

## **September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – Aerial Waterfowl Inventory Blog**

We're back at it again! We flew the first teal flight of 2018 on Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>. Blue-winged teal abundance was above average (22%) along the Illinois River for the first week of September and totaled 20,340 teal. We saw average numbers of teal along the central Mississippi River (4,120 birds). The larger concentrations of teal occurred near Chillicothe, the Rice Lake Complex, Clear Lake, Chautauqua NWR, and Emiquon Preserve on the Illinois River and in the Grafton area of the central Mississippi River. Actually, I started seeing appreciable numbers of blue-wings on August 22<sup>nd</sup> while doing some shorebird flights of the Illinois River, and teal abundance has been slowly increasing every week. Wetland habitats and moist-soil vegetation (waterfowl food) along both river systems looked phenomenal this week. Let's hope the remnants of Tropical Storm Gordon don't ruin the bountiful crop of duck groceries out there.

Good Luck with the early teal season opener on September 8<sup>th</sup>! For more information about the waterfowl survey, check out our webpage at [www.bellrose.org](http://www.bellrose.org). Stay tuned for more updates next week.....



Photo 1. The Rice Lake Complex and Woodyard Duck Club.



Photo 2. Moscow Bay.



Photo 3. Sanganois State Fish and Wildlife Area.



Photo 4. Ted Shanks Conservation Area.