

Background Report
Summary of Changes to Migratory Bird Hunting Seasons, 2018-2019
Consent Agenda Item 3
June 19, 2018

The proposed federal frameworks for all migratory bird seasons for 2018-2019 were advertised in the Federal Register in early February; the finalized frameworks have not yet been advertised, but no changes are anticipated.

The attached tables depict proposed season dates and bag limits for Florida's migratory bird seasons based on the federal frameworks.

Migratory Bird Seasons (other than Ducks, Geese, and Coots)

There are no changes to federal frameworks for rail, moorhen, snipe, and woodcock seasons. For dove, the season closing date was extended from January 15 to January 31. Dates and bag/possession limits for the 2018-2019 seasons, based on federal frameworks and Rule 68A-13.008, F.A.C., are as indicated in Table 1.

Special September Duck Season

There are no changes to Florida's special September duck season within the federal frameworks. Dates and bag/possession limits for the 2018 season, based on federal frameworks and Rule 68A-13.003, F.A.C., are as indicated in Table 2.

Regular Waterfowl and Coot Season

The frameworks have a 60-day season with a six-bird bag limit again for 2018-2019 in Atlantic Flyway states, including Florida.

There is one change to the species' bag limits: the daily bag limit for northern pintails is increased from one to two. This change is a result of species-specific harvest management strategies based on parameters such as breeding populations and habitat conditions. Staff recommends changing FWC's rules to allow these changes. If the rule amendment is approved for both advertisement and final adoption, Commission staff will file the rule for adoption as allowed by s. 120.54(3), F.S., without further public hearing. All other daily bag limits will remain the same as last year and as currently contained in Rule 68A-13.003, F.A.C. Details for Florida's season structure based on these required changes and Rule 68A-13.003, F.A.C. are provided in Table 3.

Canada Goose Season

There are no changes to federal frameworks for the regular Canada goose season. Dates and bag/possession limits for all phases of the 2018-2019 statewide Canada goose season, based on the federal frameworks and Rule 68A-13.003, F.A.C., are as indicated in Table 4.

Table 1. Previous (2017-2018) dates and proposed (2018-2019) dates, bag and possession limits for seasons for migratory birds other than ducks and coots. The 2018-2019 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Species	2017-2018	2018-2019			
		Dates	Bag/Possession	Falconry Dates	Falconry Bag/Possession
Mourning Dove and White-winged Dove	Sept. 23 – Oct. 23 Nov. 11 – Dec. 4 Dec. 12 – Jan. 15	Sept. 22 – Oct. 14 Nov. 10 – Dec. 2 Dec. 19 – Jan. 31	15/45 ¹	Sept. 22 – Oct. 14 Nov. 10 – Dec. 2 Dec. 19 – Feb. 1	3/9
Rails	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	15/45 - Clapper Rail, King Rail, & Common Moorhen; 25/75 - Virginia and Sora Rails	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	3/9
Common Moorhen	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	15/45	Sept. 1 – Dec. 14	3/9
Snipe	Nov. 1 - Feb. 15	Nov. 1 - Feb. 15	8/24	Nov. 1 – Feb. 15	3/9
Woodcock	Dec. 18 – Jan. 31	Dec. 18 – Jan. 31	3/9	Nov. 24 – Mar. 10	3/9
Crow	Aug. 12 – Oct. 29 ² Nov. 11 – Feb. 18	Aug. 11 – Oct. 28 ² Nov. 11 – Feb. 18	None	N/A	N/A

¹ The daily bag limit of doves is mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

² Saturdays and Sundays only.

Table 2. Previous (2017) dates and proposed (2018) dates, bag and possession limits for the special September duck season. The 2018 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Species	2017	2018	Bag/ Possession
Wood duck and teal	Sept. 16-24	Sept. 22-30	6/18 teal and wood ducks in the aggregate, no more than 2/6 of which may be wood ducks; wood ducks may not be taken Sept. 27-30

Table 3. Previous (2017-18) dates and proposed (2018-2019) dates and bag and possession limits for ducks, coots, mergansers, and light geese (snow [including blue] and Ross' geese). The 2018-2019 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Year	First Phase	Second Phase	Leon County ¹	Falconry ²
2017-2018	Sat., Nov. 18 – Sun., Nov 26 ³ (Thanksgiving Nov. 23)	Sat., Dec. 9 – Sun., Jan. 28 ³ Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days: Sat/Sun., Feb. 3-4, 2018 ⁴	Thurs., Nov. 23 Fri., Nov. 24 Mon., Dec. 25 Tue., Dec. 26 Mon., Jan. 1 Tue., Jan. 2 Mon., Jan. 15	Nov. 3 – Nov. 12 Feb. 5 – Mar. 2
2018-2019	Sat., Nov. 17 – Sun., Nov 25 ³ (Thanksgiving Nov. 22)	Sat., Dec. 8 – Sun., Jan. 27 ³ Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days: Sat/Sun., Feb. 2-3, 2019 ⁴	Thurs., Nov. 22 Fri., Nov. 23 Mon., Dec. 24 Tue., Dec. 25 Mon., Dec. 31 Tue., Jan. 1 Mon., Jan. 21	Nov. 3 – Nov. 12 Feb. 4 – Mar. 1

¹In addition to Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

²Falconry dates presented are in addition to days available during regular season dates; Bag/Possession limits: ducks, coots, and light geese - 3/9, singly or in the aggregate.

³Bag/Possession limits: Ducks - 6/18. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous whistling-duck, 1 canvasback, 2 black ducks, 2 pintails, 2 redheads, 2 scaup, 3 wood ducks, 4 scoters, 4 eiders, 4 long-tailed ducks, and 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females). All other species of duck (except harlequin ducks) may be taken up to the 6-duck daily limit. Coots - 15/45. Mergansers - 5/15, only 2/6 of which may be hooded mergansers. Light geese - 15/none.

⁴Bag/Possession limits: same as above; plus, common moorhen - 15/45.

Table 4. Previous (2017-18) dates and proposed (2018-2019) dates and bag and possession limits for the Canada goose season. The 2018-2019 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Year	September Season	First Phase	Second Phase
2017-2018	Sept. 2-24	Sat., Nov. 18 – Sun., Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving Nov. 23)	Fri., Dec. 1 – Tue., Jan. 30, 2018
2018-2019 ¹	Sept. 1-30	Sat., Nov. 17 – Sun., Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving Nov. 22)	Sat., Dec. 1 – Wed., Jan. 30, 2019

¹Bag/Possession limits: 5/15