



Well that seemed an awful short month and before you could say Woodcock forward! another Wildfowling season has slipped past. My last morning left me admiring 2 or 3 thousand pinks skimming the coastal fields cleverly avoiding anyone lying in wait on the local estuary fringes, myself included. Never mind though if life spares us all and world war 3 doesn't happen their grand armies will be seen again later on in mid-September.

A recent snow fall has reminded us that winter isn't completely over and although it cleared quickly there's still time yet for a decent amount to come however I must say it doesn't look likely.

Meantime back on the Tay the Salmon rod is back in action unfortunately only Kelts have been coming into my landing net and yesterday my first complete blank. However to be a bit more positive I've seen some great Spring activities going on like male woodpeckers flying between woods drumming away in anticipation for a female response and Canada geese in their normal pairs a bit like dancing on ice at times, soon they will be selecting their nest site.

On the way to one of the beats famous salmon pools I watched a tractor man ploughing a field with the usual flock of seagulls feasting on whatever would be upturned that's when I smiled at my first sighting of a Heron doing the exact same thing only instead of flying like the gulls he or she was stepping along on stilt like legs which would normally be used in the water when stalking small fish. What does this tell us, I will leave that up to you as I've my own opinion!



The pic above is I am sure what most of us fowlers would call the Wildfowling duck and it's no surprise when Julian Novorol selected these birds for his painting Wigeon over the WAGBI black hut.

I was certainly brought up shooting packs of these whistling ducks as they screamed past over the estuary's in fact it was probably my early training for forward allowance within shotguns, when you aim for the first bird and the 4th or 5th bird comes down it makes you think hopefully!

Over the years my local estuary has seen a decline in their numbers I for one stopped shooting them for my own reasons. Although they are the most sporting to shoot they are not in my opinion the best table bird to take home especially if based on the mud flats. There will be fowlers out there that spend a bit of time and will know exactly how to prepare and cook them, that's for sure, and good on them.

Any way I am certain that shooting is not to blame for their decline, it would be interesting to get some feedback on the Tay system as well as the Eden.

Many thanks for bag returns they never change much over the seasons with very little shot and only a few cartridges fired. Just enjoyable hard graft!

BASC fees have increased no surprise to us all so watch this space!

JM