

Proposed 2025-26 Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons

Presented to the Commission on Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

03/19/2025

Mourning and White-winged Doves (Statewide):

Recommendation: Sept. 1 – Sept. 30

Oct. 18 – Nov. 16

Dec. 27 – Jan. 25

Bag Limit 15; Possession Limit 45

Justification: Weekends are prioritized while providing evenly split early, mid, and late season opportunity in 30-day segments.

Framework: 90 days between September 1 and January 31. Seasons may be split into a maximum of 3 segments.

Canada Geese (Early Season):

Recommendation: September 1 – September 30

Bag Limit 5; Possession Limit 15

Justification: This season structure is identical to last year, allowing early season opportunity which targets resident Canada geese and potentially reduces human-wildlife conflicts.

Framework: 107 total days with a 5-bird daily bag limit. Seasons may be held between September 1 and February 15 and may be split into 4 segments. See below for the remainder of the Canada goose seasons.

Teal (Early Season):

Recommendation: September 20 – September 28

Bag Limit 6; Possession Limit 18

Justification: This season structure is shorter than last year due to reduced teal populations. Season overlaps Canada goose and rail seasons and maximizes weekends as late as possible in September.

Framework: 9 consecutive days between September 1 and September 30.

Rails and Gallinules (Soras, Virginia Rails, Clapper Rails, King Rails; Common and Purple Gallinules):

Recommendation: September 1 – September 30

November 22 – December 31

Sora and Virginia Rail Bag Limit 25 singly or in aggregate; Possession Limit 75

Clapper Rail and King Rail Bag Limit 15 singly or in aggregate; Possession Limit 45

Common and Purple Gallinule Bag Limit 15; Possession Limit 45

Justification: This season structure is the same as last year, providing opportunity for early season hunting which overlaps the early teal and Canada goose seasons, and provides late season opportunity overlapping a portion of the duck season.

Framework: 70 days between September 1 and January 31. The season may be split into 2 segments.

Snipe:

Recommendation: November 14 - February 28

Bag Limit 8; Possession Limit 24

Justification: This season structure the same as last year, with simple season dates, and occurs as late as possible within the allowable framework.

Framework: 107 days between September 1 and February 28. The season may be split into 2 segments.

Woodcock:

Recommendation: December 18 - January 31

Bag Limit 3; Possession Limit 9

Justification: This season structure is the same as last year, with simple season dates, and occurs as late as possible within the allowable framework.

Framework: 45 days between the Saturday nearest September 22 and January 31. The season may be split into 2 segments.

Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots:

Recommendation: November 28 – November 30

December 6 – January 31

Justification: This season structure prioritizes weekends, extends as late as allowed by the current federal framework, and uses the maximum number of days allowed. This provides most opportunity late in the season when waterfowl numbers typically peak for Mississippi.

Bag Limits: The duck daily bag limit is a total of 6 ducks, including no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females), 1 mottled duck, 2 black ducks, 3 pintails, 3 wood ducks, 2 canvasbacks, and 2 redheads. The daily bag limit for scaup is 1 scaup per day Nov. 28 - Nov. 30 and Dec. 6 - 17; and is 2 scaup per day Dec. 18 - Jan. 31.

The merganser daily bag limit is a total of 5 mergansers, only 2 of which may be hooded mergansers.

The coot daily bag limit is 15.

Possession Limit: 3 times the daily bag limit.

Framework: 60 days between the Saturday nearest September 24 and January 31. The season may be split into 3 segments. Mississippi currently has 1 statewide zone for ducks, mergansers, and coots.

Youth, Veteran, and Active Military Waterfowl Days:

Recommendation: February 7 – 8

Justification: States are allowed to include veterans and active-duty military personnel for two special waterfowl hunting days per season, and these days are allowed to overlap with the special youth waterfowl days. These late season days provide opportunity when Mississippi's waterfowl populations and wetland habitat availability are both typically high.

Framework: 2 days outside of the regular duck season on weekends or holidays. Bag and possession limits, as well as shooting hours are the same as during the regular season.

Geese: Canada, Snow, Blue, Ross's, White-fronted, and Brant

Recommendation: November 14 – November 30

December 6 – January 31

Justification: This season structure allows early season opportunity overlapping Thanksgiving week and then follows the duck season. Goose season ends on the same day as duck season to allow the Light Goose Conservation Order to begin the following day. All regular goose seasons are concurrent for simplicity.

Canada Goose Bag Limit 5; Possession Limit 9

Snow, Blue, and Ross's Goose Bag Limit 20; No Possession Limit

White-fronted Goose Bag Limit 3; Possession Limit 9

Brant Bag Limit 1; Possession Limit 3

Frameworks: For Canada geese, states may select seasons not to exceed 107 days with a 5-bird daily bag limit. Canada goose seasons may be held between September 1 and February 15 and may be split into 4 segments. For

Snow, Blue, and Ross's geese, states may select 107 days between September 1 and February 15. For White-fronted geese, states may select a season for white-fronted geese not to exceed 74 days with 3 geese daily, or 88 days with 2 geese daily, or 107 days with 1 goose daily between September 1 and February 15. For Brant, states may select a season not to exceed 70 days with 2 brant daily, or 107 days with 1 brant daily with outside dates the same as for Canada geese; alternately, states may include brant in an aggregate goose bag limit with either Canada geese, white-fronted geese, or dark geese.

Light Goose Conservation Order

Recommendation: October 1 – November 13

December 1 – December 5

February 1 – February 6

February 9 – March 31

Justification: Maximum allowed opportunity outside of regular waterfowl hunting seasons.

Bag Limit: No limit.

Possession Limit: No limit.

Framework: Allowed October 1 – March 31, but cannot be open when any waterfowl hunting season is open.