

Good Weather Brings More Ducks To State

LANSING — Michigan's weather this season is apparently more to the liking of ducks than it was a year ago because state and federal game men counted nearly 61,000 birds wintering in Lower Peninsula open waters in early January.

Latest duck sightings were up about 24,000 from January, 1967, when many of the state's wintering areas for waterfowl were spaled shut with ice.

As every winter, the most recent duck tallies by personnel of the Michigan Conservation Department and U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife were part of a continent-wide inventory designed to measure the birds' brood stock for this spring.

Despite a 65 per cent increase in the number of birds they saw, Department game men are not jumping to any conclusions that duck populations may be substantially higher this year.

AS A MATTER of fact, their recent contacts with game men in other states indicate that duck numbers may actually be down in light of the poor seasons reported in many other parts of the Mississippi Flyway.

"About the only thing we can say for sure at this point is that our latest survey counts directly reflect weather conditions, not duck abundance," reports Ed Mikula, the Department's waterfowl specialist.

"We've learned from experience," he adds, "that when wintering areas freeze up like they did last year, we don't have as many birds as when there are open waters."

THIS WINTER'S most significant change from 1967 was a 23,000 increase in scaup, most of which were found concentrating in open waters of the Lower Detroit River. The river's bigger buildup of scaup almost singly accounted for Lower Michigan's higher overall count.

Mikula notes that more scaup have been using the Detroit River in the fall during recent years, and it appears that when conditions remain open, many of them are staying there through the cold-weather months.

Also seen in greater numbers this January were canvasbacks and mallards. Canvasbacks were estimated at nearly 9,000 as against about 1,500 a year ago while mallard numbers were placed at about 7,000, some 200 higher than in 1967.

All other species of ducks —black ducks, buffleheads, redhead ducks, goldeneyes, mergansers—were below last winter's levels.

MIKULA REPORTS that he and other Department game men won't know what Michigan's counts mean in terms of duck up or down until survey results of all other states can be pieced together into one big picture for the entire continent.

As a joint phase of their winter waterfowl inventory,

state and federal game men reported seeing 2,850 Canada geese and 40 swans in this state. Last year, they counted nearly 6,000 honkers and 295 swans.

Unlike ducks, Canada geese are essentially upland feeders and Mikula speculates that more of them were pushed south than a year ago by snow cover which blanketed the survey areas during last month's survey.

Kiddie Klan Organizing In South

Special To The Observer ATLANTA, Ga. — Whitesheeted Ku Klux Klan organizers are recruiting youngsters, to carry on the work and traditions steeped in racial bigotry.

They promise the Klan Youth Corps class-order military drill and schooling in the dark arts of harassment.

The Klan Youth Corps is part of today's new action Ku Klux Klan, still the biggest of all hate organizations, black or white. Dues are \$2 in the youth corps, payable when you can get it, and there are no uniforms to buy that cannot be made at home with a bedsheet.

Smoother and slicker than before, the Klan is cropping up in such unexpected places as the Model Cities Program, a showcase federal plan to revitalize the nation's cities.

In Atlanta, Calvin Craig, a big, six-footer fond of pistols and trained, he says, in Klan sniper and Molotov cocktail schools, has taken over a sizable portion of the Model Cities program.

Craig is the Grand Dragon of the United Klans of America in Georgia, a branch of the United Klans headed by Robert Shelton of Tuscaloosa, Ala. The UKA's 15,000 members make it the biggest of all the Klans.

CRAIG LIKES to boast also of his success in another new field for the Klan, voter registration. Through a front group, the Georgia Voter Registration Committee, Craig says he rivals the League of Women Voters and the AFL-CIO in registering "the right kind" of voters.

Two years ago, according to estimates by the House Un-American Activities Committee, there were 17,000 Klansmen in 18 states. The membership rolls go up and down like popularity polls each year.

But, the significance of the Klan, as with militant black groups, lies not in its numbers but in its influence among whites, in its isolated acts of terrorism, and in its ability to provoke violent responses among whites and blacks.

If it were not for its durable terrorist arm, says the House committee, the pool hall loungers and psychopaths that fill much of the Klan ranks could be dismissed as ludicrous children playing at secret codes and war games.

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