



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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WATERFOWL BEGIN NORTHWARD MIGRATION

Thousands of ducks and geese, vanguard of the big spring migration now underway, are already deep into the northern tier of States and are following the receding ice line northward, the Department of the Interior reports.

Aerial surveys made by personnel of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, during the last week in March indicated that the waterfowl were already northward bound in large numbers. Canada geese, an estimated 7,000 of them, were at Sand Lake Refuge in northern South Dakota and in adjacent regions in Minnesota. An estimated total of 40,000 snow geese were seen in three South Dakota areas.

The diving ducks were in evidence; goldeneye and mergansers in all areas; game divers of all important species in numbers along the Mississippi in southern Minnesota; a scattering of redheads and other diving species in western Minnesota.

Mallards predominate in the number of dabblers present as far north as Fergus Falls in midwestern Minnesota; pintails in northern South Dakota near Aberdeen, and near Traverse Lake, Willmar and Minneapolis, but not in as great numbers as in previous years; a few baldpates and an occasional gadwall were also seen.

At the time of the aerial reconnaissance the ice was still heavy on the lakes in the northern part of the country--in some cases barge traffic only possible in ice-breaker channels. Food conditions were good and there were no indications of any disease outbreaks. Some local dry areas were noted.

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