

When fog changes everything



Even when previous reconnaissance has been carried out on mornings when that misty stuff comes along you can forget all that has been learned you've simply got to react on the present conditions you find yourself in. To start with have you set out at an earlier time allowing for driving conditions then before venturing out from the sea wall are you confident on making it back safely, is the tide going out or coming in!! Will you be able to follow footsteps made by yourself or have you crossed several creeks. Phones with navigation apps and a reliable compass are fine but sometimes going back to basics like muddy trails take a bit of beating.

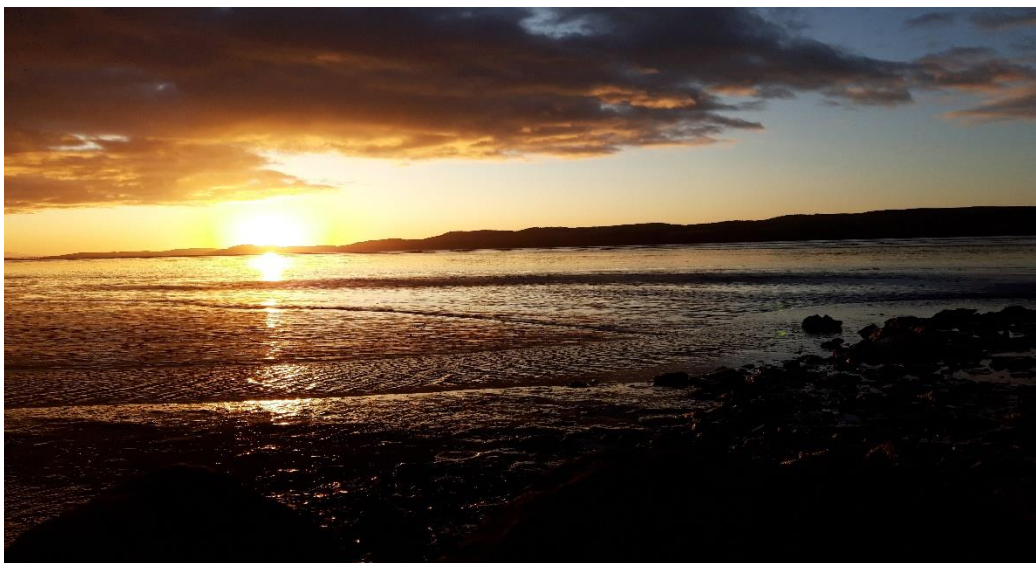
If its geese you are after have they made it into the planned roost that you never managed to check out the night before and what has happened during the night. Once in the chosen spot watching the fog come slowly in can be a we bit daunting for an inexperienced fowler and he or she might be better off staying back at the shore line. For a confident experienced fowler it's an exciting time watching the sea wall and other familiar lights and roads disappear out of sight eventually leaving you alone with no idea when the fog will start clearing!

Just recently I encountered such a morning and it's at times like that whilst awaiting the mist to lift you can't help but think about airports and the familiar tannoy all flights are grounded please await further announcements so it's frustrating for the geese as well who are by now delayed and desperate to fly out to gorge themselves on what Fife as to offer!!

I had anticipated around 2,000 or so pinkfoot coming over me so when within 30 minutes the fog started to lift so did my expectations. Right enough some birds had lifted but not with the familiar high pitched wink wink I was used to. They were well out in front of me and slipping slightly to my right hand side however another small group just behind were slightly closer and offered the best chance, once within range I could tell they were indeed greys, rising from the flat out position which by the way gets harder! as you get older! I picked my selected target and after two shots one bird hit the mussel beds I watched it lay still then quickly got myself back into the ready state!

A few more skeins made their way out of the estuary but not in the Pinkfoot numbers I was expecting nor did any of them offer the chance of a shot and that takes me back to where I started foggy days don't follow any plans you may have but they can give you days you will never forget I love them

* Fog can be dangerous, If in doubt don't go out *



JM