

# WILDLIFE ALERT NEWSLETTER 2016

Issue 6 | 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter

## DUCK HUNTING SEASON 2016-2017

Florida provides temporary refuge to more than 20 species of migratory waterfowl each year. Four species of ducks reside in Florida year round: mottled ducks, wood ducks, black-bellied and fulvous whistling ducks. The waterfowl provide significant economic and recreational benefits to the citizens of Florida.

In Florida, hunters, naturalists, and bird watchers spend countless hours enjoying these birds. As human impact on the environment has increased, impact of waterfowl populations also have increased. FWC works hard to monitor the populations of ducks and maintain vital duck habitat to ensure the sustained use and enjoyment for Florida's citizens.

### WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT

**Population Monitoring:** FWC coordinated the banding of over 600 mottled, wood and black-bellied whistling ducks. Reports of band encounters allow FWC to measure hunting pressure on these ducks.

**Habitat Management:** Waterfowl biologists provide technical assistance on wetland conservation and management issues to improve the habitat quality and quantity necessary to support Florida's waterfowl, both resident and migrant.



*Above from right to left: Wood duck hen in an FWC issued nest box; wood duck mating pair; black-bellied whistling duck.*

## Frequently Asked Questions and Facts

### Q: What species of duck can I take?

A: There are 13 species of duck that are legal to take. They are mallards, scoters, eiders, long-tailed ducks, wood ducks, redheads, pintails, scaup, canvasbacks, black duck, mottled duck, fulvous whistling-duck and mergansers. There are certain [daily bag and possession limits](#) for each species.

**Q: Is it legal to hunt waterfowl over bait?**

A: You cannot hunt waterfowl by aid of bait or on or over any baited area where you know or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited. This includes on land and over water.

**Q: When are the regular duck seasons?**

A: Regular season for ducks, coots, and light geese are: November 19-27, 2016 and December 10, 2016 through January 29, 2016.

**2016 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER (JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER) STATS**

The Wildlife Alert hotline received over **500** violation report calls, emails, and texts. We paid out more than **\$3,700** in rewards for the tips that ended in arrest. Keep those tips coming!

Thank you to the citizens who are helping conserve Florida’s wildlife and natural resources!

**CASE OF THE QUARTER:**

The South Region received two Wildlife Alert Reports of an individual who was taking eggs from a sea turtle while she was actively laying them. For 5 day FWC law enforcement surveilled the beach. On the 5<sup>th</sup> day they were successful in apprehending the subject actively taking sea turtle eggs. The subject was arrested and an FWC biologist reburied the eggs.

Thank you to the anonymous citizens that reported this crime and helped stop this violator! They both received a \$350 reward! Thank you from the sea turtle too!



**WILDLIFE VIEWING FOR THE END OF THE YEAR**

**October:** Monarch butterfly migration nears its peak along the Gulf coast; turkey vultures return to south Florida; black bears are on the move gathering food; gray foxes begin mating; look for migrating Peregrine falcons in northeast Florida.



**November:** Greater sandhill cranes arrive to winter; bears are still on the move and it is a peak month for road mortality for them; peak of deer rutting; manatees start heading south for warmer water and to the natural springs; woodpeckers aplenty; bald eagles begin their nesting season.



**December:** Great horned and barred owls are courtying; listen for their hooting; manatees are still congregating at the natural springs for the warmer water; bears are still on the move; Right whales appear off the east coast; nesting season begins for ospreys in south Florida; bald eagles start hatching in north Florida.



So get out and explore Florida!

### Contact Us

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*Remember it only takes a short phone call or a quick text message to make a big difference!*

*- Wildlife Alert*