Rapidly beating wings whistling behind us telegraphed the approach of birds. Illuminated by the sun cracking the eastern horizon, a flock of gadwalls flashed past us just out of range. With little hesitation, they locked up, gliding to the far side of the pond 250 yards away.

Sometimes, waterfowlers need to go where ducks already want to land. By remaining mobile, sportsmen can take full advantage of shifting winds and changing weather conditions. If birds consistently cruise overhead to land on the far side of a pond, leave most decoys in place, but take four to six blocks and go where ducks already want to land. Hide in natural cover, but within sight of the main spread.

Ducks see native vegetation every day and think nothing of it. Tall reeds, bushes and cattails make excellent natural blind materials. In mucky marshes like the lower delta, a section of plywood or a wooden pallet creates a stable platform. Add a shell bucket, crate or folding stool to sit on for more comfort.

Frequently, ducks seek smaller, out of the way waters. In highly pressured public waters, a secret pothole just big enough to hold a few decoys might attract more birds than a big pond filled with 200 blocks. To find hidden duck havens, thoroughly scout an area before and during the season to locate where birds want to go.

In a place with such abundant waterways as the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, a small camouflaged boat can get into places larger boats cannot go. Also, setting up in a different location each day keeps birds guessing.

Many delta hunters attach com-

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