

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR BAND-TAILED PIGEONS, WOODCOCK, RAILS, GALLINULES, SNIPE AND DOVES ABOUT SAME AS YEAR AGO

Hunting regulations for band-tailed pigeons, woodcock, rails, gallinules, common snipe and doves this fall and winter will be about the same as last year, according to Assistant Secretary Nathaniel P. Reed, who heads the Interior Department's programs for fish, wildlife, parks, and outdoor recreation.

Surveys by Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service and State wildlife agencies showed little change in populations of most of these game birds. The Service determines general "framework" rules within which the States set specific dates and bag limits.

Louisiana and States east of the Mississippi River may choose a bag limit for mourning doves of 12 daily and 24 in possession, the same as last year. Limits in other States are 10 daily and 20 in possession. An additional provision this year will allow Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana to designate two harvest zones for mourning doves in each State.

A 30-day season for band-tailed pigeons may be selected for designated parts of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah. Limits remain 5 and 10 and special permit requirements continue. The limit on white-winged doves continues at 10 in Arizona, and the season may run concurrently with the first half of the mourning dove season.

The season length on Wilson's snipe continues at 65 days in most States. The framework closing date for snipe and woodcock is February 28. However, there are the following exceptions: In 10 Northeastern and Middle Atlantic States the season cannot extend beyond January 31; in Florida and States in the Pacific Flyway, the season on snipe, but not woodcock, may be extended up to 107 days for experimental purposes.

Specific information on seasons may be obtained from State fish and game agencies. Full details of the Federal framework regulations will be published in the Federal Register in late July after States have made season selections.