

NDG&F February 3rd Newsletter

Deer Management Meetings Start Feb. 17

Eight public meetings to discuss deer management in North Dakota are scheduled to begin in mid-February.

State Game and Fish Department officials will present an overview of current deer population and prospects for the future, and look for input on possible options for changes in the way deer licenses are allocated.

Each meeting will begin at 7 p.m. local time.

Feb. 17 – Devils Lake, Lake Region Community College Auditorium

Feb. 17 – Casselton, City Fire Hall

Feb. 18 – Dickinson, Ramada Grand Dakota Lodge

Feb. 18 – Anamoose, VFW Club

Feb. 24 – Tioga, Farm Festival Building

Feb. 24 – Fordville, Community Center

Feb. 25 – Bismarck, North Dakota Game and Fish Department

Feb. 25 – Jamestown, The Bunker

Spring Light Goose Season

North Dakota's spring light goose season opens Feb. 15 and continues through May 18.

Residents can hunt during the spring season by having last fall's 2013-14 bird licenses. Otherwise, hunters will need to purchase either a 2014-15 combination license; or a small game, and general game and habitat license.

Nonresidents, regardless of age, need a 2014 spring light goose season license. The cost is \$50 and the license is good statewide. Nonresidents who hunt the spring season remain eligible to buy a fall season license. The spring season does not count against the 14-day fall hunting season regulation.

A federal duck stamp is not required for either residents or nonresidents.

Licenses are available only from the Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office, the department's website at gf.nd.gov, or by calling (800) 406-6409.

Availability of food and open water dictate when snow geese arrive in the state. Early migrants generally start showing up in the southeast part of the state in mid-to-late March, but huntable numbers usually aren't around until the end of March or early April. Movements into and through the state will depend on available roosting areas and the extent of the snow line.

Hunters must obtain a new Harvest Information Program registration number before venturing out into the field. The HIP number can be obtained online or by calling (888) 634-4798. The HIP number is good for the fall season as well, so spring hunters should save it to record on their fall license.

The Game and Fish Department will provide hunters with migration updates once geese have entered the state. Hunters can access the department's website, or call (701) 328-3697, to receive generalized locations of bird sightings in North Dakota until the season ends or geese have left the state. Migration reports will be updated periodically during the week.

The spring season is only open to light geese – snows, blues, and Ross's. Species identification is important because white-fronted and Canada geese travel with light geese. The season is closed to whitefronts, Canada geese, swans and all other migratory birds.

Shooting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. There is no daily bag limit or possession limit. Electronic and recorded calls, as well as shotguns capable of holding more than three shells, may be used to take light geese during this season.

There are no waterfowl rest areas designated for the spring season. Hunters should note that private land within waterfowl rest areas closed last fall may be posted closed to hunting.

Nontoxic shot is required for hunting all light geese statewide. Driving off established roads and trails is strongly discouraged during this hunt because of the likelihood of soft, muddy conditions, and winter wheat that is planted across the state.

To maintain good landowner relations, hunters are advised to seek permission before hunting on private lands or attempting any off-road travel during this season. Sprouted winter wheat is considered an unharvested crop. Therefore, hunting or off-road travel in winter wheat is not legal without landowner permission.

All regular hunting season regulations not addressed above apply to the spring season. For more information on regulations refer to the [2014 Spring Light Goose Hunting Regulations](#) and the [2013 North Dakota Waterfowl Hunting Guide](#).