

Background Report
Summary of Changes to Migratory Bird Hunting Seasons, 2017-2018
Consent Agenda Item 3
April 19, 2017

The proposed federal frameworks for all migratory bird seasons for 2017-2018 were advertised in the Federal Register in early February; the finalized frameworks will be advertised no later than April 1.

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 dove, rail, moorhen, snipe, and woodcock seasons. Dates and bag/possession limits for the 2017-2018 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 2017 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 2017-2018 in Atlantic Flyway states, including Florida.

There are two changes to the species' bag limits: the daily bag limit for northern pintails is reduced from two to one and the daily bag limit for black ducks is increased from one to two. These changes are 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 2017-2018 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 (2016-2017) dates and proposed (2017-2018) dates, bag and possession limits for seasons for migratory birds other than ducks and coots. The 2017-2018 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Species	2016-2017	2017-2018			
		Dates	Bag/Possession	Falconry Dates	Falconry Bag/Possession
Mourning Dove and White-winged Dove	Sept. 24 – Oct. 24 ¹ Nov. 12 – Dec. 5 Dec. 12 – Jan. 15	Sept. 23 – Oct. 23 ¹ Nov. 11 – Dec. 4 Dec. 12 – Jan. 15	15/45 ²	Sept. 23 – Oct. 23 ¹ Nov. 11 – Dec. 4 Dec. 12 – Feb. 1	3/9
Rails and Common Moorhen	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. 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. 13 – Oct. 30 ³ Nov. 11 – Feb. 18	Aug. 12 – Oct. 29 ³ Nov. 11 – Feb. 18	None	N/A	N/A

¹ Shooting hours: noon until sunset.

² The daily bag limit of doves is mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate.

³ Saturdays and Sundays only.

Table 2. Previous (2016) dates and proposed (2017) dates, bag and possession limits for the special September duck season. The 2016 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Species	2016	2017	Bag/ Possession
Wood duck and teal	Sept. 17-25	Sept. 16-24	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. 21-24

Table 3. Previous (2016-17) dates and proposed (2017-2018) dates and bag and possession limits for ducks, coots, mergansers, and light geese (snow [including blue] and Ross' geese). The 2017-2018 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Year	First Phase	Second Phase	Leon County ¹	Falconry ²
2016-2017	Sat., Nov. 19 – Sun., Nov 27 (Thanksgiving Nov. 24)	Sat., Dec. 10 – Sun., Jan. 29 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days: Sat/Sun., Feb. 4-5, 2017	Thurs., Nov. 24 Fri., Nov. 25 Mon., Dec. 26 Mon., Jan. 2 Mon., Jan. 16	Nov. 3 – Nov. 12 Feb. 6 – Mar. 3
2017-2018	Sat., Nov. 18 – Sun., Nov 26 ³ (Thanksgiving Nov. 23)	Sat., Dec. 9 – Sun., Jan. 28 ³ Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days: ⁴ Sat/Sun., Feb. 3-4, 2018	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

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 pintail, 1 canvasback, 2 black ducks, 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 (2016-17) dates and proposed (2017-2018) dates and bag and possession limits for the Canada goose season. The 2017-2018 season dates and bag and possession limits reflect federal frameworks.

Year	September Season	First Phase	Second Phase
2016-2017	Sept. 3-25	Sat., Nov. 19 – Sun., Nov. 27 (Thanksgiving Nov. 24)	Thurs., Dec. 1 – Mon., Jan. 30, 2017
2017-2018 ¹	Sept. 2-24	Sat., Nov. 18 – Sun., Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving Nov. 23)	Thurs., Dec. 1 – Mon., Jan. 30, 2018

¹Bag/Possession limits: 5/15