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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Biological Survey

DIVISION OF INFORMATION

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President Approves 45-Day
Season for Duck Hunters

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes today announced the regulations covering the 1939 migratory bird season. A 45-day season is given to duck hunters this fall for the second consecutive year. The amended regulations were approved by President Roosevelt after adoption by Secretary Ickes in accordance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The migratory bird act making effective treaties with Canada and Mexico requires that hunting regulations be adopted after determining the abundance of the birds and "when, to what extent, if at all, and by what means it is compatible with the terms of the conventions to allow hunting." This became a function of the Secretary of the Interior upon the transfer of the Bureau of Biological Survey to this Department. Regulations become effective when approved by the President.

Based on investigations by the Biological Survey, the new waterfowl-hunting rules include two outstanding changes. The season in the intermediate zone opens on October 22 instead of October 15, and the daily bag limit on geese has been reduced from 5 to 4.

Geese, the Biological Survey reported to Secretary Ickes, did not appear to be in quite as satisfactory a condition last winter as they were in the preceding

season, and the bag-limit reduction is calculated to insure a margin of safety for the species. The Survey's extensive investigations in the United States, Alaska, Canada and Mexico indicated that other waterfowl are continuing to increase.

Waterfowl improvement was attributed by the Biological Survey to the close hunting restrictions of recent years supplemented by an extensive refuge program, both of which measures have made it possible for the birds to take advantage of improved climatic conditions. The Survey's annual waterfowl inventory last January showed a duck increase for the fourth consecutive year, and investigations this summer indicate that conditions on the breeding grounds are again favorable.

The Bureau pointed out, however, that waterfowl populations are still below what they were a decade ago and that further improvement depends upon continued cooperation in the restoration program. These considerations indicated that little change should be made in the slightly liberalized regulations that proved effective last year.

Because of interest that has developed in recent years in archery, the regulations were modified to permit taking of migratory waterfowl by means of bow and arrow.

The opening date in the intermediate zone was delayed to October 22 at the request of a majority of the State Conservation Departments, who felt that the season last year opened too early to afford reasonable hunting privileges.

Hunting Begins October 1

In the northern zone, the season on ducks, geese, Wilson's snipes, or jacksnipes, and coots opens October 1 and closes November 14. In the intermediate zone the season is October 22 to December 5, and in the southern zone, November 15 to December 29. Dates are inclusive.

States in the northern zone are Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

In the intermediate zone are California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York including Long Island, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

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

In Illinois a separate season on coots opening October 1 and closing December 5 is provided for Rock Island, Whiteside, Lee, De Kalb, Kane, Du Page and Cook Counties and all counties north of these.

In southeastern Alaska from the 141st meridian south to Dixon entrance, the waterfowl hunting season opens October 1 and closes November 15; in Alaska south and west of Naknek River and Naknek Lake and the Katmai National Monument to the westernmost boundary of the Aleutian Islands and east of this area to the 150th meridian, November 16 to December 30; and in the remainder of Alaska, September 1 to October 15.

There is no open season on snow geese and brants in Florida and States north thereof that border on the Atlantic coast. Closed seasons throughout the United States and Alaska are continued on Ross's geese, wood ducks, and swans.

Scoters, sometimes called sea coots, may be taken in open coastal waters only beyond outer harbor lines in Maine and New Hampshire from September 15 to September 30, and in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, from September 15 to October 14. Thereafter they may be taken in these States from land or water during the waterfowl season.

Other Waterfowl Rules Summarized

Other regulations of waterfowl hunting are summarized as follows:

Taking waterfowl by means of bait or use of live duck and goose decoys is not authorized regardless of the distance between bait or decoys and hunters.

The 3-shell limit on repeating shotguns, either hand-operated or auto-loading, is continued. Hunters may use shotguns not larger than No. 10 gauge, or bow and arrow.

The daily bag limit on ducks is 10 in the aggregate, and the possession limit remains 20 in the aggregate. When any daily limit includes canvasback, redhead, bufflehead, and ruddy ducks, not more than 3 of any one, or more than 3 in the aggregate of these kinds may be taken, and possession of these particular kinds of ducks is limited to not more than 6 of any one kind or 6 in the aggregate.

The daily bag limit on geese and brants of the kinds permitted to be killed is 4 in the aggregate of all kinds, and the possession limit is 8 in the aggregate. Last year the limits were 5 daily and 10 in possession.

No more than 2 days' bag limit of lawfully taken and lawfully possessed ducks and geese may be transported in one calendar week out of the State in which taken.

The daily bag limit on coots remains at 25.

Waterfowl and coots may be hunted only from 7 a. m. to 4 p. m.

All persons over 16 years of age hunting migratory waterfowl are required to have with them an unexpired Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp validated by signature on the stamp. These stamps, commonly called duck stamps, may be purchased at post offices. They cost one dollar.

Hunting Rules Made for Other Migratory Birds

Snipes, rails, gallinules (other than coots), woodcocks, mourning doves, white-winged doves, and band-tailed pigeons, also protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, may be hunted in season from 7 a. m. to sunset.

The daily bag limit for rails and gallinules, other than soras and coots, is continued at 15 in the aggregate of all kinds. Other bag limits are as follows: Soras, 15; coots, 25; Wilson's snipes, or jacksnipes, 15; woodcocks, 4; mourning and white-winged doves, 15 in the aggregate of both kinds; and band-tailed pigeons, 10.

Possession limits for these species at any one time may not exceed the daily bag limit, except that in the case of woodcocks the possession limit has been raised to 8.

The increased possession limit on woodcocks, the Biological Survey indicated, will enable sportsmen hunting out of their home State to bring back a few more birds, but it is believed that granting this privilege will not result in an appreciable increase in the total annual kill of this species.

Dove Season Postponed in South

Outstanding change in the regulations governing the hunting of migratory birds other than waterfowl was a postponement of the opening of the mourning dove season in some States. In Arkansas and parts of the southern States the mourning dove season will open on September 15 instead of September 1.

This change, the Biological Survey said, was recommended on the basis of information gathered in studies conducted during the past few years. Many young doves are still in the nest on September 1, and the opening-date change will help protect these nestlings.

Taking doves by means of bait is not authorized regardless of the distance between bait and hunters.

Open seasons on mourning doves are as follows:

Alabama, north of U. S. Highway 80, September 15 to October 14 and December 20 to January 31; south of U. S. Highway 80, November 20 to January 31.

Georgia, in the counties of Troup, Merriweather, Pike, Lamar, Monroe, Jones, Baldwin, Washington, Jefferson, and Burke, and all counties north of these, September 15 to October 14 and December 20 to January 31; in the remainder of Georgia, November 20 to January 31.

Mississippi, north of U. S. Highway 80, September 15 to October 14 and November 30 to January 11; south of U. S. Highway 80, October 15 to December 31.

South Carolina, in Oconee, Pickens, and Greenville Counties, October 1 to October 31 and December 20 to January 31; in Edgefield, McCormick, Greenwood,

Abbeville, Anderson, Laurens, Spartanburg, Cherokee, Union, Fairfield, Chester, and York Counties, September 1 to September 30 and December 20 to January 31; in the remainder of South Carolina, November 20 to January 31.

Arizona, California, Idaho, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Virginia, September 1 to November 15.

Arkansas and Delaware, September 15 to November 30.

Florida, except Dade, Broward, and Monroe Counties, November 20 to January 31; in Dade, Broward, and Monroe Counties, October 1 to November 15.

Illinois, September 1 to September 30.

Kentucky, September 1 to October 31.

Louisiana, October 15 to December 31.

Maryland, September 1 to September 30 and November 15 to December 31.

North Carolina, September 1 to September 30 and December 20 to January 31.

Texas, in counties of Yoakum, Terry, Lynn, Garza, Kent, Stonewall, Haskell, Throckmorton, Young, Jack, Wise, Denton, Collin, and Hunt, all counties north of these, and the counties of Parker, Tarrant, Dallas, Rockwall, Kaufman, Johnson, Hopkins, Delta, Franklin, and Ellis, September 1 to October 31; in the remainder of the State, September 15 to November 15.

Seasons on White-Winged Doves

Open seasons on white-winged doves are as follows:

Arizona, August 1 to September 15.

Texas, in the counties of Yoakum, Terry, Lynn, Garza, Kent, Stonewall, Haskell, Throckmorton, Young, Jack, Wise, Denton, Collins, and Hunt, all

counties north of these, and in the counties of Parker, Tarrant, Dallas, Rockwall, Kaufman, Johnson, Hopkins, Delta, and Franklin, September 1 to October 31; in the remainder of the State, September 15 to November 15.

Seasons on Band-Tailed Pigeons

Open seasons on band-tailed pigeons are as follows: Arizona and New Mexico, October 1 to October 15; California, December 1 to December 15; Oregon, September 1 to September 15; and Washington, September 16 to September 30.

Woodcock Seasons

Open seasons for woodcock hunting are as follows:

In New York, north of the New York Central Railroad from Buffalo to Albany and the Boston and Albany Railroad from Albany to the Massachusetts State line, October 1 to October 31; south thereof (except Long Island), October 15 to November 14; Long Island, November 1 to November 30.

Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wisconsin, October 1 to October 31.

Indiana, Iowa, New Jersey, Ohio, and West Virginia, October 15 to November 14.

Massachusetts, October 20 to November 19.

Connecticut and Rhode Island, October 21 to November 20.

Missouri, November 10 to December 10.

Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Virginia, November 15 to December 15.

Louisiana, January 1 to January 31.

Seasons for Rails and Gallinules

The open season for rails and gallinules, except coots, is from September 1 to November 30, except in the following States, where the seasons are as indicated:

Alabama, November 20 to January 31; Louisiana, November 1 to January 31; Massachusetts, New York (including Long Island), and Washington, October 22 to December 5; and Wisconsin, October 1 to November 14.

Coot seasons are the same as those for waterfowl except in Illinois, where a separate season on coots opening October 1 and closing December 5 is provided for Rock Island, Whiteside, Lee, De Kalb, Kane, Du Page, and Cook Counties, and all counties north of these.