

## **November 14, 2013 – Aerial Waterfowl Inventory Blog**

Wow, we had a bunch of ducks. Last week's count of the Illinois River was 876,255 total ducks. This was a huge number of birds for recent times. In fact, you would have to go back to 1979, when Tud Crompton was flying the survey, to get a larger number of ducks in the Illinois Valley. Michelle Horath told me last week's number of American green-winged teal, gadwall, and northern shoveler was the highest ever recorded for each of these species since the survey began back in 1948. Frank Bellrose himself never saw that many teal, gadwall, and shoveler. However, it was short lived. The cold weather and northerly wind on Monday and Tuesday forced many of them out of the Illinois Valley. I have displayed a screenshot on Facebook of Doppler radar shortly after sunset on Tuesday night. It was a clear night so the "thunderstorm" you see is actually ducks departing the Illinois River. You can see large masses of birds leaving the Havana/Bath and Chillicothe/Lacon areas of the river. Today's, November 14<sup>th</sup>, count of the Illinois River was 595,055 down 32% from last week, but don't get discouraged. We are still 150% above the 10-yr average. I plan to fly the Mississippi River on Friday November 15<sup>th</sup>, so check back tomorrow to see how many birds we have on the Mississippi.

Stay tuned for more updates next week.....