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30 DAYS OF FALL DUCK HUNTING
ALLOWED BY NEW REGULATIONS

President Approves Open Season With
Drastic Restrictions to Reduce
Annual Kill

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Duck hunters will have 30 days for shooting this fall, but they will hunt in accordance with the most rigid regulations in the history of American wildfowling.

So says the U. S. Biological Survey in summarizing new Migratory Bird Treaty Act regulations announced today (Aug. 1) by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Recommended by the Biological Survey and adopted by R. G. Tugwell as Acting Secretary of Agriculture, the regulations were approved in a Proclamation by President Roosevelt on July 30.

The new regulations, says the Biological Survey, are based on the necessity of having a net annual increase left over at the end of the shooting season until the depleted population of migratory waterfowl is restored to normal. This year's rigid restrictions, which follow a period of approximately 35 years during which the kill each year has exceeded the annual increase from breeding, are summarized by the Bureau, as follows:

Those species which are nearest the danger point of extinction, such as canvasbacks and redheads, will be particularly favored by the elimination of sink-boxes, sneak boats, and open-water shooting, practices which have been the chief methods of taking these species.

Shooting over baited water or land, which has furnished the heaviest toll from all species and accounted for the most consistent full bag limits, will be prohibited.

Live decoys, one of the most effective methods of luring the migratory flocks to the blind, are also ruled out. None will be allowed.

Zoning of States by seasons will be eliminated, and there will be only two zones, northern and southern.

Shooting will be restricted to the hours between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Some bag limits have been reduced. The possession of more than one day's bag has been made illegal.

The 3-shell limit placed on auto-loading and repeating shotguns last February will take effect for the first time this fall, and the new regulations provide that hunters may use a shotgun only, not larger than no. 10 gage.

Regulations Not a Compromise, Says Bureau

Adoption of a short hunting season with heavy restrictions, says the Biological Survey, was the only alternative to a completely closed season. Though advocated by a considerable body of conservationists, including leading sportsmen and sportsmen's organizations, a closed season was considered ill-advised. Reports from Bureau investigators on the breeding grounds indicated that the needed net annual increase would be insured by a short season with heavy restrictions. Complete prohibition of shooting thus seemed unnecessary, and the Bureau knew that complete prohibition would be difficult to enforce. Loss of public support of the regulations and a breakdown of local enforcement through the cutting off of State operating revenues from the sale of hunting licenses were other obstacles to a closed season.

There will be violent protests, the Bureau expects, from those who believe the season should be closed entirely and equally loud complaints from those shooters who believe the Biological Survey is being over-cautious.

The regulations, says the Bureau, are not the result of an effort to find a satisfactory compromise between the two extremes. The principles that dictated the regulations, it is explained, are based on a mathematical progression toward restoration without breaking down existing law-enforcement organizations, either State or Federal, by the imposition of an impossible load.

Season to Open October 21

The 30-day shooting season, applying to geese, brant, jacksnipe, and coot, as well as to ducks, will open in northern States on October 21 and will close on November 19. In southern States the season will run from November 20 to December 19.

States in the northern zone are Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York (including Long Island), Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Washington, Oregon, and Nevada.

The southern zone includes New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

In Alaska west of the 141st meridian the season will open on September 1 and close on September 30. In the rest of the Territory the season will be September 20 to October 19.

No open season is allowed on wood ducks, ruddy ducks, bufflehead ducks, Ross's geese, or swans, and no shooting of snow geese is permitted in Florida or in States north thereof bordering on the Atlantic Ocean. The former prohibition of brant hunting in the East has been removed.

Bag and Possession Limits Changed

The new regulations place the daily bag limit on ducks at 10 in the aggregate of all kinds and make the possession limit conform to this daily bag limit. Changes, says the Biological Survey, represent a reduction of 2 in the daily bag and of 14 in the possession limit of the common species, but extra restrictions on certain species have been removed.

Bag limits on geese and brant remain at 4, but the possession limits have been cut in half, now conforming to the bag limits.

The bag and possession limits on other species affected by the regulations are as follows: Coot, 15; jacksnipe, 15; sora, 25; rails (except sora and coot), 15; woodcock, 4; mourning dove, 20; band-tailed pigeon, 10.

Hunting Methods Restricted

The prohibition of baiting included in the new regulations, says the Bureau, applies to waterfowl and to mourning doves and provides that these birds "are not permitted to be taken with or by aid of corn, wheat, oats or other grain or products thereof, salt or any kind of feed by whomsoever, or for whatsoever purpose, placed, deposited, distributed, scattered, or otherwise put out in any environment whatsoever, whereby such waterfowl or doves are lured, attracted, or enticed to the hunter!"

No live decoys may be used in the taking of any species of waterfowl.

The regulation prescribing means by which migratory game birds may be taken limits the use of "a blind, boat or floating craft of any kind" to locations "not more than 100 feet from the shore line as determined by ordinary high tide or, where there is continuous natural growth or vegetation extending beyond such shore line, not more than 100 feet from such growth or vegetation protruding above the surface of the water at the time of taking such birds." In accordance with an exception, however, scoters, or sea coots, may be taken in coastal waters without reference to the distance limitation.

This regulation prohibits entirely the taking of migratory game birds "from or by aid of an automobile, airplane, sinkbox (battery), power boat, sailboat, any boat under sail, any floating craft or device of any kind towed by power boat or sailboat."

A limitation of weapons that may be used provides that the birds may be taken "with a shotgun only, not larger than no. 10 gage, fired from the shoulder." Incorporating the provisions of President Roosevelt's Proclamation providing a 3-shell limit last February, this regulation also provides that the birds "shall not be taken with or by means of any automatic-loading or hand-operated repeating shotgun capable of holding more than three shells the magazine of which has not been cut off, or plugged with a 1-piece metal or wooden filler incapable of removal through the loading end thereof, so as to reduce the capacity of said gun to not more than three shells at one loading."

Seasons Set on Doves, Woodcock, Rails, and Pigeons

New seasons on mourning doves provide for shooting in northern States from September 1 to December 15 and in southern States from October 1 to January 15. This provision, says the Biological Survey, eliminates September shooting in the south and thus prevents the killing of many immature birds.

The northern zone for dove hunting includes Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Oregon, and Nevada. The southern States are Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

The one-month open seasons for woodcock hunting provided for in the new regulations are as follows: Wisconsin, September 23 to October 23; Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Michigan, and North Dakota, October 1 to 31; New York (including Long Island), Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and

Iowa, October 15 to November 14; Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, October 21 to November 20; Missouri, November 10 to December 10; Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, November 15 to December 15; and North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, December 1 to December 31.

On rails (except coot) the season as formerly will be September 1 to November 30, with a few exceptions. In Washington and Massachusetts the dates are October 1 to November 30; in Wisconsin and New York (including Long Island), October 21 to November 19; and in Louisiana, November 1 to January 31.

Band-tailed pigeons may be hunted in California from December 1 to December 15; in Arizona and Oregon, October 16 to October 30; in New Mexico, October 1 to October 15; and in Washington, September 16 to September 30.

Copies of the new regulations, as soon as they are available, may be obtained from the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.