

Waterfowl & Migratory Game Birds

License Requirements

A general hunting license or mentored permit is required.

To hunt waterfowl, persons 16 and older are required to have a federal duck stamp, and it must be signed across the face and carried by the hunter. The Electronic Duck Stamp, or E-Stamp, is valid in Pennsylvania, and stamps can be purchased through "HuntFishPA."

In addition, all hunters must have a Pennsylvania Migratory Game Bird License to hunt ducks, geese, doves, woodcock, brant, coots, gallinules, rails and snipe. Mentored hunters can purchase migratory game bird licenses and use them to hunt any migratory game bird species authorized for mentored hunting. This license may be obtained from any license issuing agent, or through <https://huntfish.pa.gov>.

To hunt light geese in the conservation season, hunters must purchase a conservation season permit and submit a mandatory report on their hunting activity and harvest. For more information, visit www.pgc.pa.gov, or call 717-787-4250.

Arms & Ammunition

1) Manual and semiautomatic shotguns no larger than 10-gauge with a capacity limited to no more than three shells in the chamber and magazine combined; 2) Long, recurve and compound bows and arrows; and crossbows. Only non-toxic fine shot up to and including size T (.20 inches) is lawful for waterfowl. It is unlawful to hunt waterfowl with lead shot.

Fluorescent Orange

Not required for waterfowl and dove hunters.

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

Hunting hours for the **entire dove season** are from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. Hunting hours during the **September Canada goose season**, and the **light-goose conservation season**, are from one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset. However, hunting hours for all waterfowl end at sunset on Youth Waterfowl Days. Hours for **all other migratory bird seasons** are from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset.



Restrictions

NO PERSON SHALL TAKE MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS:

- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler that is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
- From a sink box (a low-floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water).
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft.
- From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. By using records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls.
- By driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sailboat to put them in range of hunters.
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 30 days after the removal of the bait.

Decoys

Electronic decoys can be used to hunt waterfowl, doves and crows.

Hunting Parties

Waterfowl and dove hunters can hunt in a party of more than six persons as long as they are hunting from a blind or stationary position.

MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING HOURS TABLE

DATES	BEGIN A.M.	END P.M.	DATES	BEGIN A.M.	END P.M.
June 26 - July 2	5:06	8:33	Jan. 1 - 7	6:52	4:46
July 3 - 9	5:10	8:31	Jan. 8 - 14	6:52	4:52
July 10 - 16	5:15	8:28	Jan. 15 - 21	6:51	5:00
July 17 - 23	5:21	8:23	Jan. 22 - 28	6:47	5:08
July 24 - 30	5:27	8:16	Jan. 29 - Feb. 4	6:42	5:16
July 31 - Aug. 6	5:34	8:09	Feb. 5 - 11	6:35	5:24
Aug. 7 - 13	5:40	8:00	Feb. 12 - 18	6:27	5:33
Aug. 14 - 20	5:47	7:50	Feb. 19 - 25	6:18	5:41
Aug. 21 - 27	5:54	7:40	Feb. 26 - March 4	6:09	5:49
Aug. 28 - Sept. 3	6:00	7:29	March 5 - 11	5:58	5:57
Sept. 4 - 10	6:07	7:17	March 12 - 18 *	6:47	7:04
Sept. 11 - 17	6:14	7:06	March 19 - 25	6:36	7:11
Sept. 18 - 24	6:20	6:54	March 26 - April 1	6:25	7:19
Sept. 25 - Oct. 1	6:27	6:43	April 2 - 8	6:13	7:26
Oct. 2 - 8	6:34	6:32	April 9 - 15	6:02	7:33
Oct. 9 - 15	6:41	6:21	April 16 - 22	5:52	7:40
Oct. 16 - 22	6:49	6:11	April 23 - 29	5:42	7:53
Oct. 23 - 29	6:56	6:02	April 30 - May 6	5:32	7:54
Oct. 30 - Nov. 5	7:04	5:54	May 7 - 13	5:24	8:01
Nov. 6 - 12 **	6:12	4:47	May 14 - 20	5:17	8:08
Nov. 13 - 19	6:20	4:38	May 21 - 27	5:11	8:14
Nov. 20 - 26	6:28	4:36	May 28 - June 3	5:06	8:20
Nov. 27 - Dec. 3	6:35	4:35	June 4 - 10	5:03	8:25
Dec. 4 - 10	6:41	4:36	June 11 - 17	5:01	8:29
Dec. 11 - 17	6:46	4:37	June 18 - 24	5:03	8:32
Dec. 18 - 24	6:50	4:37	June 25 - July 1	5:06	8:33
Dec. 25 - 31	6:52	4:41			

Add the minutes from the Meridian Map to the begin/end times on this table.

Ducks, Mergansers & Coots

Seasons for **Ducks, Sea Ducks, Coots and Mergansers** run concurrently, but each of the state's four zones has its own **opening and closing dates**. Waterfowl hunting is closed on Sundays.

Lake Erie Zone

Oct. 31-Jan. 7

2 scaup daily, Oct. 31-Nov. 22 and 1 scaup daily, Nov. 23-Jan. 7

1 scaup daily, Oct. 8-Nov. 23
2 scaup daily, Nov. 24-Dec. 3 and Dec. 27-Jan. 7

Northwest Zone

Oct. 8-Dec. 3
Dec. 27-Jan. 7

North Zone

Oct. 8-22
Nov. 15-Jan. 7

1 scaup daily, Oct. 8-22 and Nov. 15-Dec. 15
2 scaup daily, Dec. 16-Jan. 7

SCAUP LIMITS

Hunters may take 2 scaup daily on 20 hunting days and 1 scaup daily on 40 hunting days. Season dates vary by zone and are shown on this map.

South Zone

Oct. 8-15
Nov. 22-Jan. 21

1 scaup daily, Oct. 8-15 and Nov. 22-Dec. 29
2 scaup daily, Dec. 30-Jan. 21

Ducks & Sea Ducks

6 daily, 18 in possession

The daily bag limit of six ducks or sea ducks is **combined** for any species with an open season, except for the following restrictions. Only 4 sea ducks may be taken daily. Daily limit may not include more than:

- 2 mallards
* No more than 1 hen
- 1 scaup (2 scaup at times)
- 2 black ducks
- 3 wood ducks
- 2 redheads
- 2 canvasbacks
- 1 pintail
- 1 mottled duck
- 1 fulvous whistling duck

Sea ducks

- 3 eiders
* No more than 1 hen
- 3 scoters
- 3 long-tailed ducks

Possession limits are triple the daily limits.

There is no open season for Harlequin Ducks

Mergansers

5 daily, 15 in possession

Hooded mergansers are now part of overall merganser limit.

Coots

15 daily, 45 in possession

DUCK ZONE BOUNDARIES

Lake Erie Zone

Lake Erie, Presque Isle and the area within 150 yards of the Lake Erie shoreline.

Northwest Zone

The area bounded on the north by the Lake Erie Zone and including all of Erie and Crawford counties and all of Mercer and Venango counties north of I-80.

North Zone

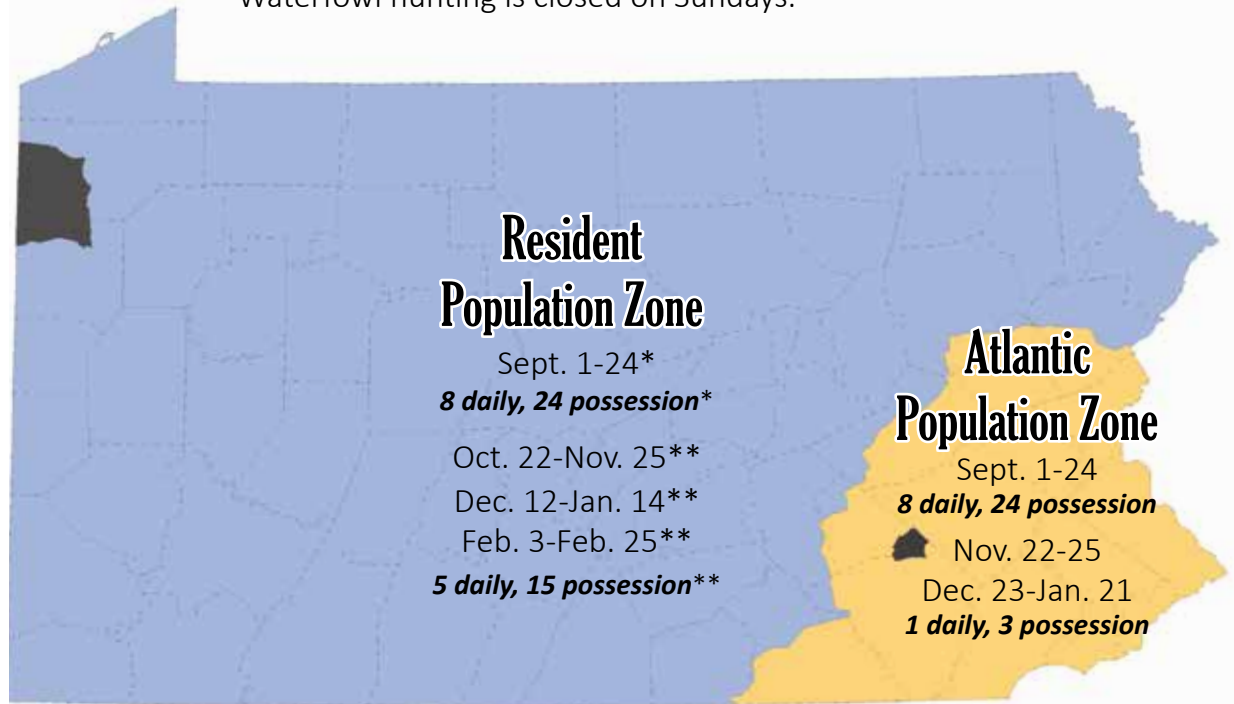
The area east of the Northwest Zone and north of I-80 to Route 220, north from I-80 to I-180, north and east of I-180 from Route 220 to I-80, north of I-80 from I-180 to the Delaware River.

South Zone

All of state not in the Lake Erie, Northwest and North Zones.

Canada Geese

Canada Goose hunting is open statewide, but season lengths and bag limits vary by zone. Seasons for Canada geese include white-fronted geese. Waterfowl hunting is closed on Sundays.



* In western Crawford County & northwestern Mercer County, the season runs from Sept. 1-10 with a daily limit of 1 and possession limit of 3.

** In western Crawford County & northwestern Mercer County, the daily limit is 3 and possession limit is 9.

EXCEPTIONS

September Season *Detailed maps of described areas available at www.pgc.pa.gov*

1.) In the area south of SR 198 from the Ohio state line to intersection of I-79, west of I-79 to SR 358 to the Ohio state line. The season is Sept. 1-10. The daily bag limit is 1, possession limit 3; except on SGL 214 where the season is closed to September goose hunting.

2.) In the area of Lancaster and Lebanon counties north of the Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, east of SR 501 to SR 419, south of SR 419 to Lebanon-Berks county line, west of Lebanon-Berks county line and the Lancaster-Berks county line to SR 1053 (also known as Peartown Road and Greenville Road), west of SR 1053 to Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, the daily bag limit is 1, possession limit 3; except on SGL 46 (Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area) where the season is closed.

Note: The above exception area restrictions do not apply to youth participation on the September youth waterfowl day in the public hunting areas of SGL 214 and SGL 46. The Controlled Hunting Areas within the Wildlife Management Areas of SGL 214 and SGL 46 remain closed to September goose hunting. Hunting hours for all migratory birds, including Canada geese, close at sunset on youth waterfowl days.

Regular Season

Areas in the public hunting sections of SGL 46 (Middle Creek WMA) in Lebanon and Lancaster counties that are outside of the controlled goose hunting areas have a daily limit of 1, and a possession limit of 3 during the regular Canada goose season. Areas inside of the controlled goose hunting areas of SGL 46 (Middle Creek WMA) have a season limit of one.

GOOSE ZONE BOUNDARIES

Atlantic Population Zone

The area east of SR 97 from Maryland State Line to the intersection of SR 194, east of SR 194 to intersection of US Route 30, south of US Route 30 to SR 441, east of SR 441 to SR 743, east of SR 743 to intersection of I-81, east of I-81 to intersection of I-80, south of I-80 to New Jersey state line.

Resident Population Zone

All of Pennsylvania except for the Atlantic Population Zone.

Southern James Bay Population Zone

This zone has been dissolved and its area incorporated into the resident population zone due to a shift in migration patterns. However, different bag limits, and in some cases different seasons, continue to apply in parts of Crawford and Mercer counties.

Light Geese, Brant & Webless Birds

Light Geese (Snow Geese & Ross' Geese)

25 daily, no possession limit

Resident Population Zone

REGULAR SEASON
Oct. 25-Feb. 25

CONSERVATION SEASON
Feb. 27-April 21

Atlantic Population Zone

REGULAR SEASON
Oct. 1-Jan. 28

CONSERVATION SEASON
Jan. 30-April 21

CONSERVATION SEASON

During the conservation season, recorded or amplified calls or sounds are permitted. Hunters need a Conservation Season permit (\$1.97 transaction fee) a federal duck stamp and a Pennsylvania Migratory Game Bird License.

Webless Birds & Brant

Brant

2 daily, 6 possession
Federal duck stamp needed

BOTH GOOSE ZONES
Oct. 8-Dec. 5

Except for crows,
migratory bird hunting is
closed on Sundays.

Woodcock

3 daily, 9 possession

STATEWIDE
Oct. 15-Nov. 25
Dec. 12-21

Wilson's Snipe

8 daily, 24 possession

STATEWIDE
Oct. 15-Nov. 25
Dec. 12-21

Gallinules

3 daily, 9 possession

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Nov. 21

Doves

15 daily, 45 possession

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Nov. 25
Dec. 21-Jan. 7

Virginia & Sora Rails

3 daily, 9 possession

Bag limit singly or combined

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Nov. 21

*Clapper and King Rail hunting
is closed statewide.*

LIFE JACKETS REQUIRED BY LAW

NOV. 1 TO APRIL 30

All boaters, including waterfowl hunters, must wear life jackets on boats less than 16 feet in length, or on any canoe or kayak during the cold-weather period from Nov. 1 through April 30.

Recreational boating fatalities that occur in Pennsylvania from November through April are primarily caused by the effects of cold-water immersion.

When water temperatures are less than 70 degrees Fahrenheit, cold-water shock is a major factor in boating fatalities.

Victims who wear a life jacket when exposed to cold water have potentially life-saving advantages, such as insulation from the cold, buoyancy for victims who are unable to tread water and reduced risk of aspiration of water.

In an effort to reduce the number of fatalities related to cold-water immersion, the Fish & Boat Commission has amended regulations to require life jackets to be worn on small and unstable boats during the period most noted for cold-water temperatures.

For other times of the year and on other types and sizes of boats, all boaters are required to have properly fitted personal flotation devices readily accessible. For more information on boating laws and safety, visit www.fishandboat.com.

Youth, Veterans and Military Days

Licensed junior and mentored youth hunters, military veterans and active military personnel can hunt ducks, mergansers and Canada geese during selected days. Hunters 16 or older need a federal duck stamp to participate. All hunters need a Pennsylvania migratory game bird license. Regular season bag limits and other restrictions apply. Check www.pgc.pa.gov for more details.

Statewide

Youth only – Sept. 24

North Zone

Youth, veterans and active military – Nov. 5
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 14

Northwest Zone

Youth, veterans and active military – Dec. 17
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 14

Lake Erie Zone

Youth, veterans and active military – Oct. 22
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 14

South Zone

Youth, veterans and active military – Nov. 12
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 28