

AGENDA

Board of Game and Inland Fisheries
Wildlife and Boat Committee
7870 Villa Park Drive
Henrico, Virginia 23228

January 22, 2020
10:00 am

Committee Members: Mr. Leon Boyd, Chair, Mr. G. K. Washington, Mr. Frank Adams, and Dr. Mamie Parker, Alternate

DGIF Staff Liaisons: Dr. Gray Anderson and Dr. Mike Bednarski

1. Call to Order and Welcome
Mr. Leon Boyd
2. Approval of October 23, 2019 Committee Meeting Minutes **Final Action**
Mr. Leon Boyd
3. Public Comments – Non Agenda Items
Mr. Leon Boyd
4. Blue Ridge PRISM – A Cooperative Weed Management Area for Virginia
Mr. Rod Walker and Mr. Jim Hurley
5. Wood Turtle Management Plan
Mr. J. D. Kloepfer
6. CWD Program Update
Dr. Gray Anderson
7. Fish Habitat Improvements
Dr. Mike Bednarski

8. Wild Trout Management Plan
Mr. Stephen Reeser

9. Waterfowl Regulation Changes
Dr. Gary Costanzo

Action

10. Wildlife Division Update
Dr. Gray Anderson

11. Fish Division Update
Dr. Mike Bednarski

12. Director's Report
Mr. Ryan Brown

13. Chairman's Report
Mr. Leon Boyd

14. Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2020
Mr. Leon Boyd

15. Additional Business/Comments
Mr. Leon Boyd

16. Adjournment
Mr. Leon Boyd

DRAFT Board Minutes

Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement Committee
Board of Game and Inland Fisheries
7870 Villa Park Drive – Board Room
Henrico, VA 23228

October 23, 2019
10:00 am

Present: Mr. Leon Boyd, **Chair;** Mr. G. K. Washington; Dr. Mamie Parker, Alternate: **Board Members** in attendance: Mr. John Daniel; Ms. Catherine Claiborne; **Executive Director:** Mr. Ryan Brown; **Director’s Working Group:** Major Scott Naff, Mr. Lee Walker, Mr. Darin Moore, Mr. Gary Martel, Mr. Tom Guess, Mr. Darin Moore, Major Bryan Young, Dr. Gray Anderson.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and noted for the record that a Quorum was present for today’s meeting.

Approval of the August 21, 2019 Committee Meeting Minutes:

The Chair called for a motion to approve the August 21, 2019 Wildlife, Boat, and Law Enforcement meeting minutes. Mr. Washington made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2019 Committee meeting. Dr. Parker seconded the motion. Ayes: Boyd, Washington, and Parker

Public Comments – Non-Agenda Items:

The Chair called for Public Comments – Non-Agenda items. Hearing none the Chair continued with the meeting.

CWD Program Update: The Chair called on Dr. Gray Anderson for a presentation.

Dr. Anderson gave a CWD Program Update.

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Dr. Anderson for his update.

Tick Borne Illnesses: The Chair called on Dr. David Gaines, the State Entomologist with the Virginia Department of Health.

Dr. Gaines gave a very informative presentation on Tick Borne Illnesses

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Dr. Gaines for his presentation.

Law Update: The Chair called on Major Scott Naff and Major Bryan Young for an update.

Major Young called on Sgt. B. I. Bell to give a presentation on the CAD Radio System that is used by Law Enforcement.

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Major Naff and Major Young and Sgt. Bell for their presentation and comments.

- Ms. Karen Terwilliger arrived at 11:40 am

Wildlife Division Update: The Chair called on Dr. Gray Anderson for an update.

Dr. Anderson reported:

- Update on Elk Program – 158,000 visited the Elk Camera
- Youth Harvest 1651 Deer – 120 Bear - 36 Turkeys
- Gave an update on the SFI- Sustainable Forestry Initiative and our Certificate for Timber Practices - Received a good Audit this year.
- Electronic Bear Check is new this year
- At the 5th Annual Oil & Gas Meeting - DGIF won award

Fish Division Update: The Chair called on Mr. Brendon Delbos for an update.

Mr. Delbos reported:

- Second Free Fishing Weekend was September 27-29, 2019 was a huge success, Events were held in Henrico County, Virginia Beach, and Fairfax County
- Trout Stock Season began on October 1, 2019- 1 million Trout in 200 bodies of water
- New Urban Stocking program call Fish Local VA
- Drought Watch – DGIF employees sit on the DEQ Drought watch group for Virginia

Director's Report: The Chair called on Director Brown for a report.

Director Brown reported:

- Attended the Agency Head Meeting
- Director still meeting with Constituents and Constituents Group
- Thanked Staff for a great job on the Governor's Fishing Challenge
- Attended the Dedication of the Wildlife Foundation Cabin
- Spoke about DGIF's National Forest and Habitat efforts
- Spoke of importance of the Agency Advisory Group
- Has attended – the AFW Conference- the SEAFWA Conference – will be attending the NEAFWA Conference in a couple of weeks

- DGIF will be hosting the SEAFWA Spring Director's Meeting May 2020 in Williamsburg, VA

Chair's Report: The Chair thanked everyone for attending the Wildlife, Boat and Law Committee meeting and thanked staff for their presentations.

- Chair thanked the Ward Burton Foundation for the work they provide in schools Working with student's getting them interested in hunting and fishing.
- He reported that it was nice to have Governor Northam and Mr. Brian Ball and Delegate James Edmonds to visited Southwest, VA
- He reported he attended the VA Oil and Gas Dinner and excepted the award on behalf of the DGIF
- He thanked Major Scott Naff and Major Bryan Young and Dr. Gray Anderson and Mr. Cale Godfrey for the event with the VA Farm Bureau that was held in Southwest, VA

The Chair asked if anyone had any further comments or questions, hearing none, he announced that next meeting will be Wednesday, January 22, 2020 and adjourned the meeting.

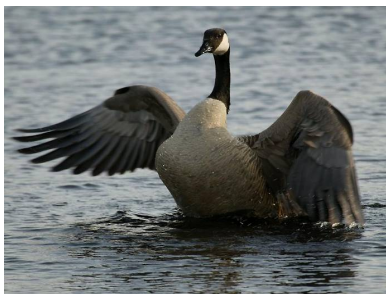
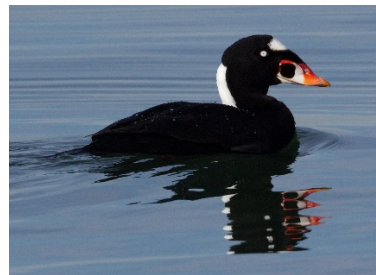
Respectfully submitted,

Frances Boswell

/s/

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

2020-2021 MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING SEASONS – FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS



Prepared by Wildlife Resources Division
January 2020

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

PRELIMINARY FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS AND STAFF PROPOSALS FOR 2020-21
MIGRATORY GAMEBIRD SEASON DATES AND BAG LIMITS

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Doves

Mourning Dove Background Information and Population Status

There are three dove management units (or flyways) across the country, including the Eastern (EMU), Central (CMU) and Western (WMU) Management Units. Virginia is in the EMU.

- Population trends in the EMU based on the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS):
10-yr (2009-2018): declining population trend.
Long term (1966-2018): increasing population trend.
- Dove Banding Study – Annual program (since 2003) to leg-band over 500 doves annually in VA, and 33,000 nationwide. Data provides estimates of movements, survival and harvest rates that are used to develop hunting regulations.
- Harvest Strategy: New Harvest Strategy adopted in 2014 allowed an increase from 70 to 90 days of hunting for doves. Daily bag limit remains at 15 birds (up from 12 in 2009).
- Data from HIP (past 3-yr avg.): Hunters = 16,400 Harvest = 225,467

Recent Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 70 days until extended to 90 days in 2014-15)</u>		
2019-2020	Sept. 2 – Oct. 27	Nov. 27 – Dec. 4	Dec. 24 – Jan. 18
2018-2019	Sept. 1 – Oct. 28	Nov. 21 – Nov. 28	Dec. 22 – Jan. 14
2017-2018	Sept. 2 – Oct. 29	Nov. 22 – Nov. 29	Dec. 23 – Jan. 15
2016-2017	Sept. 3 – Oct. 30	Nov. 19 – Nov. 27	Dec. 24 – Jan. 15
2015-2016	Sept. 5 – Nov. 1	Nov. 21 – Nov. 29	Dec. 24 – Jan. 15
2014-2015	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31	Nov. 22 – Nov. 30	Dec. 27 – Jan. 15
2013-2014	Sept. 2 – Oct. 14	Oct. 19 – Nov. 2	Dec. 31 – Jan. 11
2012-2013	Sept. 1 – Oct. 13	Oct. 17 – Oct. 27	Dec. 28 – Jan. 12
2011-2012	Sept. 3 – Oct. 10	Oct. 25 – Nov. 5	Dec. 26 - Jan. 14
2010-2011	Sept. 4 – Oct. 11	Oct. 20 – Nov. 6	Dec. 27 – Jan. 8
2009-2010	Sept. 5 - 26	Oct. 7 – Nov. 7	Dec. 25 – Jan. 9
2008-2009	Sept. 1 - 27	Oct. 4 – Oct. 31	Dec. 27 – Jan. 10
2007-2008	Sept. 1 – 29	Oct. 5 – Oct 27	Dec. 26 – Jan. 12
2006-2007	Sept. 2 – 23	Oct. 7 – Nov. 4	Dec. 28 – Jan. 15
2005-2006	Sept. 3 – 24	Oct. 8 – Nov. 5	Dec. 27 – Jan. 14
2004-2005	Sept. 4 – 25	Oct. 9 – Nov. 6	Dec. 28 – Jan. 15
2003-2004	Sept. 1 – 27	Oct. 8 – Nov. 8	Dec. 31 – Jan. 10
2002-2003	Sept. 2- 28	Oct. 9 – Nov. 9	Jan. 1 – Jan. 11
2001-2002	Sept. 1 - 29	Oct 13 – Nov. 10	Dec. 29 – Jan. 9
2000-2001	Sept. 2 – 30	Oct 7 – Nov. 4	Dec. 30 – Jan. 10
1999-2000	Sept. 4 – 25	Oct. 2 – Nov. 6	Dec. 25 – Jan. 5
1998-1999	Sept. 5 - 26	Oct. 3 – Nov. 3	Dec. 25 – Jan. 9
1997-1998	Sept. 1 – 27	Oct. 4 – Nov. 1	Dec. 24 – Jan. 6
1996-1997	Sept. 2 - 28	Oct. 4 - Nov. 2	Dec. 23 - Jan. 4
1995-1996	Sept. 2 - 30	Oct. 2 - Oct. 31	Dec. 23 - Jan. 2

DOVE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021
Hunting dates may run consecutively or be split into no more than three (3) segments.

SEASON LENGTH: Not more than 90 days.

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily and 45 in possession. Daily bag limit can be composed of mourning doves and white-winged doves, singly or in combination

SHOOTING HOURS: Between ½ hour before sunrise and sunset daily (State may select ½ day shooting in any segment).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 5 - October 28 (54 days)
November 21 - November 29 (9 days)
December 24 - January 19 (27 days)

SHOOTING HOURS: September 5 Noon until sunset
September 6 – October 28 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.
November 21 – November 29 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.
December 24 - January 19 ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily and 45 in possession. Composed of mourning doves and white-winged doves, singly or in combination

Rails

Background Information and Population Status

- **Harvest** – Comprised predominantly of clapper rails (85%), some sora (14%), and small number of Virginia rails taken. Clappers are mostly local VA birds, some are migrants from NJ, NY, and other salt marsh areas.
- **Nesting** - Clapper rails nest from May through June, with re-nesting in July/August. Late nesting rails have broods that do not reach flight stage until August or September. This occurs in years when 1st nests are flooded by spring storms/tides and re-nests contribute significantly to production. Therefore, we generally wait until the second week of September to open the hunting season. The key to setting the season is to bracket the greatest number of high tides possible.
- **Harvest Data** - Avg. No. hunters = 280, Avg. Harvest = 3,100 (HIP, past 5-yr avg.)

Past Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 70 days)</u>	
2019	Sept. 7 – Nov. 15	
2018	Sept. 8 - Nov. 16	
2017	Sept. 9 – Nov. 17	
2016	Sept. 10 - Nov. 18	
2015	Sept. 8 - Nov. 16	
2014	Sept. 8 – Nov. 16	
2013	Sept. 7 - 28	Sept. 30 – Nov. 16
2012	Sept. 8 – 29	Oct. 1 – Nov. 17
2011	Sept. 10 – Oct. 1	Oct. 3 – Nov. 19
2010	Sept. 8 – Oct. 2	Oct. 4 – Nov. 17
2009	Sept. 8 – Oct. 3	Oct. 5 – Nov. 17
2008	Sept. 10 – Nov. 18	
2007	Sept. 10 – Nov. 17	
2006	Sept. 8 – Nov. 16	
2005	Sept. 12 – Nov. 19	
2004	Sept. 13 – Nov. 20	
2003	Sept. 10 – Nov. 18	
2002	Sept. 9 - Nov. 16	
2001	Sept. 11 – Nov. 19	
2000	Sept. 13 – Oct. 2	Oct. 11 – Nov. 29
1999	Sept. 10 – Oct. 12	Oct. 22 – Nov. 27
1998	Sept. 9 – Oct. 24	Nov. 2 – Nov. 25
1997	Sept. 15 - 27	Oct. 8 - Dec. 3
1996	Sept. 16 – Oct. 17	Oct. 24 - Nov. 30
1995	Sept. 11 – Oct. 14	Oct. 21 – Nov.25

RAILS (Clapper, King, Sora, Virginia)

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

SEASON LENGTH: 70 days, straight or 2 segments.

BAG LIMIT: Clapper/King 15 daily, 45 possession
Sora/Virginia 25 daily, 75 possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 9 - November 17 (70 days)

BAG LIMIT: Clapper/King: 15 - counted together daily, 45 poss.
Sora/Virginia: 25 - counted together daily, 75 poss.

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

NOTES: - This recommendation provides 30 days of 3-ft or greater lunar tides.
- Non-Toxic shot is required for Rail and Snipe hunting in Virginia.

GALLINULE AND MOORHEN

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

SEASON LENGTH: 70 days, straight or 2 segments.

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily, 45 in possession (singly or in the aggregate)

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 9 - November 17 (70 days)

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily, 45 in possession (singly or in the aggregate)

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

Woodcock

Background Information and Population Status

- Harvest Strategy includes 3 regulatory options (Liberal, Moderate and Restrictive). Annual regulation based on the 3-year mean of the call count survey. For 2020-21, Harvest Strategy calls for Moderate Regulation (45 days/3 birds).
- Singing-ground survey (SGS) in Eastern Management Region:
 - 1 year trend (2017-2018): stable
 - 10 year trend (2009-2018): 0.90% decline per year.
 - Long-term (1966-2018): 1.08 % decline per year.
- The 2018 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.71 jv/ad female) was 28% above the 2017 index and 5.6% above the long-term index.
- Research suggests that hunting has little effect on population trend, but habitat is limiting.
- Virginia is cooperating in a Flyway-wide study of woodcock movements, migrations and habitat use. From 2018-2021, GPS transmitters are being attached to birds to follow their movements.
- In Virginia, season split into two segments to provide some opportunity for early hunting in western areas, and later hunting in central and eastern areas.
Avg. No. hunters = 1,500 Avg. Harvest = 2,520 (HIP, past 5-year avg.)

Recent Seasons (bag limit has been 3 birds)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates</u>		<u>Days</u>
2019-2020	Nov. 20 – Dec. 8	Dec. 21 – Jan. 15	45
2018-2019	Oct. 27 – Nov. 2	Dec. 8 – Jan. 14	45
2017-2018	Nov. 20 – Dec. 8	Dec. 21 – Jan. 15	45
2016-2017	Oct. 29 – Nov. 4	Dec. 9 – Jan. 15	45
2015-2016	Nov. 23 – Dec. 5	Dec. 15 – Jan. 15	45
2014-2015	Nov. 24 – Dec. 6	Dec. 15 – Jan. 15	45
2013-2014	Oct. 26 – Nov. 1	Dec. 5 – Jan. 11	45
2012-2013	Oct. 27 – Nov. 2	Dec. 6 – Jan. 12	45
2011-2012	Oct. 29 – Nov. 12	Dec. 16 – Jan. 14	45
2010-2011	Oct. 30 - Nov. 13	Dec. 27 – Jan. 10	30
2009-2010	Nov. 7 – 21	Dec. 26 – Jan. 9	30
2008-2009	Nov. 8 – 22	Dec. 20 – Jan 3	30
2007-2008	Oct. 27 – Nov. 10	Dec. 22 – Jan. 5	30
2006-2007	Nov. 4 – 18	Dec. 23 – Jan. 6	30
2005-2006	Nov. 12 – 26	Dec.17 – Dec 31	30
2004-2005	Oct. 30 – Nov. 13	Dec.18 – Jan. 1	30
2003-2004	Nov. 1 – 15	Dec. 20 – Jan. 3	30
2002-2003	Nov. 2 – 16	Dec. 21 - Jan. 4	30
2001-2002	Nov. 3 - 17	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	30
2000-2001	Nov. 4 - 18	Dec. 23 - Jan. 6	30
1999-2000	Oct. 30 - Nov. 13	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	30
1998-1999	Oct. 31 - Nov. 14	Dec. 19 - Jan. 2	30
1997-1998	Nov. 1 - Nov. 15	Dec. 20 - Jan. 3	30
1996-1997	Oct. 28 - Nov. 23	Dec. 18 - Jan. 4	45
1995-1996	Oct. 30 - Nov. 25	Dec. 20 - Jan. 6	45

WOODCOCK

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: October 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

SEASON LENGTH: 45 days, straight or 2 segments.

BAG LIMIT: 3 daily, 9 in possession.

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset daily.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: November 9 – December 2 (24 days)
December 24 – January 13 (21 days)

BAG LIMIT: 3 daily, 9 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

Snipe

Background Information

- Season generally set to overlap duck season. There are relatively few snipe hunters in VA and most snipe are taken opportunistically by other migratory bird hunters.
- Harvest Data (HIP, past 5-yr avg.): No. hunters = 260, Harvest = 750

Recent Seasons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates (all 107 days)</u>	
2019-2020	Oct. 11 – Oct. 14	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2018-2019	Oct. 5 – Oct. 8	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2017-2018	Oct. 6 – Oct. 9	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2016-2017	Oct. 7 – Oct. 10	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2015-2016	Oct. 9 – Oct. 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2014-2015	Oct. 10 – Oct. 13	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2013-2014	Oct. 11 – Oct. 14	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2012-2013	Oct. 4 – Oct. 8	Oct. 22 - Jan. 31
2011-2012	Oct. 6 – Oct. 10	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2010-2011	Oct. 7 – Oct. 11	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2009-2010	Oct. 8 – Oct. 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 30
2008-2009	Oct. 9 – Oct. 13	Oct. 22 – Jan.31
2007-2008	Oct 4 – Oct. 8	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2006-2007	Oct 4 – Oct. 9	Oct. 23 – Jan. 31
2005-2006	Oct 5 – Oct.10	Oct. 24 – Jan. 31
2004-2005	Oct 7 – Oct 11	Oct. 22 – Jan. 31
2003-2004	Oct. 8 – Oct 11	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2002-2003	Oct 9 – Oct 12	Oct. 21 – Jan. 31
2001-2002	Oct. 10 - Oct. 13	Oct. 22 - Jan. 31
2000-2001	Oct. 11 - Oct. 14	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1999-2000	Oct. 6 - Oct. 9	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1998-1999	Oct. 7 - Oct. 10	Oct. 20 - Jan. 30
1997-1998	Oct. 8 - Oct. 11	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1996-1997	Oct. 9 - Oct. 12	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31
1995-1996	Oct. 11 - Oct. 14	Oct. 21 - Jan. 31

SNIFE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

SEASON LENGTH: 107 days, straight or 2 segments

BAG LIMIT: 8 daily, 24 possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: October 9 - October 12 (4 days)
October 21 - January 31 (103 days)

BAG LIMIT: 8 daily, 24 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise until sunset

SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON FACT SHEET - 2020

- Special teal seasons were initiated in late 1960's to provide harvest opportunities on blue-winged and green-winged teal. When the blue-winged teal breeding population (BPOP) is above 3.3 million, a 9-day season can be offered. If the BPOP exceeds 4.7 million, a 16-day season can be offered.
- Blue-winged teal are one of the earliest migrants. Many pass through Virginia from late August through October, prior to the opening of the late duck season.
- Green-winged teal are also early migrants and arrive in September and October. However, some Green-wings remain through the winter depending on weather conditions.
- Virginia has held a special September teal season since 1999 (see dates listed below). The season was initially held only in the area east of I-95 because there are greater numbers of teal and teal hunters in the coastal plain. Even in the coastal plain, teal are not widespread, and the harvest has been relatively small. The season was expanded in 2011 to provide some teal hunting opportunity in the area west of I-95.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Season Dates</u>	<u>Season Dates</u>
	<u>East of I-95</u>	<u>West of I-95</u>
2019	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2018	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2017	Sept. 16 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2016	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2015	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 21 - 30
2014	Sept. 17 – 30	Sept. 22 - 30
2013	Sept. 16 – 30	Sept. 23 - 30
2012	Sept. 17 – 29	Sept. 24 - 29
2011	Sept. 19 – 30	Sept. 26 - 30
2010	Sept. 20 – 30	na
2009	Sept. 21 – 30	na
2008	Sept. 20 – 30	na
2007	Sept. 17 – 26	na
2006	Sept. 15 – 25	na
2005	Sept. 16 – 24	na
2004	Sept. 16 – 25	na
2003	Sept. 13 – 23	na
2002	Sept. 14 – 24	na
2001	Sept. 15 – 25	na
2000	Sept. 14 – 23	na
1999	Sept. 16 – 25	na

Average Annual Harvest: 670 teal

SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1 – September 30, 2020

SEASON LENGTH: Up to 16 days

BAG LIMIT: 6 daily, 18 in possession (Blue-winged and Green-winged teal only)

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise to sunset

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 17 – September 30 (14 days)
HUNT AREA: East of I – 95

September 21 – September 30 (10 days)
HUNT AREA: West of I – 95

BAG LIMIT: 6 daily, 18 in possession (Blue-winged and Green-winged teal only).

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise to sunset

FACT SHEET - Waterfowl Hunters and Harvests - 2020

- Liberal duck seasons (60 days, 6 bird bag limit) and resident goose seasons have resulted in high waterfowl harvests in Virginia during the past ten years. Harvest has averaged ~137,300 ducks and ~58,600 Canada geese from 2016-2018, compared to 114,770 ducks and 25,000 geese during the 1990's. The long season length and liberal bags offer greater opportunity and a greater cumulative harvest over the course of the season.
- Waterfowl hunter numbers in Virginia have been generally stable since the late 1990's. Since 1999, the Harvest Information Program (HIP) has been used to estimate hunter effort and harvest. The average number of duck and goose hunters over the past 3 years, as measured by HIP, was 16,800 and 14,600 respectively.
- Conditions during the 2018-2019 season were below average for waterfowl hunting. Mild temperatures throughout the U.S. resulted in fewer birds in southern wintering areas and less than ideal waterfowl hunting conditions. As a result, the 2018-2019 duck harvest was lower than the previous year. The Canada goose harvest was significantly lower due to the mild conditions during the hunting season and very poor production in the 2018 breeding season.
- The total estimated duck harvest during the 2018-2019 season in Virginia (140,700) was lower than the previous year (145,200) but still above the past 3-year average (137,300).
- During the 2018-2019 season, mallards were the most commonly harvested duck in Virginia, followed by bufflehead and scoters, which compromised the top 3 harvested species. The mallard harvest in Virginia (37,900) decreased from 2017-2018, and was lower than the past 3-year average (40,100).
- The Canada goose harvest in Virginia in 2018-2019 (31,427) was less than the previous season (60,000) and well below the 3-year average (58,600).

FACT SHEET - The Status of Ducks - 2020

Mid-Continent Areas: Annual precipitation is the most important factor influencing the quantity and quality of nesting and brood rearing habitat for prairie-nesting birds. The number of ponds counted during the USFWS May breeding waterfowl survey is used as an index for assessing waterfowl nesting habitat. In 2019, the May pond count (4.9 million) was 5% below last year's count (5.2 million), and below the long-term average (5.2 million).

The total duck breeding population (BPOP) estimate for the mid-continent area this year is 38.9 million ducks. This estimate is 6% lower than last year's estimate of 41.2 million ducks, but still 10% higher than the long-term average (1955-2018). The Breeding population estimates (BPOP), along with the percent change from last year and the long-term average, are presented below for the 10 most common species.

Species	2019 BPOP	% Change from 2018	% Change from Long-Term Avg.
Mallard	9.4 million	+2%	+19%
Blue-winged Teal	5.4 million	-16%	+6%
Green-winged Teal	3.2 million	4%	+47%
Gadwall	3.3 million	+13%	+61%
Northern Shoveler	3.6 million	-13%	+39%
Northern Pintail	2.3 million	-4%	-42%
American Wigeon	2.8 million	0%	+8%
Redhead	732,000	-27%	0%
Scaup	3.6 million	-10%	-28%
Canvasback	652,000	-5%	+10%
Total Ducks	38.9 million	-6%	+10%

Eastern Breeding Areas: More pertinent to waterfowl harvests in Virginia are the number of ducks counted in the eastern survey area. Breeding population estimates for the 6 most common species surveyed in the eastern survey area were very similar to the 2018 estimates. The estimated abundance of mallards was 1 million which was similar to last year's estimate but 16% below the long-term average. Black ducks (729,000) were similar to last year's estimate but also 16% lower than the long-term average. Other abundant species counted in the eastern survey area were, Ring-necked ducks (700,000), Goldeneyes (500,000) and Green-winged teal (300,000).

Virginia: Conditions in Virginia during the spring of 2019 were generally good with wet but not flooded conditions, and normal wetland habitats.

- The breeding pair estimate for Mallards (28,000) increased significantly from the previous year's estimate (7,913). The wood duck breeding pair estimate (8,308) was lower than the 2018 estimate (14,237), and the Canada goose breeding pair estimate (46,254) was 13% lower than the previous year's estimate.

Mallard Bag Limit in the Atlantic Flyway

The mallard has been one of the most abundant duck species in eastern North America. However, in the past 20 years, “eastern” mallards have been on the decline. Surveys conducted since 1988 throughout eastern Canada and the northeastern U.S. have provided reliable annual estimates of the breeding population size of eastern mallards. These surveys indicate that mallard numbers have decreased steadily in the northeastern U.S., declining by about 38% since 1998. Mallard numbers in Eastern Canada have been relatively stable, but overall, the breeding mallard population in eastern North America is declining (Figure 1). About 60% of the mallards harvested in Atlantic Flyway states, and around 80% of those harvested in Virginia, are derived from the northeastern US. There has also been a significant decline in the mallard harvest in the Atlantic Flyway (around 40%, Figure 2), a direct result of this population decline.

Figure 1. Mallard breeding population in eastern North America

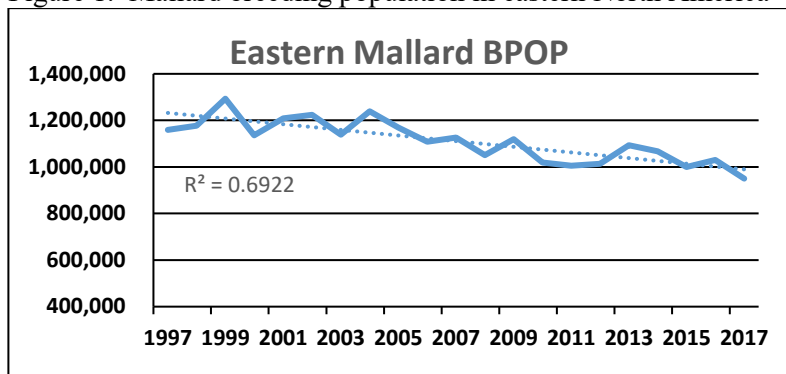
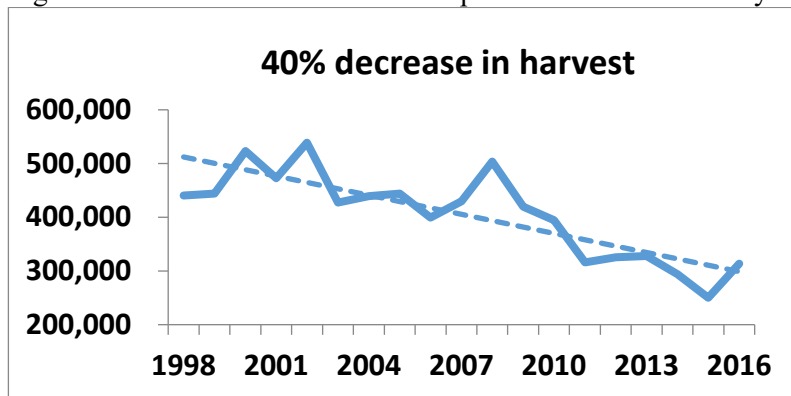


Figure 2. Mallard Harvest in the U.S. portion of the Atlantic Flyway



Population models suggested that cutting the daily bag limit in half would reduce the harvest by 25%, and would achieve a sustainable harvest level based on the current population. Therefore, last year (2019-20 season) the Atlantic Flyway and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reduced the bag limit from 4 to 2 mallards (only 1 hen) in the Atlantic Flyway. This reduction will remain in effect for this year (2020-21). In addition, a new harvest strategy is being developed that will help guide future hunting season regulations based on current mallard population dynamics.

YOUTH and VETERANS WATERFOWL DAYS

Guidelines for the Youth Days and Veterans Days include:

1. States may select 2 days per duck-hunting zone, designated as "Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days," in addition to their regular duck seasons. States may also select 2 days per duck-hunting zone designated as "Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Days" in addition to their regular duck seasons. The Youth and Veterans days could be combined and held on the same day or could be held separately.
2. Youth Days must be held outside of any regular duck season on a weekend, holidays, or other non-school days when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate.
3. Youth and Veterans Days could be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck season frameworks or within any split of a regular duck season.
4. The daily bag limit is the same as that allowed in the regular season and includes ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens, gallinules, 1 Canada geese (except in Canada Goose Zones where the bag limit is higher), and 1 tundra swan (if the hunter possesses a tundra swan permit). Flyway species restrictions remain in effect.
5. Youth hunters must be 15 years of age or younger. Youth 12 years of age and older will need a valid Virginia state hunting license. A licensed adult at least 18 years of age or older must accompany youth hunters into the field. This adult may not duck hunt, but may participate in other open seasons.
6. Those allowed to participate in the special **Veterans Days** include Veterans (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code) and members of the Armed Forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty (other than for training).

DUCKS

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Outside Dates: September 26, 2020 - January 31, 2021

Season Length: 60 hunting days; plus 2 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Hunt Days.

Bag Limit: Daily Bag limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions: can include no more than 2 mallards (only 1 hen), 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 eiders, 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks, 2 canvasback, **scaup: 2/day for 20 days and 1/day for 40 days**, 2 redheads, 1 pintail, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck.
Closed season on harlequin duck.
The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

NOTE: There is an option to include mergansers in the general duck bag or leave them as a separate bag (see Merganser framework page 10). If included in the general duck bag, the restriction on 2 hooded mergansers would apply.

Split Season Options: 3-way split season, no zones

Shooting Hours: 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Season Length: 60 hunting days; plus 2 Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Hunting Day

Season Dates: October 9 - 12 (Black Duck closed) (4 days)
November 18 – November 29 (12 days)
December 19 – January 31 (44 days)
(60 days)

October 24, February 6 – Youth/Veterans Waterfowl Days

Bag Limit: Daily Bag limit of 6 ducks of any species except for the following restrictions: can include no more than 2 mallards (only 1 hen), 4 scoters, 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 eiders, 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks (except closed Oct. 9 – 12), **scaup: 2/day for 20 days and 1/day for 40 days**, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 1 pintail, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling duck,.
Closed season on harlequin duck.
The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

Shooting Hours: 1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

MERGANSER AND COOT

MERGANSER

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Option A

Season Length: 60 hunting days
Outside Date: September 26, 2020 - January 31, 2021
Bag Limit: 5 birds daily, of which only 2 birds may be a hooded merganser
(15 in possession, only 6 of which may be hooded mergansers)

Option B

To be included into the general duck bag. If included in the general duck bag, the restriction on 2 hooded mergansers would apply.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Option A

Season Dates: To coincide with general duck season
Bag Limit: 5 birds daily, of which only 2 birds may be a hooded merganser
(15 in possession, only 6 of which may be hooded mergansers)

AMERICAN COOT

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Season Length: 60 hunting days
Outside Date: September 26, 2020 - January 31, 2021
Bag Limit: 15 birds daily (45 in possession)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Season Dates: To coincide with general duck season.
Bag Limit: 15 daily (45 in possession)

SPECIAL SEA DUCK SEASON IN SEA DUCK ZONE*

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

SEA DUCKS (SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, AND EIDER)

<u>Season Length:</u>	60 hunting days, run consecutively
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	September 15, 2020 - January 31, 2021
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds per day (15 in possession), may include no more than 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tailed ducks.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEA DUCKS (SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, AND EIDER)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 11 – January 9 (60 days) In the Sea Duck Zone delineated below
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds per day (15 in possession), may include no more than 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tailed ducks.

*** Sea Duck Zone:** Those waters at a distance greater than 800 yards from any shore, island or emergent vegetation in the following area: the ocean waters of Virginia, the tidal waters of Northampton and Accomack Counties, and the Chesapeake Bay and each of its tributaries up to the first highway bridge. Back Bay and its tributaries are not included in the Sea Duck Zone.

Note - Sea ducks cannot be taken in the Sea Duck Zone after January 9. Sea ducks can, however, be taken during the regular duck season (Oct. 9-12, Nov. 18-29, and Dec. 19 - Jan. 31) in all other areas outside of the sea duck zone (i.e.: within 800 yards of any shore, island or emergent vegetation...), since they are included in the regular season duck bag. No more than 4 scoters, 4 eiders or 4 long-tails can be included in the regular season daily limit of 6 ducks.

FACT SHEET - The Status of Resident Canada Geese - 2020

- The resident Canada goose population increased significantly in Virginia during the 1980's and 1990's, and peaked at 264,000 geese in the late 1990's. This population caused significant conflicts with human and wildlife populations, and management actions were taken to reduce their numbers. The current population estimate is 125,966 (+/- 28,000) in Virginia and near 1 million in the Atlantic Flyway.
- Special resident goose hunting seasons were initiated in 1993 to help manage this population and to provide recreational opportunities for hunters. These seasons occur prior to the arrival of most migrant geese (~Sept. 25 in Virginia), or in areas where there are fewer migrant geese. The Federal Framework allows Virginia to conduct a statewide September Resident Goose season from September 1-25.
- There are fewer migrant geese in the western portions of Virginia, and special “Goose Hunting Zones” have been established that allow more liberal seasons in areas with a greater percentage of resident Canada goose.
- Special resident goose hunting seasons have been very popular, and have increased hunter participation and resident goose harvests. These seasons have been very effective in managing resident goose populations and helping to meet statewide population objectives.
- In areas where hunting is not feasible, other options including Depredation Orders (Airport, Agricultural, and Nest and Egg Depredation Orders) have been implemented to help manage resident goose conflicts.

Year	Population Estimate *	September Harvest
2019	125,966 +/- 22%	na
2018	132,633 +/- 24%	5,600
2017	142,167 +/- 21%	5,500
2016	158,200 +/- 19%	na
2015	150,651 +/- 22%	6,100
2014	130,503 +/- 26%	7,500
2013	144,910 +/- 26%	10,700
2012	158,267 +/- 28%	9,700
2011	165,022 +/- 28%	14,700
2010	147,313 +/- 29%	15,600
2009	145,019 +/- 29%	16,800
2008	157,560 +/- 29%	17,500
2007	154,030 +/- 27%	13,600
2006	136,700 +/- 27%	11,100
2005	129,486 +/- 26%	10,100
2004	143,741 +/- 25%	17,000
2003	186,753 +/- 23%	14,800
2002	218,719 +/- 24%	14,300
2001	218,384 +/- 27%	11,800
2000	227,164 +/- 32%	10,800
1999	261,554 +/- 34%	11,400
1998	264,867 +/- 35%	12,200
1997	249,612 +/- 34%	10,500
1996	181,813 +/- 36%	10,000
1995	151,043 +/- 39%	5,500

*3-year running average

SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

OUTSIDE DATES: September 1 – September 25, 2020

BAG LIMIT: 15 daily, 45 in possession

SHOOTING HOURS: ½ hour before sunrise to sunset (except as provided for in special hunting options *)

* SPECIAL HUNTING OPTIONS: Allows the use of electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours (1/2 hr after sunset) when no other waterfowl seasons are open.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

SEASON DATES: September 1 – September 25 (25 days)

BAG LIMIT: 10 daily, 30 in possession

HUNT AREA: Statewide

SHOOTING HOURS:

East of I-95

September 1 – 16: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr after sunset.

September 17 – 25: ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.

West of I-95

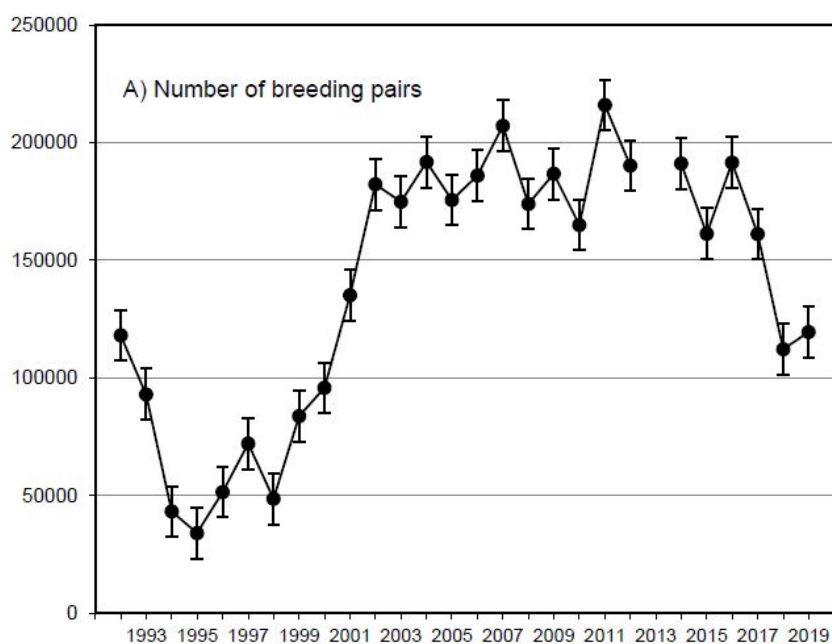
September 1 – 20: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr after sunset.

September 21 - 25: ½ hr before sunrise to sunset.

NOTE: Staff is not recommending the options of using electronic calls or unplugged shotguns for hunting geese in the September season.

FACT SHEET- History and Status of Migrant Canada Geese - 2020

- Migrant Canada geese from the Atlantic Population (AP) declined significantly from 1985-1995. The hunting season was closed in 1995 to allow the population to recover. Goose numbers rebounded quickly and a limited season (6 days with a 1-bird bag) was held in both 1999 and 2000.
- As the population increased, hunting regulations were liberalized. The season was extended to 30 days in 2001, then 45 days in 2002, and 50 days in 2012. The bag limit was increased to 2 per day in 2004 and remained at 50 days with a 2 goose daily limit through 2018-19.
- However, annual productivity has been below average for 6 of the past 7 years, leading to a decline in the breeding population from 2016-2018 (see graph below). In addition, adverse weather conditions on the nesting grounds in Canada in 2018 resulted in very poor production last year. Conditions on the nesting grounds improved this spring, and the breeding pair count rebounded slightly to 120,000 pairs in 2019 (6% higher than last year's estimate of 112,000).



- Due to the “bust” in production in 2018 and the declining population trend, the Atlantic Flyway Council and the USFWS recommended reducing the harvest on AP geese in 2019-20. The season was restricted to 30 days with a 1-geese daily limit in the AP Goose Zone this past season. These restrictive regulations will remain in effect again for the 2020-21 season. Canada goose seasons in the other two goose zones in Virginia (Southern James Bay (SJB) and Resident Zones (RP)) will be unchanged from last year.

Canada Goose Populations and Hunt Zones

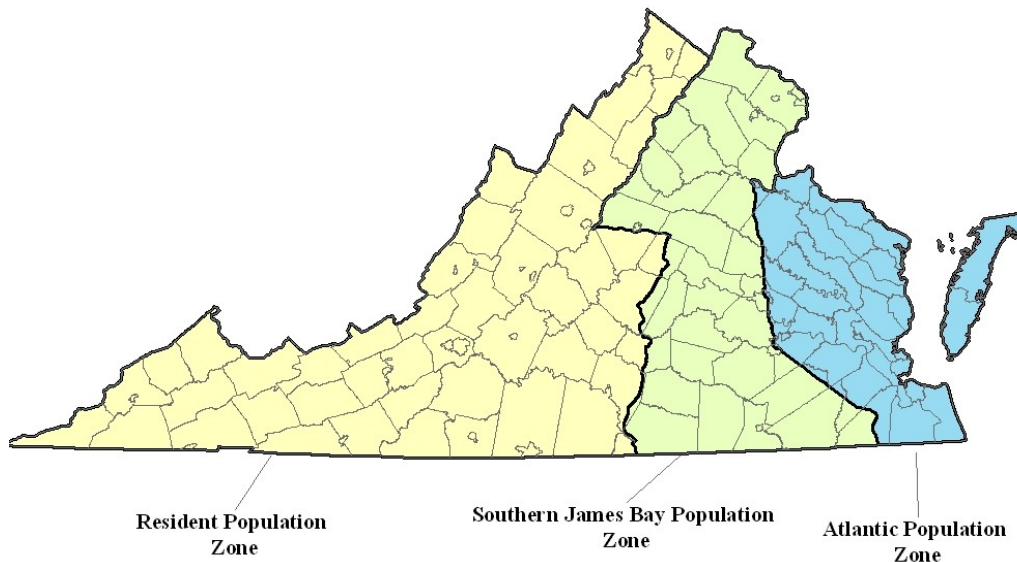
- There are 4 subpopulations of Canada geese in Virginia. These include the Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (RP) along with three migrant goose populations, the North Atlantic Population (NAP), the Southern James Bay Population (SJBP), and the Atlantic Population (AP). The majority of our migrant geese (~82%) are from the AP, about 18% are from the SJBP, and <1% are from the NAP.
- Recent research and banding analyses have enabled us to better delineate the distribution and migration corridors used by these different subpopulations, and to establish separate hunting zones based on the percentage of migrant geese in each zone. These zones include the:

Atlantic Population (AP) Hunt Zone – The area east of the Stafford/King George County line from the Potomac River south to the Rappahannock River, then west along the Stafford County line to Interstate 95, then south along I-95 to Route 460 in Petersburg, then southeast along Route 460 to Route 32 in the City of Suffolk, then south to the North Carolina border.

Southern James Bay Population (SJBP) Hunt Zone – The area to the west of the AP Hunt Zone boundary and east of the following line: the “Blue Ridge” (Loudoun County-Clarke County line) at the West Virginia-Virginia Border, south to Interstate 64 (the Blue Ridge line follows county borders along the western edge of Loudoun-Fauquier-Rappahannock-Madison-Greene-Albemarle and into Nelson Counties), then east along Interstate Rt. 64 to Route 15, then south along Rt. 15 to the North Carolina line.

Resident Population (RP) Hunt Zone – The portion of the state west of the SJBP Hunt Zone.

Virginia's Canada Goose Hunt Zones



CANADA GOOSE

FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE (AP):

<u>Season Length:</u>	30 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	November 15 – February 5
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	1 bird daily (3 in possession)

SOUTHERN JAMES BAY POPULATION ZONE (SJBP)

<u>Outside Dates and Season Length:</u>	
Regular Season:	November 15 – January 14 (up to 40 hunting days)
Extended Season:	January 15 – February 15
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	3/day (9 in possession) through January 14 5/day (15 in possession), January 15 to February 15

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE (RP):

<u>Outside Dates:</u>	November 15 – March 10
<u>Season Length:</u>	80 hunting days
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds daily (15 in possession)

NOTE – All seasons also include White-fronted geese along with Canada geese.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE: (AP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	December 19 – January 1 (14 days) January 16 – January 31 (16 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	1 goose per day (3 in possession)
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

SOUTHERN JAMES BAY POPULATION ZONE (SJBP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	
Regular Season:	November 18 – November 29 3/day December 19 – January 14 3/day
Extended Season:	January 15 - February 15 5/day
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE: (RP)

<u>Season Dates:</u>	November 18 – November 29 December 19 - February 24
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	5 birds daily (15 in possession)
<u>Shooting Hours:</u>	1/2-hour before sunrise until sunset daily

NOTE – All seasons also include White-fronted geese along with Canada geese.

FACT SHEET - Status of Light Geese (Greater and Lesser Snow Geese, and Ross's Geese) - 2020

- The majority of the “Light” geese found in the Atlantic Flyway are Greater Snow Geese, while less than 5% are Lesser Snow Geese, with even smaller numbers of Ross's Geese.
- The Greater Snow Goose population is monitored on spring staging areas along the St. Lawrence Valley in Quebec. The 2019 population estimate was 714,000 geese, which is 19% lower than last year but similar to the long-term average.
- The principal nesting areas for greater snow geese are on Bylot, Axel Heiberg, Ellesmere, and Baffin Islands, and on Greenland. They winter along the Atlantic Coast from New Jersey to North Carolina.
- Breeding conditions were above average on Bylot Island in 2019 and biologists reported early spring phenology. Warm temperatures and an early snowmelt led to early nest initiation, and nest depredation was low. Initial nesting parameters included (with long-term averages in parentheses): nest initiation on June 7 (LTA June 12), estimated mean hatch date of July 4 (LTA July 9), mean clutch size of 4.1 (LTA 3.71), and late incubation nest success 90% (66%).
- Over the last 30 years, snow goose populations have increased almost ten-fold. A shift from feeding almost exclusively in marshes to feeding more on agricultural grains has allowed them to expand their range and habitat use. This shift has also allowed them to return to their breeding habitats in better physical condition, which has led to increased productivity.
- This population boom has resulted in ecological degradation on their breeding, migration and wintering areas. Snow geese can cause damage to these habitats by pulling up plant roots and denuding marshes of vegetation. Snow geese can also cause conflicts with agricultural interest by pulling up green grains including wheat and barley.
- Current hunting regulations for snow geese are as liberal as Federal Frameworks will allow and include a 107-day season that runs from October to January, and a bag limit that was increased from 15 to 25 in 2010. Liberal seasons have helped increase the harvest, however, the population is still quite large and concerns remain about detrimental impacts these birds are having on breeding and wintering habitats.
- A Conservation Order (CO) was established in 2009, and authorizes the use of alternative management strategies (unplugged shotguns, electronic calls, shooting to ½ hour after sunset, no daily bag limit) to further increase the harvest of snow geese in the Atlantic Flyway.

LIGHT GOOSE SEASONS

REGULAR LIGHT GOOSE SEASON

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<u>Season Length:</u>	107 hunting days
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	October 1, 2020 - March 10, 2021
<u>Split Season Option:</u>	3-way split season
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	25 birds daily (no possession limit)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Season Dates:</u>	October 17 – January 31	(107 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	25 birds daily (no possession limit)	

LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<u>Outside Dates:</u>	When no other waterfowl seasons are open
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	No daily or possession limit
<u>Special Hunting Methods:</u>	Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours to one-half hour after sunset only in areas and at times when other waterfowl seasons are closed.
<u>Special Requirements:</u>	States participating in the Conservation Order are required to monitor hunter participation, effort, and success.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Conservation Order Zone: The same as the AP Canada Goose Zone - The area east of the Stafford/King George County line from the Potomac River south to the Rappahannock River, then west along the Stafford County line to Interstate 95, then south along I-95 to Route 460 in Petersburg, then southeast along Route 460 to Route 32 in the City of Suffolk, then south to the North Carolina border.

<u>Season Dates:</u>	February 1 – April 5, 2021	(65 days)
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	No daily or possession limit	
<u>Special Hunting Methods:</u>	Electronic calls, unplugged shotguns and extended shooting hours to one-half hour after sunset.	
<u>Special Requirements:</u>	Hunters participating in the Conservation Order <u>must register with DGIF</u> , keep a record of their harvest and participation, and return a harvest report form within two weeks following the close of the season.	

FACT SHEET - Status of Atlantic Brant and Tundra Swan - 2020

- **BRANT.** The main breeding areas for Atlantic Brant are in the Eastern Canadian Arctic on Baffin, Southampton, and Ellesmere Islands. Most brant winter along the Atlantic Coast from MA to NC.
- The 2019 Mid-Winter Survey count of brant in the Atlantic Flyway (120,109) was 30% lower than the 2018 estimate and was well below the past 5-year average (135,344). The low MWS count was coupled with very low productivity during the 2018 nesting season. Fall productivity surveys indicated only 1.5% young (n=30,500), which is 92% below the long-term average.
- The low count in 2019 resulted in a reduction in the brant hunting season framework in 2019-20, which was shortened from 60 to 30 days with a 2-bird/day limit.
- The framework for the 2020-21 hunting season will be based on the 2020 mid-winter count, which will be conducted in January 2020. Therefore, this framework will not be available until February 2020.
- **TUNDRA SWANS.** The Eastern Population of tundra swans nest in arctic tundra areas from Alaska, east to Hudson Bay and Baffin Island. These birds winter in coastal areas from Maryland to North Carolina.
- Similar to other arctic nesting species (AP Canada Geese and Atlantic Brant), productivity for Tundra swans was well below average in 2018. Productivity estimates for the 2019 breeding season are currently being compiled.
- There were 92,819 eastern population tundra swans counted on the 2019 Mid-Winter Survey, which was 17% lower than the 2018 count, and dropped the 3-year running average to 107,907. This decline resulted in a 25% reduction in the number of hunting permits for the 2020-21 season.
- Prior to 2019, eight states in the U.S. hunted tundra swans including Alaska, Utah, Montana and Nevada in the Pacific Flyway, North Dakota and South Dakota in the Central Flyway, and North Carolina and Virginia in the Atlantic Flyway.
- In 2019-20, Delaware initiated its first tundra swan hunting season. Therefore, starting in 2019-20, the allocation of hunt permits in the Atlantic Flyway was split between the 3 states that have tundra swan hunting seasons (DE, VA, NC), in proportion to the number of swans in each state. For the 2020-21 season, North Carolina will be allocated 4,895 permits, Virginia will be allocated 638 permits, and Delaware will be allocated 67 permits.
- The tundra swan hunting season in Virginia is authorized and conducted as specified in the Atlantic Flyway Tundra Swan Management Plan and Hunt Plan, with limits and guidelines as specified under an MOU with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

ATLANTIC BRANT

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK (Preliminary dates)*

<u>Season Length:</u>	30 hunting days*
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	September 26, 2020 - January 31, 2021
<u>Split Season Option:</u>	2-way split season
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	2 bird daily (6 in possession)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS (Preliminary dates)*

<u>Season Dates:</u>	December 19 – January 1* January 16 - January 31
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	2 birds daily (6 in possession)

***Preliminary Framework – Final dates will be determined after results of the Mid-Winter Survey are compiled in February 2020.**

TUNDRA SWAN

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

Season Length: 90 hunting days

Outside Dates: October 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

Virginia may issue up to **638 permits** and must obtain harvest and hunter participation data. Each permittee is authorized to take one (1) tundra swan per season.

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Season Dates: November 18 - January 31

Bag Limit: One per permittee per season

Hunt Area: All counties and portions of counties east of U.S. Route I- 95 and south of the Prince William/Stafford county line in Chopawamsic Creek at Quantico Marine Corps Base.

NOTE: VDGIF will issue no more than **638** swan-hunting permits to holders of a valid Virginia hunting license. Only hunters with a valid 2020-2021 tundra swan-hunting permit issued by VDGIF shall be authorized to hunt tundra swans. Each permittee will be authorized to take one tundra swan during the season. Swan hunting permits are non-transferable and are valid for use only by the person to whom issued. Permits must be in the immediate possession of the permittee while swan hunting. Immediately at the time and place of kill, successful hunters must permanently record the month and day of kill on their permit and attach it to their swan. The VDGIF is required to obtain hunter participation and harvest information to offer this Tundra Swan hunting season. **Hunters are required to complete the tundra swan hunt questionnaire (survey) and submit their results to the Department by February 15, 2021.** Those who fail to submit their results are ineligible for future drawings.

FALCONRY

FEDERAL FRAMEWORK

<u>Season Length:</u>	No more than 107 on any species (Gun and Falconry combined)
<u>Outside Dates:</u>	September 1 - March 10
<u>Bag Limit:</u>	3 daily (9 in possession)
<u>Hawking Hours:</u>	½ hour before sunrise until sunset.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Dove:</u>	September 5 – October 28 November 21 – November 29 December 24 – January 31
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Rail, Gallinule, Moorhen: September 9 – December 22

Woodcock: October 17 – January 31

Snipe: October 9 - 12
October 21 – January 31

Canada Goose: September 1 - September 25
November 18 – November 29
December 19 - February 24

September Teal: September 17 - September 30

Ducks, Mergansers, Coot: October 9 - 12
November 18 – February 12

Brant and Snow Goose: October 17 – January 31

NOTE: Recommended dates based on adoption of preceding gun season proposals; if amended, staff requests permission to calculate permissible dates for each species within the allowable federal framework.