

THE SHIAWASSEE SPORTSMAN

NEWSLETTER #80 SUMMER 2007

Welcome Back!

If this is your first newsletter in a while it probably means that you are not a current member of the SFCHA. Well, we have sent this newsletter out to many of our past members in an effort to bring you up to date on the work and projects we have been involved with. And to encourage you to renew your membership with this wonderful association by joining us at this years annual banquet. After all, the amount of work we can afford to do and the amount of influence we have as an organization is a direct product of our membership size. If you are already a current member of the SFCHA and you know someone who may be interested in the work we do on the area bring them to the banquet. It provides a lot of great information on the upcoming season and the flats itself. Not to mention... it's a great time!

SFCHA ANNUAL BANQUET - KEVIN SIESS

This years SFCHA banquet will be held on Thursday, September 13th at the Albee Township Community Center. Attached to this newsletter you will find a flyer with the ticket form and all the information.



The format will be similar to years past with a few minor changes:

- This year youth tickets for the banquet will be available to purchase for \$20. A youth is considered anyone under 16 years of age (same as the youth hunt cutoff)
- The largest raffle ticket package (\$300 receives \$500 in tickets) will only be available if you choose to prepay for it with your banquet ticket. The \$100 (\$140 in tickets) package and the \$50 (\$60 in

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FLOODED WOODS 2007 HABITAT EVALUATION - BRIAN SIESS

An extended wading tour of the flooded woods was done on Saturday 5/26/07 for the purpose of evaluating purple loosestrife growth, galerucella beetle activity, successional plant development, and river channel changes. Purple loosestrife germination this year is estimated at 10 – 20% of peak densities which were noted 6 years ago. Remaining growth is in small clusters growing out of root structures carried over from previous years and are widely dispersed. No new seed-germinations were noted. Arrowhead, smartweed, and button bush are rapidly expanding to fill the voids where loosestrife once out-competed them. New button bush growth is estimated to be 200% of 2006 observations.

Galerucella beetle activity was the highest ever observed from a May hatch. Every plant had been significantly damaged from beetle feeding activity, with 5 – 20 beetles per plant observed. Extensive breeding activity indicates that this hatch is nearing the end of its life cycle.



From previous year observations, a second hatch of malar population density is expected around June 10th which will be followed by a massive hatch around July 15th. Once again, it is highly unlikely that any loosestrife will survive the July hatch this year and no viable seed will be produced. The beetles

have now demonstrated that they have adapted to the highly variable winter flooding regime in this unit and are capable of surviving in numbers sufficient to contain loosestrife growth for the foreseeable future.

River flow continues to disperse into ever growing secondary channels which begin immediately downstream of the transition section. The old mainstream channel is now 100% blocked by debris and siltation approx .5 miles from the south dike. The small channels are providing increased wetland habitat through the spring and summer. We jumped an estimated 300 mallards (mainly drakes) and many wood ducks who simply relocated within the unit as we walked.

End of article

Shiawassee River State Game Area Late Spring Early Summer Report—Vic Weigold

(06/18/07)

Above average rainfall for the months of April, May and early June required personnel to run pumps for dewatering fields right through the 6th of June. During the month of April we received 4 inches of rain with cool temperatures throughout the month. On April 11th we received two inches of snow that stuck around for three days. The Shiawassee River remained high from 1st of March until mid June. The high river levels did not allow us to gravity flow water out of the farm units thus requiring us to do more pumping to keep fields low. For the month of May we received 3.5 inches of rain, but again cool wet weather delayed planting. The following is a breakdown of condition field by field at the time of the article.

1-5

120 feet wide corn strips were planted on May 24th. On June 11th 20 feet strips of sorghum were planted on both sides of the corn strip. The corn is now 8-10 inches tall and the sorghum is just starting to germinate. The corn is a good solid stand at this time. The corn strips were moved one spot to the west of last years strips.

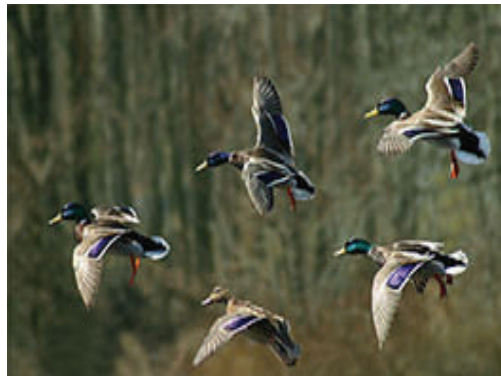
6-14

This field is sharecropped and the entire field this year is planted wall to wall corn. This planting in this field started on

May 10th and was finished on the 11th of May. The corn in this field is average 24 inches tall and a good solid stand. The corn strips in this field will be moved 240 feet to the west of last years strips.

29

This marsh has been kept full all spring and will be kept full all summer. We did replace the boards in the control structure to prevent accidental drainage of this unit.



30-38

This field is sharecropped and the farmers share is planted to soybeans. This field was planted on May 23rd and the corn is now on the average of 16 inches tall. The corn strips are 120 feet wide and will be moved directly to the west of last years corn strip.

39-48

Corn in this unit is averaging 12 inches tall. This corn strip is 120 feet wide and was planted on May 24th. This corn strip was moved directly to the west of

last years strip.

55-60

This unit is farmed by a share-cropper and was planted entirely to corn. This field was planted on May the 13th and now stands approximately 20 inches tall. The corn strips for cover will be moved directly to the west of last years strip. This is also a good solid stand of corn and the strips will be 120 feet wide.

61-66

This field was planted on May 28th and the corn is now 6 inches tall. The corn strips are 120 feet wide and have been moved to the north of last years strip.

67-76

This unit was drained in the spring for tube replacement and some dike work on the west side of the unit. Our work plans call for two tubes to be replaced in this unit and also to try and create some openings with the dozer yet this summer. This unit is still dry at this time.

Prior rd. refuges

We have again drained down the South East refuge this year, we will broadcast millet in this unit sometime in mid July. We have also drained down the northwest moist soil unit to try and control the cattail growth and promote better moist soils plant growth. We will disk down cattail when conditions allow us to and do some broadcast seeding of millet.

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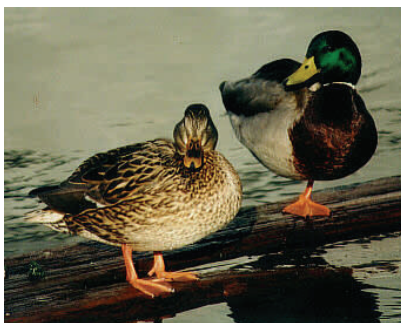
SFCHA Annual Banquet continued from page 1.

tickets) package will still be available for purchase at the dinner.

- If you prefer, you can purchase your dinner ticket online through the SFCHA website: **WWW.shiawasseefflats.com** for those who do buy their ticket over the internet please remember to include the name or names and addresses of the people you are purchasing the tickets for and they will be

waiting for you when you arrive at the banquet.

- If your banquet party consists of 8 or more people than you will



be entitled to a reserved table at the dinner.

Of course one of the things that makes our banquet so successful is the quality and quantity of prizes at the raffle tables. If you would like to donate anything to this years banquet you can contact Dean Gross at 989-845-5329. All donors will be given a receipt for the cash value of their contribution and be recognized in the dinner pamphlet.

Shiawassee River State Game Area Late Spring Early Summer Report—continued

77-117

The loosestrife beetles have had an amazing first hatch in this unit, almost of the loosestrife plants have been stripped of the vegetation and we are seeing very promising establishments of moist soils plants. We will be doing some modifications of the spillways at the west entrance to the woods.

137-150

The pump has been reinstalled and as soon as we can we will add water to this unit.

23-28

This pump is still out of service, we have not been able to access this area due to the high river levels. As soon as the opportunity presents itself we will install this pump and bring levels up to full pool.

Budget problems have put delays in some of our projects but

we should be able to accomplish all of our work projects for the year. Weather is always a factor one way or another and right now we need rainfall. The corn is doing well but we have not received rain in over 13 days and with the high temperatures and windy weather the crops are starting to get stressed. Deer is still another issue with crop damage, hopefully we will get some rain and the sorghum will takeoff and the deer will leave the corn alone.

All of the fields have been disked and sprayed in preparation for the planting of buckwheat. The soil district is delivering the 15 ft no-till drill on Tuesday morning and we will start planting right away (plans are to be finished planting buckwheat before the fourth of July).

Overall on a scale of 1-10 if I were looking into a crystal ball I would say we should be at a 9 for waterfowl season as far as field conditions go. We have directors orders directing us to post the area before the hunting season and plans are in place to do so, if any one is interested in helping post the area of ideas get in touch with me and we'll set something up. We are also planning on installing new pull-over posts at each pullover before the hunting season providing someone can provide the pipe.

Wildlife Technician

Victor Weigold

Shiawassee River State Game Area

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SFCHA - SHIAWASSEE FLATS
CITIZENS AND HUNTERS ASSOC.

4360 Walton rd.
Vassar, Michigan

Phone: 989-823-2526

E-mail: Bud Dankers (ydankers@tds.net)



WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.SHIAWASSEEFLATS.COM

INCREASING HUNTERS ACCESS DAILY.

AREA WORK DAY AUGUST 11TH

The SFCHA will be having a work day on the area August 11th we will be meeting at the Ott farm (where the pavement ends on Prior road) at 9:00 AM. The following is a list of projects that we are going to work on:

- Clear brush from the Northwest unit of the Prior road refuge
- Cut trees in the Northeast unit of the Prior road refuge
- Cut trees on the North and West dikes of unit 29
- Post the hunting zones for the river blinds and the old federal marsh (zones 23-28)
- Put out boards at pullover crossings

What to bring (if available):

- Chainsaw
- Weed whip or brushcutter
- Junky pair of waders or tennis shoes
- Work gloves, safety glasses, and ear plugs