

Life

North Iowa Waterfowl Hunter Going Strong at 80

Story and photo by Lowell Washburn

Posted: April 6, 2010 80-year-old, Al Infante takes advantage of this year's spring snow goose season at the Ventura Marsh. Seeing all those different birds makes it well worth being out here whether I get to see any snow geese or not, says Infante. If I do shoot a goose, then I guess it's just like icing on the cake - I mainly come out here to watch. Photo by: Lowell Washburn

VENTURA MARSH - Al Infante has been on a wild goose chase ever since he was knee high to a grasshopper. Still going strong at 80, he rarely misses an opportunity to get out on the marsh.

This week, Infante is making the most of Iowa's spring snow goose season. During the past few mornings, he's been hunting at Ventura Marsh. And although the

bulk of this year's snow goose migration has currently passed to the north, there is always the possibility of luring in a straggler. It happened just the other day when a wary old gander succumbed to the pleading notes of Infante's 50-year-old Faulk's brand goose call and circled a bit too close to the decoys.

"This is my favorite time of the year to be out here," says Infante. "In the spring, you get to see just about every kind of wild duck there is -- a lot more kinds than you normally see in the fall. We also get a lot of

white-fronted geese through Iowa in the spring. When those birds come back south in the fall, you hardly ever get to see them here because most fly to the west of Iowa. White-fronted geese are a very beautiful goose and they're so noisy.

"I also have ducks of all kinds come right in and land next to my [snow] goose decoys. The males have all their spring color and are fascinating to watch," adds Infante. "Seeing all those different birds makes it well worth being



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