



2023-2024 Seasons and Limits for Migratory Game Birds

Ducks, Mergansers & Coots

Species	Season Dates	Daily Bag
General Duck Season	<p>Inland Duck Zone: Oct. 19 – Oct. 21, 2023 Nov. 4 – Nov. 25, 2023 Dec. 19, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024 (the season on black ducks and mottled ducks is closed until November 18)</p> <p>Coastal Duck Zone: Oct. 27 – Oct. 28, 2023 Nov. 4 – Nov. 25, 2023 Dec. 18, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024 (the season on black ducks and mottled ducks is closed until November 18)</p>	<p>Daily bag limits are the same in each duck zone.</p> <p>Includes a total of 6 ducks with no more than 4 total sea ducks [no more than 3 scoters, 3 eiders (1 hen eider), or 3 long-tailed ducks], 4 mallards (no more than 2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 pintail, 1 mottled duck and 1 fulvous whistling duck.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prior to January 9 the scaup bag limit is 1, on January 9 and after it is 2. ▪ The season on harlequin ducks is closed.
Mergansers	Same as general duck season	5 mergansers with no more than 2 hooded mergansers
Coots	Same as general duck season	15 coots
September Teal (includes green-winged, blue-winged and cinnamon teal)	Sept. 13 – Sept. 30, 2023 (The September Teal Season is open only in the area east of U.S. Highway 17)	6
Sea Ducks	Oct. 27 – Oct. 28, 2023 Nov. 4 – Nov. 25, 2023 Dec. 18, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	Includes scoters, eiders, and long-tailed ducks. 4 total sea ducks with no more than 3 scoters, 3 eiders (1 hen eider), or 3 long-tailed ducks. Sea Duck daily bag limits count towards the general duck daily bag limit of 6 ducks.

- Possession limits are three times the daily bag unless otherwise specified.
- Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset unless otherwise specified.
- Falconers may hunt during the Webless Migratory and Waterfowl Seasons, but the daily bag limit for falconry is three and the possession limit is nine, singly, or in aggregate. The falconry limit is not in addition to the gun bag limit.

[Goose and Duck Zone Maps](#)

Geese, Brant & Swans

Species	Season Dates	Daily Bag
Canada Goose (September season)	September 1 – 30, 2023 (Statewide)	15 In the area west of US Highway 17 only, expanded hunting methods are allowed for Canada geese including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended shooting hours to ½ hour past sunset Use of unplugged guns Use of electronic calls This applies to this area only during the month of September.
Canada Geese (Resident Population Zone) – includes White-fronted geese	Oct. 19 – Oct. 28, 2023, Nov. 4 – Nov. 25, 2023, Dec. 18, 2023 – Feb. 10, 2024	5 Canada geese (includes Canada geese or white-fronted geese either singly or in the aggregate)
Canada Geese (Northeast Hunt Zone) – includes White-fronted geese	Dec. 28, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	2 Canada geese (includes Canada geese or white-fronted geese either singly or in the aggregate)
Brant	Dec. 28, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	1
Light Geese (includes snow and Ross's geese) – regular season	Oct. 10, 2023 – Feb. 10, 2024	25 (no possession limit)
Light Geese (includes snow and Ross's geese) – Conservation Order season	Feb. 12 – Mar. 31, 2024 (by permit only) Expanded hunting methods are allowed and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended shooting hours to ½ hour past sunset Use of unplugged guns Use of electronic calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No daily bag limit No possession limit To learn more or apply for a permit after July 1 visit ncwildlife.org/LightGoose
Tundra Swan	Nov. 4, 2023– Jan. 31, 2024 (by permit only)	1 per season with special permit (4,721 permits will be issued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited number of permits will be issued to hunt tundra swans. Permits will be issued by a random drawing authorizing each permit holder to harvest one tundra swan. Refer to ncwildlife.org/PermitHunt

- Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset unless otherwise specified.
- There shall be no hunting of migratory game birds by any method on Sundays.
- Possession limits are three times the daily bag unless otherwise specified.
- Falconers may hunt during the Webless Migratory and Waterfowl Seasons, but the daily bag limit for falconry is three and the possession limit is nine, singly, or in aggregate. The falconry limit is not in addition to the gun bag limit.

Youth Waterfowl Day(s)

Species	Season Dates	Daily Bag
Youth Waterfowl Day(s)	Feb. 3 & Feb. 10, 2024 (Statewide)	Same bag limit as during the regular waterfowl season(s). Waterfowl hunting outside the regular season is allowed on the day(s) officially designated as "Youth Waterfowl Day." Legal species include ducks, geese, brant, tundra swans, mergansers, and coots. Youth must have a valid permit if hunting tundra swans. Refer to the Game Lands Section for guidelines on hunting game lands, including permit-only areas.

Youth that are 17 or younger may participate in accordance with the guidelines listed below:

- Youth under the age of 16 who have obtained Hunter Education Certification must be accompanied by an adult age 18 or older.
- Youth under the age of 16 who have not successfully completed Hunter Education Certification must be accompanied by a properly licensed adult aged 18 or older.
- Youth aged 16 & 17 must be properly licensed, must have HIP certification and a federal duck stamp and must be accompanied by an adult age 18 or older.
- Accompanying adults that are properly licensed cannot duck hunt but may participate in other seasons that are open on youth waterfowl days.
- Possession limits are three times the daily bag unless otherwise specified.
- Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset unless otherwise specified.

Veterans/Military Waterfowl Day(s)

Species	Season Dates	Daily Bag
Veterans/Military Waterfowl Day(s)	Feb. 3 & Feb. 10, 2024 (Statewide)	Same bag limit as during the regular waterfowl season(s). Waterfowl hunting outside the regular season is allowed on the day(s) officially designated as "Veterans/Military Waterfowl Day." Legal species include ducks, geese, brant, tundra swans, mergansers, and coots.

Veterans and members of the Armed Forces on active duty, including National Guard and Reserves on the active duty (other than for training) may participate in accordance with the guidelines below:

- Must be properly licensed with valid credentials, must have HIP certification and a federal duck stamp.
- Must have a valid permit to hunt tundra swans. Refer to the Game Lands Section for guidelines on hunting game lands, including permit-only areas.

Doves and Other Webless Migratory Game Birds

Species	Season Dates	Daily Bag
Mourning Dove & White-winged Dove	Sept. 2 – Oct. 7, 2023, Nov. 11 – Nov. 25, 2023, Dec. 9, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	15 Either singly or in the aggregate for Mourning Doves and White-winged Doves
King & Clapper Rails	Sept. 2 – Nov. 22, 2023	15 Includes King or Clapper rails either singly or in the aggregate
Sora & Virginia Rails	Sept. 2 – Nov. 22, 2023	25 Includes Sora or Virginia rails either singly or in the aggregate
Gallinule & Moorhens	Sept. 2 – Nov. 22, 2023	15 Includes Gallinules or Moorhens either singly or in the aggregate
Woodcock	Dec. 11, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	3
Common Snipe	Oct. 27, 2023 – Feb. 28, 2024	8

- Possession limits are three times the daily bag unless otherwise specified.
- Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset unless otherwise specified.
- There shall be no hunting of migratory game birds by any method on Sundays.
- Falconers may hunt during the Webless Migratory and Waterfowl Seasons, but the daily bag limit for falconry is three and the possession limit is nine, singly, or in aggregate. The falconry limit is not in addition to the gun bag limit.

Extended Falconry Seasons for Migratory Game Birds

Species	Season Dates	Daily Bag
Mourning Dove & White-winged dove	Oct. 9 – Oct. 21, 2023	3 migratory game birds singly or in the aggregate
Rails, Gallinule and Moorhens	Dec. 9, 2023 – Jan. 13, 2024	3 migratory game birds singly or in the aggregate
Woodcock	Dec. 1 – Dec. 9, 2023 Feb. 3 – Feb. 24, 2024	3 migratory game birds singly or in the aggregate
Ducks, mergansers & coots	Oct. 2 – Oct. 14, 2023 Feb. 1 - 10, 2024	3 migratory game birds singly or in the aggregate

- Falconers may also hunt during the applicable gun seasons for migratory game birds. The daily bag and possession limits of 3 and 9 respectively, also apply while hunting during the gun seasons.
- Falconry hours for all species are from ½ hour before sunrise until sunset.
- Falconry for migratory game birds is not allowed on Sundays.
- Daily bag and possession limits are for all species singly or in the aggregate. the taking of harlequin ducks is prohibited.