

Waterfowl Hunter Harvest Surveys and
Hunter Observations at Shepody National Wildlife Area
on October 1, 1982



prepared by:

H. P. Barkhouse
October, 1982

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Waterfowl hunter harvest surveys were conducted at Shepody National Wildlife Area on October 1, the opening day of the 1982 waterfowl season in New Brunswick. The survey was conducted by seven Canadian Wildlife Service personnel from the Sackville, New Brunswick office. All three sections of the wildlife area were covered; five survey personnel were stationed at the Germantown Section and one each at the Mary's Point Section and the New Horton Section. The saltmarsh adjacent to the Mary's Point Section was also included.

Hunters were interviewed as they departed from the marshes and the information recorded on data sheets (copy appended). The locations and extents of the three sections of the wildlife area and places of hunter access are shown on Figure 1.

The early morning weather was clear and mild (8-10°C) with light SW winds, but by mid-morning it was mostly overcast with moderate SW winds. The dull weather and winds persisted throughout the rest of the day and light rains began just after darkness fell.

Information on the waterfowl harvest and hunting pressure at Shepody NWA on October 1, 1982 is presented in Tables 1 and 2. A total of 283 waterfowl were harvested by 113 hunters checked at the wildlife area. Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Black Duck accounted for 29.3, 28.6 and 24.0 percent of the harvest, respectively. The only other species taken in appreciable numbers were Ring-necked Duck - 19 and Wood Duck - 17. Smaller numbers of four other species were also harvested (Table 1). The reported crippling loss for the wildlife area was 48 birds.

The most intensive hunting occurred at the Germantown Marsh where 88 hunters recovered 214 ducks. Eleven hunters at Mary's Point harvested

16 waterfowl and 19 hunters at New Horton took 53 birds. Information on waterfowl harvest and hunting pressure at the Germantown Marsh is presented for three components of the area. Sixty-two of the 88 hunters checked at the Germantown Marsh hunted in Impoundments A-D and recovered 150 waterfowl. The majority of hunting in that component of the marsh occurred on and near the cross dikes that separate the impoundments. Hunting pressure and waterfowl harvest was much less in the other two components; however, the success rates were very similar in all three areas (Tables 1 and 2).

The number of hunters checked at the Germantown Marsh was one more than the 87 checked on the opening day of the 1981 season. It was estimated that 9 hunters were not checked in 1981, whereas it is believed that all hunters were contacted in 1982. The 1981 waterfowl harvest was higher with 239 birds reported by the checked hunters and an estimated 25 taken by those that were not checked.

This was the first year that surveys were conducted at the Mary's Point and New Horton Sections. Hunting activity at both those locations was low. Hunting at Mary's Point was restricted almost entirely to the saltmarsh with the waterlevel in the impoundment at Point Horn Creek being low because of a leak in the structure. Hunting pressure at the New Horton Section was surprisingly low with only 7 hunters set up for the early morning shoot. It is anticipated that the hunting pressure will intensify over the next few years as more hunters become aware of this recently flooded marsh.

Information on hunting methods and equipment used by hunters at Shepody NWA on October 1, 1982 is presented in Table 3. A large

percentage, 82.4%, of the parties checked were classified as hunting from blinds. In most cases constructed blinds were used, but also included in this category were those hunting from stationary sites and using natural vegetation for concealment. Less than 20 percent of the parties hunted by jump shooting only, while a number of hunters using blinds also hunted by jump shooting during the period that birds were not very active. Twenty-eight of the 51 parties hunted over decoys, 26 parties used boats and 17 parties were accompanied by dogs.

Nearly 80 percent of the hunters were from the Moncton, River-view, Dieppe area and only 6 were from within 10 miles of the wildlife area (Table 4). This is a typical situation that goes back well before the establishment of the wildlife area.

Eleven banded waterfowl were recovered on opening day at Shepody NWA and information on those recoveries is presented in Table 5.

Hunter observations were conducted at the Germantown Marsh Section of Shepody NWA on October 1, 1982. Information was obtained on only a few parties and in most cases entire hunts were not observed. The information cannot be considered to reveal the complete hunting situation at the Germantown Marsh, but it does provide a good indication of nature of the hunting activity. The data was recorded on the appended form. The following gives a brief account of each observation that was conducted:

1. Party of 6 hunters observed from 0640 to 1000 hrs. (3hr. 20 min.).

The 6 hunters were located in 3 separate, but closely situated, blinds on the cross dike between Impoundments B and C. The first shots were recorded at 0641 hrs. but it was too dark for the observer to determine what was being shot at and the results of the shooting until 0702 hrs. From 0641 to 0701 hrs. a total of 35 shots were fired. From 0702 to 1000 hrs. another 179 shots were fired at a total of 75+ birds. During that time 12 birds were brought down and of those 7 were retrieved. This equates to 1 retrieved bird for every 25.6 shots fired and a crippling loss of 41.7% (5 of 12). The hunters did not have a dog or a boat and could not search for or retrieve birds that fell across the burrow pits until aided by another party of hunters with a canoe.

2. Party of 2 hunters observed from 0640 to 0810 hrs. (1 hr. 30 min.)

The hunters were in a blind on the cross dike between Impoundments A and B. The first shots were recorded at 0650 hrs. A total of 22 shots were fired at 10 birds. Three birds were brought down and all were retrieved. Two of the three birds were retrieved by a dog with hunters in a nearby blind (probably hunting companions). There was no crippling loss and the shooting success was 1 bird for 7.3 shots.

3. Party of 2 hunters observed from 0657 to 0830 hrs. (1 hr. 33 min.)

The hunters were in a blind on the natural marsh SW of Impoundment E. The first shots were recorded at 0657. A total of 13 shots were fired at 4+ birds. Two birds were brought down and both were retrieved. A dog was used to retrieve the birds. There was no crippling loss and the shooting success was 1 bird per 6.5 shots.

4. Party of 3 hunters observed from 0650 to 0730 hrs. (40 min.)

The hunters were in a blind on the main dike of Impoundment A. The first shots were recorded at 0655 hrs. A total of 4 shots were fired at 4 birds. Two birds were brought down and both were retrieved. A dog was used to retrieve the birds. There was no crippling loss and the shooting success was 1 bird per 2.0 shots.

5. Party of 5 hunters observed from 1530 to 1552 (22 min.)

The hunters were in a blind on the cross dike between Impoundments B and C. A total of 11 shots were fired at 6 birds. No birds were brought down.

6. Party of 2 hunters observed from 1600 to 1900 hrs. (3 hrs.)

The hunters were in a blind in Impoundment C. They were shooting over decoys and had a boat and a dog. A total of 44 shots were fired at 17 birds. Five birds were brought down of which 2 were recovered immediately. The status of 2 was unknown, and 1 was not searched for. The crippling loss is not known and the shooting success was 1 bird per 8.9 shots.

A total of 36 hunter hours were observed. During that time 308 shots were fired and 16 birds were retrieved and the status of 2 was unknown. This equates to 1 bird per 2.2 hunter hours which is similar to the 1 bird per 2.7 hunter hours from the hunter survey data for the Germantown Section. It also equates to 1 retrieved bird per 19.3 shots fired. Using this value to extrapolate for the entire hunt at the Germantown Marsh gives a figure of 4140 shots (214 retrieved birds x 19.3) or 48 shots/hunter.

Survey personnel were: Bruce Johnson, Jocelyne Gauvin, Al Smith, Dale Morton, Randy Hicks, Ron Hounsell, Peter Barkhouse.

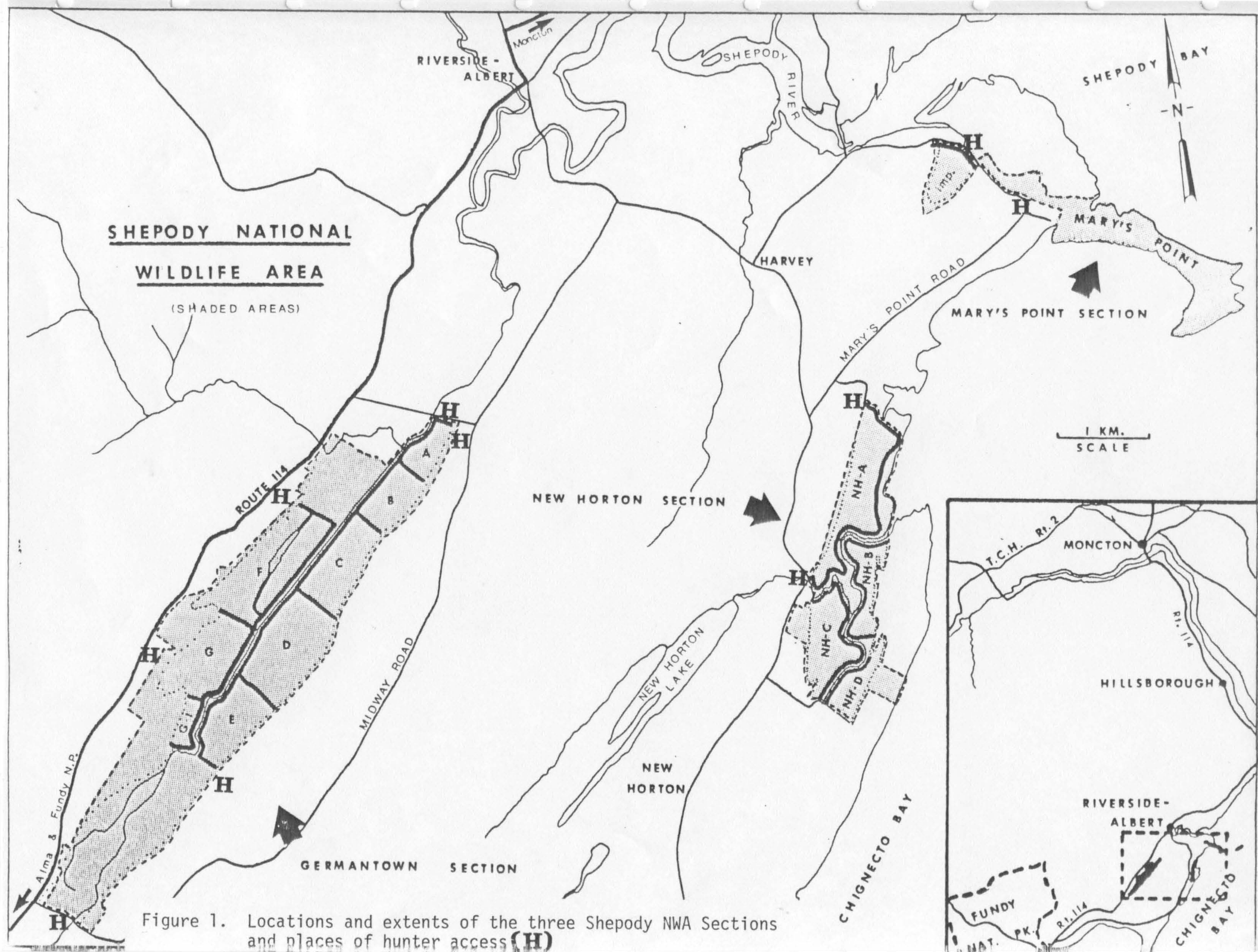


Figure 1. Locations and extents of the three Shepody NWA Sections and places of hunter access (H)

Table 1. Waterfowl Harvested at Shepody NWA, October 1, 1982 and Reported Crippling Loss

Species	GERMANTOWN			Total	Mary's Point	New Horton	Total	Percent	Reported Crippling loss
	Imp. A-D	Imp. E & Natural	Imp. F & G						
Black Duck	28	17	1	46	10	12	68	24.0	17
Pintail	1	-	-	1	1	4	6	2.1	-
Green-winged Teal	47	7	10	64	4	15	83	29.3	26
Blue-winged Teal	45	7	13	65	1	15	81	28.6	
American Wigeon	1	2	-	3	-	2	5	1.8	-
Northern Shoveler	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.4	-
Wood Duck	14	2	-	16	-	1	17	6.0	1
Ring-necked Duck	12	1	3	16	-	3	19	6.7	1
Hooded Merganser	2	1	-	3	-	-	3	1.1	-
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Total	150	37	27	214	16	53	283	100	48

Table 2. Number of Hunters, Hours Hunted and Success Rate at Shepody National Wildlife Area, October 1, 1982.

	Germantown			Total	Mary's Point	New Horton	Total
	Imp. A-D	Imp. E & Natural	Imp. F & G				
Number of Hunters Checked	62	16	10	88	11	14(19)*	113
Number of Hours Hunted	406	118	47	571	35	54	660
Success Rate (birds/hunter)	2.4	2.3	2.7	2.4	1.5	2.8	2.5
Number of Hunters not Checked	-	-	-	-	-	2**	2

* 5 hunters checked at New Horton had previously hunted and had been checked on other sections of Shepody NWA (Mary's Point - 2; Germantown - 3)

** 2 hunters not checked at New Horton were from New Horton (no vehicle). They hunted in blinds on small islands in Impoundment C.

Table 3. Hunting Methods and Equipment Used by Hunters at Shepody National Wildlife Area, October 1, 1982

	Germantown			Total	Mary's Point	New Horton	Total	Percent
	Imp. A-D	Imp. E & Natural	Imp. F & G					
Number of Parties Checked	25	7	4	36	5	10	51	
Number of Parties Using Blinds	23	6	4	33	3	6	42	82.4
Number of Parties Using Decoys	14	5	2	21	3	4	28	54.9
Number of Parties Using Dogs	7	5	1	13	-	4	17	33.3
Number of Parties Using Boats	14	6	1	21	1	4	26	50.9
Number of Parties Jump Shooting	2	1	-	3	2	4	9	17.6

Note: A number of hunters using blinds also hunted by jump shooting during the time that birds were not active 0930-1600 hrs. Some parties recorded as using blinds actually used only natural vegetation for concealment. Blinds in general were not well constructed and natural vegetation was often as effective or more effective.

Table 4. Place of Residence of Hunters at Shepody National Wildlife Area, October 1, 1982.

Place	Number of Hunters	Percent
Moncton	57	50.4
Riverview	32	28.5
Dieppe	1	0.9
Hillsborough	5	4.4
Salisbury	5	4.4
Elgin	2	1.7
Lower Coverdale	2	1.7
Sackville	1	0.9
Fredericton	1	0.9
Oromocto	1	0.9
Riverside-Albert	3	2.7
Hopewell Hill	1	0.9
New Horton	2	1.7
Total	113	100

Table 5. Banded Birds Recovered at Shepody National Wildlife Area,
October 1, 1982.

Species	Band Number	Hunter's Name and Address
Black Duck	1187-31156	Wyatt Hosman, R.R. #3, Salisbury, N.B. EOA 3E7
Black Duck	1237-56390	Pat Hicks, 105 Canusa Dr., Riverview, N.B.
Blue-winged Teal	815-34521	Charles Polley, 62 Deepwood St., Moncton, N.B. E1A 4Z3
Blue-winged Teal	845-16160	Robert Richard, 51 Walsh St., Moncton, N.B.
Blue-winged Teal	815-08306	John Wilson, 47 Burbank St., Moncton, N.B.
Blue-winged Teal	845-16134	Ron Hargrove, 201 Havelock Rd., Riverview, N.B.
Blue-winged Teal	845-16137	E. Articri, 152 Ayer Ave., Moncton, N.B. E1C 8G8
Blue-winged Teal	845-16105	Dan Pellock, Hillsborough, N.B. EOA 1X0
Blue-winged Teal	755-39164	John Carruthers, MacLaughlin Rd., Moncton, N.B.
Wood Duck	866-71731	Arden Beaumont, Box 244, Hillsborough, N.B.
Wood Duck	866-71732	Kevin Robinson, 91 Canusa Dr., Riverview, N.B.

