

# Southgate DUCK CLUB

— LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #275 —

The Mississippi Flyway hosts millions of ducks and geese each fall. Mallards seem to be everyone’s preferred duck, but teal, woodies, pintail and their traveling companions are always welcome; Canada geese also have a serious following of hunters, as do snows and blues. One of the “always asked” questions about duck hunting is “where did you get them?”, because there’s always more demand for good duck hunting spots than there is supply. On private property, the best duck hunting areas, over the long term, often get developed as duck clubs.

This small piece of river bottom has always attracted ducks, primarily because of its proximity to the Missouri River, and also because it holds some water in the crop fields during wet falls. To encourage ducks in dry years, a berm was pushed up to create a

ten-acre pool; then a well drilled and a pump installed - to fill the pool. Now, dry falls are never an alibi for “no ducks”; but unseasonably warm weather up

north, in Canada and the Dakotas, likely always will be.

Water alone, of course, is not the complete recipe to attract ducks. When they come off the big water of a refuge, they’re going to be hungry! Each spring, the bermed area is drained, allowed to dry, then tilled and replanted into what’s thought to be next fall’s miracle mix for waterfowl—which always includes a generous amount of field corn.

A memorable duck hunt generally includes lots of ducks in the air, great camaraderie in the blind, respectable shooting



*Every duck club needs a name, and preferably some type of sign to welcome regulars and visitors. This is the welcome sign at Southgate.*

by the hunters, fine retrieving by the dog(s) and most of a limit of ducks for each person. Please note that not very many duck hunts are memorable!

It was not I who created or initially enhanced this duck hunting area, but it was my honor and pleasure to invest a little more and give it a name. Hunting is a traditional sport for my family and I’m a traditional person;

“...not very many duck hunts are memorable!”

so, a traditional name it would be. A name that included one of the directions was on my mind, and the word “South” had special meaning; then I remembered that Thomas Southgate, of London England, invented the automatic ejector that has been used on Purdey and Holland and Holland shotguns since about 1890 – so, “Southgate” was an easy choice. This is the true story of how Southgate Duck Club got its name.



Larry Potterfield  
Southgate Duck Club  
Columbia, Missouri  
November 11, 2020



*We installed two, 16-foot, Concealed Comfort blinds—one on the north, one on the south—to accommodate for changing wind direction.*



*Brenda and I, with results of a morning's hunt.*