But the biggest takeaway cuts deeper, to the culture of American waterfowl hunting. Generally, we kill fewer ducks per hunt than you can almost anywhere else in the world, and yet we’re the ones obsessed with numbers.

That’s because the strict limits on how many ducks and how many of each species we can kill forces American waterfowlers to be careful counters. Each dead bird is one notch closer to a

ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Setting up a morning hunt in a wild marsh in northern Argentina.

limit. A full limit means the end of the hunt, and complete success.

As Russell says: “It’s almost like if you only shoot three ducks, you lost. It’s made to feel like if you’re not killing a limit, you’re not having fun.”

Of course, these limits are good and necessary for conservation. In the U.S., we have much higher hunter-density numbers than in other parts of the world. There are about 1 million U.S. waterfowlers. In comparison, only a few hundred Americans travel to the Yaqi Valley in Mexico to hunt ducks each winter, according to Russell. Those few hundred hunters end up harvesting a statistically insignificant number of ducks, even if they’re bringing back a whole pile of birds each day.

In the rest of the world, waterfowl hunting for sport isn’t as common, and neither are limits or hunting pressure. In some corners of the world, you set your own limit. One of Russell’s hunts in Pakistan drives home the point.

He was invited by a feudal lord to hunt a sprawling marsh along the Indus River (one of the longest rivers in Asia, which serves as a major flyway). The lord had heard that the American was a crack shot, so he made his way down to the blind to watch. He gave Russell a few boxes of shells from his personal stash—German-made, 3-inch lead loads—and insisted that Russell take long shots that most American hunters would consider sky blasting.

“If you want to hunt in Pakistan, you must shoot like a Pakistani,” the lord said.

So, Russell started burning through shells, and once he got the long lead figured out,

birds rained from the sky. Russell wasn’t counting but figures he killed more ducks that day than most American waterfowlers shoot in a season. Each bird was recovered diligently (meat doesn’t go to waste in Pakistan), and Russell was immersed in a totally different hunting culture. To the Pakistanis, the most important aspect of the hunt was shooting ability.

The upshot? You can’t travel halfway across the world and expect locals to have the same hunting values as you do.

And over time, Russell’s clients have developed new hunting values.

“In the beginning, the number-one question clients would ask is, ‘How many ducks can I shoot?’” Russell says. “Now hardly anyone asks that. Now everyone

Many times, Russell hunts with locals who speak a different language from him. This minimizes the small talk, but they still communicate through hand signals and gestures in the duck hunter’s common language: *Fix the hide, the ducks are flaring; tweak the spread, they’re not committing close enough; good shot, here come some more birds.*

“You can put four people from anywhere in the world together in a blind, and they’ll have more in common than they’ll have differences, because they’re hunters.”

THE NEXT MIGRATION

On our last day in Mexico, we opt to hunt Pacific brant in a tidal flat of the Sea of Cortez. Shortly after sunrise, the birds beeline for our decoys, low and tight, flying like giant black teal in slow motion. After two volleys, Russell’s 9-year-old Lab, Cooper, has a pile of retrieving work to do. Cooper is a registered service dog, and she’s traveled the world with Russell. This is the last big tour of her career.

Next, we head to a backwater to hunt teal, and for the first time, Russell sets aside his shotgun.

As we pick off teal one at a time, Cooper methodically plucks our birds out of the marsh. She needs no direction from Russell, and is mostly too deaf to hear him anyway. She retrieves because it’s in her blood. It’s what she’s always done.

Meanwhile, Russell contemplates the future of waterfowling. He plans to target millennials with his international duck-hunting trips. This demographic has proven willing to spend more on travel than any other expense. He’s banking

on the idea that the groups of hardcore young guns you see patrolling the goose fields of every Midwest town will one day want to chase birds in Canada, Mexico, or Russia.

Getting this next generation of hunters excited about waterfowling and conservation on a global scale, he hopes, will be his legacy.

“Someday, I don’t want my headstone to read, ‘Here lies Ramsey Russell: One million dead ducks,’” Russell says. “There has to be more to it than that. Don’t you think?”



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