

September 2016 - March 2017

MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING GUIDE

Includes season dates for woodcock, snipe, rails, and crows



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Cover artwork 2017 Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp © Mark Thone

This guide provides a summary of the most pertinent laws and regulations concerning the hunting of migratory birds. No attempt has been made to employ the exact wording of laws and regulations, nor to provide their complete listing. For legal purposes, the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and the General Statutes of Connecticut should be consulted.

New for 2016-2017

Legislation (Public Act 16-27) that took effect July 1, 2016, changes the requirements to hunt migratory birds (waterfowl, woodcock, snipe, rails, and crows). The \$13 Connecticut Duck Stamp has been merged with the \$4 Harvest Information Permit (HIP) into a single Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, which will cost \$17. This new, single stamp will be **required for anyone hunting waterfowl, rails, snipe, woodcock, and crows**. Anyone who purchased a 2016 Connecticut Duck Stamp and/or HIP permit (e.g., a 2016 CT Duck Stamp and HIP permit for hunting Canada geese, or a HIP permit for hunting woodcock) prior to July 1, 2016, will not be required to purchase the new, single stamp for the remainder of 2016. Those who have not yet purchased the stamp for the upcoming migratory bird seasons must purchase the new, single Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp for \$17. The biggest changes with this legislation are that crow hunters must now purchase the Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, and ALL migratory bird hunters, regardless of age, must have a Connecticut Migratory Bird Stamp. Hunters under the age of 16 do not need to purchase a Federal Duck Stamp to hunt waterfowl. All of the proceeds from the Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp will continue to go into a dedicated account that is to be used solely for wetland habitat management and acquisition or for improving hunter access. The final piece of this new legislation is the creation of a 3-day, out-of-state (non-resident) bird hunting license. This license will cost \$35 and allow out-of-state hunters to hunt migratory and resident (non-migratory) game birds for 3 consecutive days. Out-of-state hunters will still need to purchase either a Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp or a Connecticut Resident (Non-migratory) Game Bird Conservation Stamp, depending on what species they intend to hunt.

The biggest change in harvest regulations for 2016-2017 is the reduction in the sea duck season from 107 days to 60 days. Sea duck populations are declining and the Atlantic Flyway is hoping to reduce overall sea duck harvest by 25%. Reducing the season length to 60 days and reducing the bag limit from 7 birds to 5 birds will hopefully achieve that goal Flyway-wide. Connecticut Wildlife Division biologists have been concerned about sea ducks for some time and, therefore, reduced the state's sea duck bag limit to 5 many years ago. With this change, there also is a change in the composition of the bag, with no more than 4 of any species (eider, long-tailed duck, scoter) allowed in the total bag.

The Atlantic brant season will be 50 days with a 2-bird daily bag limit. Although production continues its recent poor trend, the 2016 Midwinter Waterfowl Survey (upon which the season is set) indicated a much higher than expected population level. Thus, the Wildlife Division believes that a 50-day season is in concert with offering opportunity while still being conservative in the harvest.

Report Violations

*Poaching is stealing! Shooting before or after hours, overbagging, shooting out of season, and rallying birds are all unethical and illegal hunting behaviors. If you see violations, report them to DEEP's 24-hour hotline at **1-800-842-HELP (4357)**. All calls are confidential.*

September and Late Canada Goose Seasons

The Special September and late Canada goose seasons will again be offered.

The early season in the North Zone will begin on September 1 and run through September 30. In the South Zone, the season will begin on September 13 and end on September 30. The daily bag limit for the early season continues to be 15, with a possession limit of 45. Shooting hours for the September season are to ½-hour past sunset. Unplugged shotguns are legal to use during the September goose season.

The late goose season is from January 25, 2017 to February 15, 2017 in the South Zone only (east of the Quinnipiac River). Goose hunters are reminded that the AFRP zone encompasses the shoreline west of the Quinnipiac River and that season runs to February 15, 2017 also. No special permit is required; however, all waterfowl hunters must have a federal Duck Stamp and a Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp (which includes the HIP permit as of July 1, 2016).

Statewide Youth Waterfowl Hunter Training Days

Connecticut will hold 2 statewide youth waterfowl hunter training days on **October 1, 2016 and November 5, 2016**. Participants must be between 12-15 years of age, possess a valid small game junior hunting license and a Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp (which includes the HIP permit as of July 1, 2016) and be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years of age. Adults must possess a valid hunting license; however, they are not allowed to carry a firearm. Ducks, geese, mergansers, and coots may be hunted. Bag limits and shooting hours are the same as for the regular duck and goose hunting seasons.

The Connecticut Waterfowl Association (CWA) sponsors a Waterfowl Hunter Mentoring Program that pairs up experienced volunteer mentors with youths and adult novice waterfowl hunters. The goal is to encourage new participants in this great sport who will then appreciate and help conserve our waterfowl resources. The mentors also have the opportunity to give back to the resource they cherish. Mentors of youths are able to enjoy all aspects of waterfowling (except shooting) during the two Youth Waterfowl Hunter Training Days offered each season when only youths can hunt. More information on this program can be found on CWA's website at www.ctwaterfowlers.org. Information about Junior Hunter Training Days are on the DEEP website at www.ct.gov/deep/JuniorHunter.

Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp

The cover art on this guide is the painting that won the 2016 Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp Art Contest – it will be featured on the 2017 Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp. The painting of canvasbacks at the mouth of the Thames River was created by Mark Thone, a Minnesota artist with a passion for the outdoors. His parents introduced him to many outdoor activities, including waterfowl hunting, at an early age. A gift of paints and brushes soon turned into an interest in painting wildlife. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, Mark painted for enjoyment while he worked in advertising and graphic arts.

It was in 2001 that a Minnesota Waterfowl Association member noticed one of Mark's paintings while it was being framed. One thing led to another and the Association made it their 35th Anniversary print. The print quickly sold out, making it one of their most popular selling prints. In 2006, Mark also was chosen by Turn In Poachers (TIP) Minnesota to work with Football Hall of Fame Coach Bud Grant on a special 25th anniversary print. Mark's artwork has placed in the top group

in numerous state stamp competitions, and he was recently the winner for the 2016 Nevada Duck Stamp. When Mike saw a picture of the New London Ledge Lighthouse, he was inspired to paint a group of canvasbacks flying by the lighthouse as his entry for the Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp Contest. "There is nothing quite like the sight and sound of 'cans' flying by you when you're out on the water ... I'm honored to have this painting appear on the (2017) Connecticut stamp," said Mark. He continues to refine his painting style, preferring acrylics for the detailed stamp competitions, but he also works in watercolor, oils, and even does sculptures. For more information on the 2017 Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp Print or other art, please contact Mark at www.artbymarkthone.com.

All waterfowl hunters, including 12- to 15-year-olds, are required to purchase and carry the current Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, and hunters 16 years and older are required to purchase and carry the Federal Duck Stamp. However, conservationists, stamp collectors, and others also purchase stamps in support of wetland habitat conservation. Revenue from the sale of Migratory Bird Conservation Stamps is a major source of funding for wetland restoration projects in our state. Since 1994, Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp funds have been used to restore and enhance over 3,145 acres of wetlands, encompassing nearly 50 sites, mostly on state-owned wildlife management areas. Funds also have been used to purchase specialized large equipment to conduct extensive marsh restoration work, particularly along the coast.

Proceeds (98%) from the federal Duck Stamps go into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, which supports the purchase of wetlands for inclusion into the National Wildlife Refuge System. In Connecticut, 39% of the acreage of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge was purchased with federal Duck Stamp funds. Federal Duck Stamps can be purchased at local post offices for \$25 each.

The Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp (which now includes the HIP permit) can be purchased for \$17 each wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold: participating town clerks and retail agents, DEEP License and Revenue (79 Elm Street, Hartford), and through the online Sportsmen's Licensing System (www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing). (The Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp will be \$9 for hunters aged 12-17 years old.) Upon request, stamps can be sent through the mail. The 2016 Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, which expires on December 31, 2016, features Atlantic brant. The 2017 Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, with Mark Thone's canvasback painting, will be valid from January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017.

Falconry Seasons

Falconers possessing valid permits (state and federal falconry permits, Connecticut small game license, Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, and federal Duck Stamp) may take migratory game birds during any established migratory game bird season. Allowable species for falconry are: ducks, coots, mergansers, and sea ducks (see season dates on pages 8-9), as well as woodcock, snipe, and rails (see season dates on page 10). Species-specific bag limits do not apply to falconry take. However, the daily bag limit for falconry is 3 migratory game birds in aggregate per day and 6 in possession. The daily and possession limit may contain any species that is legal during any regulated firearms migratory game bird season. The falconry bag limit is not in addition to gun limits.

Hunter Ethics

As Connecticut becomes more urbanized, a smaller percentage of our population participates in hunting and is familiar with the traditions and values associated with hunting. The image that individual hunters portray to the non-hunting community is often the image that is placed upon the hunting community as a whole. Thus, the way hunters present themselves to the public is very important to the future of the hunting tradition.

Due to the high visibility areas that some waterfowlers use, particularly along the coast, it is imperative that hunters maintain the highest integrity and remain responsible while out in the field. To conduct yourself in an ethical and responsible manner, you should:

1. Respect property and landowners. Always obtain permission to hunt on private land – this is a legal requirement in Connecticut.
2. Know and obey the laws.
3. Hunt safely. Shoot in a safe direction. Treat all guns as loaded. Always dress appropriately and be prepared for changes in the weather.
4. Avoid potential conflicts with non-hunters.
5. Respect the environment and wildlife.
6. Don't "skybust." Calling waterfowl in to appropriate gun range is one of the greatest challenges and rewards of waterfowling.
7. Don't shoot ducks on the water.
8. If a nearby hunting party is working birds, don't call those birds to you.

Waterfowl Hunting in Urban Settings

Waterfowl hunting along the Connecticut coast is a long-running, cherished tradition. It has taken place for many years in close proximity to areas of high human use. For the most part, there have been very few conflicts. However, in recent years, there have been some negative encounters between waterfowl hunters and the non-hunting public. Waterfowl hunters must realize that when hunting in coastal areas in the public eye, they must uphold the highest standards of legal and ethical hunting behavior. Remember that **hunting is a privilege, not a right**. The hunting privilege that **you** enjoy could be **curtailed due to the unethical and unsportsmenlike actions of a few hunters**.

If you choose to hunt in areas in the public eye, you must exercise unquestioned ethical hunting practices, avoid conflicts with other users of the resource, and use common sense. If you don't, the alternative is clear...hunting opportunities will be greatly reduced.

How Annual Waterfowl Regulations Are Set

The annual process of setting migratory gamebird hunting regulations in the United States begins in January and ends in September and is based on a system of resource monitoring, data analyses, and regulation development. Hunting regulations for ducks, geese, woodcock, mourning doves, and other migratory gamebirds are set annually and based on the population status of each species. Estimates of both the number of birds and hunting harvests are needed to monitor and ensure appropriate and sustainable populations of each species.

Each year, surveys, such as the waterfowl breeding pair, woodcock singing ground,

and dove call count, are conducted. The results of these various surveys are used to assess the populations. In addition, leg banding of various waterfowl species and others, such as mourning doves, is used to determine harvest and survival rates for use in harvest and population models. Information on hunter numbers and harvests is obtained from the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Habitat conditions also are annually assessed across the waterfowl breeding ranges of North America.

All these data are analyzed annually by the biologists of each of the 4 Flyway Councils (Atlantic, Mississippi, Central, and Pacific). The councils develop waterfowl and other migratory gamebird hunting regulation proposals, which are, in turn, submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for evaluation and approval or denial.

After extensive public review, the USFWS Regulations Committee (SRC) sets migratory bird hunting regulations by establishing the frameworks, or outside limits, for season lengths, bag limits, and areas for migratory bird hunting. For example, the current duck hunting season frameworks in the Atlantic Flyway are a 60-day season with a 6 bird daily bag limit that must occur between the Saturday nearest September 24 and the last Sunday in January. Individual states may then choose their hunting seasons from within those frameworks. States can be more restrictive than the allowable framework, but never more liberal.

On the heels of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (2013), regulations for hunting seasons are now based on data from the previous year, not the current year. Canada has been setting duck hunting regulations in this manner for many years, and woodcock hunting seasons are currently set in this manner. Movement towards this system will simplify the annual regulations process. Also, because of many years of monitoring and research, the waterfowl management community is confident that moving in this direction will cause little risk to the resource.

Regardless of what data are used, the setting of waterfowl hunting seasons and regulations is a balancing act. Hunters request different season dates, bag limits, shooting hours, etc., depending on the species they want to pursue and when they want to pursue them. Hunters appear to want maximum hunting opportunity. DEEP's challenge is to balance these demands with the ability of waterfowl populations to remain healthy over the long-term. This is never easy and will likely become more difficult in the future.

Explaining Migrant Canada Goose Seasons

Three distinct populations of Canada geese are present in Connecticut during fall, winter, and early spring – the Atlantic Population (AP), North Atlantic Population (NAP), and Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (AFRP). The AP nests in northern Quebec and winters from Massachusetts southward to North Carolina, although primarily in the Chesapeake region of the Atlantic Flyway. The NAP breeds in the Canadian Maritime Provinces and western Greenland, and winters primarily in southern New England and eastern Long Island. The AFRP geese breed throughout Connecticut, but are at their highest densities in the more urbanized areas of the state where hunting exposure is low.

As AFRP goose numbers began to expand throughout Connecticut, so did the number of nuisance complaints. As such, Connecticut was the first state in the nation to establish a season specifically designed to harvest AFRP geese while ensuring a minimal harvest of migrant Canada geese. This special late season began in 1986 and continues today, with minor modifications, in the South Zone. A similar

September season was established in 1996 to target AFRP geese before migrant geese arrive in the state. These special seasons are monitored through the analysis of band recovery data and neck collar observations.

The status of migrant goose populations drives the regular goose season regulations in the Atlantic Flyway. In 1995, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) closed the regular Canada goose season in the Atlantic Flyway because the AP breeding pair estimate declined to such low levels that it was evident that the AP could not support any sport harvest. The AP season was closed in Connecticut until 1999. The presence of large numbers of NAP geese in New England led to the initiation, in 1998, of migrant Canada goose hunting once again in Connecticut. This season was only offered in certain areas of the state and targeted NAP geese. 1998 marked the first year that the USFWS separated the AP from the NAP during regular goose hunting seasons. In Connecticut, band return data and neck collar observations indicate that AP geese occur primarily in Litchfield County and western Hartford County, whereas NAP geese tend to be found east of the Connecticut River, predominantly in Windham and New London Counties. Thus, due to the presence of 3 different goose populations in Connecticut, the state has been divided into 3 goose hunting zones, each with different regulations, based on the status of the population and the overall management goal for each population. As data are compiled and analyzed, changes are made accordingly.

Access Restrictions Due to Heightened Security

Waterfowl hunters are reminded that restrictions are in place in many areas due to heightened security concerns. Of note, per the United States Coast Guard:

1. No boat may be anchored within 25 yards of any bridge along any navigable waterway.
2. There is a 700-yard security zone around the Millstone Power Plant in Niantic.
3. No boats are allowed within 1,500 feet of the downstream side of the Shepaug and Lake Housatonic Dams (Derby/Shelton); 700 feet of the downstream side of the Stevenson Dam (Oxford/Monroe); 300 feet of the downstream side of the Bleachery Dam (New Milford); and 300 feet upstream of all these dams.

Avian Influenza

What is it? Avian influenza is a naturally occurring virus. Type A viruses (referred to as avian influenza or “bird flu”) cause infection in birds, humans, and some other mammals, such as pigs. There are 144 identified subtypes (strains) of Type A influenza. Wild birds, especially shorebirds and waterfowl, are the natural host for all the known strains of Type A influenza viruses. Most strains of Type A influenza are low pathenogenic. Typically, wild birds do not become sick when they are infected with avian influenza A viruses, and humans are not affected either. Sometimes, however, the virus is introduced into a new host, such as domestic poultry, and evolves into a more lethal (high pathenogenic) strain.

The ongoing outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5 in the United States is now the largest such outbreak in the country's history. HPAI has been confirmed in wild, captive, commercial, and backyard birds in 21 states since December 2014. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) has confirmed 223 detections of HPAI H5 in backyard and commercial poultry in 15 states, with over 48 million birds affected

as of early July 2015. No new outbreaks have been reported. DEEP, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Department of Agriculture continue to conduct passive surveillance for HPAI throughout the state on waterfowl and poultry. In 2015 and early 2016, over 300 samples were collected from ducks throughout the state. No HPAI was detected. If hunters observed dead waterfowl, particularly Canada geese which are very susceptible to the HPAI strains, please report those on the DEEP website at www.cfwwildbirdmortalityreporting.ct.gov, or by calling 860-424-3011.

Should hunters be concerned? The highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), referred to in the media as bird flu, is not easily transmitted to animals other than birds. It has resulted in massive mortality in commercial turkeys and laying chickens in the western and midwestern U.S. Regardless of the fact that transmission has not occurred between wild birds and humans, hunters should take basic precautionary measures, if they do not already, when handling harvested waterfowl:

1. Do not handle birds that are obviously sick or birds found dead.
2. Keep your game birds cool, clean, and dry.
3. Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning your birds.
4. Use rubber gloves when cleaning game.
5. Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol wipes after dressing birds.
6. Clean all tools and surfaces immediately afterward; use hot soapy water, then disinfect with a 10% chlorine bleach solution.
7. Cook game meat thoroughly (165°F) to kill disease organisms.

Contaminants in Waterfowl

Studies conducted in Pennsylvania and New York have shown that some samples from mergansers, especially common and red-breasted, had high levels of contaminants, including PCBs. Mergansers feed primarily on fish that may concentrate contaminants. Other studies have shown that diving ducks (e.g., scaup, bufflehead, goldeneye) also may have high levels of contaminants; dabbling ducks (e.g., mallards, black ducks, teal, wigeon, gadwall) generally have lower levels; and wood ducks and Canada geese are the least contaminated.

Many sportsmen are aware of health advisories regarding high PCB concentrations in ducks from Massachusetts (Canada geese were **not** included in those advisories). Sportsmen and their families that want to minimize any potential exposure to contaminants should limit their consumption of mergansers and other waterfowl and remove the skin and fat before cooking. This consideration is especially important for pregnant women due to the effects of PCBs on reproduction.

Removing the skin from the breasts of waterfowl substantially reduces the amount of contaminants. If birds are stuffed, the stuffing should not be consumed. Drippings should not be used for gravy. If you would like more information regarding the health effects of PCBs, call the Connecticut Department of Public Health at 860-509-7742.

Open Waterfowl Season

Changes from 2015 are

(All Dates Inclusive -

NORTH ZONE: The portion of the state north of Interstate 95; *SOUTH ZONE*:

SHOOTING HOURS: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, **except for the**

<i>SPECIES</i>	<i>SEASON</i>	<i>NORTH ZONE</i>
DUCKS, MERGANSERS, and COOTS	Early Late	Oct. 8 - Oct. Nov. 10 - Jan
SEA DUCKS (Scoter, Oldsquaw, Eider) ^C		
CANADA GEESE ^E	September Early Season	Sept. 1 - Sep
REGULAR SEASONS	AP Unit ^F	Oct. 10 - Oct Nov. 23 - Jan
	AFRP Unit ^G	Oct. 10 - Oct Nov. 11 - No Dec. 10 - Feb
	NAP-H Unit ^H	Oct. 8 - Oct Nov. 10 - Jan
Special Late Season		
SNOW GEESE (includes BLUE GEESE)		Oct. 1 - Jan. Feb. 21 - Ma
BRANT		Nov. 14 - Jan

^A Includes all species of ducks, with the following restrictions: MALLARD: daily limit 4 and may include limit: 2. REDHEAD: daily limit 2. PINTAIL: daily limit 2. CANVASBACK: daily limit 2. HOODED HARLEQUIN DUCKS IS CLOSED.

^B MERGANSERS ARE INCLUDED IN THE TOTAL DUCK BAG OF 6.

^C In coastal waters and streams seaward of the first upstream bridge.

^D **Daily bag limit for sea ducks may include no more than 4 SCOTERS, 4 OLD SQUAW, 4 EIDER**

^E Daily bag limit includes white-fronted geese.

^F AP Unit: Litchfield County and the portion of Hartford County, west of a line beginning at the Massachusetts line, Hartford, and then extending south along I-91 to its intersection with the Hartford/Middlesex County

^G AFRP Unit: Starting at the intersection of I-95 and the waters of the Quinnipiac River, excluding the portion on I-691 to the Hartford County line, and encompassing the rest of New Haven County and Fairfield

^H NAP-H Unit: All of the rest of the state not included in the AP or AFRP descriptions above.

^I That portion of the South Zone east of the Quinnipiac River.

^J There is no possession limit for snow geese.

Seasons and Bag Limits

highlighted in bold

(Except Sundays)

E: The portion of the state south of Interstate 95.

September Goose Season, when shooting hours end ½-hour past sunset.

<i>ZONE</i>	<i>SOUTH ZONE</i>	<i>DAILY BAG LIMIT</i>	<i>POSSESSION LIMIT</i>
Oct. 15	Oct. 8 - Oct. 11	DUCKS 6 ^{A,B}	18 ^{A,B}
Oct. 10	Nov. 16 - Jan. 20	COOTS 15	45
	Nov. 12 - Jan. 20	5 ^D	15 ^D
Oct. 30	Sept. 13 - Sept. 30	15	45
Oct. 13		3	9
Oct. 14			
Oct. 13	Oct. 10 - Oct. 13	5	15
Nov. 30	Nov. 11 - Nov. 30		
Dec. 15	Dec. 10 - Feb. 15		
Oct. 15	Oct. 8 - Oct. 15	3	9
Oct. 21	Nov. 10 - Jan. 21		
	Jan. 25 - Feb. 15 ^I	5	15
Oct. 14	Oct. 1 - Dec. 1	25	J
Mar. 10	Jan. 7 - Mar. 10		
Nov. 10	Nov. 24 - Jan. 20	2	6

include only 2 HENS. WOOD DUCK: daily limit 3. BLACK DUCK: daily limit 1. SCAUP: daily limit 2. MERGANSER: daily limit 2. Possession limits are three times the daily bag limit. SEASON FOR

R, 12 in possession.

Massachusetts border in Suffield and extending south along Route 159 to its intersection with I-91 in the western line.

east shore, north on the Quinnipiac River to its intersection with I-91, north on I-91 to I-691, west to the Connecticut County in its entirety.

NEW for 2016-2017: The Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp is required to hunt for woodcock, snipe, rails, and crows.

Woodcock and Snipe Seasons

Oct. 22 – Nov. 19 and Nov. 21 – Dec. 6, 2016

	Daily Limit	Possession Limit
American Woodcock	3	9
Wilson's Snipe	8	24

Rail Season

Sept. 1 – Nov. 9, 2016

	Daily Limit	Possession Limit
Virginia & Sora	25	75
Clapper & King*	10	30

* Only 1 of the daily bag limit may be a king rail

Shooting hours for woodcock, snipe, and rail seasons: One-half hour before sunrise until sunset.

Crow Season

Crow hunting allowed only on certain days:

Aug. 13 - Oct. 7, 2016:	Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays
Oct. 15 - Nov. 30, 2016	Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays
Jan. 9 - March 25, 2017	Mondays through Saturdays

Shooting hours for crows: One-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset. **On Oct. 15, 2016, legal hunting starts at 7:00 AM.**

Report Waterfowl Bands

Reporting waterfowl bands is crucial for management decisions. Leg band return data help managers track waterfowl movements, timing of these movements, harvest rates, and other important information. Bands and other markers, such as neck collars, can be reported at www.reportband.gov. When you report band recoveries, you will receive immediate feedback on where the bird was initially banded and can print a Certificate of Appreciation. Bands can also be reported by calling a toll-free number, 1-800-327-BAND. Operators are available Mon.-Fri., from 7:00 AM-4:30 PM, with voice mail after hours and on weekends. This number should only be used to report bands. (**Please note:** *The 800 number will soon be phased out. Hunters should start getting used to using the online reporting at www.reportband.gov.*) A mobile application is now available for band reporting in the field.

Federal Regulations

The material below is only a summary. A more detailed summary of the federal regulations can be found on the DEEP website at www.ct.gov/dep/hunting. Each hunter should also consult the actual federal regulations which may be found in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 20. In addition to state regulations, the following federal rules apply to the taking, possession, shipping, transporting, and storing of migratory game birds.

Restrictions. Unless specifically authorized for a special season, no person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance.
- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler which is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
- From a sink box (a low floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of water).
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with involvement of both legs, usually due to disease or injury to the spinal cord.
- From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat, unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress therefrom ceased. However, crippled ducks in tidal waters seaward of the first upstream bridge may be taken under power.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame, or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- By the use of recorded or electronically amplified bird calls or sounds, or electronically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds.
- By driving, rallying, or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or sailboat to put them in the range of hunters.
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt, or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area where a person knows or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait.

Closed Season. No person shall take migratory game birds during the closed season.

Shooting Hours. No person shall take migratory game birds except during the hours open to shooting as prescribed.

Daily Bag Limit. No person shall take in any one day more than one daily bag limit.

Field Possession Limit. No person shall possess more than one daily bag limit while in the field or while returning from the field to one's car, hunting camp, home, etc.

Wanton Waste. All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.

Tagging. No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information: 1) The hunter's signature; 2) The hunter's address; 3) The total number of birds involved, by species; and 4) The dates such birds were killed.

No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are properly tagged.

Possession of Live Birds. Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

Dressing. No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one fully feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported from the field to one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility.

Shipment. No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

Importation. For information regarding the importation of migratory game birds killed in another country, hunters should consult Title 50, CFR, 20.61-20.66. One fully feathered wing must remain attached to all migratory game birds being transported between the port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility. No person shall import migratory game birds belonging to another person.

Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. The law requires that waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older must carry on their person a valid federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) signed in ink across the face. A federal duck stamp is **not** required to hunt woodcock, snipe, coot, rail, or gallinule.

Dual Violation. Violation of state migratory bird regulations is also a violation of federal regulations.

Reference. Federal regulations related to migratory game birds are located in Title 50, CFR, Part 20.

Caution. More restrictive regulations may apply to national wildlife refuges open to public hunting. For information, contact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at 413-253-8274.

Connecticut Regulations

1. While hunting migratory game birds, all hunters must have valid Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp authorization on their license or have in their possession a CT Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp signed in ink across the face of the stamp. A stamp **IS REQUIRED** to hunt waterfowl, woodcock, snipe, rails, and crows.
2. Only the following shot shall be used for waterfowl hunting: (1) non-toxic steel shot no larger than BB steel, or (2) any other federally-approved non-toxic shot type, such as bismuth-tin alloy, tungsten iron, tungsten polymer, tungsten matrix, or tungsten-nickel-iron (Hevishot) shot no larger than #2. No person may possess lead shot while waterfowl hunting.
3. Hunting, shooting, or carrying of loaded firearms within 500 feet of any building occupied by people or domestic animals or used for storage of flammable material, or within 250 feet of such buildings when waterfowl hunting in tidal areas from land shooting positions or from floating blinds anchored adjacent to land or from rock positions, is prohibited, unless written permission from lesser distances is obtained from the owner and carried. Landowners, their spouses, and lineal descendants are exempt from this restriction, providing any building involved is their own.
4. Shooting toward any person, building, or domestic animal when within range is prohibited.
5. All waterfowl hunting on state-controlled lands and water of Great Island, in Old Lyme, and Ragged Rock, in Old Saybrook, shall be from temporary waterfowl hunting blinds only, except that cripples may be recovered by shooting within the area open to hunting.
6. Boats left unattended at DEEP lands must be marked so that identification of the owner can be made.
7. No person shall kill or wound any waterfowl without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird. Any bird which is killed or wounded and not retrieved shall count in the daily bag total.
8. A hunting party shall include no more than six individuals, with a minimum distance of 100 yards between parties.

9. No person may construct or place any permanent blind or structure for hunting of waterfowl on state-controlled lands or waters.

Local Regulations

DEEP has closed certain areas to waterfowl hunting or imposed additional restrictions at some sites. These actions are taken when DEEP finds that the physical setting of a particular locality presents an unreasonable risk that hunters may violate the regulations regarding minimum distances to dwellings or the regulations regarding shooting toward dwellings or people. Become familiar with these local sites and always use good judgment when hunting near any populated area. Maps of these closure areas can be found at:

www.depdata.ct.gov/wildlife/maps/CTWaterfowlClosures.htm and are available upon request at 860-424-3011. **Just because an area is not specifically listed here does NOT mean it is open to waterfowl hunting. Hunters must always comply with existing regulations regarding minimum distances from dwellings and shooting towards persons, buildings, and domestic animals within range.**

1. Waterfowl hunting is permitted at Selden Neck Natural Area Preserve in Lyme.
2. Waterfowl hunting in the Niantic River in the towns of Waterford and East Lyme is subject to the following regulations:
 - (a) Hunting is prohibited from the shore or in the intertidal area without permission of the riparian property owner.
 - (b) Hunting is prohibited in the water area northerly of an east and west line which touches the southern tip of Sandy Point and includes Kenny Cove.
 - (c) Hunting from boats is permitted only along the midline of the river.
 - (d) Hunting is prohibited in Smith Cove and the channel entering Smith Cove in East Lyme.
3. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited in Alewife Cove and entrance channel, Waterford and New London, and in Jordan Cove north from the mean high water line on the northern side of the sand spit and island.
4. In Westport, waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters shoreward of lines extending from the tip of Cedar Point to: a) the southerly tip of the stone breakwall at the eastern end of Compo Beach; and, b) the southwest tip of Hendrick's Point.
5. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in the tidal waters of Cove Harbor within 100 feet of the mean high tide mark of the Darien shore.
6. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in Cove Pond (Holly Pond), Stamford and Darien, north of the dam.
7. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in Poquetanuck Cove, bordered by the town of Preston and Ledyard.
8. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited in the area of Mason's Island known as Ram Point Cove inland of a line extending from the high water mark of the southernmost tip of Ram Point to the southernmost tip of Mason's Island bordering the eastern side of Ram Point Cove.
9. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited in the Black Hall River in Old Lyme in the area bordered on the south by Route 156 and on the north by the first upstream railroad crossing.
10. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in Assekonk Swamp WMA, North Stonington.
11. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in any direction within a 500-foot radius of the mean high tide mark at Merwin Point in Milford or from within an area bounded by the shoreline and a line from the southernmost extension of the 500-foot radius at Merwin Point westward to the southeastern shoreline at Pond Point in Milford.
12. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited in Bantam Lake in Litchfield and Morris.
13. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in the Mystic River from Route 27 south to Route 1 in Mystic and Groton.

14. There shall be no waterfowl hunting in or from the banks of Ash Creek north of the line drawn from the northern end of the steel railing on the fishing pier in Fairfield to the northern end of the stone sea wall in Bridgeport at the mouth of the creek where it enters Long Island Sound.
15. Waterfowl hunting at King's Island in Enfield is by written permit only; call the Wildlife Division (860-424-3011) for details.
16. Waterfowl hunting in the Thames River in the town of Waterford is prohibited in Smith Cove northwest and above the railroad tracks, and from the shores and waters in the vicinity of Mamacoke Island in Mamacoke Cove westward of a line running from the easternmost point of land at Harrison's Landing due north to the point where it intersects the southernmost tip of Mamacoke Island, and from the shores and waters within the unnamed cove west of the southernmost point of shoreline of the unnamed waterbody west of the railroad tracks, the shores and waters of which shall also be closed to waterfowl hunting, to a point intersecting the shoreline of Mamacoke Island.
17. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shore and water in the Giant's Neck area of East Lyme at the mouth of the Pataguanset River northward of a line running due west from the south end of the fixed pier located at the Giant's Neck Boat Association Launch to the south end of the breakwall located at the end of Point Road.
18. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of Long Island Sound in Greenwich as follows:
 - In Greenwich Cove, north of a line extending from the easternmost point of land at Willowmere Point to the northernmost point of land on the peninsula immediately north of Meadow Place.
 - In Cos Cob Harbor, north of a line extending due east from the southernmost point of land at the power plant property off of Sound Shore Road to the shoreline adjacent to Glen Avon Road.
 - In Greenwich Harbor, Smith Cove, and Indian Harbor, north of a line extending from the northernmost tip of the area known as Round Island on the west side of Greenwich Harbor to the southernmost tip of the peninsula at the end of Indian Field Road.
 - In Byram Harbor, north of a line extending northeastward from the end of Dock Road to the southeastern most tip of Gamecock Island across Byram Harbor to the southernmost tip of the unnamed peninsula immediately west of Harbor Drive.
19. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of the Branford River in Branford from Route 1 south to Montowese Avenue.
20. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters in Post Cove in Deep River southward of the dike that extends across the northern edge of the cove.
21. Waterfowl hunting at Plum Bank WMA in Old Saybrook is prohibited north and east of a line extending from Southview Circle southeast to Gull Lane.
22. Hunting is prohibited in that part of Gulf Pond in Milford between the Milford breakwater and Metro North railroad tracks and in Milford Harbor from the Milford breakwater north to the Memorial Bridge.
23. Hunting is prohibited in Lake Wononscopomuc in Salisbury.
24. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of the Housatonic River in Stratford and Milford southward from the I-95 bridge to a line running east and west across the river that includes the northern-most tip of the island in the river that occurs adjacent to the end of Riverview Place in Stratford.
25. Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of the Quinnipiac River downstream from a line extending from the southernmost tip of Fargeorge Preserve (Granis Island) at the mouth of Hemingway Creek, across the river to Lombard Street, south to the Amtrak/Route 1 bridge near the mouth of New Haven Harbor.

Sunrise/Sunset (Old Saybrook)

Tide Chart (Old Saybrook)

Approximate corrections: Greenwich +40 min.; Stonington 1 hr 30 min.

DATE	SUNRISE	SUNSET	AM High	hgt	PM High	hgt	AM Low	hgt	PM Low	hgt
SEPTEMBER										
1	6:16	7:22	11:02	4.2	11:25	4.2	4:54	0.1	5:12	0.3
5	6:20	7:15	1:36	3.7	2:00	4.2	7:32	0.7	8:09	0.7
10	6:25	7:06	:04	3.1	6:29	3.8	11:42	1.2	---	---
15	6:30	6:58	9:56	4.1	10:15	4.5	3:38	0.0	3:57	0.1
20	6:35	6:49	1:27	4.2	1:56	4.9	7:31	0.0	8:19	-0.1
25	6:41	6:41	6:42	3.5	7:18	4.2	12:23	0.3	12:40	0.5
OCTOBER										
1	6:47	6:31	11:18	4.4	11:42	3.8	5:04	0.4	5:32	0.3
5	6:51	6:24	1:53	3.4	2:12	4.1	7:36	0.9	8:22	0.7
10	6:56	6:16	6:26	3.3	6:43	3.8	---	---	12:05	1.1
15	7:02	6:08	10:09	4.8	10:33	4.4	3:52	-0.3	4:26	-0.4
20	7:07	6:00	2:04	3.9	2:32	4.8	8:07	0.1	8:59	-0.1
25	7:13	5:53	7:23	3.8	7:51	3.7	12:55	0.3	1:24	0.5
NOVEMBER										
1	7:21	5:44	---	---	12:14	4.2	5:45	0.7	6:25	0.3
5	7:26	5:40	3:02	3.1	3:10	3.7	8:44	1.1	9:31	0.5
10	6:32	4:34	6:28	3.9	6:46	3.8	---	---	12:28	0.3
15	6:38	4:30	10:25	5.2	10:53	3.9	4:03	-0.4	4:51	-0.8
20	6:44	4:26	2:45	3.5	3:13	3.8	8:54	0.4	9:32	0.0
25	6:50	4:23	7:29	3.9	7:53	3.3	1:02	0.4	1:43	0.3
DECEMBER										
1	6:56	4:21	11:31	3.9	---	---	4:58	0.5	5:40	0.0
5	7:00	4:20	2:19	3.1	2:22	3.5	8:12	0.8	8:49	0.1
10	7:05	4:20	6:49	4.2	7:10	3.5	12:15	-0.1	1:03	-0.3
15	7:08	4:21	11:01	4.8	11:29	3.8	4:37	-0.5	5:24	-0.9
20	7:11	4:23	3:15	3.5	3:39	3.3	9:29	0.4	9:53	0.1
25	7:14	4:26	7:44	3.8	8:09	2.9	1:11	0.5	1:58	0.3
JANUARY										
1	7:15	4:31	12:19	3.1	12:27	3.8	6:02	0.3	6:41	-0.3
5	7:15	4:35	3:28	3.4	3:44	3.3	9:47	0.1	10:02	0.0
10	7:14	4:40	8:14	4.5	8:37	3.4	1:45	-0.4	2:37	-0.8
15	7:13	4:46	12:03	3.7	12:27	3.9	6:06	-0.3	6:41	-0.5
20	7:10	4:51	4:35	3.4	5:01	2.6	10:51	0.4	10:56	0.5
25	7:06	4:57	8:45	3.7	9:09	3.0	2:10	0.4	2:50	0.0
FEBRUARY										
1	7:00	5:06	1:15	3.5	1:31	3.5	7:26	-0.1	7:47	-0.3
5	6:56	5:11	5:07	3.8	5:33	3.0	11:29	-0.3	11:34	-0.1
10	6:50	5:17	9:42	4.2	10:02	3.7	3:20	-0.5	3:57	-0.8
15	6:44	5:24	1:12	3.7	1:35	3.3	7:24	0.0	7:40	0.1
20	6:37	5:30	5:51	3.3	6:21	2.6	11:55	0.5	---	---
25	6:29	5:36	9:37	3.9	9:58	3.5	3:09	0.0	3:38	-0.4
MARCH										
1	6:23	5:40	12:01	3.9	12:24	3.8	6:12	-0.5	6:29	-0.4
5	6:17	5:45	3:38	3.9	4:08	3.0	10:08	-0.1	10:17	0.1
10	6:09	5:51	8:42	3.9	8:59	3.7	2:18	-0.3	2:50	-0.4

State-owned or Controlled Waterfowl Hunting Areas

The following areas are open for waterfowl hunting. This list is not inclusive; however, it represents areas where a majority of waterfowl hunting occurs and that have good access. A full list of areas that are open to waterfowl hunting can be found on the DEEP website at <http://www.depdata.ct.gov/wildlife/maps/HuntingAreas.asp>.

Town	Area
Andover	Bishops Swamp WMA
Barkhamsted	Peoples State Forest
Bloomfield	Bloomfield Flood Control Area (Site 2) ^d
Bolton	Bolton Area ^d
Burlington	Sessions Woods WMA ^{a, d}
Canaan	Robbins Swamp WMA
Canterbury, Plainfield	Quinebaug River WMA
Colchester	Salmon River State Forest (including Holbrook Pond)
Colebrook, Hartland	MDC-Colebrook Reservoir/Hogback Dam
Cornwall	Wyantenock State Forest
Cromwell, Middletown	Cromwell Meadows WMA
Durham	Durham Meadows WMA
East Haddam, Colchester	Babcock Pond WMA ^a
East Haddam, Haddam	Salmon River Cove and Haddam Neck ^b
East Lyme	Nehantic State Forest ^c
East Windsor, Enfield	East Windsor-Enfield Area ^d
East Windsor	Scantic River State Park ^{c, d}
Eastford	Natchaug State Forest ^c
Eastford, Union, Ashford	Yale Forest (owned by Yale University) ^d
Enfield, Suffield	NU-Kings Island Cooperative WMA ^d
Goshen	Mohawk State Forest (Ziegler/Johnson Tract)
Guilford	East River Marsh WMA ^b
Guilford	Great Harbor WMA
Haddam	Higganum Meadows WMA (off Clarkhurst Road)
Haddam	Cockaponset State Forest ^c
Hartland	Tunxis State Forest
Harwinton	Roraback WMA
Hebron	Raymond Brook Marsh
Kent	Housatonic River WMA
Killingly, Sterling	Ross Marsh WMA
Lebanon	Bartlett Brook WMA
Lebanon	Red Cedar Lake (Camp Mooween)
Lebanon, Colchester	Lebanon Coop Mgmt. Area ^d

Lyme	Lord's Cove WMA ^b
Lyme	Nott Island ^b
Lyme	Selden Neck State Park (Selden Island) ^b
Mansfield	Mansfield State-leased Field Trial Area
Mansfield, Chaplin	Mansfield Hollow Lake (excluding State Park)
Middlefield	Black Pond WMA
New Hartford	MDC-Greenwoods Pond
North Franklin	Franklin Swamp WMA
North Haven	Quinnipiac River Marsh ^b
Old Lyme	Roger Tory Peterson Wildlife Area ^b
Old Saybrook	Plum Bank Marsh
Old Saybrook	Ragged Rock Creek WMA ^b
Old Saybrook	South Cove
Oxford, Beacon Falls	Naugatuck State Forest
Portland	Wangunk Meadows
Portland, etc.	Meshomasic State Forest
Ridgefield	Bennett's Pond State Park
Salem	Zemko Pond WMA
Salisbury	East Twin Lakes Water Access Area
Scotland	Mohegan State Forest
Sharon	NU-Skiff Mtn. Coop WMA ^d
Sharon	Housatonic State Forest
Simsbury	Simsbury WMA
Stafford	Ellithorpe Flood Control Area
Stafford	Shenipsit State Forest
Stonington	Barn Island WMA
Stratford	Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge ^e (Great Meadows Unit)
Stratford, Milford, Orange	Charles E. Wheeler WMA ^b
Thompson	West Thompson Dam (federal public land)
Tolland	Kollar WMA
Torrington	John Minetto State Park
Torrington	Paugnut State Forest
Torrington	Sunnybrook State Park (west of Newfield Rd.)
Union	Nipmuck State Forest
Voluntown	Pachaug State Forest ^c

^a *Handicap accessible blind available*

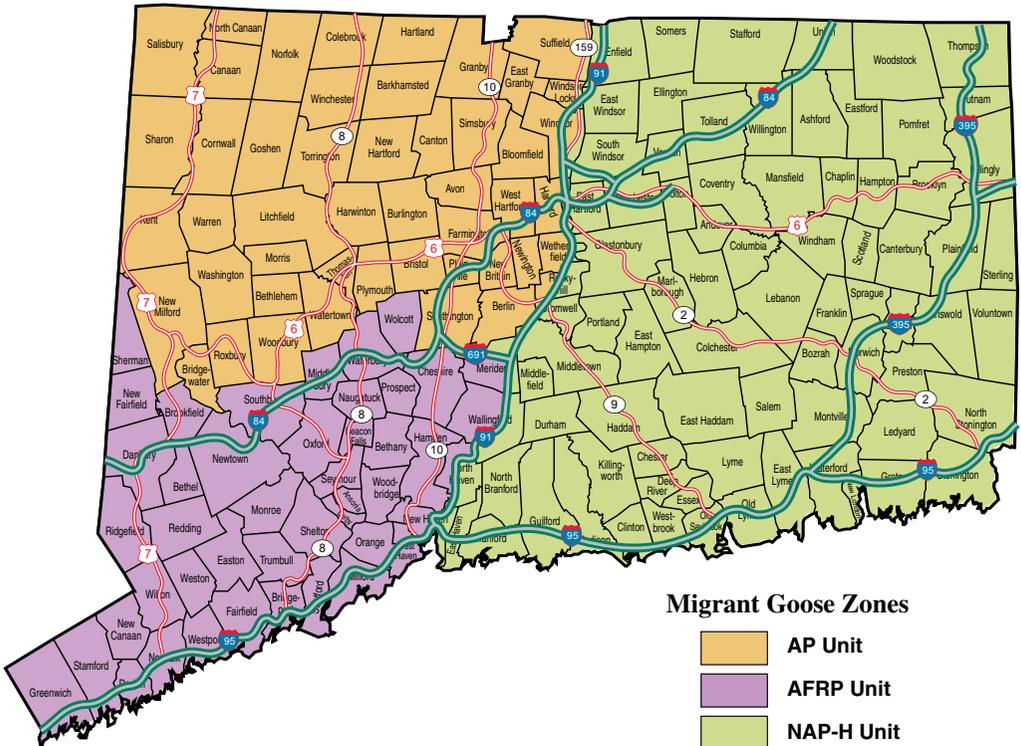
^b *Access by boat only*

^c *Some areas designated as firearm restricted, bowhunting only*

^d *Permit required*

^e *Permit required through Stewart B. McKinney NWR at 860-399-2513*

Connecticut Migrant Goose Zones



P. J. USCO