

Tyler's Is Oldest Goose Hunting Club In Eagle Lake

Preparing for waterfowl hunting season each year goes far beyond leasing land and hiring guides for Clifton Tyler. "One of the most often asked questions is why hunters can't hunt the natural ponds that form on the prairie," Tyler commented.

The answer may surprise you... "Because there aren't any," he said. They hamper farming operations, so in working land farmers cut drainage slopes so the natural prairie formations will not hold water.

Each year, Tyler and his crew

rework those natural pond areas so they will hold water, at least for the season. Once drainage lines are closed, hunting operations depend on rain to fill them. If not, Tyler said he would even go to the expense of having water pumped in. All in all, 20 to 30 ponds are created each year.

Even after the ponds are covered with birds, hunters aren't allowed to stalk their prey at the water's edge. Tyler stated the ponds are for attracting the birds into certain field areas and to hold them there.

Without water, the birds would fly on to other areas.

Tyler and his guides know where that water is and put hunters into an area a field or two away. This placement enhances the morning's hunt and explains the reason hunters need to be in the fields well before shooting time. They want to make sure all is ready when the birds come off the water.

Clifton has a long history of working with visiting hunting groups and has been one of the top duck and goose guides in this area

for more than 30 years.

He has put that experience into his own duck and goose hunting club known as the Clifton Tyler Goose Hunting Club. It has thousands of acres of top rice land scattered across the Eagle Lake and Garwood prairies.

The rice prairies of Eagle Lake and Garwood are the winter home for the largest concentration of wild geese in the world.

"Run and Shoot" provides some of the best hunts of the year. All hunters enjoyed the action very much.

"I was surprised by the number of successful decoying hunts. It had always been thought that by Feb. geese are too smart to decoy. This simply is not correct," Tyler said. "With proper conditions, we have enjoyed some outstanding decoying shoots. I believe that the main factor is a lack of hunting pressure during that time of the year. The geese are calm and inclined to maintain their anticipated flight patterns."

The Tyler Hunting Club will again offer the "Run and Shoot"

which is for snow geese only. This will take place during late Jan. and Feb. when there's not much pressure in the fields, allowing the hunters and guides greater mobility. It is also meant to be a fun time for everyone involved.

The price is \$135 weekdays or \$150 Saturday and Sunday per man which will allow those thinking about hunting geese, but not sure if that's what they would like to do, to take part in the experience without incurring a large expense.

Tyler's Club can accommodate up to 60 hunters with a four-party minimum.

A guide will be provided for each hunt from legal shooting time until noon only. Decoys, white spreads and parkas are furnished. Every guide has his own trained retrievers. Tyler, who has lived in this area all his life, has experienced guides available for the hunter.

For reservations, you may contact Ida or Clifton Tyler at 979-732-6502 (Columbus); write to 103 Mesquite, Columbus, Texas 78934. Or you may visit their web site at <http://www.texasgoosehunt.com>.

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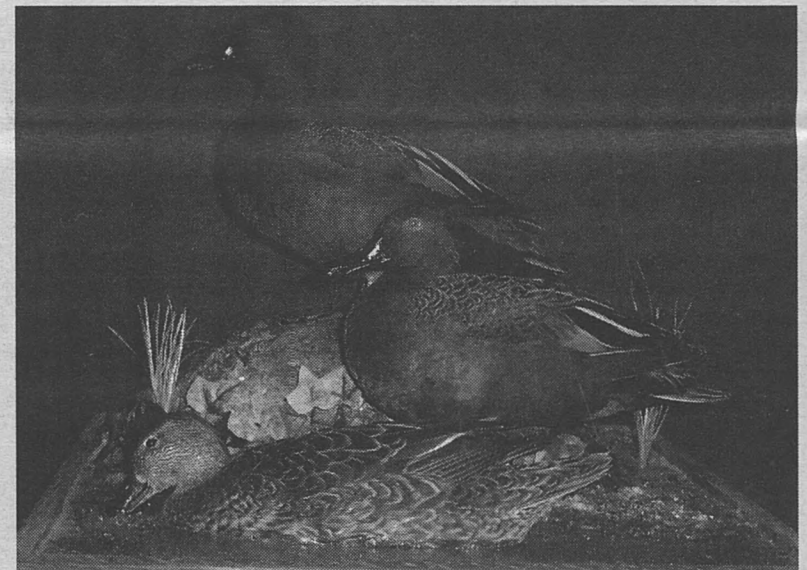
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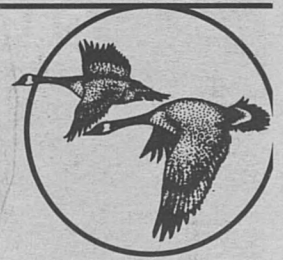
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Pictured above is a Natural Habitat Scene by Bobby Wied of B & S Taxidermy. Stop by his shop on Main Street to see more of his wonderful work.

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