



Just where does the time go, it just seems like yesterday crouched in a narrow gully I watched a handful or so pintail whizzing past me, the safety remained on as they were wide of the mark, close enough though to make out decent tails on the males!

The season has had its highs and lows I can't remember a wetter one! On the positive side a morning flight over the flats with a young Yorkshire fowler provided him with his first duck which happened to be a splendid male pintail a day he or I won't forget.

On the negative side 5 blank days on the trot without pulling the trigger takes a bit of getting used to. That was mainly due to rapid changeable weather and geese that were always in the wrong place!! Which makes it their fault!!

Most of the fields in Fife were completely sodden and with duck ponds and fresh green crops to feed on trips to the foreshore were not really necessary, as for the geese they were feeding late most nights and not coming into the Estuaries until dark. As expected they were in great condition for the table.

I guess me calling days that I have shot nothing as blanks can be a bit misleading, as we all know even days with no shots going off can turn out to reward us with some spectacular results.

On one morning Mr Otter popped up at the rivers edge less than 2 metres from my feet I didn't dare blink for the 5 seconds that he stared at me! Then there was the morning out on the estuary when our largest bird of prey along with its friend drifted right over the top of me, that was followed another evening by the appearance of one of our smaller shy birds coming out for a 30 min paddle before disappearing back into a thick reed bed.



Another morning just reinforced the wonders of nature and the way wildlife is adapting. I had shot a male Wigeon that had fatally come down 10 metres out on an incoming tide, no dog but I knew it would float slowly into me! Not so!

Along came a black backed gull, dropped down picked up the duck lifted it clear from the water and dropped it 20 metres out to sea, this was repeated 5 times taking the wigeon further away from me. It was at that point I realised Wigeon would certainly not be accompanying me back to the car never mind on the menu.

I still can't get used to seeing the Little Egret, one morning I was sure I saw a Large Egret, or was it just a large Little Egret!!!





Now back to real time, it looks like the total ban on lead shot in relation to game should be easy to implement within the 5 year slot, let's hope the manufacturer's and powers that be sort it out once and for all. By that I mean steel or alternatives, non-plastic case, and fibre wads or alternative for steel.

Dates for the Scouts excursion to Mugdrum 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> April

Many thanks for bag returns, keep them coming! We would like very much to get online with the BASC bag returns, so hopefully we can appoint a club bag return officer at our next AGM or at the very least discuss it.

Our club clay shoot will most likely take place at Cluny in May you will be notified on the date nearer the time, this will incorporate selection for the BASC Interclub in June

Remember it's a great time to get out and about checking those tracks and trails before they get hidden by the eventual summer.

Now that the river levels are slowly falling and taking snow melt into the equation it's definitely Spring Salmon time good luck all and tight lines

JM