

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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## EARLY HUNTING SEASON FRAMEWORKS FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS SET

Final regulations setting the 1979-80 hunting frameworks for certain migratory birds have been announced by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The rulemaking, published in the July 24, 1979, Federal Register, sets forth the outer limits for dates and times when shooting may begin and end and for the number of birds that may be taken and possessed. State wildlife officials will now select season dates and daily bag and possession limits from within these frameworks.

The regulations apply to seasons opening prior to September 29, 1979, and cover mourning doves, white-winged doves, band-tailed pigeons, rails, woodcock, common snipe, and gallinules; teal in portions of the Mississippi and Central Flyways during September; sea ducks in designated areas of the Atlantic Flyway; ducks in late September in Iowa; sandhill cranes in portions of North and South Dakota; and extended falconry seasons.

Generally the frameworks are the same as last year except for a few minor changes which affect local areas or regions. These are as follows:

--Texas will be allowed to select a 5-day hunting season for white-winged doves. The season last year was 4 days.

--Daily bag limits for white-winged doves in Arizona have been reduced and seasons modified. The change was recommended by the State of Arizona because surveys this spring indicated low breeding populations.

--Bag and possession limits for band-tailed pigeons in California, Oregon, and Washington have been reduced from eight to five birds in recognition of depressed population levels.

--Iowa may select a portion of its regular duck season, not to exceed 5 days, in September. If selected, the option may be implemented for 3 years on a trial basis and must include an evaluation of resulting population and harvest data. In 1979 the dates for the September portion would be September 22 through September 26, with hunting days chosen in September to be deducted from the number of days offered during the regular waterfowl season. Bag and possession limits which will be in effect during the 1979 regular waterfowl season will apply to the September portion of the waterfowl season.

Additional information on Federal early hunting season frameworks is available from the Washington and regional offices of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Because States may choose to make their own regulations more strict than the limits prescribed in the Federal frameworks, hunters are advised to check State regulations carefully.

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