



U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of Information



Release - Immediate

1918

NEW GAME LAWS PROMULGATED.

President Wilson Issues A Proclamation Concerning Migratory Bird Hunting, Based on Agreements Between the United States And Canada.

Washington, D. C.

Regulations governing the taking of mi-

gratory birds, adopted as a result of international action binding on the United States and Canada, were promulgated by the President of the United States on July 31. The new law gives effect to the terms of the treaty which effectually protects such birds in most of the North American continent, and in the main there are only slight changes in the law as it existed before the treaty.

Under its provisions there is no spring open season, and the fall open season is made more uniform throughout the country. Nevertheless, the several States have the right under the terms of the act to make and enforce their own regulations when these are not inconsistent with the Federal rulings, but such State regulations may act only to afford additional protection to migratory birds, and not to extend the open seasons beyond those just promulgated, nor to authorize methods of taking birds not sanctioned in the Federal act.

Main Features of New Law.

The uniform open season in general covers the period between September 1 and January 31, with a period not exceeding 3-1/2 months for individual species, though there are slight exceptions to these dates and periods, as the shorebird season in certain New England and Middle Atlantic States, which opens August 16 and closes November 30. The sale of migratory birds is prohibited except of those propagated under permits issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, and uniform bag limits are set for the entire country. Sportsmen may not ship more than 2 days' bag limit in any calendar week.

At the same time provision is made for the collection of birds for scientific purposes, and under extraordinary conditions Federal permits may be issued to kill migratory birds should they become injurious to agricul-

tural interests.

Provides for Game Farms.

Liberal provisions are included also for the propagation of migratory waterfowl on game farms and preserves, and the sale of birds so bred and reared is authorized as a part of the program for increasing the food supply. This paves the way for building up an industry which has already shown possibilities of marked success. Many species of waterfowl can be profitably raised in captivity, either on land unsuited to farming or in connection with other farm operations.

The Department says that many persons have been deterred from engaging in this business because there were no suitable laws governing or fostering the enterprise. It is hoped that this action by the Federal Government will lead to uniform and appropriate State legislation governing game farming. Such legislation is urgent because no migratory birds, except those reared under permit, can now be sold anywhere in the United States.

Some Wholly Protected.

The new law gives continuous protection to all insectivorous birds, band-tailed pigeons, cranes, wood ducks and eider ducks, swans, curlew, upland plover, and all shorebirds, except the black-bellied and golden plovers, Wilson snipe or jack snipe, woodcock and the greater and lesser yellowlegs, and to certain non-game birds such as auks, gulls, grebes, gulliemots, herons, loons, puffins, terns, and the like.

No night hunting is allowed, the killing or capturing of migratory birds between sunset and a half hour before sunrise being prohibited.

The Open Seasons.

The open seasons under the new regulations are as follows:

The open seasons for waterfowl (except wood duck, eider ducks, and swans), coot, gallinules, and Wilson snipe or jacksnipe are as follows:

In Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York (except Long Island), Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Nevada and that portion of Oregon and Washington lying east of the summit of the Cascade Mountains the open season is from September 16 to December 31;

In Rhode Island, Connecticut, Utah, and that portion of Oregon and

Washington lying west of the summit of the Cascade Mountains the open season is from October 1 to January 15;

In that portion of New York known as Long Island, and in New Jersey, Delaware, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California the open season is from October 16 to January 31;

In Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana the open season is from November 1 to January 31; and

In Alaska the open season is from September 1 to December 15.

The open season for sora and other rails (except coot and gallinules) is from September 1 to November 30, except as follows:

In Louisiana the open season is from November 1 to January 31.

#### Season for Plovers.

The open seasons for black-bellied and golden plovers and greater and lesser yellowlegs are as follows:

In Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia the open seasons are from August 16 to November 30;

In the District of Columbia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Alaska the open season is from September 1 to December 15;

In Vermont, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, and that portion of Oregon and Washington lying east of the summit of the Cascade Mountains the open season is from September 16 to December 31;

In Utah and in that portion of Oregon and Washington lying west of the summit of the Cascade Mountains the open season is from October 1 to January 15; and

In Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas the open season is from November 1 to January 31.

#### Woodcock Open Season.

The open seasons for woodcock are as follows:

In Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota,

North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas the open season is from October 1 to November 30; and

In Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma the open season is from November 1 to December 31.

The open seasons for mourning and white-winged doves are as follows:

In Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, California, Nevada, Idaho, and Oregon the open season is from September 1 to December 15; and

In North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana the open season is from September 16 to December 31.

#### Daily Bag Limits.

The daily bag limits for one person are as follows:

Ducks (except wood duck and eider ducks) twenty-five in the aggregate of all kinds; geese, eight in the aggregate of all kinds; brant, eight; rails, coot, and gallinules, twenty-five in the aggregate of all kinds; black-bellied and golden plovers and greater and lesser yellowlegs, fifteen in the aggregate of all kinds; Wilson snipe or jacksnipe, twenty-five; woodcock, six; doves (mourning and white-winged), twenty-five in the aggregate of both kinds.

#### Sale of Game.

Under section 2 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act it is unlawful to hunt, take, capture, kill, possess, sell, purchase, ship, or transport by any means whatever, or export at any time, any migratory bird included in the terms of the treaty, except as permitted by regulation of the Secretary of Agriculture. In the regulations the Secretary has not given permission for the sale of any migratory game birds except as propagated on game farms and for scientific purposes. As a result, the sale of wild migratory game birds is forbidden throughout the United States. It will be especially worth noting in connection with the law and regulations that the regulations do not repeat the prohibitions contained in the law, but note the exceptions in the way of permissions authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture. Copies of the law and regulations may be obtained of the Secretary of Agriculture.

#####