

*The mix of mallard decoys really worked well.*

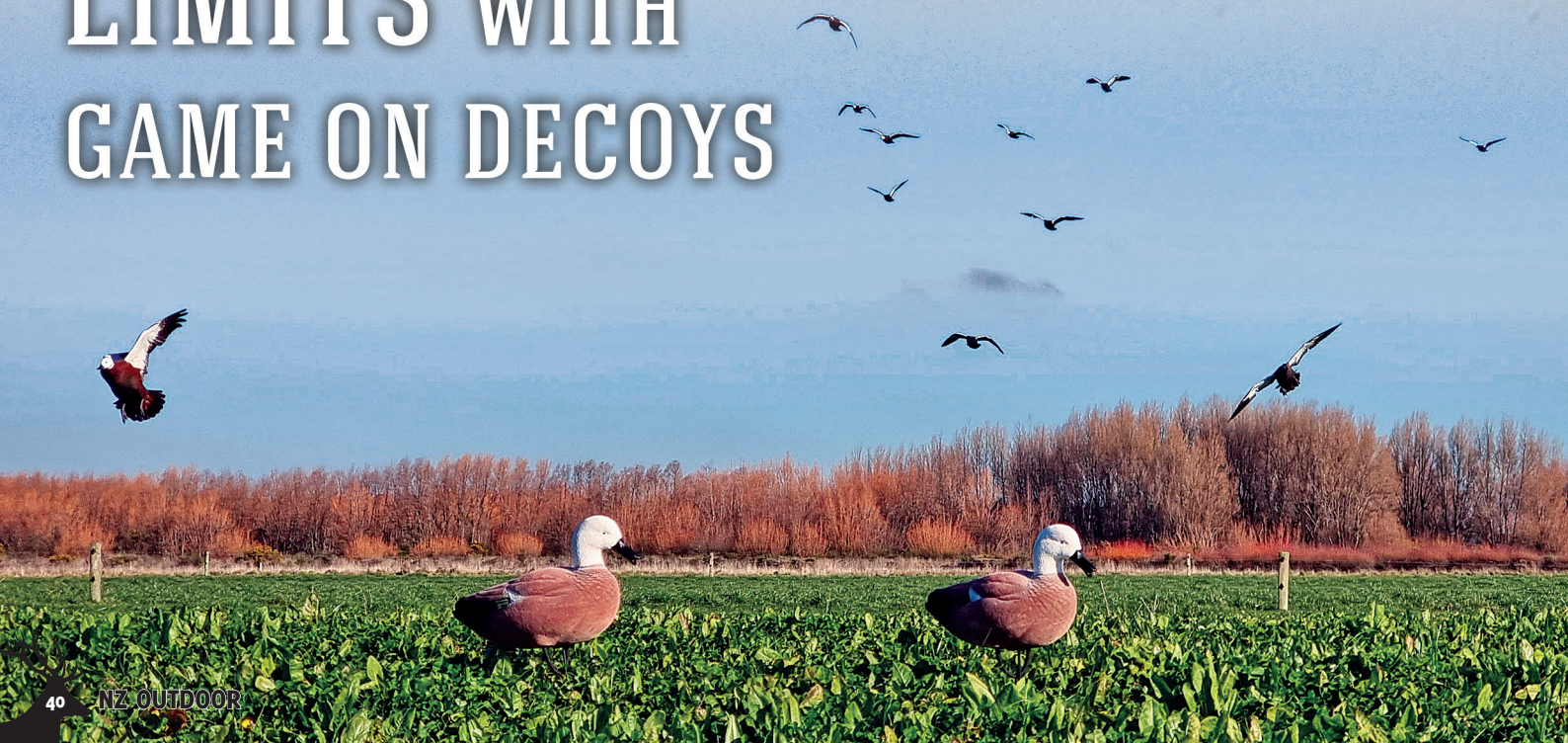
*By Tom Lanauze*

As waterfowl hunters, we're always on the lookout for decoys that strike the right balance between realism, performance, and affordability. In last year's Oct/Nov issue, I compared flocked vs. painted decoys, weighing the benefits and challenges of each.

This time, I'm focusing on the 'Game On' full-body duck decoys from Gun City. These decoys helped us bag a double-double limit of ducks on their first day in the field and continued to perform exceptionally well throughout the Canterbury season.

# TESTING THE LIMITS WITH GAME ON DECOYS

*I shot as many with  
the camera as I did  
the Beretta.*





I'd had my eye on the Game On decoys for a while and finally picked up a few boxes from Ferg at Gun City, Christchurch. It was mid-June and the birds had already been heavily pressured, making it the perfect time to put these decoys to the test.

## Game On Full Body Duck Decoy Features:

- *Mix of resting/semi-active and feeding decoys per 6 pack.*
- *Includes stands with a motion cup to allow natural movement.*
- *Realistic 20" size and colouring (available painted and fully flocked).*
- *Includes 4 hens & 2 drakes per box (mallards) and 3 hens & 3 drakes (parries).*
- *Wobble-head feeder decoys available (realistic feeding motion and no batteries required).*

### Part 1: The Mallards

I picked up the decoys Friday night and within 13 hours they were set up in a field. Errol and I arrived at the paddock well before dawn and while the air was crisp a

light breeze kept the frost off the ground. Like excited kids on Christmas morning, we opened the decoy boxes and set up in a field near a small stock pond where the ducks were feeding and day roosting. At this point in the season the birds were scattered in small groups all over the farm and neighbouring properties, so we placed flags around other high-traffic areas where the local farmers had stirred things up.

We laid out a good spread of full-body mallard decoys with a mix of painted and fully flocked, along with six wobble-head decoys. We'd left the wing spinners at home, relying on the wobble-heads to provide the natural motion we wanted thanks to the breeze - with wary mallards sometimes less is more when it comes to motion and activity.

The morning was quiet at first, with just a few distant quacks. The first group of mallards passed overhead a little too early for a shot, landing further out in the paddock. I decided to flush them once it was light enough to shoot, hoping to stop any others from landing with them.

On my way back to the blind, I spotted two mallards heading straight for the decoys. Errol didn't hesitate and dropped both with two quick shots that I retrieved before quickly returning to my blind. No sooner had I jumped back in when three more mallards appeared, more cautious now likely due to hearing the earlier shots.

We held off hoping they'd get closer, but only one came round again. Normally we'd wait for the single to land and bring in the rest, but the lead bird veered off so we took the shot as the lone drake gave us a quick pass and that's all we needed.

Our shooting was on point and by mid-morning ducks were coming in regularly, though not in large numbers - we had mostly singles or pairs. The birds came from all directions, some from ponds and lakes while others came from nearby fields disturbed by farmers. With little wind and ducks approaching from all angles, we had to stay alert. The birds were also coming in quiet due to it being later in the season and often the first sign of them was the sound of their wings whistling as they came in to land in the decoys which were doing all the hard work. Errol and I hardly needed to call.

By 11am we had reached our limit of 30 mallards between the two of us. We bagged out in just over three hours on a calm bluebird Canterbury day - an impressive first effort for the Game On decoys. But the day and testfire were far from over.

### Part 2: The Parries

After a solid morning on the mallards, we shifted focus to hunt paradise shelducks in a nearby chicory paddock.



**The mallards came in mostly solo or in pairs.**



When we arrived the ducks were right where we expected them to be - but in two mobs at each end of the field. We drove along the fenceline to gently flush them, something they were accustomed to due to frequent disturbances by farmers. True to form, the birds lifted and flew about 150 metres in either direction to land in separate spots once again but within the same paddock. We let them be for now, unloaded the wagon and set up the Game On decoys.

Once again, we kept things simple using a mix of full-body flocked and painted parrie decoys and the ever-reliable wobble-heads. These had worked wonders for the mallards so we were confident they'd do the job for the parries, especially with a gentle breeze still blowing. The Gun City six-slot goose decoy bag was perfect for the wobble-heads as you could store them in one piece - stake and all, making setup and storage quick and easy.

As I pulled the fully flocked decoys from the box I couldn't help but admire them. They were the most striking decoys I'd ever seen, with the vivid colours of the hen and drake standing out in the green field. These decoys were a step above anything I'd used before, so I had high hopes for the hunt and the photos I was hoping to take on such a clear day.

With the spread set I moved down to one end of the field to flush the ducks,

leaving an empty decoy box behind as a deterrent. Meanwhile, Errol took the truck to the other side, flushing the remaining ducks and leaving another box behind. We then returned to our blinds for a coffee and a bite to eat while we waited for our feathered friends to return.

We didn't have to wait long and within an hour we saw the first signs of movement back into the field. It's easy to assume that good duck hunting only happens at each end of the day, but with the right birds and good scouting you can hunt them effectively at any time. We'd pushed these off at noon and less than an hour later they were already confidently cupping back into the decoys.

Over the next couple of hours I shot as many ducks with my camera as I did with the Beretta. The birds just kept homing in on the spread. We had a few groups of 20 or more drop in, so we let them pass hoping to bring them back in smaller groups later. By dusk those birds had returned in small groups eager to grab a belly full of chicory. We had a quick count up and dropped what we needed to complete our 40-bird bag.

Just like that, we had notched our second limit of the day completing a Canterbury double-double for each of us. It was another successful hunt, proving once again that paradise shelducks never disappoint and these Game On decoys get the job done.

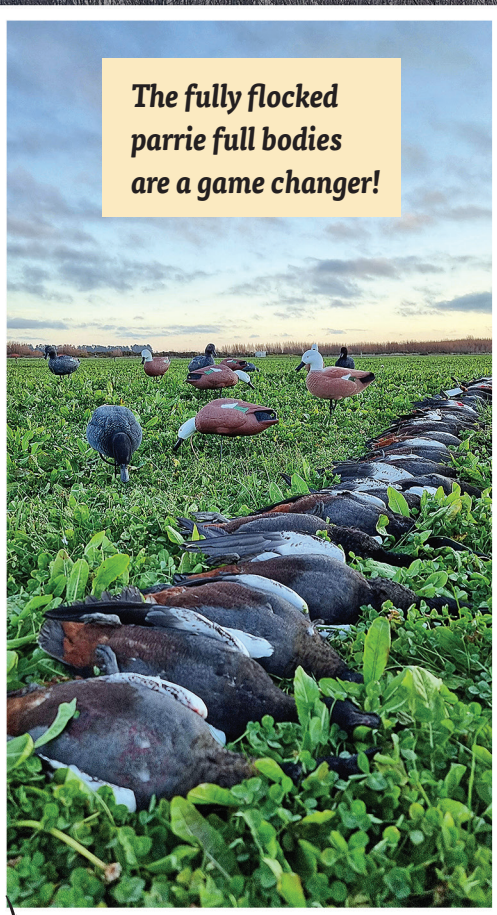
## Part 3: Late Season Action

I was now keen to see how the Game On decoys performed on public land later in the season.

On a wet and wild morning, I headed off to a backwater spot I'd scouted a few times where I could tuck into the reeds without needing a layout blind. The wind and rain were pushing birds off the main riverbed in search of shelter and the action was slow but steady. By midday I'd bagged out on mallards and even dropped a couple of bonus parries, all over just 12 Game On full bodies and four floaters - not a bad effort.

My final hunts wrapped up on the last weekend of the season. Saturday kicked off with a classic field hunt using the Game On Full Bodies and once again Errol and I limited out on mallards. Sunday was a little different, a typical 'end-of-season' scramble, where I managed to squeeze in a quick hunt despite not having scouted. The river was reliable but by this point in the season the birds were extra wary. I kept it simple with just six fully flocked decoys and set up on a familiar trade route. A few mallards came through keeping me busy, but it was the two geese that locked in just as I was about to call it a day that capped off an epic season.

**The fully flocked parrie full bodies are a game changer!**



**My wet and wild backwater river hunt.**





## Game On Decoys: Final Thoughts

Maybe these decoys should've been called 'Game Changers' instead.

Gun City's 'Game On' mallard and paradise shelduck decoys were a real pleasure to hunt over for the 2024 season.

The combination of great gear and diligent scouting made it one of the most successful and enjoyable seasons I've had in years.

These decoys have held up well, despite being used heavily and in all kinds of weather. I always made sure to store them in slotted bags and dry them

properly before packing away - a must for all fully flocked decoys.

Whether you're setting up a full field spread, hunting the river, or just adding a few around your pond for that extra realism, these decoys will get the job done. They are affordable, tough, and finish birds like a charm!.<<<



Nice mixed bag to  
end the season.

## ELECTRIC OR COMBUSTION?



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SIDE BY SIDE**

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- ⚡ Low, low, low running costs;
- ⚡ Equipped with 2WD/4WD, diff locks;
- ⚡ Regenerative braking for control on steep inclines;
- ⚡ Lithium iron phosphate battery pack;



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- 🚗 Electrophoresis anti-corrosion treatment;
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