



PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

BUREAU OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

2001 ELMERTON AVENUE HARRISBURG, PA 17110-9797 | (717) 787-5529

2025-26 Pennsylvania Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons

Each year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service along with the states in the Atlantic Flyway meet to establish federal frameworks for migratory game bird seasons. These frameworks form the side boards that each state must set their season within. States can be more restrictive (less days or lower bag limits) but cannot be more liberal (more days or higher bag limits) than the federal frameworks allow.

Generally speaking, frameworks do not vary widely from year to year, but changes in habitat conditions or populations of migratory game birds may cause them to change. For 2025-26 seasons, there are two changes to the frameworks. The Atlantic Population Canada goose regular season will be 30 days with a reduced daily bag limit of 1. For northern pintail, there will be a flat daily bag limit of 3.

The following pages document the federal frameworks and the proposed seasons developed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Bureau of Wildlife Management staff. If you have questions or are interested in commenting on proposed seasons you have a few options listed below. **Please provide the species, zone (if applicable) and County/Counties you are specifically commenting on. Note, the comment period closes March 21st.**

- Questions or comments can be submitted to waterfowlcomments@pa.gov or a letter can be mailed to Pennsylvania Game Commission, Bureau of Wildlife Management, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.
- An online Q&A session will be held on the proposed seasons on **March 6th at 1PM on the Pennsylvania Game Commission YouTube channel**. A recording will be available afterward.
- **A Waterfowl Open House will take place at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, 100 Museum Rd, Stevens, PA 17578 on March 8th from 10AM-2PM**. Attendees will have the opportunity to interact with Game Commission Staff, see proposed seasons presented, and receive updates on waterfowl research in Pennsylvania.



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Duck Seasons

Proposed Duck Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season Dates	Bag Limits
Lake Erie Zone	Nov. 3 – Jan. 10	Maximum allowed by Frameworks*
Northwest Zone	Oct. 11 – Nov. 28 Dec. 22 – Jan. 10	Maximum allowed by Frameworks*
North Zone	Oct. 11 – Oct. 25 Nov. 18 – Jan. 10	Maximum allowed by Frameworks*
South Zone	Oct. 11 – Oct. 18 Nov. 18 – Jan. 17	Maximum allowed by Frameworks*

*Scaup bag limit shall be 2 for the last 20 days of the season in each zone except in the Lake Erie Zone where it shall be 2 for the first 20 days, the bag shall be 1 during the remainder of the season in each zone.

Frameworks for **Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots**

- Dates: September 27 – January 31
- 60-day season with 1 split (2 season segments) per zone
- Daily bag limit
 - Ducks: 6, including no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 hens), 2 scaup for 20 days and 1 scaup for 40 days, 2 black ducks, 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, 3 pintails, 4 sea ducks (including no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks, or 3 eiders and no more than 1 female eider).
 - Mergansers: 5
 - Coots: 15

Proposed Youth and Veterans and Active-Duty Military Days

- Statewide Youth Day
 - September 20th
- Youth, Veterans and Active-Duty Military Day
 - Lake Erie Zone
 - October 25th
 - Northwest Zone
 - September 27th
 - North Zone
 - November 1st
 - South Zone
 - November 8th
- Veterans and Active-Duty Military Day
 - Northwest, North, and Lake Erie Zone
 - January 17th
 - South Zone
 - January 24th



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Goose Seasons

Proposed Early Canada Goose Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide*	Sep. 1 – Sep. 25	8/Day

*Exceptions Listed Below:

- In the area south of SR 198 from the Ohio state line to intersection of I-79, west of I-79 to SR 358, north of SR 358 to the Ohio state line: the season dates are Sept. 1 – Sept. 13. The daily limit is 1 Canada goose with a possession limit of 3 geese. The season is closed on State Game Lands 214.
- In the area of Lancaster and Lebanon counties north of the Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, east of SR 501 to SR 419, south of SR 419 to Lebanon-Berks county line, west of Lebanon-Berks county line and the Lancaster-Berks county line to SR 1053 (also known as Peartown Road and Greenville Road), west of SR 1053 to Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76: daily bag limit of 1 Canada goose, possession limit 3; **except** on State Game Lands No. 46 (Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area) where the season is closed.

Frameworks for Early Canada Goose Seasons (Statewide)

- Dates: September 1 – September 25
- Daily bag limit: 15 geese
- Hunting allowed ½ hour after sunset
- Frameworks allow the use of unplugged shotguns; however, this is prohibited by state statute.

Proposed Regular Canada Goose Seasons

Zone	Proposed	Proposed Bag Limit
Atlantic Population	Nov. 22 – Nov. 28 Dec. 22 – Jan. 17	1/Day
Resident Population*	Oct. 25 – Nov. 28 Dec. 15 – Jan. 17 Jan. 30 – Feb. 21	5/Day

*Exceptions Listed Below:

- In the area south of SR 198 from the Ohio state line to intersection of I-79, west of I-79 to SR 358, north of SR 358 to the Ohio state line: the daily limit is 1 Canada goose with a possession limit of 3 geese.

Frameworks for Regular Goose Seasons

- Atlantic Population
 - Dates: October 25 – February 5
 - 30-day season with 1 split (2 season segments)
 - Daily bag limit: 1 goose
- Resident Population
 - Dates: October 25 – March 10
 - 80-day season with 2 splits (3 season segments)
 - Daily bag limit: 5 geese



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Proposed Light Goose Seasons

Zone	Season	Proposed	Proposed Bag Limit
Atlantic Population	Regular Season	Oct. 1 – Jan. 24	25/Day
	Conservation Order	Jan. 26 – April 24	25/Day
Resident Population	Regular Season	Oct. 22 – Feb. 21	25/Day
	Conservation Order	Feb. 24 – April 24	25/Day

Frameworks for Light Goose Seasons (Snow Geese, Blue Geese, and Ross's Geese)

- Dates: October 1 – March 10
- 107-day season with 2 splits (3 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 25 geese

Frameworks for Light Goose Conservation Order (Snow Geese, Blue Geese, and Ross's Geese)

- May be open only when all other waterfowl seasons are closed
- Daily bag limit: Unlimited
- Electronic calls may be used
- Hunting allowed ½ hour after sunset
- Frameworks allow the use of unplugged shotguns; however, this is prohibited by state statute.

Proposed Brant Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide	Oct. 11 – Nov. 14	1/Day

Frameworks for Brant

- Dates: September 27 – January 31
- 30-day season with 1 split (2 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 1 brant

Webless Migratory Game Bird Seasons

Proposed Gallinule Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide	Sep. 1 – Nov. 20	3/Day

Frameworks for Gallinules

- Dates: September 1 – January 31
- 70-day season
- Daily bag limit: 15 gallinules



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Proposed Virginia and Sora Rail Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide	Sep. 1 – Nov. 20	3/Day

Frameworks for Virginia and Sora Rails

- Dates: September 1 – January 31
- 70-day season with 1 split (2 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 25 rails
- King and clapper rails are closed to harvest

Proposed Snipe Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide	Oct. 18 – Nov. 28 Dec. 15 – Dec. 24	8/Day

Frameworks for Snipe

- Dates: September 1 – February 28
- 107-day season with 1 split (2 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 8 snipe

Proposed American Woodcock Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide	Oct. 18– Nov. 28 Dec. 15 – Dec. 24	3/Day

Frameworks for Woodcock

- Dates: September 13 – January 31
- 45-day season with 1 split (2 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 3 woodcock

Proposed Mourning Dove Seasons

Zone	Proposed Season	Proposed Bag Limits
Statewide	Sep. 1 – Nov. 28 Dec. 20 – Jan. 3	15/Day

Frameworks for Mourning Doves

- Dates: September 1 – January 31
- 90-day season with 2 splits (3 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 15 doves



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Proposed Extended Falconry Seasons

Species	Zone	Proposed Season
Ducks, mergansers, and coots*	Lake Erie	Jan. 19 – Mar. 10
	Northwest	Nov. 29 – Dec. 20 Feb. 10 – Mar. 10
	North	Oct. 27 – Nov. 17 Feb. 9 – Mar. 10
	South	Oct. 21 – Nov. 17 Feb. 16 – Mar. 10
Canada, cackling, and white-fronted geese*	Atlantic Population	Dec. 10 – Dec. 20 Jan. 19 – Mar. 10
	Resident Population	Mar. 7 – Mar. 10
Gallinules*	Statewide	Nov. 21 – Dec. 31
Virginia & Sora Rails*	Statewide	Nov. 21 – Jan. 2
Woodcock & Snipe*	Statewide	Sep. 1 – Oct. 17 Nov. 29 – Dec. 13 Dec. 26 – Jan. 3
Doves*	Statewide	Nov. 29 – Dec. 18

* Falconry daily bag limits for all permitted migratory game birds must not exceed 3 birds in the aggregate during extended falconry seasons, any special or experimental seasons, and regular hunting seasons

Frameworks for Falconry

- Dates: September 1 – March 10
- 107-day season (combined regular and special/experimental seasons) with 2 splits (3 season segments)
- Daily bag limit: 3 birds (in the aggregate during extended falconry, special/experimental, and regular hunting seasons)