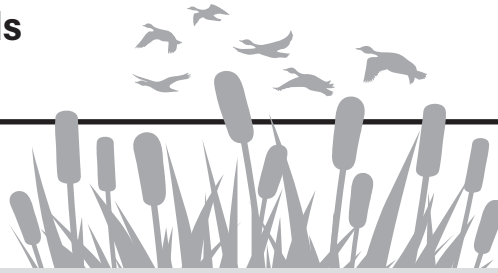




Summary of Migratory Birds Hunting Regulations

August 2024
to July 2025



Notice: Avian influenza virus is a contagious viral infection that can affect domestic and wild birds throughout the world. Guidelines have been developed to prevent or mitigate the spread of this virus, and for precautionary measures to take when handling wild game. For more information, please refer to www.canada.ca/Avian-flu and the *Wildlife and Avian Influenza – Handling Guidelines to Protect Your Health* web page on the Government of Canada website.

To hunt migratory game birds in Canada, you must possess:

- a valid Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit;
- a Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp on the permit.

These two documents are issued by the federal government and are valid in all provinces and territories.

Hunting Districts

Zone No. 1 means the counties of Antigonish, Pictou, Colchester, Cumberland, Hants, Kings, and Annapolis.

Zone No. 2 means the counties of Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, Queens, Lunenburg, Halifax, Guysborough, Cape Breton, Victoria, Inverness, and Richmond.

Refer to the *Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022* for restrictions and requirements for items such as baiting, hunting methods and equipment.

Most provinces and territories have additional licence requirements for hunting migratory birds and/or to carry firearms. To know what you require, and if there are further restrictions for hunting migratory birds, please verify the applicable regulations for the province/territory and municipality where you will be hunting. Restrictions such as Sunday hunting closures and minimum required distances from residences and businesses for the discharge of firearms may be applicable.

You can purchase your Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit by visiting the Government of Canada website (www.permis-permits.ec.gc.ca).

Hunters may carry their Migratory Game Bird Hunting (MGBH) permit either in physical (paper) or electronic formats (such as on a mobile device). Electronic MGBH permits must be in the PDF format provided by the e-permitting system (a photograph or screenshot of your permit is not valid). It is the hunter's responsibility to be able to show all required permits to a game officer immediately upon request.

Consultation Process and Migratory Birds Regulatory Reports

A national consultation process has been developed which includes a report on the population status of migratory game birds and a consultation document that provide an opportunity to participate in developing the hunting regulations. For more information, consult the *Migratory Birds Regulatory Report Series* web page on the Government of Canada website.

Youth Migratory Game Bird Hunting (MGBH) Permit

Hunters who are minors (less than 18 years old) have the option to hunt with a Youth MGBH permit. The Youth MGBH permit, as well as the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation stamp, can only be obtained through our online permitting system, free of charge. The Youth MGBH permit is not available for purchase from independent vendors or Canada Post.

The Youth MGBH permit provides young hunters with the opportunity to practice their skills under the supervision of an adult mentor (in possession of a MGBH Permit) throughout the full open season and the special conservation season, and provides Youth MGBH Permit holders with their own daily bag and possession limits.

Mentors must possess their own MGBH permit, must have held such a permit in a previous year, and may accompany no more than two youth hunters. Mentors may carry a firearm, and may hunt. For more information on the new rules pertaining to hunting migratory game birds in the modernized *Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022*, please consult the Government of Canada *Migratory Game Bird Hunting* website.

Important Updates to the Hunting Regulations for Nova Scotia

The bag limit for American Black Ducks has been increased from 4 to 6 ducks per day throughout Nova Scotia for the entire season.

General duck hunting season length has been increased by up to 8 days to the maximum allowable of 107 days, with new season closing dates.

The eider open season dates have changed and are now from November 2 to December 31.

Enforcement



Federal game officers enforce the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* (MBCA) and its associated regulations throughout Canada. This law regulates human activities, such as hunting, that could adversely affect wildlife conservation. Game officers may use warnings, administrative monetary penalties, tickets or prosecutions to enforce the provisions of the MBCA and its regulations. The fines and penalties that may be imposed reflect the seriousness of the offence(s). Individuals may be subject to a fine range for a first offence associated to sections of the MBR, 2022 designated for the purposes of paragraph 13(1)(c) of the MBCA, 1994 on summary conviction of not less than \$5,000 and not more than \$300,000, or imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or both.

Shot

- Lead shot is toxic to wildlife and the environment.
- In Nova Scotia, the use and possession of shot other than non-toxic shot is prohibited while hunting migratory game birds other than woodcock.
- Within National Wildlife Areas (NWA) that allow hunting, the possession of lead shot is prohibited for all hunting, including the hunting of migratory birds and upland game birds. Refer to the *Wildlife Area Regulations* to know which NWAs allow hunting and for the restrictions or requirements when conducting this activity.

To reduce your exposure to contaminants in meat, make sure, before cooking it, to:

- remove the shot from birds hunted with lead shot;
- remove the skin and fat from fish-eating birds.

Species at Risk

- Barrow's Goldeneye is listed in the *Species at Risk Act* as a species of special concern, and the daily bag and possession limit is 1 bird.

Crime Stoppers

Anyone wishing to report illegal hunting activities, illegal selling of birds or other offences related to migratory birds is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477). Your call is anonymous, and you may be eligible for a cash reward.

Open Season and Daily Bag and Possession Limits for Migratory Game Birds in Nova Scotia

Area	Species	Open Season	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
Zone No. 1	Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks, Eiders, and Scoters, combined	October 1 to November 1 This is not an open season for Eiders.	5 (not more than 4 may be Scoters)	10 (not more than 4 may be Eiders and not more than 8 may be Scoters)
		November 2 to December 31	5 (not more than 2 may be Eiders, of which not more than 1 may be female, and not more than 4 may be Scoters)	
		January 1 to January 15 This is not an open season for Eiders.	5 (not more than 4 may be Scoters)	
	Ducks (other than Harlequin Ducks, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks, Eiders and Scoters), combined	October 1 to January 15	6 (not more than 1 may be Barrow's Goldeneye)	18 (not more than 1 may be Barrow's Goldeneye)
	All Geese, combined	September 1 to September 15	5 (plus an additional 5 Canada Geese or Cackling Geese in any combination)	20
		October 1 to December 31	5	
	Woodcock	October 1 to November 30	8	16
Snipe	October 1 to November 30	10	20	

Area	Species	Open Season	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
Zone No. 2	Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks, Eiders and Scoters, combined	October 8 to November 1 This is not an open season for Eiders.	5 (not more than 4 may be Scoters)	10 (not more than 4 may be Eiders and not more than 8 may be Scoters)
		November 2 to December 31	5 (not more than 2 may be Eiders, of which not more than 1 may be female, and not more than 4 may be Scoters)	
		January 1 to January 22 This is not an open season for Eiders.	5 (not more than 4 may be Scoters)	
	Ducks (other than Harlequin Ducks, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks, Eiders and Scoters), combined	October 8 to January 22	6 (not more than 1 may be Barrow's Goldeneye)	18 (not more than 1 may be Barrow's Goldeneye)
	All Geese, combined	September 1 to September 15	5 (plus an additional 5 Canada Geese or Cackling Geese in any combination)	20
		October 16 to January 15	5	
	Woodcock	October 1 to November 30	8	16
Snipe	October 1 to November 30	10	20	

The information presented here is a summary of the law. If there is a discrepancy between the law and this summary, the law prevails. For more information, consult the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, the *Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022*, the frequently asked questions for hunters, and other information on the Government of Canada website (www.canada.ca).

You may also direct your questions to:

**Environment and Climate Change Canada
Canadian Wildlife Service**

Regional Office
17 Waterfowl Lane
P.O. Box 6227
Sackville, New Brunswick E4L 1G6
Tel.: 1-800-668-6767
enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca

Report your Migratory Bird Bands:
Call 1-800-327-BAND (2263) to leave a message or go to:
www.reportband.gov