

# 2023-24 MAINE MIGRATORY GAME BIRD QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



Please reference the *Maine 2023-24 Summary of Hunting Laws* for more details, available at [mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws](http://mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws).

## MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

For the purpose of this section, migratory game birds include and are limited to species in the following families: 1. Anatidae (wild ducks, geese, and brant); 2. Rallidae (rails, coots, moorhens and gallinules); and 3. Scolopacidae (woodcock and snipe). Except as expressly provided in the regulations, it is unlawful to hunt, capture, kill, take, possess, transport, buy or sell any migratory game bird or part thereof.

## LICENSES

To hunt in Maine, you need to have one of the 30+ hunting licenses available. These vary by category of game, equipment used, resident status, age, and other factors.

Go to [mefishwildlife.com](http://mefishwildlife.com) to see which license type is right for you, and to read what the license allows, when it allows it, and what permits are included or need to be purchased separately.

## STAMPS

Waterfowl hunters age 16 and up must purchase state waterfowl permits and federal duck stamps. 16-year-olds still hunting on a junior license may hunt on a youth day, but need a Federal duck stamp.

Migratory waterfowl permits are not required to hunt Crow, Woodcock, Common Snipe, Sora & Virginia Rails, or Gallinules. A pheasant permit is required to hunt pheasant in York and Cumberland counties.

## OPERATION GAME THIEF

Call 1-800-ALERT US (253-7887) to report game law violations. Caller identification protected. Rewards paid. Poachers are thieves — help us stop them.



## SUNDAY HUNTING IS ILLEGAL IN MAINE

### LEGAL HUNTING HOURS FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS:

1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset.



## BAND RECOVERY REPORTS

Anyone finding a band or recovering one while hunting should log onto:

[reportband.gov](http://reportband.gov)

Results will provide better estimates of survival and harvest rates and will reduce high costs associated with banding studies.

## HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM

If you plan to hunt woodcock, ducks, geese, snipe, rails, or coots, you are required to indicate on your license your intention of doing so at the time you purchase your license. The information will be used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (H.I.P.).

## ETHICS ARE WHAT WE DO WHEN NO ONE ELSE IS WATCHING

In the Maine woods, rarely will anyone be there to notice your ethical behavior, but the landowner and the hunters that follow will greatly appreciate it. Ethical behavior is vital to Maine's sporting future, and it encourages landowners to keep their property open for all to enjoy. So remember: always respect the rights of landowners, and please *ask first*.

## OUTDOOR PARTNERS LANDOWNER RELATIONS PROGRAM

For \$15.00, you can become an Outdoor Partner and support the MDIFW landowner relations program, which works to preserve and enhance access, helps landowners with access issues, and promotes responsible, ethical sporting behavior.

Members also receive discounts from retail partners, discounted subscriptions, and day passes, as well as an Outdoor Partners decal and entry into a drawing to win one of six \$500 gift cards. You can join at any time – either as an add-on to your license purchase or at [mefishwildlife.com](http://mefishwildlife.com).



OUTDOOR PARTNERS

## 2023-24 MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTER'S LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS		LEGAL HUNTING HOURS			
DATE	OPEN	CLOSE	DATE	OPEN	CLOSE
9/1/23	5:27	7:12	11/17/23	6:05	4:05
9/2/23	5:28	7:11	11/18/23	6:06	4:04
9/4/23	5:31	7:07	11/20/23	6:09	4:02
9/5/23	5:32	7:05	11/21/23	6:10	4:02
9/6/23	5:33	7:03	11/22/23	6:11	4:01
9/7/23	5:34	7:01	11/23/23	6:13	4:00
9/8/23	5:35	6:59	11/24/23	6:14	3:59
9/9/23	5:37	6:58	11/25/23	6:15	3:59
9/11/23	5:39	6:54	11/27/23	6:18	3:58
9/12/23	5:40	6:52	11/28/23	6:19	3:57
9/13/23	5:41	6:50	11/29/23	6:20	3:57
9/14/23	5:42	6:48	11/30/23	6:21	3:56
9/15/23	5:44	6:46	12/1/23	6:22	3:56
9/16/23	5:45	6:44	12/2/23	6:23	3:55
9/18/23	5:47	6:41	12/4/23	6:26	3:55
9/19/23	5:48	6:39	12/5/23	6:27	3:55
9/20/23	5:50	6:37	12/6/23	6:28	3:54
9/21/23	5:51	6:35	12/7/23	6:29	3:54
9/22/23	5:52	6:33	12/8/23	6:30	3:54
9/23/23	5:53	6:31	12/9/23	6:31	3:54
9/25/23	5:56	6:27	12/11/23	6:32	3:54
9/26/23	5:57	6:25	12/12/23	6:33	3:54
9/27/23	5:58	6:24	12/13/23	6:34	3:54
9/28/23	5:59	6:22	12/14/23	6:35	3:54
9/29/23	6:00	6:20	12/15/23	6:36	3:55
9/30/23	6:02	6:18	12/16/23	6:36	3:55
10/2/23	6:04	6:14	12/18/23	6:38	3:56
10/3/23	6:05	6:12	12/19/23	6:38	3:56
10/4/23	6:06	6:10	12/20/23	6:39	3:56
10/5/23	6:08	6:09	12/21/23	6:39	3:57
10/6/23	6:09	6:07	12/22/23	6:40	3:57
10/7/23	6:10	6:05	12/23/23	6:40	3:58
10/9/23	6:13	6:01	12/25/23	6:41	3:59
10/10/23	6:14	6:00	12/26/23	6:42	4:00
10/11/23	6:15	5:58	12/27/23	6:42	4:00
10/12/23	6:16	5:56	12/28/23	6:42	4:01
10/13/23	6:18	5:54	12/29/23	6:42	4:02
10/14/23	6:19	5:53	12/30/23	6:43	4:03
10/16/23	6:22	5:49	1/1/24	6:43	4:04
10/17/23	6:23	5:47	1/2/24	6:43	4:05
10/18/23	6:24	5:46	1/3/24	6:43	4:06
10/19/23	6:26	5:44	1/4/24	6:43	4:07
10/20/23	6:27	5:42	1/5/24	6:43	4:08
10/21/23	6:28	5:41	1/6/24	6:43	4:09
10/23/23	6:31	5:37	1/8/24	6:42	4:12
10/24/23	6:32	5:36	1/9/24	6:42	4:13
10/25/23	6:33	5:34	1/10/24	6:42	4:14
10/26/23	6:35	5:33	1/11/24	6:41	4:15
10/27/23	6:36	5:31	1/12/24	6:41	4:16
10/28/23	6:37	5:30	1/13/24	6:40	4:17
10/30/23	6:40	5:27	1/15/24	6:39	4:20
10/31/23	6:42	5:25	1/16/24	6:39	4:21
11/1/23	6:43	5:24	1/17/24	6:38	4:22
11/2/23	6:44	5:22	1/18/24	6:38	4:24
11/3/23	6:46	5:21	1/19/24	6:37	4:25
11/4/23	6:47	5:20	1/20/24	6:36	4:26
11/6/23	5:50	4:17	1/22/24	6:35	4:29
11/7/23	5:51	4:16	1/23/24	6:34	4:30
11/8/23	5:52	4:15	1/24/24	6:33	4:32
11/9/23	5:54	4:13	1/25/24	6:32	4:33
11/10/23	5:55	4:12	1/26/24	6:31	4:34
11/11/23	5:57	4:11	1/27/24	6:30	4:36
11/13/23	5:59	4:09	1/29/24	6:28	4:39
11/14/23	6:01	4:08	1/30/24	6:27	4:40
11/15/23	6:02	4:07	1/31/24	6:26	4:41
11/16/23	6:03	4:06			

All times listed through October 31 are Eastern Daylight Time; after that date, they are Eastern Standard Time (for Bangor).

The following are general dates for the 2023-2024 season. Please reference the *Maine 2023-24 Summary of Hunting Laws*, available at [mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws](http://mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws).

## 2023-24 MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS SEASONS & BAG LIMITS

SPECIES	SEASON		LIMITS		
	FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION	
<b>Crows*</b>	Wildlife Management Districts 1 - 6	August 1, 2023	September 23, 2023	No Limit	
		February 5, 2024	April 15, 2024		
	Wildlife Management Districts 7 - 29	August 1, 2024	September 21, 2024		
		August 1, 2023	September 23, 2023		
		January 22, 2024	March 30, 2024		
		August 1, 2024	September 21, 2024		
<b>Common Snipe**</b>	September 1, 2023	January 3, 2024	8	24	
<b>Woodcock**</b>	September 30, 2023	November 21, 2023	3	9	
<b>Rails (Sora And Virginia)***</b>	September 1, 2023	November 21, 2023	25 <i>Single or in aggregate</i> 25		
<b>Canada Goose (Early)</b>	North Zone	September 1, 2023	September 25, 2023	8	24
	South Zone	September 1, 2023	September 25, 2023	10	30
	Coastal Zone	September 1, 2023	September 25, 2023	10	30
<b>Canada Goose</b> <i>Regular, White-Fronted Geese</i>	North Zone	October 2, 2023	December 9, 2023	2	6
	South Zone	October 2, 2023	October 14, 2023		
		November 1, 2023	December 25, 2023		
	Coastal Zone	October 2, 2023	October 7, 2023		
October 27, 2023		January 9, 2024			
<b>Snow Geese</b> <i>Including Blue Geese</i>	October 2, 2023	January 31, 2024	25		
<b>Ducks</b> <i>Including Black Ducks, American Coot, American Wigeon, Common Goldeneye, Scaup, Sea Ducks, Teal, Mergansers, Pintails, Ring-Necked Duck</i>	North Zone	September 25, 2023	December 2, 2023	6	18
	South Zone	September 30, 2023	October 14, 2023		
		November 1, 2023	December 25, 2023		
	Coastal Zone	September 30, 2023	October 7, 2023		
November 9, 2023		January 9, 2024			
<b>Brant</b>	North Zone	September 25, 2023	October 28, 2023	1	3
	South Zone	October 2, 2023	October 14, 2023		
		October 31, 2023	November 20, 2023		
	Coastal Zone	October 2, 2023	October 7, 2023		
		December 13, 2023	January 9, 2024		

All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.

\*Crows are neither migratory waterfowl or migratory game birds. The use of lead shot and the use of a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells is permitted. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required. Use of electronic calls is permitted.

\*\*Woodcock & Snipe are considered migratory game birds, not migratory waterfowl. The use of lead shot is permitted.

The use of a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells is prohibited. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required.

\*\*\*Rails are considered migratory game birds not migratory waterfowl. The use of lead shot and a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells is prohibited. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required.

## 2023-24 MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS SEASONS & BAG LIMITS

SPECIES AND AREA	SEASONS		LIMITS		
	FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION	
<b>Special Falconry Season</b> <i>In addition to the regular migratory bird season (on Ducks, Geese, Mergansers, American Coots.)</i>	North Zone	December 18, 2023	February 7, 2024	3	9
	South Zone	January 10, 2024	March 1, 2024	<i>Respectively, singly or in aggregate Species Restrictions Apply</i>	
	Coastal Zone	January 10, 2024	March 1, 2024		
<b>Special Youth Waterfowl Hunts</b> <i>All duck species except Harlequins, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Moorhens and Gallinules – may be hunted on these days, including geese. For the Sept 23, Oct 21, Oct 28 and Dec 9 youth days, the goose limit is under the Regular Season limit. On youth waterfowl hunting days, scoters, eiders, and long-tailed ducks may be taken as part of the 6 bird daily limit on regular ducks. Also on these dates, 2 Black Ducks may be taken.</i>	North Zone	September 16, 2023 & December 9, 2023		<i>Special regulations apply to youth and accompanying adult. Please see Junior Hunters section.</i>	
	South Zone	September 23, 2023 & October 21, 2023			
	Coastal Zone	September 23, 2023 & October 28, 2023			

## EXCEPTIONS

Harlequin Ducks, Barrow's Goldeneye, Moorhens & Gallinules	Closed Season
American Coots	In addition to the 6 duck daily bag limit, hunters may take 5 coots. It is unlawful to possess more than 15 coots at any time.
Northern Pintails, Mottled Ducks, Fulvous Whistling Ducks, and Scaup	The daily limit on these species is 1 bird; possession limit is 3.
Black Duck, Redhead, Hen Mallards and Canvasback	The daily limit on these species is 2 birds; possession limit is 6.
Mallards	The daily limit is 4 (2 hen mallards); possession limit is 12 (6 hen mallards).
Mergansers (Common, Red-breasted and Hooded)	In addition to the 6 duck daily bag limit, hunters may take 5 mergansers in the aggregate, with a species specific limit of 5. It is unlawful to possess more than 15 mergansers at any time.
Sea Ducks (Scoter, Eider, and Long-Tailed Duck)	The daily limit is 3 by species (4 total sea ducks), not exceeding 1 hen eider; possession limit is 9 by species (12 total sea ducks), not exceeding 3 hen eiders.
Teal	No more than 4 of any one Teal species (American green-winged teal, blue winged teal or cinnamon teal) can be taken in a day; possession limit is 12.
Wood Ducks	The daily limit is 3 birds, possession limit is 9.