

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Ward Stone
FROM: Kirsten Cooke
SUBJECT: Duck Plague
DATE: March 4, 1994

OPTIONAL FORM 99 (7-80)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

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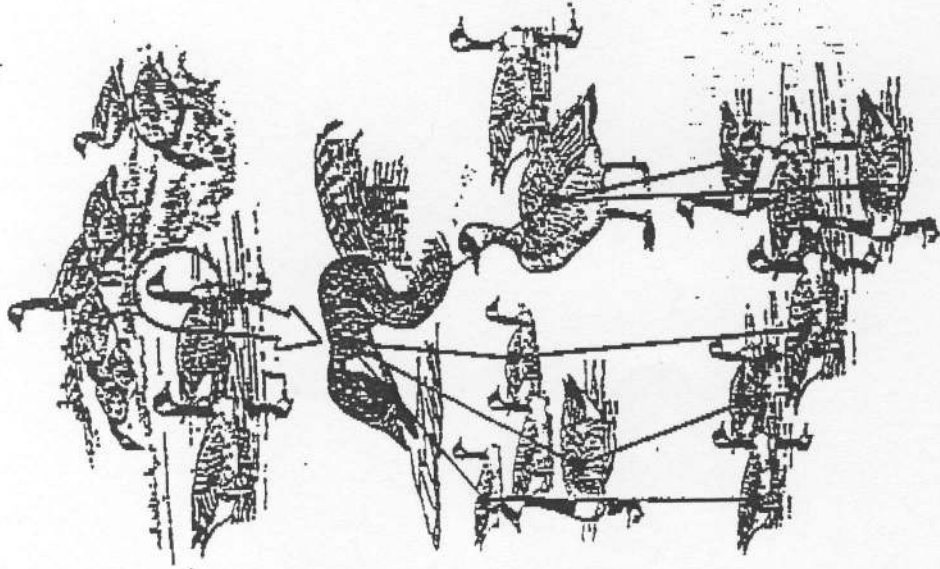
To: MARY R. SWEET
Dept./Agency: SLPWA
Fax #: 607/535-2851
From: TOM ENNIN
Phone #: 607 869-1450
Fax #: 1532
NSN 7540-01-317-7388 5000-101 GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

As of yesterday (3/3/94), the Wildlife Pathology Unit has received 624 birds in conjunction with the duck plague (DVE) outbreak in the Finger Lakes. The majority (589) were diagnosed as having the virus, but other causes of mortality were found. The following table is a summary of the cause of death of the various species of waterfowl.

Black Duck	462 DVE 3 unknown 1 pneumonia 1 chronic aspergillosis
Mallard	119 DVE 2 trauma 2 suspect lead poisoning 1 chronic aspergillosis 1 unknown
Canada Goose	2 DVE 8 undiagnosed as yet 2 lead poisoning (lead shot) 1 aspergillosis
Hybrids (Black-Mallard)	6 DVE 1 unknown
Redheads	2 lead poisoning (sinkers/lures)
Goldeneye	1 unknown
Ringneck	1 lead poisoning (sinker/lure) 1 unknown (fishing line in gizzard, but no lead) 1 drowned (many zebra mussels present in A.C.)
Bufflehead	1 blunt impact trauma
Great Blue Heron	1 starvation
Greater Scaup	1 pneumonia and poss. predation 1 starvation 1 unknown

act of feeding waterfowl can be a continuing cycle of the birds becoming nuisances and being subjected to diseases that can spread like man spreads the common cold.

An infected bird may spread the disease to many other birds by infecting the water supply. When the birds are scattered over a large area this does not pose a serious problem. However, when the birds are bunched close together their chances of contracting disease increase and the result may be disastrous.



Transmission of disease through a concentration of geese

what you can do to help them retain their "wildness" and maintain their well-being . . .

- Stop feeding them! They don't understand the problem . . . You do.
- Purchase a Federal Duck Stamp at most post offices, State Department of Natural Resources Offices or National Wildlife Refuges. ALL proceeds from the sale of these stamps are used to purchase wetlands which provide natural habitat for our nation's waterfowl.
- Learn more about waterfowl by visiting a library, nature center, museum, state wildlife management area or National Wildlife Refuge . . . then teach others what you know.
- Preserve the spirit of America by allowing waterfowl to stay wild . . . observe and appreciate them from a distance.



Painting by Arthur G. Anderson selected for use on the 1987 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp.



CAUTION Feeding Waterfowl May be Harmful!



Regular feeding can cause:

- ☐ Dependency on people for food
- ☐ Bird/People conflicts
- ☐ Spread of Disease
- ☒ All of the above



Over the centuries waterfowl have developed patterns of seeking out and feeding on highly nutritious marsh and grassland plants. These preservation patterns are passed on to each succeeding generation. Survival of waterfowl ultimately depends upon their ability to make use of food and habitat sufficient to maintain healthy populations.

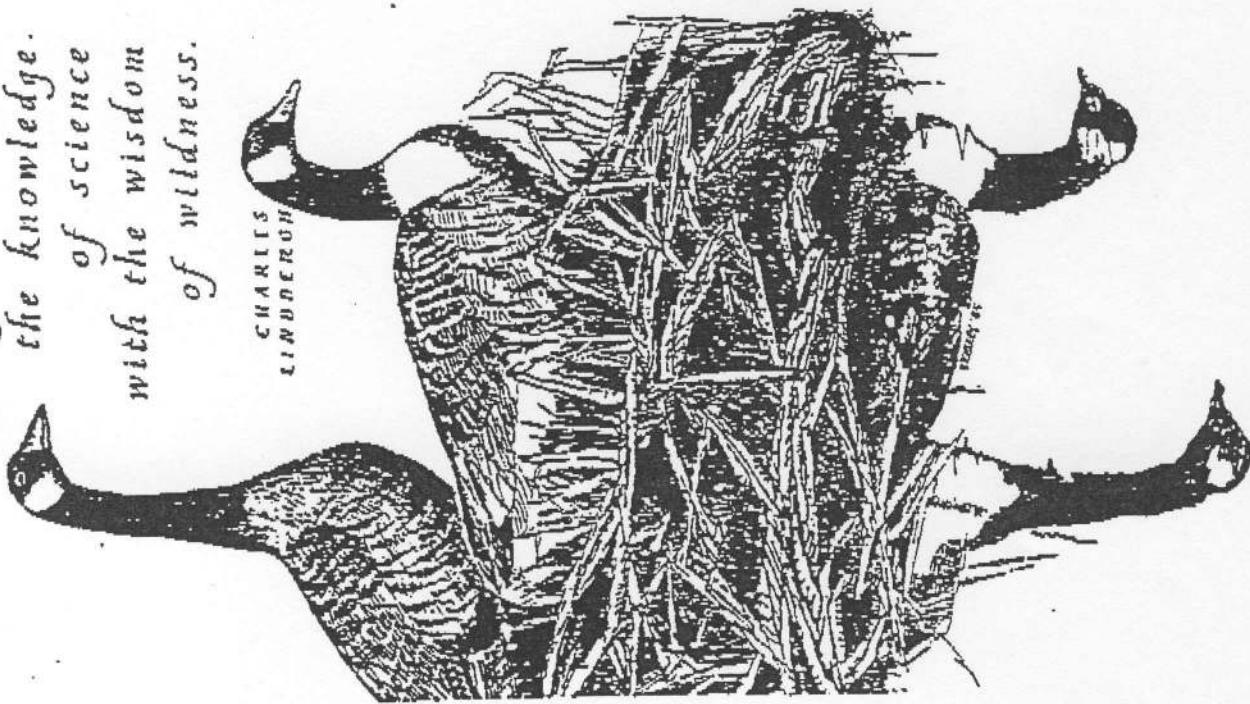
In northern regions of the United States the extreme cold and blanketing snow of the fall and winter months severely reduce the quality and quantity of marsh and grassland plants. Thus, each year most waterfowl, like many other birds, migrate tremendous distances south in search of food and habitat. That's why they migrate through the winter months. In the spring they again migrate, this time returning to their northern breeding grounds.

Over all waterfowl, however, complete the entire migrational cycle. Many are sidetracked when they stop to feed and rest in the lakes and marshes found in urban environments. There they are observed by city dwellers who enjoy the beauty of these magnificent wild birds. And there they are fed by people who unknowingly are enticing the birds into delaying their migration and often into becoming permanent residents.

Many urban environments can provide sufficient space and food for small populations of waterfowl. However, as thousands of waterfowl concentrate in areas because handouts are non-threatening and easily attainable, the once wild birds can soon

*The human future depends
on our ability to combine
the knowledge
of science
with the wisdom
of wildness.*

CHARLES
LINDNER



become tame, lose their fear of most things people-related and pick up habits that conflict with the human population and the bird's patterns of migration. Lack of fear of cars or planes can cause traffic problems as birds casually stroll or sit in the middle of roadways or fly across airport runways. Of increasing public concern is the damage waterfowl cause to parks, golf courses and residential lawns where large numbers of birds



graze, trample and defecate on the grass. Excess nutrients in ponds, caused by waterfowl droppings, may also result in water quality problems such as noxious algal blooms in the summertime.

Food handouts often result in large numbers of birds competing for very limited food supplies in small concentrated areas. Such crowding and competition for food combined with the stresses of less nutritious food and harsh weather increases their susceptibility to life threatening diseases like avian cholera, duck plague and avian botulism. These diseases have the potential to kill off large numbers of waterfowl.

TO: SENECA LAKE PURE WATERS ASSOCIATION
FROM: THOMAS ENROTH

MARCH 22, 1994

ATTN: MARY RUTH SWEET

DURING THE SATURDAY BOARD MEETING YOU MENTIONED THAT PRIOR TO THE LAST BIG SNOW STORM, THE ESTIMATE OF WATER IN THE SNOW WAS ONLY 2" OVER THE ENTIRE WATERSHED. I KNEW THIS WAS LOW AND DID SOME "BACKYARD SCIENCE" TO SEE WHAT WAS OUT THERE. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, I DID SOME ANALYSIS ON THE SNOW COVER ON SOUTH HILL ROAD AROUND MY PROPERTY. AT THIS TIME I HAVE ONLY A FEW DATA POINT SAMPLES (RAN OUT OF BUCKETS TO MELT THE SNOW IN).

FROM THE CORES I MELTED DOWN, THIS IS WHAT I MEASURED:

SNOW DEPTH	WATER YIELD	COMMENTS
14"	4.35"	in bare field
21"	8.00"	average snow depth
24"	8.35"	average snow depth
36" drift	13.30"	bottom 6" solid ice

IN THE HIGHER ELEVATIONS, THE DEPTH OF SNOW IS ABOUT 2 FEET DEEP, THE FIELDS MAY HAVE LESS DUE TO WIND EFFECTS. THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDES OF ALL HEDGEROWS HAVE ANYWHERE FROM 8 TO 12 FEET OF SNOW DEPTH WITH A WIDTH OF THESE DRIFTS APPROXIMATELY 25 FEET WIDE!

WHAT THIS ALL MEANS IS THAT SHOULD A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF RAIN/WARM WEATHER OCCUR OVER A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, WE WILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANT RUNOFF EVENT. (THIS IS NOT ANYTHING YOU DON'T ALREADY KNOW) I AM UNABLE TO FORECAST THE TOTAL RUNOFF FROM JUST A FEW DATA POINTS IN MY YARD OF COURSE, BUT THERE IS A LARGE VOLUME OF WATER HELD UP IN THE SNOW. I VIEW THIS AS A DELAYED PRECIPITATION EVENT, AND HOPE THAT THE SEASON WILL SLOWLY WARM UP SO THAT THE WATER EQUIVALENT OF THE SNOW WILL MELT DOWN FOR WEEKS. MAYBE SOMEDAY WE WILL HAVE A NETWORK OF STATIONS OUT THERE TO COLLECT DATA FOR FORECASTING LAKE LEVELS FROM RUNOFF.

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW,

Tom E.

OPTIONAL FORM 98 (7-90)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

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To

MARY RUTH SWEET

From

ENROTH

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