

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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WILD DUCK POPULATION SHOWS SIGNIFICANT INCREASE, INTERIOR REPORTS

The Department of the Interior said today that North America's duck breeding population has made a remarkable comeback from the low period of 1965 and that the increase, plus improved nesting conditions on the vital northern prairie breeding grounds, is expected to produce a larger flight of ducks this fall.

John S. Gottschalk, Director of the Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, said that aerial surveys by the Bureau's flyway biologists which revealed the increase in breeding ducks also showed that water levels in the prairie potholes and sloughs have held up well during the summer months.

Gottschalk said the breeding population is still below the average for the last 11 years, but that this year's increase is especially significant in view of the outlook for continued improvement of nesting conditions on the northern plains. The mallard, which is perhaps the most important game duck, is still at a relatively low level, he added.

Bureau officials are encouraged about the prospects of improved conditions continuing on the breeding grounds next year. The good conditions expected in the major nesting areas will have increased capacity for more breeding birds.

"The Waterfowl Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from State and private conservation organizations, will meet with our staff next week to work out recommended hunting regulations," Gottschalk said. "Waterfowl Councils in the four Continental flyways met earlier this week to hear reports on duck populations from Bureau representatives and to frame recommendations for the Advisory Committee. The condition of the duck population this year will permit some easing of last year's restrictive regulations. However, the mallard will still require extra protection in order to bring it back to desired numbers."

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J. CLARK SALYER, NOTED WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST, DIES

The cause of wildlife conservation lost one of its greatest fighters today when J. Clark Salyer, father of the National Wildlife Refuge System, died at his home in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Salyer was the first recruit of famous cartoonist-conservationist J. N. "Ding" Darling when Darling was appointed Chief of the old Bureau of Biological Survey, predecessor of the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. In a 1959 letter, Darling said of Salyer, "To me he was the salvation of the Duck Restoration Program of 1934-5-6. He did most of the work for which I was given credit and awarded medals."

When Salyer was placed in charge of the refuge program in 1934, there were only a few areas set aside for various forms of wildlife. In 1961 when he became special staff assistant to the Bureau's wildlife division chief, the system contained 279 refuges totaling 29 million acres, the world's greatest system of wildlife refuges.

Under his guidance, a new concept of wildlife refuge management was developed.

Salyer was born in Higginsville, Missouri in 1902 and graduated from Central College, Fayette, Missouri, where he took his A.B. in biology in 1927. He received his Master's degree from the University of Michigan in 1931. From 1927 to 1930 he was science instructor in the Parsons, Kansas, public school system. From 1932 to 1933 he was instructor in biology at Minot, North Dakota. Before joining the Bureau of Biological Survey he was State Biologist of Iowa.

Salyer received the coveted Nash Award for Conservation in 1956 and was awarded the Department of the Interior's highest award--the Distinguished Service Award--in 1962.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mabel E. Salyer and a son, John Clark, III of Washington, D.C.