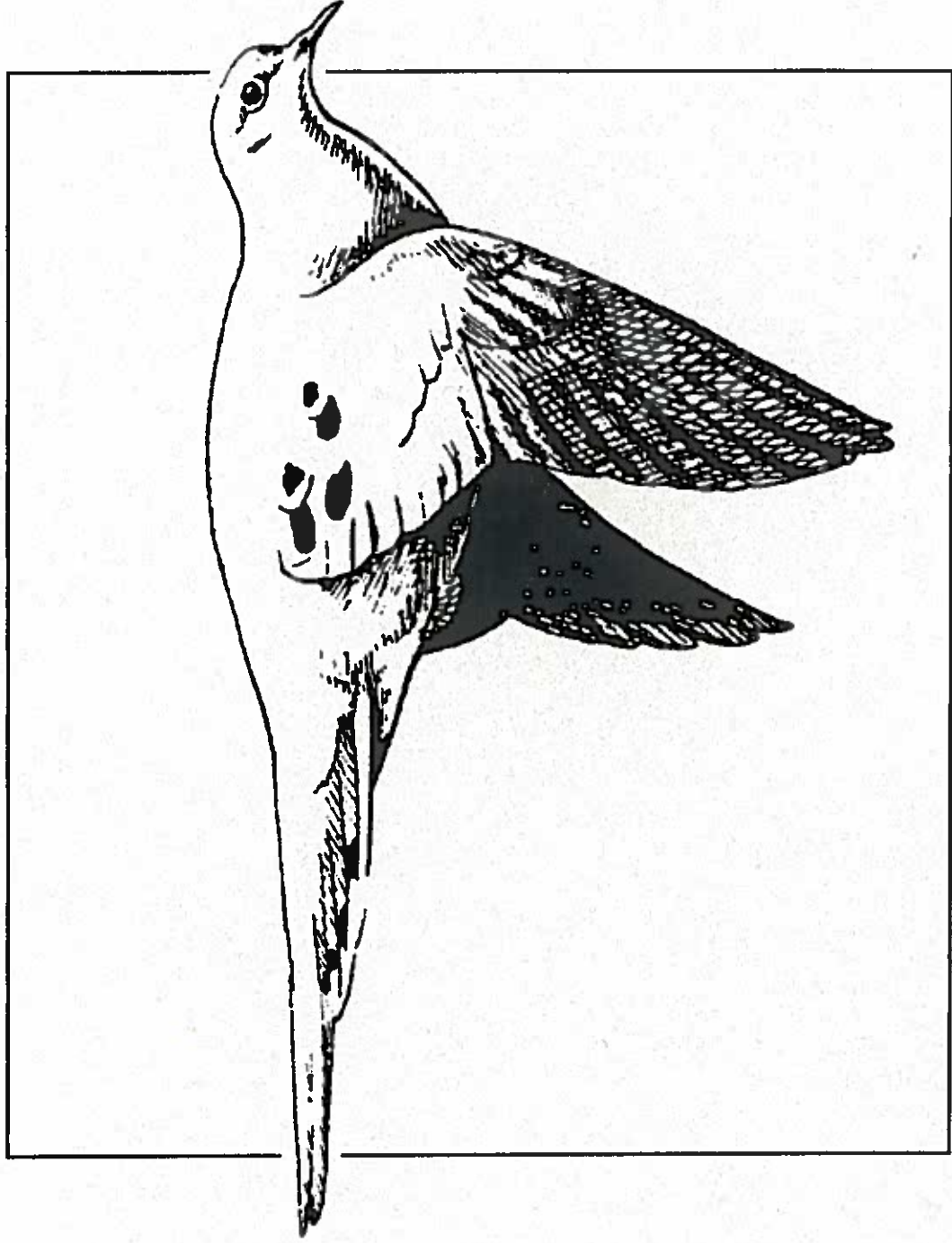


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**Wildlife Resource Bulletin No. 99-5**  
**August 1999**

**1998-99 Mourning Dove Hunter**  
**Survey Summary**



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**Wildlife Division**

**Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

### **Wildlife Resource Bulletin**

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# **1998-99 Mourning Dove Hunter Survey Summary**

by

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**Abstract:** In order to better understand the desires and concerns of Virginia dove hunters, a survey was mailed to 5,000 dove hunters randomly selected from hunters who registered with Virginia's Harvest Information Program (HIP). A total of 2,173 surveys were completed and returned. Eighty one percent of the respondents indicated they had hunted during the 1998-99 dove season. These hunters reported bagging 35,428 doves during a total of 6,063 hunts throughout the Commonwealth. Individuals were asked to rank their preference 1=strongly oppose to 7=strongly favor for a season length of 70 days with a daily bag limit of 12 doves as well as a season length of 60 days with a bag limit of 15. A season length of 70 days with a 12 dove bag limit was slightly favored (average rank = 5) over a 60 day season, 15 dove bag (average = 4.7). When asked to rank their satisfaction (1=extremely dissatisfied to 7=extremely satisfied) with the current dove season, the majority (51.5%) ranked their satisfaction as a 5 or 6. Only a small minority (2.5%) expressed extreme dissatisfaction with the existing season. Hunters ranked the months of September, October, November, December and January from 1 to 5 in order of the most preferred month to the least preferred month to hunt doves. A total of 86% of the respondents ranked September as the most preferred (1.2) month to hunt doves followed by October (2.2), November (3.4), December (3.8) and January (4.4). Hunters were asked to give their opinion of the status of the dove population in their area. Ten percent had no opinion, 7.3% felt their local population was increasing, 36.5% believed their population was decreasing, and 45.7% thought the population was stable in their area.

Because the mourning dove (*Zenaidura macroura*) is a migratory bird, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is responsible for its general management. The USFWS provides the framework for all migratory bird seasons within which states are allowed to select certain season options. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) sets hunting regulations for the mourning dove as well as all of the other

webless migratory birds at the Board of Director's July meeting each year after receiving public input and comments.

The 1998-99 Virginia dove season was comprised of three segments. The dove season opened on September 5<sup>th</sup> and ran through September 26<sup>th</sup>. Doves could be hunted noon until sunset each day except Sunday. Virginia does not allow Sunday hunting. The second segment was October 3<sup>rd</sup> through November 6<sup>th</sup>

both days inclusive and the last segment ran December 25<sup>th</sup> through January 9<sup>th</sup>. Shooting hours for the latter two segments were ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily. The daily bag limit for all three segments was 12 with a possession limit of 24 birds. The first two segments are often referred to as the early segment and the third the late segment.

In an effort to increase hunter satisfaction VDGIF conducted a dove hunter survey to identify hunter's preferences on current and future Virginia dove hunting regulations, hunter effort data and demographics.

## METHODS

A random sample of 5,000 names and addresses was drawn from hunters who had indicated they had hunted doves when they registered with the 1998-99 Virginia Harvest Information Program (HIP). In February 1999, a survey (Appendix A), a self-addressed pre-stamped envelope, and a cover letter explaining the importance of the survey were mailed to each of the selected hunters.

One hundred three surveys were returned undeliverable. Survey reminders were not sent. The number of completed surveys received by May 25, 1999 was 2,173 for a response rate of 44.4% percent.

Regional comparisons were made based on the five regions of Virginia depicted in Figure 1. Respondents were asked to identify where they had dove hunted in 1998-99 by indicating the VDGIF's regional area.

## RESULTS

Of the 2,173 respondents, 1,766 (81%) indicated they had hunted during the 1998-99 dove season, 404 people did not hunt during the 1998-99 dove season, and 3 did not answer this question. Twenty-seven (1.5%) of the 1,766 individuals who hunted during the 1998-99 dove season were females, and 30 (1.7%) individuals did not specify their gender. Six hundred thirty-five respondents (33.5%) hunted in region 1, 513

(27.0%) hunted in region 2, 70 (3.7%) hunted in region 3, 190 (10.0%) hunted in region 4, and 490 (25.8%) hunted in region 5. One hundred thirty-two individuals hunted in more than one region, which explains why the total number exceeds the number responding to the survey.

The number of hunts in region 1 totaled 635 with 12,280 doves bagged (32.5%). Region 2 hunts totaled 513 with 9,737 doves bagged (25.7%). The number of hunts taking place in regions 3, 4, and 5 hunts totaled 70, 190, and 490 with 1,549 (4.1%), 4,476 (11.9%), and 9,730 (25.8%) doves bagged, respectively. The average number of doves killed per hunt in each region was 19.3 doves in region 1, 19.0 doves in region 2, 22.1 doves in region 3, 23.6 doves in region 4, and 19.9 doves in region 5. This average number exceeded the legal daily limit, indicating those people likely reported season totals rather than daily total bagged.

On opening day, 5,852 doves were harvested, constituting 16.5% of the harvest reported in this survey. During the first segment, 22,136 doves were harvested, 5,134 doves during the second segment, and 2,306 doves during the third segment, constituting 62.5%, 14.5% and 6.5% of the harvest reported in this survey. Hunters hunted 4,324 days during the first segment, 1,275 days during the second segment, and 463 days during the third segment for a total of 6063 days hunted during the 1998-99 dove season.

Individuals were asked to rank their preferences from 1 to 7 (1=strongly oppose to 7=strongly favor) for a season length of 70 days with a bag limit of 12 doves as well as a season length of 60 days with a bag limit of 15 doves. A season length of 70 days with a 12 dove bag limit (average rank=5.0) was slightly favored over a season length of 60 days with a 15 dove bag limit (average rank=4.7) among all people surveyed (Table 1).

Our survey attempted to determine whether an opening day of September 1, Labor Day, the first Saturday in September, the second Saturday in September, the third Saturday in September, or the fourth Saturday in September was most preferred. Individuals ranked all 6 choices from 1 to 6, with 1 indicating their highest preference and 6 indicating their lowest preference. The first Saturday in September, with a rank of 2.2

overall, was the most preferred, followed by a September 1 opening date with a ranking of 2.6. Labor Day, ranked 2.7, was the next preferred opening date, followed by the second Saturday in September ranked at 3.5, the third Saturday in September ranked at 4.5 and finally by the fourth Saturday in September ranked at 5.4 (Table 2).

Hunters were asked to rank the months of September, October, November, December, and January from 1 to 5 in order of the most preferred month to the least preferred month to hunt doves. September was the month most hunters preferred to dove hunt with 86.5% of respondents ranking this as their first choice. The resulting overall rank was 1.2. October was ranked at 2.2 with 70.5% of respondents ranking October as their second choice. November was ranked at 3.4 with 65.3% of respondents ranking November as their third choice. December was ranked at 3.8 with 68.9% of respondents ranking December as their fourth choice. January was ranked at 4.4 with 73.2% of respondents choosing January as their least favorite month in which to hunt doves (Table 3). The order of preferred months to hunt did not differ between men and women.

Preferences for shooting hour options on opening day, during the early segment and during the late segment were ranked on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 indicating they strongly opposed the option and 7 indicating they strongly favored the option. On opening day, the noon until sunset option was ranked 5.1 overall, and the all day option was ranked 5.0 overall (Table 4). Both option rankings on opening day fall between the "does not matter" and "strongly favor" categories and are only slightly favored as options. The early segment noon until sunset option was ranked at 4.8 overall and the all day option was slightly more favored with an overall ranking of 5.2. The late segment noon until sunset option was ranked 3.8, falling between the "strongly oppose" and "does not matter" categories and indicating that most were slightly opposed to this option. The late segment all day option was slightly favored with a ranking of 5.9. In general, the majority of the rankings fell on either side of the "does not matter" category indicating that most hunters are satisfied with the current regulations on shooting

hours. There was very little difference between the men's and women's ranks for each of the choices. Men were more opposed to the late segment noon until sunset shooting option than were women, ranked 3.8 and 4.5, respectively.

When hunters were asked to rank their satisfaction with the dove hunting season framework that currently exists in Virginia on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 indicating they were extremely dissatisfied and 7 indicating they were extremely satisfied, the overall ranking was 5.1. The majority (51.5%) of all people surveyed ranked their satisfaction as a 5 or 6. Only a small minority (2.5%) expressed extreme dissatisfaction with the existing framework. Hunters also ranked the quality of the 1998-99 dove season on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 designating a poor quality season and 7 designating an excellent season. The overall ranking was 3.20, which translates to a slightly less than good rating. Of the 1,755 hunters who answered this question, 25.5% rated the 1998-1999 dove season as poor, 27.4% rated the dove season as good, and 5.3% rated the dove season as excellent. None of the other ranks exceeded 14.0%. Female hunters (N=27) rated the quality of their hunting season the same as male hunters (average rank=3.2).

Individuals surveyed were asked to give their opinion of the status of the dove population in their area. Ten percent of those surveyed had no opinion, 7.3% believe their local population is increasing, 36.5% believe the population is decreasing, and 45.7% believe the population is stable. The majority of hunters (48.7%) in region 1 think the population is stable, but 33.2% think the population is decreasing. The majority of hunters (42.7%) in region 2 think the population is decreasing. An almost equivalent 39.8% of hunters in region 2 believe the population is stable. The hunters in regions 3, 4, and 5 believe their populations are either stable or decreasing with 52.9%, 54.2%, 46.5%, and 29.4%, 30.0%, 36.2% of the hunters choosing either option, respectively. Of those surveyed who indicated they had not hunted during the 1998-99 dove season, 90.0% did not complete this question, 2.0% had no opinion, 1.2% think the population in their area is increasing, 3.4% believe the population is decreasing, and 3.4% think the population is stable. An almost equal

number of women believe the populations in their area are either decreasing (37.0%) or stable (33.0%). Men also were more inclined to believe their populations were decreasing rather than stable.

Hunters were asked how difficult it was for them to find a place to hunt and to rank the difficulty on a scale of 1 to 7; 1 designated a very difficult time and 7 designated it was not difficult at all to locate a place to hunt. The overall ranking was 4.9, indicating a moderately difficult to not difficult time in locating a place to hunt. The majority of hunters (36.9%) indicated they had no difficulty at all locating a place to hunt for the 1998-99 season. In general, women had an easier time finding a place to hunt than did men (female average rank=5.4 versus male average rank=4.9).

Over 80% of those surveyed indicated they hunted on private land. Those hunting on private land hunted 6,296 days out of the 7,825 total days hunted by those answering this question. Hunt clubs on leased private land were the second-most popular lands used during the 1998-99 season, constituting 10.1% of the land hunted. Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Wildlife Management Areas were used for 352 days, or 4.5% of the time. Other lands, which accounted for 1.5% of the land hunted during the 1998-99 dove season, included military lands such as Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Pickett, and Quantico Marine Base property, government or federal property, licensed shooting preserves, privately owned hunt clubs, Department of Corrections property, and state forest property (Table 5). Women hunted primarily on private land (87.0%) and secondarily on wildlife management area lands (11.1%). Men, on the other hand, hunted primarily on private land (80.4%) and secondarily on hunt clubs on leased private land (10.3%).

Hunters chose to hunt over a harvested cornfield most often, accounting for 54.0% of the crop hunted over most often. The harvested cornfield was followed by sunflowers (13.0%), and then by pasture (11.8%) as the preferred crops. Other crops constituted 8.6% of crops hunted over and included alfalfa, barley, bean fields, buckwheat, cantaloupe, clover, grain sorghum, hay, Johnson grass, melons, millet,

milo, oats, orchards (peach and apple), peanuts, pumpkins, ragweed, rye, sage, soybeans, tobacco, and winter wheat.

In 1998, the USFWS made it mandatory for everyone hunting doves, woodcock, rails, snipe, coots, ducks, brant or geese in any state to register with the Harvest Information Program (HIP) in the state in which they would hunt. Most people surveyed (38.3%) were informed about these mandatory HIP regulations through VDGIF literature or personnel. Friends informed another 33.1% of the hunters and magazine articles spread the word to 12.3% of those surveyed. Television, radio, and sports shows informed a combined 5.2% of those surveyed about HIP regulations. Other sources of information concerning the HIP regulations included unspecified types of stores or stores "where they purchased their licenses," sports stores or gun shops, newspapers, family members, and the Internet.

Virginia implemented HIP as a toll free phone-in registration. We attempted to determine how difficult people felt the HIP phone registration was to use and asked them to rate the level of difficulty on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 designating very difficult, 4 designating moderately difficult, and 7 designating not difficult at all. The overall rating was 6.3 indicating those surveyed found the registration by phone quite simple to use. Sixty-nine percent (69%) indicated the phone registration was not difficult at all to use, and only 1.7% of respondents classified the process as very difficult. Men found it slightly easier to use the phone registration system (average rank=6.3) versus females (average rank=5.9).

Currently there is no additional fee to the hunter associated with the HIP registration. VDGIF provides a toll free number for easy registration. Hunters were asked to what extent they would favor or oppose various costs associated with purchasing a separate paper permit instead of using the toll free number to register with HIP. They ranked 3 costs separately on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 indicating they strongly opposed the cost, 4 indicating cost was not an issue, and 7 indicating they were strongly in favor of the cost of the paper permit. The overall rank for a 50-cent cost for a HIP permit was 2.3. Sixty-four percent (64%) of

those surveyed were strongly opposed to such a cost; 18.7% indicated it did not matter to them and 9.6% indicated they were strongly in favor of this fee. When asked about a cost of \$1 or \$2 for the HIP permit, the overall rankings were 1.9 and 1.7, respectively. As the cost associated with the permit increased, the number of individuals strongly opposing the cost also increased. There was virtually no difference between the rankings of females versus males among the \$1 or \$2 fee choices. Females were only slightly less opposed to a 50-cent fee than were males (average rank=2.6 vs. 2.3) but were nonetheless strongly opposed. Of the 1,623 people who answered this question, 1,055 (65.0%) were strongly opposed to all 3 costs associated with obtaining a paper permit for the HIP registration.

We asked hunters to quantify their expenses for the 1998-99 dove season including license fees, gas, meals, lease fees, shells, new guns, and other associated costs and place themselves within 1 of 6 expenditure categories. More than 88% of hunters placed their expenses in the "under \$500" category, 8.2% placed themselves in the "\$500-\$1,000" category, 2.1% placed themselves in the "\$1,000-\$1,500" category, and less than 1% placed themselves in each of the "\$1,500-\$2,000", "\$2,000-\$2,500", and "over \$2,500" categories. Most hunters (80.3%) indicated they did not belong to an organized hunting club, while 2.5% indicated they did belong to some hunt club. Over 17% of those surveyed did not complete this question.

The number of years that respondents had been dove hunting ranged between 0 and 70 years. The average number of years each hunter had been hunting was 21.3 years. Women who hunted this season (N=26) had been hunting for 7.8 years, with a range between 1 and 25 years, and men who hunted this season (N=1709) had been hunting for 21.3 years, with a range between 0 and 70 years. Sixteen percent of those surveyed generally hunt with a dog. Ten of 27 women who hunted during the 1998-99 dove season hunted with a dog while 338 of

1709 men hunted with a dog. More than half of those surveyed (56.3%) reported that they never took youth (15 years and younger) dove hunting with them. Only 10.6% of those surveyed reported taking youth occasionally, 12.2% took youth frequently, and 13.7% indicated they always took youth hunting with them. Women were no more likely to take a youth hunting with them than were men.

## DISCUSSION

The survey gave each person an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns regarding the dove season regulations, the current population levels, and the VDGIF's involvement with the sport. Many people expressed their appreciation for VDGIF's solicitation of their opinions and their ability to offer input prior to decisions being made while others did not understand the usefulness of the survey. A substantial number of people offered praise for the current administration of the dove season and its regulations. Many of those surveyed expressed concerns for what they perceive to be a decline in the dove population over time. There was additional concern over the crowded conditions on the WMA's and many suggested solutions such as lotteries to restrict the number of hunters or expansion of the croplands to allow for a greater number of hunters in one area. There appeared to be a strong consensus regarding a cost associated with the new HIP registration requirement. Most individuals believe their license fees are high enough and would rather not agree to another fee that would be subject to increase in future years. While VDGIF can take all of the opinions voiced through this survey into account, all of them cannot be satisfied due to the nature of wildlife management and the regulations required to ensure its persistence in Virginia and elsewhere. We are extremely appreciative to those individuals who took the time to complete the survey.

Figure 1. Physiographic regions for the 1998-99 dove hunting season in Virginia.

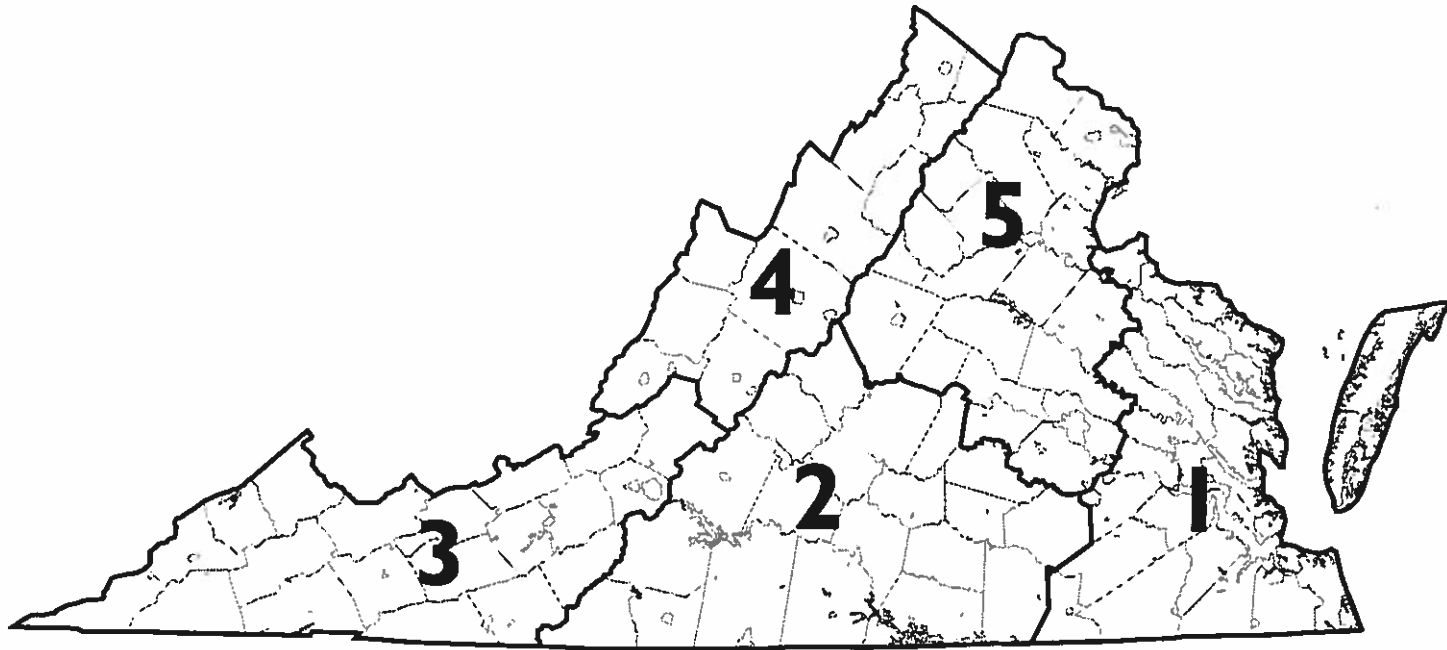


Table 1. Preference of dove season length and bag limit.

Rank	70 day season, 12 dove limit	60 day season, 15 dove limit
	%	%
1 strongly opposed	6.7	12.9
2	3.0	5.4
3	5.2	6.1
4 does not matter	34.2	29.3
5	5.8	5.1
6	8.7	5.8
7 strongly favor	36.4	35.4
Average rank	5.0	4.7

Table 2. Preference of when to open the dove season in percentages.

Rank	September 1	Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Sat. Sept.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat. Sept.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sat. Sept.	4 <sup>th</sup> Sat. Sept.
	1 most preferred	41.7	16.7	37.9	10.6	4.3
2	15.2	42.4	18.5	9.7	5.2	2.1
3	17.2	19.7	32.6	14.0	7.1	3.2
4	6.5	3.9	6.4	58.6	9.4	6.4
5	4.8	8.1	1.6	1.2	67.8	8.4
6 least preferred	14.6	9.2	2.9	6.0	6.1	76.6
Average rank	2.6	2.7	2.2	3.5	4.5	5.4

Table 3. Preference of month to hunt doves in percentages.

Rank	September	October	November	December	January
1 most preferred	86.6	13.8	1.6	1.7	2.2
2	8.7	70.6	5.2	6.6	6.2
3	2.3	6.4	65.4	11.2	11.3
4	0.8	4.9	13.0	69.0	7.1
5 least preferred	1.7	4.3	14.9	11.5	73.2
Average rank	1.2	2.2	3.3	3.8	4.4

Table 4. Preference of dove shooting hour options in percentages.

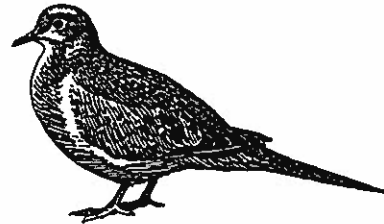
Rank	Opening Day		Early Segment		Late Segment	
	½ day	all day	½ day	all day	½ day	all day
1 strongly oppose	12.6	18.9	14.0	14.6	25.0	6.1
2	4.4	3.9	4.8	3.5	6.7	1.3
3	5.4	3.9	6.4	2.9	6.2	1.1
4 does not matter	17.1	12.1	23.4	15.7	34.0	18.7
5	3.6	2.7	4.1	2.7	3.5	1.9
6	7.5	6.0	6.9	6.7	3.9	6.5
7 strongly favor	49.3	52.5	40.4	53.9	20.8	64.4
Average rank	5.1	5.0	4.8	5.2	3.8	5.9

Table 5. Type of land hunted during the 1998-99 dove season and number of days.

Land type	# of days	% of hunts
VDGIF Wildlife Management Areas	352	4.5
National Forest (US Forest Service)	109	1.4
Private Land (excluding hunt club or leased land)	6,296	80.5
Corporate Land (e.g. Westvaco, but excluding hunt club or leased)	41	0.5
Hunt club on leased private land	792	10.1
Hunt club on leased corporate land	117	1.5
Other	118	1.5

Appendix A.

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES  
1998-99 MOURNING DOVE HUNTER SURVEY**



Please answer each of the following questions completely. All responses to questions will be kept in strictest confidence. Results from this study will be reported only in an aggregate total, never attributed to any individual.

1. Did you hunt mourning doves in Virginia during the **1998-99** season (July 1, 1998 – June 30, 1999)?
- Yes** (If yes, utilize the map below to indicate the regions hunted and number of birds killed in each region.)
  - No**

Region(s) Hunted	Number of Birds Killed

If you answered **no** to question #1, you are now finished with this survey. Please return it in the postage paid envelope as soon as possible. Thank you.

2. Approximately how many days did you hunt and how many doves did you harvest each period during the **1998-99** dove season? Enter a **0** (zero) if you did not hunt during a period.

<u>Segment</u>	<u>#Days</u>	<u>#Doves Harvested</u>
Opening day (Sept. 5)	_____	_____
First segment (Sept. 7-26)	_____	_____
Second segment (Oct. 3 -Nov. 3)	_____	_____
Third segment (Dec. 25- Jan. 9)	_____	_____

We would like to have your opinion on future dove regulations in Virginia. Because the mourning dove is a migratory game bird, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service provides the basic framework within which states select season dates and bag limits. The answers to the following questions will help us better meet the preferences of our dove hunters.

3. Two season-length and bag-limit options are available in Virginia. To what extent do you favor or oppose each option?

	Strongly Oppose			Does Not Matter			Strongly Favor
Season length 70 days, bag-limit 12 doves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Season length 60 days, bag-limit 15 doves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. The federal framework allows for the dove season to open as early as September 1 in Virginia. Please rank your preference for the following **opening dates** (1 = most preferred, 6 = least preferred). **Do not use the same rank for more than one selection.**

<u>Opening Date</u>	<u>Rank of Preference</u>
September 1	_____
Labor Day	_____
First Saturday in September	_____
Second Saturday in September	_____
Third Saturday in September	_____
Fourth Saturday in September	_____

5. Please rank the following months in order of preference for **hunting doves** (1 = most preferred, 5 = least preferred). **Do not use the same rank for more than one month.**

<u>Month</u>	<u>Rank of Preference</u>
September	_____
October	_____
November	_____
December	_____
January	_____

6. To what extent do you favor or oppose the following shooting hour options for doves?

	Strongly Oppose			Does Not Matter			Strongly Favor
Opening day							
Noon until sunset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Segment							
Noon until sunset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Late Segment							
Noon until sunset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How satisfied are you with the dove hunting season framework that currently exists in Virginia?

Extremely Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Extremely Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Approximately how many days of the **1998-99** dove season did you hunt doves on the following types of land (enter all that apply)?

<u>Land Type</u>	<u># Days Hunted</u>
VDGIF Wildlife Management Area	_____
National Forests (U.S. Forest Service)	_____
Private Land (excluding hunt club or leased land)	_____
Corporate Land (e.g. Westvaco) (excluding hunt club or leased land)	_____
Hunt club (s) on Leased Private Land	_____
Hunt club (s) on Leased Corporate Land	_____
Other (please specify) _____	_____

9. Do you belong to an organized dove hunting club?

Yes (if yes, what is the name of your club \_\_\_\_\_?)  
 No

10. Overall, how would you rate the quality of your **1998-99** dove season?

Poor	Good	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. How difficult was it for you to locate a place to hunt during the **1998-99** dove season (check one)?

Very Difficult	Moderately Difficult	Not Difficult At All
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. In your opinion, is the dove population of your area (please check one):

Increasing  
 Stable  
 Decreasing  
 No opinion/ not sure

The new Harvest Information Program (HIP) initiated in 1998 will provide wildlife professionals needed information so they can better manage your wildlife resources. Thank you for your cooperation and participation. Please answer the following questions regarding HIP.

13. How did you learn about the HIP requirements?

magazine article  
 television  
 radio  
 sport show  
 VDGIF literature or personnel  
 friend  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

14. How difficult was the HIP phone registration (1-800-WETLAND) to use?

Very Difficult	Moderately Difficult	Not Difficult At All
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. To what extent would you favor or oppose each of the following costs to purchase a separate paper permit instead of using the toll free number to register with HIP?

	Strongly Oppose	Does Not Matter	Strongly Favor
\$0.50	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

These last questions will help us understand some basic information about dove hunters in Virginia. Please answer each question.

16. Approximately how many years have you been hunting mourning doves? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you usually hunt dove with a dog?

Yes  
 No

18. What type of crop did you most often hunt over during the **1998-99** dove season?

sunflowers  
 harvested corn field  
 pasture  
 top sown wheat field  
 cotton  
 cutover pine  
 other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



19. How often did you take a youth (15 years and younger) dove hunting with you during the 1998-99 dove season?

- Never                      Occasionally                      Always
- 

20. What do you estimate your total cost for dove hunting during the 1998-99 season (including license, gas, meals, lease fees, shells, new gun, etc.)?

- under \$500.00
- \$500 - \$1000
- \$1000 - \$1,500
- \$1,500 - \$2,000
- \$2,000 - \$2,500
- over \$2,500

21. Gender:       male       female?

22. What county (or city) do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

23. What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

24. Remarks (please use this space to make any additional comments concerning the Virginia dove hunting season and the HIP process that were not addressed by this survey).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your answers are very important to the successful management of wildlife in Virginia. If you have any questions regarding the study or this questionnaire, please contact:

Patty Moore, Farm Wildlife Habitat Biologist  
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
4792 Anderson Hwy.  
Powhatan, VA 23139  
(804)598-3706

**PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENCLOSED POSTAGE PAID ENVELOPE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THANKS AGAIN!**

