

South Carolina

Migratory Bird Conservation



photo: Larry Richardson



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photo: USFWS

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Inventory and Monitoring

- Mourning dove call count surveys.
- Mid-winter waterfowl survey.
- Waterfowl banding program.
- Nongame bird inventories on national wildlife refuge systems lands.
- Coordination and analysis of winter waterfowl censuses and spring/fall shorebird migration censuses on NWR's.

Research

- Species composition and seasonal numbers of shorebirds along the South Atlantic Coast.
- Nongame birds and grasslands.

Management

- Wetland protection/restoration/enhancement.
- Bottomland hardwood restoration.
- Rice field restoration/enhancement.
- Migratory bird hunting regulations development.
- Nongame bird studies.

Partnerships

- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.
- BRD-Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit-Clemson.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Ducks Unlimited.
- TNC.

Outreach

- Migratory Bird Day.

Questions and Answers

Why is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service so involved with migratory birds?

The Service, as a result of Congressional action and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918) has responsibility for this group of Federal trust species. Because migratory birds (game and nongame species) move across state, provincial and national borders, they are recognized as an international resource requiring conservation on a continental basis. Protection in North America is provided for by conventions between the United States, Canada, Japan and Mexico. There are migratory bird treaties with these countries that require the United States to determine when, to what extent, and by what means it is compatible with the terms of treaties/conventions to allow use of these birds and their habitats. The Secretary of the Interior has been charged with such determinations.

Are there permit requirements to protect migratory birds, their nests and eggs, or body parts?

Yes, each Service region has a migratory bird permit branch(es) that decides if permits are needed for various actions involving migratory birds. The types of permits that may be issued or required are:

Eagle Exhibition.

Eagle Indian Religious.

Eagle Scientific.

Eagle Depredation.

Taxidermy.

Waterfowl Sale/Disposal.

Scientific Collecting.

Depredation.

Rehabilitation.

Special Purpose (Possession).

Salvage of Dead Birds.

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Miscellaneous Special Purpose.

Falconry.

Raptor Propagation.

How are migratory bird hunting regulations established?

The Service collects population, habitat, hunter, and harvest data on an annual basis to gauge the status of hunted species. This is a cooperative effort with the states, Canada and Mexico. Waterfowl hunting regulations for migratory species use flyways (broad geographical areas traveled by groups of migrating birds) to establish regulation frameworks for hunting. The states within a flyway work with Service biologists to analyze data and propose regulations to the Service's Regulation Committee. This committee judges the proposals and recommends a broad set of hunting regulations that include season dates, bag/species limits, etc. These framework regulations are approved by the Service Director, and states are then allowed the flexibility to choose specific state regulations within the flyway frameworks.