



I've been waiting for our first frost of the year which for some of us means its time to get round the blackthorn bushes and see how the sloes have done. Some years fair better than others and I am glad to say that eventually I came across 3 bushes that gave me all the berries required. Fife region kindly planted an abundance of these small trees, they can be found in between apple, cherry, and some of the more common trees across the kingdom. Seeing blackbirds, redwings, thrushes and others feasting on various berries trees I thought it best to get out there collecting even though there has been no frost, better safe than sorry!!

Making the brew is a simple task and six weeks maturing is all that is required with that in mind if you get out there now it will be ready for Christmas or new year shoot.

Take a 70cl bottle of gin drink half of it, if your still standing add 3/4lb of berries and top up with 130g of sugar, don't worry it will all fit in! place the bottle some where safe, shake the bottle once a day for the first seven days then once a week for the remaining five weeks, job almost done. Pour contents into clean jug via coffee filter or simple kitchen toweling, it will now be crystal clear and ready to be put into whatever you like.

Dispose of used berries or make sloe chocolate with them honest !! (JM)



My first outing for duck this season took me out along the shore edge walking in the dark across plick plack for 40 min or so before finally arriving at an old favourite spot of mine. There was a fine breeze blowing and the tide was way out, things looked promising. That first 20 min of grey dark before morning is for me by far the wildfowlers favourite and most exciting time especially for duck. Looking towards the east I was hoping to pick up the shapes of flying birds coming against the wind towards me. Some small packs of teal came first low over the mud flats, too low and dark for me to see the bead on the end of my barrel. Mallard were next a group of four passing out of range to my left then two to my right perfect height but wide. The morning light was fast appearing and my chances for a bird were slowly running out when out in front two mallards came directly towards me, up slowly with the browning I allowed approx a metre in front and at the first shot the nearest bird wobbled and on the second it folded coming down onto the mud just short of the river.

As so often happens no more chances came my way, 20 min of head spinning like a radar dish was over it was time for home, cleaning the mud off the male bird I placed it into the game bag delighted with my first foray on the estuary

As I came away I noticed skeins of pinkfoot about a mile away flying over another favourite spot of mine, I was already in my mind planning my next morning flight I will keep that story for another time.

TVWA Secretary JM