

# Duck hunting clubs host youth in waterfowl hunt

By MARGARET SLAYTON  
News-Press NOW

Young hunters were given an opportunity to shoot their first bird of the youth waterfowl season at private duck clubs during the eighth-annual Big Muddy Duck Hunt held near Mound City, Missouri, last Saturday.

The clinic was on Oct. 26 and was open to hunters that were between 11 and 15 years old.

Missouri Department of Conservation agents Jade Wright and Anthony Maupin along with outdoorsmen Bill Hutting started the clinic in Holt County with the goal of introducing the sport of duck hunting to youth.

Wright said the event reduced the number of youth that participated in the clinic this year from 25 to 11 participants because there was a drop in the availability of duck blinds.

"The number of spots were reduced due to the flooding and poor crop in the duck

marshes," Wright said. "But we are always looking for kids to sign-up. We accept reservations for the event all year because we do fill up quickly."

He said the clinic is free to attendees and is open to those that have never been hunting.

"We are glad to have youth be involved who have never gone



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Young hunters were given an opportunity to shoot their first bird of the youth waterfowl season during the annual Big Muddy Duck Hunt held near Mound City, Missouri, last Saturday.

hunting or have never shot a gun," Wright said. "This event is designed for those who have harvested a bird and for those that have not."

During the clinic, the youth participated in four educational stations that are designed to teach them how to safely and effectively harvest the birds.

The stations included topics such as duck calling techniques, duck identification, waterfowl hunting regulations, how to set-up a duck decoy spread and pre-

paring waterfowl as food. In addition, there are beginning and intermediate shooting skills stations that allow the youth to learn how to safely and confidently use a firearm.

The youth are then able to hunt birds at a private duck club in the county. Lunch was provided by the Mound City Kiwanis Club and a dinner banquet was held in the evening.

Wright said the event reserves spots for youth with parents in the 139th Airlift Wing at Rose-

crans Memorial Airport in St. Joseph, Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska and Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

In addition, they partner with members of Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Joseph and the Missouri Department of Corrections.

Outdoor organizations and local duck clubs in the county support the clinic by donating funds, providing hunting blinds along with serving as guides and safety coaches.

This was the first year that the Squaw Creek Chapter of Delta Waterfowl in St. Joseph provided funds for the clinic and donated a cooler bag for each youth participating.

He said the National Wild Turkey Federation provided a grant for three 12-gauge Stoeger shotguns. Two 20-gauge 870-Remington youth model shotguns were donated by an individual to the clinic.

The clinic will retain them in their trailer and the equipment can be loaned for other wildlife conservation events in the area.

The clinic was also supported by the Waterfowlers Hall of Fame in Mound City, the Northwest Missouri Sportsman's Club in Atchison County and Ducks Unlimited.

Each youth received a care package of outdoor gear that included a duck call and a goose call. They also gave door prizes including local guided hunts, taxidermy services and a framed wildlife print.

For more information on the hunt, contact Wright by email at [Jade.Wright@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Jade.Wright@mdc.mo.gov) or register online at [www.bigmuddyduck-hunt.org](http://www.bigmuddyduck-hunt.org).