

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

# **The Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission**

**Will Meet at 10:30 AM  
On Wed., January 18, 2023  
Department of Natural Resources  
Google Meet**

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Annual Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (Group Discussion)**

**Approval for January 18, 2023, Meeting Agenda**

**Approval for Minutes from November 16, 2022 Meeting**

**Blood Tracking Dogs of Maryland (Guest Speaker: Darren Minor)**

**Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits (Game Bird Section Leader Bill Harvey and Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack)**

**Break**

**2023 Legislative Session Update (Director Paul Peditto and Associate Director Brian Eyler)**

**Maryland Farm Bureau Update (Colby Ferguson)**

**Natural Resources Police Update (Captain Shawn Garren)**

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

**Public Comment:**

**Adjourn**

***NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.***

**The Proposed Schedule for the 2023 meetings  
Of the Wildlife Advisory Commission is as follows:**

<b>January 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Google Meet</b>
<b>February 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Google Meet</b>
<b>March 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building</b>
<b>April 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Google Meet</b>
<b>May 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>No Meeting</b>
<b>June 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building</b>
<b>July 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>No Meeting</b>
<b>August 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Google Meet</b>
<b>September 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>TBD - Google Meet or No Meeting or Field Day</b>
<b>October 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Google Meet</b>
<b>November 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Google Meet</b>
<b>December 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>No Meeting</b>

***PLEASE NOTE THAT MEETING DATES ARE HELD  
ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH***

**Note: Unless notified otherwise, all meetings will be held via Google Meeting. When meeting in person, the meetings will be held in the C-1 Conference Room Department of Natural Resources - Tawes State Office Building beginning at 10:30 am. Available parking is located at the Navy Stadium Parking Lot.**

***NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.***

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2023

Chairman Carl Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. This meeting was held via teleconference. Chairman Wagner asked for a roll call of individuals on the “call.” Unfortunately, because of the anonymity of Google Meet callers, it was impossible to determine the identity of every participant.

**Annual Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair**

- Motion
  1. Commissioner Keithley moved to nominate Carl Wagner as Chair and Joe Schroyer as Vice-Chair.
  2. Commissioner Showalter seconded.
  3. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Carl Wagner will remain as Chair and Joe Schroyer as Vice-Chair of the Wildlife Advisory Commission.

**Approval for January 18, 2023 Meeting Agenda**

- Motion to Approve the Agenda:
  1. Commissioner Showalter moved to accept January 18, 2023, Commission Meeting Agenda.
  2. Commissioner Alder seconded.
  3. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Approval for Minutes from November 16, 2022, Meeting**

- Motion:
  1. Commissioner Keithley moved to accept the November 16, 2022, Meeting Minutes.
  2. Commissioner Showalter seconded.
  3. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Blood Tracking Dogs of Maryland – Guest Speaker: Darren Minor**

- Mr. Minor addressed the Commission regarding tracking dogs and their role and value in recovering dead deer. Mr. Minor is hoping that the regulations could be tightened up and/or clarified.
- Mr. Minor provided some history. Mr. Minor started tracking training dogs in 2019. Mr. Minor is a member of United Blood Trackers, a national organization and “governing body” of tracking dogs. Mr. Minor has recently been accepted as a judge through United Blood Trackers. Mr. Minor was involved in helping people with the training and tracking of their dogs. Additionally, Mr. Minor is a member of about 21 different tracking groups.
- Mr. Minor said they are leading several groups with 6,200 members, primarily in Maryland.
- Mr. Minor mentioned that in Maryland, the only information related to the use of dogs for tracking is located in the Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping. The Guide does not have the actual law or regulations in it. Mr. Minor understood that the Wildlife and Heritage Service could not put everything inside the Guide.
- Mr. Minor outlined suggestions to the Commission:
  1. First, require a tracker to have a Maryland hunting license. Maryland needs to be tightened up or unambiguously spelled out because trackers from other states do not buy a Maryland hunting license to track in Maryland. These trackers should be purchasing hunting licenses. Mr. Minor informed the Commission that he tracks in Pennsylvania; he must buy an out-of-state hunting license to track deer in Pennsylvania.
  2. Second, the hunter must contact DNR before tracking. However, Mr. Minor would like to see that changed to allow the tracker to contact DNR. Mr. Minor stated that most trackers are already directly reporting to DNR Comm Center.

3. Thirdly, Mr. Minor raised that there are a host of reasons why he thinks that it is more practical to allow a tracker to carry a handgun.
  4. Fourth, Section F of 08.03.04.19 stated, “The dog handler shall maintain physical control of the leashed tracking dog at all times while conducting the search.” Mr. Minor pointed out that trackers are in the recovery business to recover deceased or mortally wounded animals. The trackers are not hunting live animals.
- Commissioner Keithley explained that he did not think this topic required an immediate decision. However, Commissioner Keithley agreed to work with Mr. Minor to get a proposal for the Commission to review for the beginning stage of the regulation package.
  - Director Peditto thanked Mr. Minor for attending. Director Peditto expressed that this is what the Commission is here for and encouraged Mr. Minor to write his ideas to the Commission and staff so this concept could be put into the discussion queue for the 2024-2026 hunting seasons. Director Peditto informed the Commission that when the law was adopted, a very small community of individuals advocated for it. It seems that the tracker community is organized, and they have some sideboards that they would like individuals to comply with. In the winter of 2023-24, there will be a stakeholder meeting that includes a lot of different organizations and individuals. Director Peditto concluded that it was probably time for Wildlife and Heritage Service to revisit this topic, given the growth of the tracker community. To do this right, staff want to have a few months of dialogue.
  - Commissioner Keithley commented that there had been a lot of social media posts by others in this arena, and the posts are not good, especially for the trackers trying to present a positive image. Therefore, the timing of this topic is critical. Hopefully, Mr. Minor and some other trackers can start self-regulation among their peers and make the hunting community aware of who the more qualified and responsible trackers are.
  - Public Comment Section:
    1. Mr. Webb Johnson, Quaker Neck Outfitters, commented that if a client calls him in to dispatch a deer, the outfitter dispatches the deer for the client.
  - Q&A Section:
    1. Commissioner Keithley requested staff input on this type of regulation change and the timing of the regulation cycle.
      - a. Associate Director Stonesifer informed the Commission that staff are headed into the regulation cycle process. The Wildlife and Heritage Service regulation cycle is an eight-month process. The regulations will be for the next two years of hunting seasons and bag limits that will occur this fall. Staff will wrap up the seasons and bag limits in the spring of 2024; the additions and/or changes would be effective for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 seasons.
  - Chair Wagner requested that Mr. Minor compile a one-page synopsis on this topic and work with Commissioner Keithley on it because this is something the Commission would need to discuss.
  - As new information comes in, the Tracking Dogs issue will be added to future agendas under Old Business.

**Proposed Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limits** – Josh Homyack, Waterfowl Project Leader  
Waterfowl Project Leader Josh Homyack gave an update on the 2023-2024 Proposed Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limits via a PowerPoint Presentation. [ATTACHMENT A]

- Mr. Homyack reminded the Commission that staff presented the status of the various waterfowl populations from the surveys and banding to the Commission at the October meeting. Those surveys and banding data spawned the federal frameworks, which were distributed to the states. Then the states will develop the proposed migratory game bird hunting seasons that fall within the federal frameworks.
- The Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee (MGBAC) reviewed the proposed migratory game bird season and bag limits. MGBAC did not have many comments on the proposals.
- The Proposed Migratory Game Bird Season and Bag Limits did not require the Commission to vote at this process stage. However, at the March WAC meeting, staff will present the summary of public

comments and recommendations for the Commission to vote on for submission to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

- The Commission will receive the summary of all the seasons in a PDF format. [ATTACHMENT B]
- Mr. Homyack displayed some of the banding data for Atlantic Population (AP) geese on Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay. Staff placed 103 GPS collars on these geese, part of a three-year Atlantic Flyway project. The Hudson and Ungava Bays are the primary nesting areas of the AP geese. Staff put ten additional collars on geese in Maryland this fall, which are the green dots; and the purple dots are birds banded on Hudson Bay; the orange dots are birds banded on Ungava Bay. This data matches well with our band return data; it is close to what staff expected to observe. Staff wanted to share this data as a visual aid because it goes along with the AP Goose Harvest Strategy, federal framework, and proposed season that staff presented to the Commission.
- Q&A Section
  1. Mr. Webb Johnson asked about the mallard population decrease. Mr. Webb Johnson added that it had been 15 years that the mallard population has been on a decrease, and in four years, there is modern season availability, and staff are allowing hunters to kill the heck out of them right out of the gate.
    - a. The mallard population has not been in decline for the past 15 years, as a decline stopped about four years ago. The mallard population has been stable, then the mallard population turned the corner and started increasing. It was a 20-year decline, followed by a halt, then turning the corner and rising.
  2. Mr. Webb Johnson asked if there are talks with USFWS about not jumping to a four-mallard bag-limit but maybe going to three and trying to let the population continue to grow with the harvest strategy instead of going right back to a moderate season.
    - a. These discussions occurred over the past several years, right into creating the harvest strategy.
    - b. Current harvest strategy is very different from the old harvest strategy. In fact, the two-bird bag limit wasn't a harvest strategy. It was just something put in place so people could have a mallard season for a short period of time - in anticipation of a fully functional new harvest strategy being developed.
    - c. Recall mallards were used to set the entire waterfowl hunting season. Then, USFWS switched to multi-stock, and the mallards were removed; the mallard population has nothing to do with selecting the general hunting seasons anymore.
    - d. Input from the hunters was incorporated into creating the new harvest strategy.

### **2023 Legislative Session Update** – Associate Director Brian Eyler

- Director Peditto introduced Brian Eyler as the newly appointed Associate Director of the Administration Program.
- Associate Director Eyler mentioned that he listed four bills on the Summary of 2023 Proposed Legislation as of January 17, 2023. Two of the bills WHS is tracking closely are SB0091 (Natural Resources – Apprentice Hunting License – Alterations) and SB0096 (Howard County – Archery Hunting – Safety Zone and Position of Archery Hunter). The other two bills are SB0001 and SB0086; WHS is monitoring due to implications related to hunting devices and raising the age requirement on firearms and ammunition. [ATTACHMENT C]
- The Commission members can track the bills online at the Maryland General Assembly website at <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>.
- Chair Wagner emphasized the need for the Commission to decide if there is value in the Commission taking a position on a bill. Additionally, Chair Wagner urged the Commission to take a more proactive approach being that the Commission is supposed to represent the wildlife conservation and management community; the Commission should have a finger on the pulse of what is good and not good. Furthermore, the Commission should review these bills and either endorse them or not endorse them; Commission may have to write letters to the legislature.
- Commissioner Showalter agreed with Chair Wagner's points that the Commission should take a

position on bills of interest to the hunting community. Commissioner Showalter also expressed support for SB0091 and SB0096.

- Commissioner Showalter read SB0091; the bill authorizes the Department to issue an apprentice hunting license to a person under the age of 17. Therefore, it could be a person 16 and younger.

**Maryland Farm Bureau Update** – Presentation by Maryland Farm Bureau Director of Government & Public Relations Colby Ferguson.

- Mr. Ferguson informed the Commission that Prince George’s County Archery and Sunday bills dropped on January 18, 2023. The Prince George’s County Archery bill will reduce the 150 yards to 50 yards, and the Sunday hunting bill will have the 10:30 restriction.
- The Maryland Farm Bureau has no hunting-related bills for the 2023 Legislative Session.
- The Doe Harvest Challenge on the Lower Shore went fairly clean and smooth.
- Mr. Ferguson heard from a farmer that has a deer cooperator permit. Mr. Ferguson was under the impression that the deer cooperator permit would go from half of January through the first half of April; instead, the permit authorized February through March. Mr. Ferguson asked if the extension of the deer cooperator permit did not get finalized.
  1. Director Peditto responded that the Deer Cooperator Permit Regulations had been a discussion for the WAC for several months. Director Peditto had hoped it would have flagged the Maryland Farm Bureau that the regulations were still pending with the previous Administration. The Deer Cooperator Permit Regulations are being reviewed at the Department of Legislative Services and the Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR) committee. There are some concerns from the lawyers regarding the legal foundation from which that regulatory framework was born. Staff continues to work with the lawyers on this issue.
  2. Director Peditto informed the Commission and Mr. Ferguson that there was no way this regulation would be ready before the January permits were issued. This was made clear at the last several WAC meetings, going back to November.
  3. Mr. Ferguson announced that the Deer Cooperator Permit extension would need to be revisited this season as an opportunity to try to address deer problem areas. Even though the Deer Cooperator Permit is not heavily used; however, where it is used, it is effective. Mr. Ferguson added that Deer Cooperator Permit does not wipe out the deer population; it won’t annihilate the deer that the hunters shoot. Mr. Ferguson challenged why WAC refused to have that Deer Cooperator Permit extension, mainly because the farmers are the ones that provide the resources. The farmers are just trying to protect the crops a little later into the season, particularly in April, when deer do their most damage at the beginning of the crop planting.
  4. Director Peditto informed Mr. Ferguson that the reason that the Deer Cooperator Permit extension did not go through is not on WAC. Director Peditto reminded Mr. Ferguson that he was involved in the stakeholder’s discussions. WAC took the stance because the larger public opinion and stakeholders opposed the Deer Cooperator Permit extension. Despite the Commission’s opposition to the extension of the Deer Cooperator Permit, staff moved the proposal forward in October.
  5. Chair Wagner pointed out that the Deer Cooperator Permit Regulation has been listed under Old Business for months. The staff has updated WAC on it monthly. Chair Wagner suggested that Mr. Ferguson present the Deer Cooperator Permit extension to the new WAC members for consideration.
  6. Mr. Ferguson agreed to let this set since the Deer Cooperator Permits were issued. However, Mr. Ferguson does not want this through the legislative process.
  7. Chair Wagner agreed to keep it under Old Business.
- Mr. Ferguson reported that he worked with DNR on a bill last year to clarify some concerns if a farmer allows people to hunt on the property under the landowner recreational use statute.
  1. There are still discussions at the Attorney General’s Office.

**Natural Resources Police Update** – Captain Garren gave a presentation.

- Captain Garren outlined the 2022 Natural Resources Police stats as 16,870 warnings and 6,627 citations for 23,511 violations. These numbers do not include some statement of charges and handwritten citations.
- There were 9% wildlife violations, 33% boating, 15% public lands, 28% fisheries, and 16% traffic violations.
- Commissioner Keithley expressed his gratitude to Officer Herbert Shannon for his efforts and for engaging with Commissioner Keithley and his hunting partner related to some issues that they had.

**Old Business**

- Hunter Education Programming – Chair Wagner updated Commission that this topic will need to be revisited.
- Future Hunting License and Stamp Model Discussion
  1. Chair Wagner informed the Commission that he, Commissioner Keithley with the Hunters of Maryland, and Maryland Sportsmen’s Foundation have been working with Senator Bailey and Senator Elfreth’s hunting and wildlife conservation bill.
  2. Chair Wagner shared the fee increase amounts and that there’s a new Sika Deer stamp included in the bill. The bill is a comprehensive hunting bill. It increases the DNR budget by more than \$8M. In addition, the bill includes other aspects of hunting, enhanced R3 programming, landowner liability protection, and Sunday hunting for waterfowl species.
  3. Commissioner Keithley reiterated that this fee increase is long overdue; he does not think it will create a hardship for anybody. Commissioner Keithley added that it had been 34 years since the last increase.
  4. Commissioner Schroyer commented that he thinks Western Maryland is good with it based on the provided details.
  5. Chair Wagner indicated that once the bill has been released, Chair Wagner would like input from the Commission and Director Peditto.
  6. Commissioner Schroyer emphasized the need for WHS to explain what the additional funding will do for the resources and share that information with the Commission so that the members speak the same language as the Department.
  7. Mr. Ferguson mentioned that WHS issues deer management permits and other management permits at no permit charge; if WHS has more funding, there will be more services to assist the farmers. Mr. Ferguson expressed that this is a great opportunity; obviously, there will be individuals who will push back because they do not want to pay more to hunt, but it is long overdue.
  8. Director Peditto expressed that he appreciated Mr. Ferguson’s comments. Director Peditto thinks that the lawmakers and committee members heard that the MFB acknowledges that those essential things, hunting licenses, and stamp dollars fund the time and equipment staff use to deal with wildlife damage on agricultural lands. Unfortunately, WHS cannot use federal match for these services, such as the deer cooperator permit, deer management permit, and other nuisance species like bears on agricultural land. Therefore, raising special funds revenue is hugely vital to the farming community.
  9. Former Commissioner Boyles Griffin commented that she thinks HSUS could be supportive or could remain neutral based on the information discussed at this meeting. Former Commissioner Boyles Griffin requested information in writing so she could forward on through the chain of command.
    - a. Chair Wagner responded that he would keep Former Commissioner Boyles Griffin in the loop.
  10. Former Commissioner Gulbrandsen also agreed that the fee increase and reevaluating licenses and stamps are long overdue.
  11. Chair Wagner indicated that if any of the members of the Commission have questions or concerns about this bill, please get in touch with him or Commissioner Keithley, or Vice Chair Schroyer

for assistance.

**No New Business**

**Public Comment –**

- The public may contact the Members of the Commission at [wac.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:wac.dnr@maryland.gov).
- There were no further public comments.

**Adjournment**

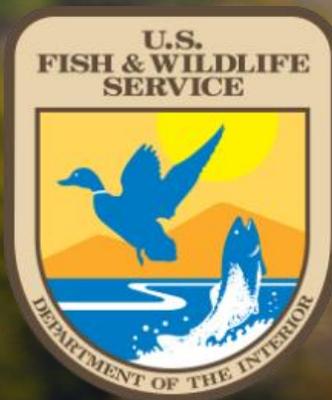
- The meeting adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at the Tawes State Office Building, 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD, 21401.

**Attendance**

Members:	B. Alder, M. Cole, T.J. Jenkins, S. Keithley, K. Rossignuolo, J. Schroyer, R. Showalter, and C. Wagner
Absent:	J. Parks
Guest:	C. Ferguson, S. Boyles-Griffin, E. Gulbrandsen, T. Johnson, D. Minor, and J. Nicholson
Staff:	B. Eyler, S. Garren, B. Harvey, J. Homyack, J. McKnight, P. Peditto, T. Spencer, H. Spiker, and K. Stonesifer

# Proposed Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons for 2023-24



# “Regular” Duck Hunting Season



## Federal Framework:

60-day season between Saturday nearest Sept. 24 and January 31 with a daily bag limit of 6 ducks (species restrictions).

Eastern Duck Zone	Western Duck Zone
Oct. 14, 2023 – Oct. 21, 2023	Sept. 30, 2023 – Oct. 14, 2023
Nov. 11, 2023 – Nov. 24, 2023	Nov. 18, 2023 – Nov. 24, 2023
Dec. 15, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	Dec. 15, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024

## Daily Bag Limit:

6 per day (including mergansers) but no more than 4 sea ducks (3 long-tailed ducks, 3 scoters, 3 eiders), 4 mallards (2 hens), 3 wood ducks, 1 pintail, 2 redheads, 1 scaup\*, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks (during black duck season), 1 mottled duck, and 1 fulvous tree duck.

- *Scaup hybrid season: Daily bag limit is 1 except between Jan.8, 2024 and Jan. 31, 2024 when 2 scaup per day may be harvested.*

# Youth/Military Waterfowl Hunting Days

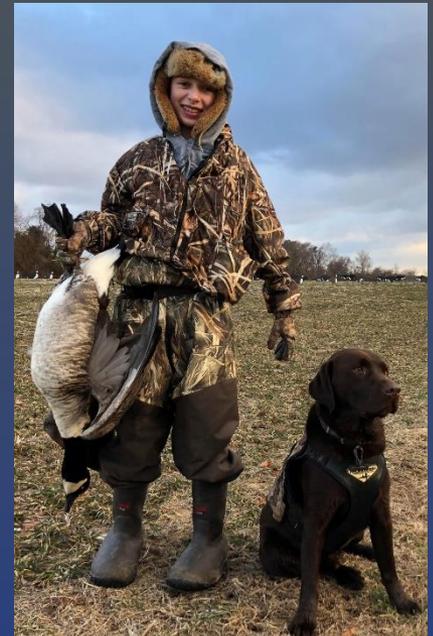


**Federal Framework:** States can hold 2 youth/military personnel days outside of regular duck season but within 14 days of the end framework dates (Sept. 21 and Jan. 31). Must be on weekends, holidays, or other non-school days.

**Proposed Dates:** Nov. 4, 2023 and Feb. 3, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit:** 6 ducks (certain species bag restrictions), 2 Canada geese in the AP Zone or 5 Canada geese in the late RP Zone, 1 brant, 25 light geese, 2 scaup and 15 coots.

Requirements: Youth hunter must be 16 years of age or younger and accompanied by an unarmed adult at least 21 years old. The adult may assist in calling, setting decoys, and retrieving downed birds. Military veterans (as defined in Section 101 of title 38, United States Code) of any age and members of the armed forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on Active duty (other than for training) can participate in these two hunt days.



# AP Pair Estimates and Hunting Implications



- AP CAGO Breeding Pair Data

- 2022 - 164,000 pairs

- 2021 - No survey

- 2020 - No Survey

- 2019 - 120,000 pairs

- 2018 - 112,000 pairs



- In 2021 AFC recommended keeping restrictive seasons for 2022-2023 although the harvest plan called for a moderate (30 day/2 bird per day) package.

- In 2022 the AFC recommended the standard package (45 days/ 2 bird per day) for 2023-24 based on a predicted breeding pair estimate of 180,500 in 2023.

# Atlantic Population (AP) Canada Goose Hunting Season



## Federal Framework

A 45-day season may be held between Nov. 15 and Feb. 5 with a 2 bird daily bag limit. The season may be divided into no more than 2 segments.

## Proposed Season and Bag Limit:

Nov. 21, 2023 – Nov. 24, 2023

Dec. 15, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit: 2 per day**

# AF Resident Population Canada Goose Hunting Season

(AFRP Zone)



## Federal Framework:

80-day season between Nov. 15 and Mar. 10

**Daily Bag Limit:** 5 per day

## Proposed Season and Bag Limit:

Nov. 18, 2023 - Nov. 24, 2023

Dec. 11, 2023 - Mar. 5, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit:** 5 per day

# Atlantic Brant Hunting Season



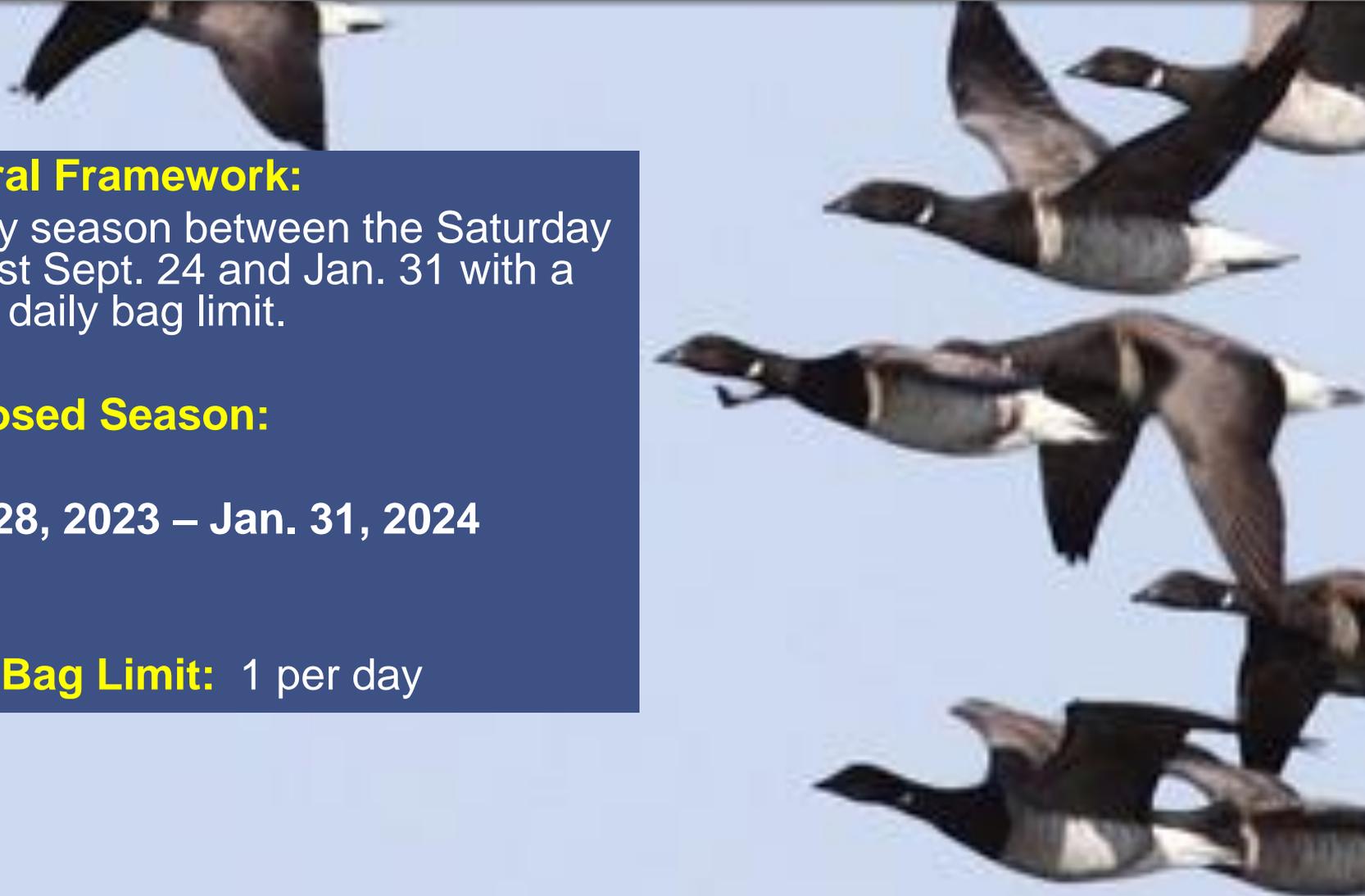
## Federal Framework:

30-day season between the Saturday nearest Sept. 24 and Jan. 31 with a 1-bird daily bag limit.

## Proposed Season:

Dec. 28, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit:** 1 per day



# Light Goose Hunting Season



## Federal Framework:

107-day season between Oct. 1 and Mar. 10 with a 25-bird daily bag limit and no possession limit.

## Proposed Season:

Oct. 1, 2023 - Nov. 24, 2023

Dec. 11, 2023 - Jan. 31, 2024

Feb. 3, 2023

**Daily Bag Limit:** 25 per day  
**No Possession Limit**



# Light Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season



## Federal Framework:

**Federal Framework:** The Conservation Order allows extended shooting hours for light geese (one-half hour after sunset) and imposes no daily bag limits for light geese. The CO may only open when all waterfowl (including light goose) and crane hunting seasons (excluding falconry) are closed.

## Proposed Season:

Nov. 27, 2023 - Dec. 9, 2023

Feb. 1, 2024 - Feb. 2, 2024

Feb. 5, 2024 - April 15, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit:** No bag limit  
No possession limit



# Mourning Dove Season



## Federal Framework

States may select a 90 day season between Sept. 1 – Jan. 31 with 15 birds/day. There can be no more than 3 season segments.

## Proposed Season:

Sept. 1, 2023 – Oct. 14, 2023

Oct. 21, 2023 – Nov. 24, 2023

Dec. 16, 2023 – Jan. 10, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit:** 15 birds/day



# Woodcock Season



## Federal Framework:

Federal Framework: States may select a 45-day season between October 1 and January 31 with a 3-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

## Proposed Season:

Oct. 19, 2023 – Nov. 24, 2023

Jan. 6, 2024 – Jan. 20, 2024

**Daily Bag Limit:** 3 birds/day



## **PROPOSED MARYLAND MIGRATORY GAME BIRD SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR THE 2023-24 HUNTING YEAR**

### **SPECIAL EARLY RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE**

***Federal framework:*** A 15-day special season may be held between September 1 – 15 in the Eastern zone and a 25-day season between September 1 - 25 in the Western zone.

#### Proposed Season Dates

Eastern Zone                      Sep. 1, 2023 - Sept 15, 2023

Western Zone                      Sep. 1, 2023 - Sept 25, 2023

Daily Bag Limit: 8 in both zones. Possession limit is 3 times the daily limit.

Eastern Hunt Zone: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97 and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of 301 to the Virginia line.

Western Hunt Zone: Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery and Washington Counties; and that part of Anne Arundel County west of Interstate 895, Interstate 97 and Route 3; that part of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County west of 301 to the Virginia line.

Shotguns capable of holding more than 3 shells may be used. Shooting hours in both zones are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

### **SEPTEMBER TEAL SEASON**

***Federal framework:*** States may select a 16 day season to be held between September 1 and 30. Teal season may not run concurrently with other seasons (resident Canada goose) that allow special considerations such as modified shooting hours or unplugged guns.

Proposed Season Dates              Sep. 16, 2023 - Sep. 30, 2023

Daily Bag Limit: 6 blue-winged or green-winged teal, singly or in aggregate. The possession limit is 3 times the daily bag limit.

September Teal Hunt Zone: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; that part of Anne Arundel County east of Interstate 895, Interstate 97, Route 3; that part of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that part of Charles County east of 301 to the Virginia line. Shooting hours for teal during this season are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

### **DUCKS, COOTS and MERGANSERS**



## YOUTH, VETERAN, AND MILITARY WATERFOWL HUNTING DAYS

***Federal Framework: States may select two days per duck-hunting zone, designated as “Youth, Veteran, and Military Waterfowl Hunting Days,” in addition to their regular duck seasons. The days must be held outside any regular duck season on a weekend, holiday or other non-school day when youth hunters would have the maximum opportunity to participate. The days may be held up to 14 days before or after any regular duck season framework, within any split of a regular duck season or within any other open season on migratory birds. New for the 2021-22 hunting season military veterans (as defined in Section 101 of title 38, United States Code) of any age and members of the armed forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on Active duty (other than for training) can participate in these two hunt days.***

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 4, 2023 and Feb. 3, 2024

Daily Bag and Possession Limits: The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 4 sea ducks (no more than 3 long-tailed ducks, 3 scoters or 3 eiders), 4 mallards (no more than 2 hen mallard), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 1 pintail, 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 fulvous tree duck and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. In addition, youth hunters may take 2 Canada geese in the Atlantic Population Hunt Zone or 5 Canada Geese in the Late Resident Canada Goose Hunt Zone, 2 brant, 25 light geese and 15 coots. No open season for harlequin ducks and swans.

Any licensed hunter 16 years old or younger may participate during these one-day hunts. Youth of this age who are exempt from the Maryland hunting license requirements may also participate. Youth waterfowl hunters must possess a receipt showing they purchased a \$9 Maryland Migratory Game Bird Hunting Stamp. A Federal Migratory Hunting and Conservation Stamp is required of youth hunters who are 16 years old. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult at least 21 years old that holds a valid Maryland hunting license or is exempt from the hunting license requirements. The accompanying adult may call waterfowl, assist with decoys, and retrieve downed birds but may not possess a hunting weapon.

## ATLANTIC POPULATION (AP) CANADA GEESE

***Federal Framework: AP Zone: A 45-day season may be held between November 15 and February 5, with a 2-bird daily bag limit. These seasons also include white-fronted geese. Unless specified otherwise, seasons may be split into two segments.***

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 21, 2023 – Nov. 24, 2023  
Dec. 15, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024

Bag Limit: 2 per day

AP Zone: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, St. Mary’s, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97 and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George’s County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

## AF RESIDENT POPULATION CANADA GEESE

***Federal Framework: An 80-day season may be held between November 15 and March 10, with a 5-bird daily bag limit. The season may be split into 3 segments.***

Proposed Season Dates: Nov. 18, 2023 - Nov. 24, 2023  
Dec. 11, 2023 - Mar. 5, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: 5 per day\*

RP Zone: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, and Washington Counties; and that portion of Carroll County west of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97 and west of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; and that portion of Prince George's County west of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County west of Route 301 to the Virginia line.

\*Includes Canada geese, cackling geese and white-fronted geese singly or in aggregate.

## ATLANTIC BRANT

***Federal Framework: States may select a 30-day season between the Saturday nearest September 24 (September 27) and January 31, with a 1-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.***

Proposed Season Dates: Dec. 28, 2023 - Jan. 31, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: 1 per day

## LIGHT GEESE

***Federal Framework: States may select a 107-day season between October 1 and March 10, with a 25-bird daily bag limit and no possession limit. States may split their seasons into three segments.***

Proposed Season Dates: Oct. 1, 2023 - Nov. 24, 2023  
Dec. 11, 2023 - Jan. 31, 2024  
Feb. 3, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day\*\* No possession limit.

\*\*Includes greater and lesser snow geese and Ross's geese singly or in aggregate.

## LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

***Federal Framework: The conservation order allows new methods of taking light geese, allows shooting hours for light geese to end one-half hour after sunset and imposes no daily bag limits for light geese. Control activities may be conducted only when all waterfowl (including light goose) and crane hunting seasons, excluding falconry, are closed.***

Proposed Season Dates: Nov 27, 2023 - Dec. 9, 2023  
Feb. 1, 2024 - Feb. 2, 2024  
Feb. 5, 2024 - Apr. 15, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: No Limit, no possession limit

Hunt Area: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Harford, Howard, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties; and that portion of Carroll County east of Route 31 to the intersection of Route 97, and east of Route 97 to the Pennsylvania line; that portion of Prince George's County east of Route 3 and Route 301; and that portion of Charles County east of Route 301 to the Virginia line. The Special Sea Duck Zone is excluded from this hunt area.

### **Special Regulations during Light Goose Conservation Order Season:**

(1) Participating hunters must possess a \$5 Snow Goose Conservation Order Hunting Season Permit while hunting light geese during this season; (2) Hunters may use shotguns capable of holding more than three shotshells; (3) Hunters may use electronic calls with recordings of light geese; and (4) Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

*Note: Shooting hours for regular waterfowl seasons are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset except for (1) Resident Canada geese during September seasons when shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset, and (2) for light geese during the Light Goose Conservation Order Season when shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset. All season dates are inclusive. There is no possession limit for light geese; for all other waterfowl, the possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. In the Atlantic Flyway States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina and Pennsylvania, where Sunday hunting is prohibited statewide by State law, all Sundays are closed to all take of migratory waterfowl (including mergansers and coots).*

### **WEBLESS MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS (Doves, Rails, Snipe and Woodcock)**

***Note: The USFWS recently approved compensatory days for webless migratory game birds for states including Maryland, where Sunday hunting for migratory game birds is prohibited by state law. Prior to this change, Sundays counted against the maximum number of days in states where Sunday hunting is prohibited by state law. Beginning with the 2018-19 hunting season, the federal framework will allow a maximum number of hunting days, rather than calendar days for webless migratory game birds. States were granted compensatory days for waterfowl hunting seasons in 1997.***

### **MOURNING DOVE**

***Federal Framework: States may select a 90-day season between September 1 and January 31 with a 15-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into three segments.***

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1, 2023 - Oct. 14, 2023  
Oct. 21, 2023 - Nov. 24, 2023  
Dec. 16, 2023 - Jan. 10, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: 15 per day

### **KING AND CLAPPER RAIL**

***Federal Framework:*** States may select a 70-day season between September 1 and the last Sunday in January with a 10-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1, 2023 - Nov. 21, 2023

Daily Bag Limit: 10 per day (No more than 1 King Rail)

### **SORA AND VIRGINIA RAIL**

***Federal Framework:*** States may select a 70-day season between September 1 and the last Sunday in January with a 25-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 1, 2023 - Nov. 21, 2023

Daily Bag Limit: 25 per day

### **COMMON SNIPE**

***Federal Framework:*** States may select a 107-day season between September 1 and January 31 with an 8-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Sep. 29, 2023 - Jan 31, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: 8 per day

### **WOODCOCK**

***Federal Framework:*** States may select a 45-day season between October 1 and January 31 with a 3-bird daily bag limit. States may split their seasons into two segments.

Proposed Season Dates: Oct. 19, 2023 - Nov. 24, 2023  
Jan. 6, 2024 - Jan. 20, 2024

Daily Bag Limit: 3 per day

For additional information on population status, regulations, where to hunt, and more go the [DNR Waterfowl Page](#).

**Summary of 2023 Proposed Legislation  
Wildlife and Heritage Service  
(as of January 17, 2023)**

<b>Number/ Chapter (Cross File) Total: 31</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Primary Sponsor</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Original House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates</b>	<b>Opposite House Committee(s) and Hearing Dates</b>
<a href="#">SB0001</a>	Criminal Law - Wearing, Carrying, or Transporting Firearms - Restrictions (Gun Safety Act of 2023)	<a href="#">Senator Waldstreicher</a>	Prefiled	<a href="#">Judicial Proceedings</a>	
<a href="#">SB0086</a>	Rifles and Shotguns – Possession – Age Requirement (Raise the Age Act of 2023)	<a href="#">Senator Waldstreicher</a>	Prefiled	<a href="#">Judicial Proceedings</a>	
<a href="#">SB0091</a>	Natural Resources – Apprentice Hunting License – Alterations	<a href="#">Senator Bailey</a>	Prefiled	<a href="#">Education, Energy, and the Environment</a>	
<a href="#">SB0096</a>	Howard County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone and Position of Archery Hunter	<a href="#">Senator Hester</a>	Prefiled	<a href="#">Education, Energy, and the Environment</a>	