



# Summary of Migratory Birds Hunting Regulations

AUGUST 2020  
TO JULY 2021



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

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

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

The 2020 federal permit is also valid for the 2021 spring special conservation harvest for Snow Geese and Ross's Geese.



### Hunting Districts

#### 1. Hudson-James Bay District

Wildlife Management Units 1A, 1B, and the portions of Wildlife Management Units 1D, 25, and 26 lying east of longitude 83°45' and north of latitude 51°.

#### 2. Northern District

Wildlife Management Unit 1C, those portions of 1D, 25 and 26 lying west of longitude 83°45' and south of latitude 51°, as well as Wildlife Management Units 2 to 24 inclusive, 27 to 41 inclusive, and 45.

#### 3. Central District

Wildlife Management Units 42 to 44 inclusive, 46 to 50 inclusive, and 53 to 59 inclusive.

#### 4. Southern District

Wildlife Management Units 60 to 95 inclusive.

For more information on Wildlife Management Units, contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Note that south of the French and Mattawa rivers, Sunday gun hunting is permitted by provincial regulations in some municipalities, but not all. Season dates for Canada Geese and Cackling Geese in the Southern District may differ between municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is permitted and those where it is not. Hunters should consult the provincial regulations for information about Wildlife Management Unit boundaries and a list of municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is permitted.

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 where you will be hunting. Municipalities may have additional restrictions on discharging firearms. Note that all required permits and licences must be in your possession while you are hunting.

You can purchase and print your Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit by visiting the *Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit* web page on the Government of Canada website ([www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca)).

### Consultation process and migratory birds regulatory reports

A national consultation process has been developed to provide an opportunity for everyone to participate in developing the migratory birds hunting regulations. For more information, consult the *Migratory Birds Regulatory Report Series* web page on the Government of Canada website ([www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca)).

### IMPORTANT UPDATES TO THE HUNTING REGULATIONS FOR ONTARIO

#### Canada Geese

- Daily bag limit has increased from 2 to 3 birds of Canada Geese or Crackling Geese or any combination of them, may be taken daily in Wildlife Management Unit 94 during the regular goose hunting season.
- Daily bag limit has decreased from 5 to 3 Canada Geese or Crackling Geese, or any combination of them, may be taken daily in Wildlife Management Unit 65 from the start of the regular goose hunting season for 35 days.

#### Snow Geese and Ross's Geese

- There is now a late February/early March open season, concurrent with the Canada Goose/Cackling Goose season, in only those municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is not permitted by provincial regulations.
- Spring Conservation Measures (March 1 to May 31) have been expanded to include Wildlife Management Units 66, 67 and 69B, in addition to 65.

All Geese: open season starts on September 1 and closes on December 16 in the Northern and Central Hunting Districts.

Possession Limits: are standardized to three times the daily bag limit for all migratory game bird species or groupings, except for Barrow's Goldeneye, which remains at 1 bird.

#### Enforcement

In June 2017, the *Environmental Violations Administrative Monetary Penalties Regulations* came into force. In particular, these regulations authorize game officers to use administrative monetary penalties (AMPs) to enforce the provisions of the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* (MBCA) and its associated regulations.

In July 2017, amendments to the fine regime and penalty provisions in the MBCA and the *Designation of Regulatory Provisions for Purposes of Enforcement (Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994) Regulations* came into force. In particular, these amendments allow courts to impose penalties that reflect the seriousness of offences following a conviction pursuant to the MBCA or its associated regulations.

For more information on AMPs and the new fine regime, consult the *About the Environmental Enforcement Act* web page on the Government of Canada website ([www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca)).



Game officers enforce the federal MBCA throughout Canada. This law regulates human interventions, such as hunting that could adversely affect long-term wildlife conservation. For any questions, please contact Wildlife Enforcement by telephone or by email at the contact information at the end of this hunting summary.

### Shot

- **Non-toxic shot must be used** to hunt all migratory game birds (includes Mourning Dove), except for woodcock.
- Within National Wildlife Areas that allow hunting, the possession of lead shot is prohibited for all types of hunting, including the hunting of migratory birds and upland game birds.
- Hunters should consult provincial or territorial regulations for additional restrictions.

### 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 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.

### Waterfowler Heritage Days

Waterfowler Heritage Days are intended for young hunters under 18 years of age. These days allow young people, a few days before or during the hunting seasons, to:

- develop safe hunting habits in a supervised and structured environment;
- be guided by adult hunters who serve as mentors and pass on their skills and knowledge;
- learn more about wildlife conservation.

The following rules are in effect during Waterfowler Heritage Days:

- Young hunters can hunt without having a Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit or Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp.
- Young hunters must comply with all safety and licensing requirements found in the *Firearms Act* and provincial hunting regulations.
- Young hunters must be accompanied by a licensed mentor (who is not a minor).
- Adults acting as mentors:
  - must have a valid Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit and Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp;
  - may not hunt or carry a firearm;
  - may accompany no more than two young hunters.
- Only young hunters are allowed to hunt when Waterfowler Heritage Days fall outside of the regular open seasons.
- Daily bag limits are outlined in the Bag and Possession Limits table below, and include footnotes *a*, *e*, *f*, *g* and *h*.

### WATERFOWLER HERITAGE DAYS AND OPEN SEASONS IN ONTARIO (No open season for Harlequin Ducks)

Area	Waterfowler Heritage Days	Open seasons in Ontario				
	Ducks (other than Harlequin Ducks), Rails (other than Yellow Rails and King Rails), Gallinules, Coots, Snipe, Geese, Woodcock and Mourning Doves	Ducks (other than Harlequin Ducks), Rails (other than Yellow Rails and King Rails), Gallinules, Coots, and Snipe	Canada Geese and Cackling Geese	Geese (other than Canada Geese and Cackling Geese)	Woodcock	Mourning Doves
1. Hudson–James Bay District	Sept. 5 ( <i>a</i> )	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 15 to Dec. 16	No open season
2. Northern District	Sept. 5 ( <i>a</i> )	Sept. 10 to Dec. 24	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 15 to Dec. 16	No open season
3. Central District	Sept. 12 ( <i>b</i> )	Sept. 19 to Jan. 2	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 1 to Dec. 16	Sept. 15 to Dec. 16	Sept. 1 to Nov. 30 ( <i>b</i> )

## WATERFOWLER HERITAGE DAYS AND OPEN SEASONS IN ONTARIO (No open season for Harlequin Ducks)

4. Southern District	Sept. 19 (b)	Sept. 26 to Jan. 9	Sept. 10 to Sept. 20 (c); Sept. 10 to Sept. 20 (except for any Sunday within this period) (d); Sept. 26 to Dec. 30 (c); Sept. 26 to Jan. 9 (except for any Sunday within this period) (d); Feb. 27 to Mar. 6 (except for any Sunday within this period) (d), (e)	Sept. 26 to Dec. 30 (c), (f); Sept. 26 to Jan. 9 (except for any Sunday within this period) (d), (f); Feb. 27 to Mar. 6 (except for any Sunday within this period) (d), (e), (f), (g)	Sept. 15 to Dec. 20 (h) Sept. 25 to Dec. 20 (i)	Sept. 1 to Nov. 30 (b)
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(a) Except for Mourning Doves.

(b) Non-toxic shot required.

(c) In municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is permitted by provincial regulations.

(d) In municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is not permitted by provincial regulations.

(e) Except in Wildlife Management Unit 94.

(f) In Wildlife Management Unit 65, 66, 67 and 69B, recorded Snow Goose and Ross's Goose calls may be used when hunting those geese; any species of migratory bird for which it is open season may be taken while hunting Snow Geese and Ross's Geese with those calls.

(g) Includes only Snow Goose and Ross's Goose.

(h) In Wildlife Management Units 60-67, 69B.

(i) In Wildlife Management Units 68, 69A, 70-95.

## BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS IN ONTARIO

Limit	Ducks (other than Harlequin Ducks)	Canada Geese and Cackling Geese	Snow Geese and Ross's Geese	Other Geese	Rails (other than Yellow Rails and King Rails), Coot and Gallinules	Snipe	Woodcock	Mourning Doves
Daily Bag	6 (a)	5 (c), (d), (e), (f)	20 (g)	5	10 (h)	10	8	15
Possession	18 (b)	No limit	No limit	15	30	30	24	45

(a) Not more than 1 may be Barrow's Goldeneye. In the Southern District, not more than 2 may be American Black Ducks, and in the Hudson-James Bay District, Northern District and Central District, not more than 4 may be American Black Ducks.

(b) Not more than 1 may be Barrow's Goldeneye.

(c) A total of not more than 3 Canada Geese or Cackling Geese, or any combination of them, may be taken daily in Wildlife Management Unit 94 from September 26 to January 9.

(d) A total of not more than 3 Canada Geese or Cackling Geese, or any combination of them, may be taken daily in Wildlife Management Units 65, 82, 84, 85 and 93 from September 26 to October 30.

(e) Up to 5 additional Canada Geese or Cackling Geese, or any combination of them, may be taken daily in the following Wildlife Management Units:

(i) 8, 10, 13, 36, 37, 39, 41 and 45 from September 1 to September 9;

(ii) 42 to 44 and 46 to 59 from September 1 to September 18;

(iii) 60 to 81, 83, 86 to 92, and 95 from September 10 to September 20;

(iv) 60 to 81, 83, and 86 to 92 from February 27 to March 6, in municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is not permitted.

(f) Up to 3 additional Canada Geese or Cackling Geese, or any combination of them, may be taken daily in

(i) Wildlife Management Units 82, 84, 85, 93 and 94 from September 10 to September 20; and

(ii) Wildlife Management Units 82, 84, 85 and 93 from February 27 to March 6, in municipalities where Sunday gun hunting is not permitted.

(g) Up to 30 additional Snow Geese or Ross's Geese, or any combination of them, may be taken daily in the Hudson-James Bay District.

(h) Not more than 4 may be Gallinules and not more than 8 may be Coots.

## OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

The *Migratory Birds Regulations* also provide for special conservation harvest periods when hunters may take overabundant species. See the table below for details.

## MEASURES IN ONTARIO CONCERNING OVERABUNDANT SPECIES

Area	Period during which Snow Geese may be killed	Additional hunting method or equipment
Wildlife Management Unit 65, 66, 67 and 69B	Mar. 1 to May 31 (a)	Recorded bird calls (b)

(a) Hunting and hunting equipment are allowed only on farmland.

(b) "Recorded bird calls" refers to bird calls of a species referred to in the heading of column 2.

**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*, the frequently asked questions for hunters, and other information on the Government of Canada website ([www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca)).**

**You may also direct your questions to:**

**Environment and Climate Change Canada  
Canadian Wildlife Service**  
4905 Dufferin Street  
Toronto, Ontario M3H 5T4  
Tel.: 1-800-668-6767  
[ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca)

**REPORT YOUR MIGRATORY BIRD BANDS:  
CALL 1-800-327-BAND (2263) TO LEAVE A MESSAGE OR GO TO:  
WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV**

**Canada**