

## DAD, DOG AND DUCKS

By Ben Broussard

"Great shot, Ben! That's your first flying duck!" I heard my dad say.

It's Thanksgiving Day 2010 and I'm on my first duck hunt. But to catch you up on what's going on, let's back up to yesterday.

It's the day before Thanksgiving and I'm thinking about what I'm going to do the next day, besides eating and playing all day long, when my dad asks me, "Hey Ben, do you want to go hunting with me tomorrow?" I instantly answer, "Sure Dad!"

Beep, beep, beep, beep! That's my alarm clock. I hit the off button and jump out of bed and get dressed. I'm so excited. Soon enough we're in the truck and off to meet the other hunters. When we're all ready to head out to our blinds, we jump on our four wheelers and take off toward the fields. I'm wondering how we don't scare off the ducks with all the engines running. We arrive at the blind and begin the task of setting out the decoys and finally put out the lucky duck electric decoy. Then we wait for shooting time.

I hear the calling and shooting starting at the other blinds. We wait a little longer and let it get a little lighter so we can see the ducks better. My dad tells me: "Keep the gun on safe until I tell you to take it off and shoot. We'll keep it propped against the wall of the blind until it's time to shoot. Remember to always think about safety first." By now we can see the vague forms of hundreds upon hundreds of ducks flying through our decoys. We also see the thousands of mosquitoes hovering around our heads, so we spray down in mosquito spray--one less thing to distract us. Soon after, five teal land in our decoys just yards away. It's duck hunting time! My dad instructs me to slowly raise the gun over the blind and aim it at one of the ducks, then take off the safety and shoot! My heart was beating ninety to nothing and then ... BLAAM! I looked up and there was a duck floating dead in the decoys. My dad said, "Go get 'em, Bently!" and our black lab jumps and races over to the dead duck and brings it back to us. We examine it and see that it's a greenwing teal. We high five and my dad says "That's your first duck! Woo-Hoo!!" After our brief celebration, we quickly get back to calling ducks and waiting for our next shot.

After we have bagged seven ducks, my dad suddenly says "Two widgeon, a hen and a drake!" So he calls them in and the hen lands in the decoys, but the drake is hovering over the electronic decoy and my dad says, "Shoot him, Ben!" So I stand up, aim and pull the trigger. I watch him splash in the water below. Soon after the hen flies up and my dad gets her too! After Bently brings them both in, my dad says "Great shot Ben, that's your first flying duck!" We give each other high fives and admire my widgeon drake.

After picking up and heading in with our nine ducks, and Bently running alongside the four wheeler, we load in the truck and relive every moment of my first duck hunt all the way home. What a day! It's one I'll never forget!