

September 14th, 2017 – Aerial Waterfowl Inventory Blog

We flew the second teal flight on Thursday after the fog lifted around 11a.m. Teal abundance actually dropped (5%) along the Illinois River compared to the previous week. We lost about ½ of our blue-winged teal from last week, but American green-winged teal numbers nearly doubled. I estimated 18,420 teal in the Illinois Valley from Hennepin to Meredosia; however, the total was 31% below average. There is some weather hitting the prairies this weekend, but I'm not sure the wind is right to bring in new birds.

A few ducks were using the central Mississippi River where I estimated 5,740 teal (5% below the 10-yr average). Some people I spoke with this week were speculating the blue-winged teal have already moved through, and this week's count of bluewings was low along the Mississippi. Many areas of the Mississippi River from New Boston to Grafton were still dewatered to promote duck food plants, so there wasn't an abundance of shallow water for the teal to muck around in.

I hope everyone remembers that the early Canada goose season closes on Friday, September 15th. Don't forget that when the flocks of honkers start moving around this weekend!

The attached photo shows some teal loafing along the shoreline/mudflat and a few American white pelicans hoping to find some stranded fish to feed upon.

For more information about the waterfowl survey, check out our webpage at www.bellrose.org. Stay tuned for more updates next week.....

