

THE BASC WILDFOWLER'S CODE

The Wildfowler's obligation

Always remember that your main quarry, wild geese and duck, are largely migrant and we have a responsibility to safeguard them and their environment.

Always remember that others judge the sport by your behaviour.

A responsible shot will have third party liability insurance cover, but the best insurance is to follow the B.A.S.C. Shotgun Safety Code.

Always remember that it is the wildfowler's responsibility to understand the laws relating to his sport; in particular to be able to recognise his quarry and know when and where he may shoot.

Consideration for your quarry

Always condemn unsporting shooting, i.e. at poor fliers and at birds out-of- range.

Remember a marsh can be spoilt by continual human disturbance - and you need not be shooting to cause a disturbance.

Always mark wounded quarry and ensure that it is picked up and humanely dispatched as soon as possible. A sharp knock on the head with a suitably heavy stick or priest is most effective.

Always remember that a dog is essential for tide shooting and picking up after dark - keep it under control at all times.

SEASONS

Inland 1 September - 31 January inclusive.

Below the mean high water mark of Ordinary Spring Tides

1 September - 20 February inclusive.

NB Geese and ducks only after 31 January.

Guns and Cartridges

A double barrelled twelve bore is a suitable all-round shotgun. If your fieldcraft is good you will be successful with the standard 2 1/2" cartridge (correctly loaded).

Traditionally, wildfowlers prefer a 3" chambered gun which enables them to shoot heavier shot more effectively. Big bore guns, ie 10, 8 and 4 bores, although capable of handling big shot very effectively, can be cumbersome and a burden.

Choke only marginally increases your range and is no excuse for attempting out of range shots.

The use of any gun or rifle firing a single bullet for the purpose of killing wildfowl is prohibited to B.A.S.C. members.

It is illegal to use an automatic shotgun in the pursuit of wildfowl or game unless fitted with a device to prevent the firing of more than 3 cartridges in succession, without reloading.

<i>SHOT SIZE</i>	QUARRY	MAX. EFFECTIVE RANGE
No. 4/5	Ducks	40 yards
No. 6	Teal/Waders	40 yards
No. 3	Geese	40 yards

Planning

When you go on the foreshore for the first time go in daylight with someone who knows the area and can point out marsh boundaries and inherent dangers which occur.

When wildfowling away from home, it is courteous to make contact with the secretaries of the local wildfowling clubs, to ensure you do not inadvertently encroach on private ground.

Always tell someone where you have gone wildfowling and do not forget to tell them you have returned safely.

Make sure you know of local rules and restrictions, particularly those that may be operating in a Nature Reserve Shooting Area.

Always avoid the more distant parts of the marsh when a big tide is expected.

Always consult tide tables before going on the marsh. Remember that the figures stated will be altered by the prevailing weather conditions.

If you are out all day carry some food and a thermos containing a hot drink.

Wear comfortable, inconspicuous, warm, waterproof clothing.

Waders are normally recommended.

Always take a large canvas bag - it is often useful to sit on.

Make sure you carry your shotgun certificate with you.

A game licence is needed for snipe and woodcock.

Equipment

Always carry a waterproof wristwatch, it is essential for judging the state of the tide.

Remember, if British summer time is in force, to make the necessary correction to your tide table.

Always carry a waterproof torch BUT REMEMBER torch flashing is ONLY justified in an EMERGENCY.

A pair of binoculars will enhance the day and be useful for identification purposes.

A six foot wading pole will greatly assist you to walk on the marsh and can be used to sound gutters and crossing places.

Always carry a pocket compass.

Always carry a "pull through", it is all too easy to get mud or snow into the muzzle of your gun.

On the Marsh

Do not disturb the locality or other sportsmen by making a noise, banging car doors when arriving early in the morning or leaving late at night.

Never arrive late, or depart early and so disturb the shooting of those who have taken the trouble to get into position in good time.

Do not shoot in the immediate vicinity of houses adjoining the shore.

Make sure you are well hidden; camouflage yourself to suit your surroundings.

Try to make your dog comfortable - if you sit on your game bag make sure he has a dry seat.

Look through your gun barrels to make sure that they are clear whenever an obstruction may be entered.

Range judging when wildfowling is particularly difficult - as the flight develops - don't spoil it by shooting too early at out-of-range birds.

Send your dog to retrieve birds as they are shot.

Take care to recognise legal quarry; if in doubt don't shoot.

Never leave cartridge cases or unsightly pit holes in the marsh.

Dogging the tideline will often recover lost birds.

Never try to be clever waiting for the last moment to leave the marsh when the incoming tide is approaching. Channels fill quickly and in a very short time they become a torrent.

On leaving the marsh your dog will be cold and wet - consider his needs before your own.

Take care of your quarry - don't waste it.

Pay special attention to cleaning your gun - sand and saltwater will quickly corrode it. Check for faults which may need rectifying.