RABBIT

Nov. 22 – Feb. 28
Daily limit 5; No possession or season limits
Box-Trapping Season: Nov. 22 – Feb. 28

QUAIL

Nov. 22 – Feb. 28
Daily limit 6; Possession 12; Season, no limit

GROUSE

Oct. 13 – Feb. 28
Daily limit 3; Possession 6; Season 30

BOBCAT

Oct. 13 – Feb. 28
No limits

GROUNDHOG, NUTRIA, COYOTE, SKUNK (STRIPED), ARMADILLO AND FERAL SWINE (HOGS)

There is no closed season or bag limit, except in Hyde, Beaulon, Washington, Dare and Tyrrell counties. In those five counties, coyote hunting, day and night, is prohibited. Hunters may use electronic calls for coyotes.

- Feral swine and coyotes may be hunted at night with lights.

PHEASANT

Nov. 15 – Feb. 1 (male pheasant only)
Daily limit 3; Possession 6; Season 30

FOX

Year Round (including Sundays)

- Must be taken with dogs only; no limits.
- Local laws may restrict hunting foxes with dogs. See the “Fox Season Hunting and Trapping Laws” publication at ncwildlife.org or call 919-707-0050 to request a copy.

Nov. 15 – Jan. 1
Daily limit 2; Season 10
This season applies as follows:

- In those counties and parts of counties east of I-77 where local laws do not prohibit the taking of foxes or that do not have established fox seasons and Mitchell and Caldwell counties.
- Foxes taken during this hunting season shall not be bought or sold.
- In Caldwell County, foxes may be taken by firearms only.

Daily limit 2; Season 10
- Foxes may be taken in the counties listed below by legal weapons and may be sold after being properly tagged (refer to page 9 for more information on fox tags):
  - Caswell
  - Henderson
  - Clay
  - Macon
  - Graham
  - Tyrrell
- Hunters must possess fox tags prior to harvesting foxes during this season.

There is no open weapons hunting season in any other county except where provided by local laws. To see if your county has a hunting season on foxes, see the hunting page on ncwildlife.org/Hunting/LawsSafety.aspx and click on Fox harvest Season dates, or call 919-707-0050 to request a copy.

EXTENDED SEASON FOR TAKE BY FALCONRY

Oct. 13 – Feb. 28 (Applies only to rabbits)
Outside of Regular Season Dates:
Rabbits: Daily limit 3; Possession limit 6
Regular species bag limits apply during regular seasons.

BEAVER

There is an open season for taking beaver with firearms or bow and arrow during any open season for the taking of wild animals, provided that permission has been obtained from the owner or lessee of the land on which the beaver is being taken.

CONTROLLED HUNTING PRESERVES

Oct. 1 – Mar. 31
No limits.
This applies to domestically raised birds (mallard ducks and upland game birds) only.
No wild turkey may be taken.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Migratory Birds Protected Federal laws protecting migratory birds (songbirds, woodpeckers, raptors or waterfowl) take precedence over state laws. Before any migratory birds may be taken or killed during the closed season, a federal permit must be obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Substantial penalties for violations apply. Call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Bird Permits Section in Atlanta, Ga. at 404-679-7070 for information. During the May 1–Aug. 31 time period, depredation permits issued directly from the Wild-life Resources Commission are available when Canada geese are depredating in commercial agriculture situations. Contact the Commission at 919-707-0050 for more information. Federal seasons and bag limits on migratory game birds are adopted as state regulations.

Colonial Water Bird Nesting Areas Coastal islands and beach areas posted as “Colonial Water Bird Nesting” areas are being managed for our nesting populations of pelicans, terns, gulls, herons and egrets. Special regulations apply. Access is prohibited on these areas from April 1–Aug. 31, except by special permit.
Dogs are not allowed on these areas during this time period. Access on these areas from Sept. 1–March 30 will be allowed as authorized by the landowner.

MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS – HUNTING STAMPS AND PRIVILEGES

Harvest Information Program (HIP) All licensed hunters hunting migratory game birds (dove, rails, woodcock, snipe or waterfowl) in North Carolina are required to have certification of participation in the federal Harvest Information Program (HIP). Certification can be obtained free of charge by going online at ncwildlife.org, calling 888-248-6834, or visiting a wildlife service agent.

Migratory Bird Hunting And Conservation Stamp (Federal Duck Stamp) The law requires that each waterfowl hunter 16 years of age and older, must carry on his person a valid Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, or federal duck stamp, signed in ink across the face. (Hunters under age 16 may voluntarily purchase a duck stamp and help preserve wetlands for waterfowl.) Refer to page 9 for more information.

North Carolina WaterfowlPrivilege Each waterfowl hunter 16 years of age and older must carry on his person a license having the North Carolina Waterfowl Privilege. The North Carolina Waterfowl Privilege is required in addition to the federal duck stamp.
Refer to the “License Types” section on page 5 of this digest for information on which licenses include this privilege license.

**North Carolina Duck Stamp**  Hunters are no longer required to carry the North Carolina duck stamp while hunting for waterfowl; however, the current year’s duck stamp will be available for collecting purposes; call 888-248-6834 for more information.

### Migratory Game Birds – Seasons

#### Nongame Migratory

**Waterfowl and Webless Migratory**  Dates, bag limits and shooting hours for doves, other webless migratory game birds and resident Canada goose will be available by Aug. 1. Dates, bag limits and shooting hours for waterfowl will be available by Sept. 1. To obtain information on these dates, bag limits and shooting hours, call the following toll-free number: 800-675-0263, or see our website at ncwildlife.org. Wildlife service agents will receive posters containing this information, and the information also will be distributed through local news media.

**Youth Waterfowl Day**  Waterfowl hunting outside of the regular season is allowed on the day officially designated as “Youth Waterfowl Day.” Youths must be 15 years of age or younger and accompanied by a properly licensed adult at least 18 years of age. Legal species include ducks, geese, tundra swans, mergansers, moorhens, gallinules and coots. The accompanying adult may not duck hunt but may participate in other seasons open on Youth Waterfowl Day. Call 800-675-0263 after Sept. 1 for the date. Canada goose bag limits and any additional restrictions on Youth Waterfowl Day vary by the applicable hunt zone. See the Canada Goose Hunt Zone section for information about the Northeast Goose Hunt Zone. Any youth harvesting a tundra swan must have a valid swan permit.

### Waterfowl

**Tundra Swan**  A limited number of permits will be issued to hunt tundra swans. Permits will be issued by a random drawing authorizing each permitholder to harvest one tundra swan. The following regulations apply:

- The permit and tag are not transferable and are valid only for the person whose name appears on the permit. It is unlawful to possess a swan permit or tag while hunting that was assigned to another person, or to alter the permit or tag in any way other than cutting out the proper month and day of kill.
- The permit must be canceled by cutting out both the month and day of the kill immediately at the time and place of the kill.
- The permit must be affixed to the harvested swan in accordance with instructions provided with the permit.
- The permit must be carried on one’s person while hunting or, if in possession of a swan, the permit must be affixed to the swan. Every hunter receiving a swan permit will also receive a questionnaire. If the hunter does not return that completed questionnaire to the Wildlife Resources Commission by April 1, that hunter will be ineligible for a tundra swan permit the following season.

See the Wildlife Resources Commission’s Permit Hunting Opportunities publication for instructions on obtaining a swan permit.

### Special Sea Duck Area

The taking of sea ducks (scoter, eider and oldsquaw), except during the regular duck season, shall be limited to the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, and to those coastal waters south of U.S. 64 that are separated by a distance of at least 800 yards of open water from any shore, island or marsh. Special sea duck bag limits and seasons apply in these areas. During the regular season, this bag limit may be in addition to the limits applying to other ducks. In all other areas, sea ducks may be taken only during the regular open season for ducks, and they must be included in the regular duck season daily bag and possession limits.

### September Teal Zone

That area located east of U.S. 17 is designated as the “September Teal Zone.” Teal seasons occurring prior to Oct. 1 apply to this area only.

### Canada Goose Hunt Zones

The state is divided into Canada goose hunt zones. See the map on page 54 for zone descriptions. For the hunt dates, bag limits or other restrictions that may apply in each zone, please call 800-675-0263 after Sept. 1, or visit our website at ncwildlife.org.

As with other migratory game birds, it is unlawful to hunt or possess Canada goose without having HIP certification as well as other applicable state and federal licenses and stamps in your possession.

### Gaddy Goose Refuge

It is unlawful to harass or take any Canada goose during established goose hunting seasons that occur after Oct. 1 each year in the Gaddy Goose Refuge in Anson County. The Gaddy Goose Refuge is that area in Anson County starting at the N.C. 109 bridge over the Pee Dee River and following N.C. 109 south to SR 1650; west on SR 1650 to S.R. 1649; west on S.R. 1649 to U.S. 52; south on U.S. 52 to S.R. 1652; west on S.R. 1652 to S.R. 1641; west on S.R. 1641 to N.C. 742; northwest on N.C. 742 to Lanes Creek; north along Lanes Creek to the Rocky River; downstream on the Rocky River to the Pee Dee River; and downstream along the Pee Dee River to the beginning of the N.C. 109 bridge.

### NonToxic Shot Requirements

In North Carolina, no person shall take waterfowl while possessing shells loaded with any shot other than steel or other approved nontoxic materials. On posted waterfowl impoundments on game lands, it is unlawful to hunt with or have in possession any shotgun shell containing lead or toxic shot while hunting; except shotgun shells containing lead buck-shot may be used while deer hunting. Nontoxic shot is required for the taking of captive-reared mallards on shooting preserves, in field trials and during bona fide dog-training activities.

### Summary of Federal Regulations

In addition to state regulations, the following federal rules apply to the taking, possession, shipping, transporting and storing of migratory game birds. **No persons shall take migratory game birds:**

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10 gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machinegun, fish hook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance;
- With a shotgun of any description capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler, incapable of removal without disassembling the gun, so its total capacity does not exceed three shells. This restriction does not apply during dates states have selected under the Conservation Order