

Background Report
Summary of Changes to Migratory Bird Hunting Seasons, 2020-2021
Consent Agenda Item 2
May 14, 2020

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

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

There are no changes to federal frameworks for dove, rail, common moorhen, snipe, and woodcock seasons. Dates and bag/possession limits for the 2020-2021 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 2020 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 2020-2021 in Atlantic Flyway states, including Florida.

There are three changes. The first is the addition of two Veterans and Active Military waterfowl hunt days. This opportunity is a result of passage of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. The second is a change in the scoup bag limit to one bird for the first 40 days, followed by a two bird bag limit for the final 20 days of the regular season. This change is a result of species-specific harvest management strategies based on parameters such as breeding populations and habitat conditions. The third change reduces the falconry season for ducks and common moorhens by one day to compensate for the addition of the Veterans and Active Military waterfowl hunt days. 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 2020-2021 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 (2019-2020) dates and proposed (2020-2021) dates, bag and possession limits for seasons for migratory birds other than ducks and coots. The 2020-2021 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Species	2019-2020	2020-2021			
		Dates	Bag/Possession	Falconry Dates	Falconry Bag/Possession
Mourning Dove and White-winged Dove	Sept. 28 – Oct. 20 Nov. 9 – Dec. 1 Dec. 19 – Jan. 31	Sept. 26 – Oct. 18 Nov. 14 – Dec. 6 Dec. 19 – Jan. 31	15/45 ¹	Sept. 26 – Oct. 18 Nov. 14 – Dec. 6 Dec. 19 – Feb. 17	3/9
Rails	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	15/45 - Clapper Rail, King Rail; 25/75 - Virginia and Sora Rail	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	3/9
Common Moorhen	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	15/45	Sept. 1 – Dec. 13	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. 10 – Oct. 27 ² Nov. 11 – Feb. 18	Aug. 8 – Oct. 25 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 (2019) dates and proposed (2020) dates, bag and possession limits for the special September duck season. The 2020 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Species	2019	2020	Bag/ Possession
Wood duck and teal	Sept. 21-29	Sept. 19-27	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. 24-27

Table 3. Previous (2019-20) dates and proposed (2020-2021) dates and bag and possession limits for ducks, coots, mergansers, and light geese (snow [including blue] and Ross' geese). The 2020-2021 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Year	First Phase	Second Phase	Leon County ¹	Falconry ²
2019-2020	Nov. 23 – Dec. 1 ³	Dec. 7 – Jan. 26 ³ Youth Waterfowl Days: ⁴ Nov. 16 Feb. 9	Nov. 28	Nov. 3 – Nov. 12 Feb. 3 – 28
			Nov. 29	
			Dec. 24	
			Dec. 26	
			Dec. 31	
2020-2021	Nov. 21 – 29 ³	Dec. 12 – Jan. 31 ³ Youth Waterfowl Days: ⁴ Nov. 14 Feb. 13 Veteran's / Active Military Days: ⁴ Feb. 6-7	Jan. 2	Nov. 3 – Nov. 12 Feb. 8 – Mar. 4
			Jan. 20	
			Nov. 26	
			Nov. 27	
			Dec. 25	
			Dec. 31	
			Jan. 1	
Jan. 18				

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, 1 pintail, 1 scaup from November 21-29, 2020 and December 12, 2020 - January 11, 2021, 2 scaup from January 12-31, 2021, 2 black ducks, 2 redheads, 2 mallards (no more than 1 of which may be female), 3 wood ducks, 4 scoters, 4 eiders, 4 long-tailed ducks, and 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 (2019-20) dates and proposed (2020-2021) dates and bag and possession limits for the Canada goose season. The 2020-2021 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Year	September Season	First Phase	Second Phase
2019-2020 ¹	Sept. 7-29	Nov. 23 – Dec. 1	Dec. 1 – Jan. 30
2020-2021 ¹	Sept. 5-27	Nov. 21 – 29	Dec. 1 – Jan. 30

¹Bag/Possession limits: 5/15