

Special Early Teal Season Guidelines

Reference: 90 FR 40178, August 18, 2025 (page 40187)

“Special early teal seasons have been allowed in parts of the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways since 1965. In considering the Councils’ recent recommendations for special early teal seasons, we recognized that our special early teal season guidelines were developed over multiple Federal Register publications, including August 28, 2014 (79 FR 51402 at 51403); April 30, 2014 (79 FR 24512 at 24518–24519); August 23, 2013 (78 FR 52658 at 52659– 52660); August 25, 2009 (74 FR 43008 at 43009); August 27, 2003 (68 FR 51658 at 51658); August 21, 2001 (66 FR 44010 at 44010–44011); and August 21, 1992 (57 FR 38202 at 38204), and were not described completely in one publication. Thus, we are providing our special early teal season guidelines here completely for ease of reference.

The Service’s special early teal season guidelines allow special early teal seasons in certain States within the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways when the spring blue-winged teal population estimate from the WBPBS traditional survey area (i.e., subareas 1–18, 20–50, and 75–77) is at least 3.3 million birds. States authorized in the Atlantic Flyway include Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. States authorized in the Mississippi Flyway include Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. States authorized in the Central Flyway include Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and parts of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming.

The special early teal season lengths are 9 days if the blue-winged teal population estimate is between 3.3 and 4.7 million birds and 16 days if the estimate is greater than 4.7 million birds. Season days must occur in September prior to the regular duck season. The daily bag limit is six teal in the aggregate. Shooting hours are one half hour before sunrise to sunset, except in the States of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, and Wisconsin, where the hours are from sunrise to sunset.

Blue-winged teal production States in the Mississippi Flyway (Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) and Central Flyway (Montana (part), North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming (part)), in lieu of selecting special early teal seasons, may include additional daily bag and possession limits of two and six blue-winged teal, respectively, during the first part of the regular duck season equivalent in length to the special early teal season. These extra blue-winged teal limits are in addition (bonus) to the regular duck season daily bag and possession limits.

When the blue-winged teal population estimate is less than 3.3 million birds, all available applicable data will be considered and more restrictive limits or a closed season may be prescribed as determined to be appropriate for special early teal seasons.”