

Chincoteague Hunting / Fishing Center, Inc.

P.O. Box 404, Chincoteague, VA 23336
Toll free (888) 231-4868
email: huntfish@dmv.com

d.b.a.

Fish Tales Charters

1142 Luther Drive, Rockledge, FL 32955
Toll free (866) 657-7929

Which ammo to use ????????

When I was a kid (many moon's ago) a goose gun was a 36" bolt action 10 or 12 gauge shotgun with a full choke. My preferred load was #4 buckshot. You could reach out and touch a Canada Goose with that rig, the Snow Goose season was closed at that time. Most shots were taken at ranges well in excess of 100 yards. You had plenty of time to crank off 3 rounds because the noise at those distances didn't much bother the geese and by the time the sound reached them the third shot was in the air. The trick was to aim at the lead goose, when the fifth bird back fell, you acted like that was the one you were aiming at all along. Over the years, things have changed. The Snow Goose season has been reopened. The Fed.'s made us use steel because the Bald Eagle's were eating the ducks and the lead was killing the eagles. That was a big success, the eagles have recovered and are eating ducks again. Manufacturers have improved the ammo and there are more waterfowl hunters than ever before, it's hard to get ahead when you are a duck.

When we were forced to use steel (most of us anyway) there was a lot of grumbling about the price, some also complained that it was nearly impossible to kill anything with it.

Some of the problems with steel are that you can't choke it. Yes, they now sell "steel cokes" which means that the steel won't wear out the choke, but you still can't choke it. Steel does not compress like lead. The steel is enclosed in a plastic "wad" and when you choke it, it just pushes the steel into the wad. If and when it comes out of the plastic is anybody's guess. Those that realized that, found out that the length of the barrel and choke size meant nothing as far as the patterning, and why try to choke a load that couldn't kill anything at long ranges anyhow.

28", 26" and even 24" barrels became popular because they were easier to swing. 3" loads gave way to 3 1/2" and 12 gauge guns went to 10 gauge.Birds still weren't falling!

SPEED, was determined to be the short coming, so manufacturers started producing faster loads. Speed IS one of the most important factors in waterfowl hunting ammo, your shot must be able to travel faster than the duck! After your shot is traveling more than 60mph or so, you have all the speed you need. Now you have to work on "A" meeting "B", they call that leading. A fast miss, is still a miss.

All other things being equal, the only way to make your shot go faster is to make it lighter. The lighter it is, the less energy it has when it gets there. Most manufacturers measure their ammo's speed as "muzzle velocity", which mean's if the bird is sitting on the end of your barrel you are going to hit it really fast. Unfortunately, most birds are a little further out.

Again, all things being equal, the heavier the load the faster the down range speed will be, and more energy transferred to your target. That's the place where "A" and "B" are supposed to come together. Example: A shell loaded with paper would have a much faster muzzle velocity than a lead slug, but wouldn't have the same effect 50 yards out. For those that think that a shotgun can only kill out to about 40 yards, a lead slug will have less than a 8" drop and kill a deer stone dead at 100 yards. A shotgun has the power, steel just doe's not have the energy.

Ok, we are back to price. They now have stuff on the market that will bring down a helicopter. If you come hunting with us and you shoot 25 rounds a day, it's going to cost you a little over \$6.00 every time that you pull the trigger.....that's before the cost of the ammo. In addition you have also paid for a room, gun, transportation, clothing, waders, licenses and the best waterfowl guide service in the country. Another \$10 or \$20 could make the difference as to whether you get your bird or not, ammo is not the place to cut corners. We sell steel shot for about \$10.00 for a box of 25. If the bird is too close when you hit it, the steel goe's through him like a needle and the bird flies off and dies somewhere. If you hit him too far out, it doesn't penetrate the feathers. If you hit him in the head out there, you may piss him off or knock him down but he usually shakes it off and flies away. I'm not sure that we should be relying on head shots on a flying object at 30 yards anyway (yes Ed, they are supposed to be flying)

We sell HEVI SHOT for about \$20.00 for a box of ten, if you can hit him, most times it will kill him. Two big advantages of HEVI SHOT are that it is not only much heavier than steel, it is also heavier than lead. And although it doesn't mushroom like lead, it is shaped like and hits like shrapnel, which is as or more effective than the mushrooming effect of lead.

This year we are also offering HEVI STEEL for about \$25.00 for a box of 25, it's not as good as HEVI SHOT but a hole lot better than steel and still affordable.

Another big advantage of HEVI SHOT and some of the other new stuff on the market is that it's ballistics are much closer to lead than steel, which means your lead would be about the same as when shooting sporting clays, trap and upland game. When shooting steel at divers and Sea Ducks, no one hits in front of the bird. Target shooting with lead then hunting with steel is the worst possible thing to do because your lead could be as much as ten feet different.

Anyhow, to answer the question;

Divers- #6, 2 ¾" or 3" HEVI STEEL, (first timers 3" #4 steel), at least 2 box's (25) each

Sea Ducks- #4, 3" HEVI STEEL, (first timers 3" #2 steel), at least 2 box's (25) each

Puddle Ducks- #6 2 ¾ or 3" HEVI SHOT 1 box (10)

Brant- #4, 3" HEVI SHOT (10) or #4, 3" HEVI STEEL 1 box (25)

Canada and Snow Geese- #2, 3" HEVI SHOT 1 box (10)

Cripples #6, 2 ¾" steel 1 box (25)

Mark Twain said that "There are 3 types of lies. Lies, Damn lies and statistics." Be careful of what you read.

For the prices that we sell ammo for, we make little or no money. We offer ammo only as a service to you and this advice is to hopefully make your hunt more enjoyable and rewarding. Please feel free to bring any type or amount of legal ammo that you choose.

Although we try to stock adequate amounts of ammo it is recommended that you preorder if you intend buying it from us. Call for current pricing.

Note: Your guide doe's not carry extra ammo with him.