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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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BASIC SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR DOVES AND BAND-TAILED PIGEONS ARE ESTABLISHED

Reflecting a favorable status of mourning dove populations, 1960-61 hunting regulations for this popular game bird have been liberalized by the Department of the Interior in two of the three new management units established this year for this species. Basic frameworks for seasons and bag limits were also announced for white-winged doves and band-tailed pigeons.

Individual States will select the dates for their seasons within the period September 1 through January 15, and conforming to the conditions of the framework established for each management unit. These dates will be announced after the several States have made their selections.

The Eastern Management Unit, which includes all States east of the Mississippi River and the State of Louisiana, may have 70 consecutive half-days or two periods of equal or unequal length totaling 70 half-days of mourning dove hunting from 12 noon (Standard time) to sunset. The daily bag limit for this Unit is 12 with a possession limit of 24. Last year the States in this Unit had a season of 65 half-days and a bag and possession limit of 10 and 20 respectively. Some States in this Unit do not have open seasons on mourning doves.

The Central Management Unit includes the States of Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming. Except for Texas, all States in this unit may select seasons of 60 consecutive full days or two periods of equal or unequal length totaling 60 full days. Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Because of its large size, Texas may select seasons of 60 consecutive half-days for each of two geographical areas, and in a third geographical area a season of 57 consecutive half-days plus three alternate days for the hunting of both white-winged and mourning doves. On those three days the shooting hours are from 2:00 p.m. (Standard time) until sunset. On all other days of the mourning dove hunting seasons in the State of Texas shooting hours are from 12 noon (Standard time) until sunset. Not all States in this Unit have open dove seasons.

The daily bag and possession limits for this Unit are 15 and 30 in all States except Texas and New Mexico. In New Mexico, the daily bag and possession limits on mourning and white-winged doves in the aggregate of both kinds are 15 and 30, of which not more than 10 daily and 20 in possession may be white-winged doves. In Texas, the daily bag and possession limits on mourning and white-winged doves are 15 and 30 in the aggregate of both kinds, but no more than 10 may be white-winged doves. Last year, except for Texas and New Mexico, the States in this Unit had a mourning dove season of 50 full days with a daily bag limit of 10 and a possession limit of 20.

In the Western Management Unit, which includes the States of Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington, the States may select seasons of 50 consecutive full days or two periods of equal or unequal length totaling 50 full days. Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. The daily bag limit is 10 and the possession limit is 20 in all States except Arizona and California. In Arizona, the daily bag and possession limits are 10. In California, the daily bag and possession limits on mourning and white-winged doves are 10 singly or in the aggregate of both kinds.

Since the mourning dove population index in this Unit has remained fairly constant for several years, the length of season and bag and possession limits are the same as last year.

An intensive dove banding program carried on for several years has provided the basis for establishing the three new management units. Analysis of band returns indicates that the dove harvest within each unit is comprised largely of doves produced within that unit.

White-winged dove hunting is prescribed for Arizona and New Mexico and for certain counties specified by California and Texas. Consistent with last year, the season dates for hunting white-winged doves in Arizona, California, and New Mexico will conform to those dates selected by these States for hunting mourning doves; Texas may select three alternate days for hunting this species. In Arizona, the daily bag and possession limit on white-winged doves is 25. The bag and possession limits for California, New Mexico, and Texas were discussed under the previous section on mourning doves.

Band-tailed pigeon seasons are prescribed for Washington, Oregon, and California. Oregon and Washington may select seasons of 30 consecutive full days, and California may again select 30 consecutive full-day seasons for each of two geographical areas. Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. The daily bag and possession limit is 8 this year, compared to 6 last year.

Daily shooting hours are based on Standard time within the time zone where hunting is being conducted.

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