

NDG&F August 17th Newsletter

Fall Turkey Season Set

North Dakota's fall turkey season is set with 3,655 licenses available to hunters, 150 fewer than last year.

Prospective hunters, including gratis applicants, can [apply online](#), or print out an application to mail, at the State Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov. Paper applications will be available by Aug. 21 from Game and Fish offices, county auditors and license vendors. The deadline for applying is Sept. 2

Applications are also accepted at the department's toll-free licensing line, 800-406-6409. A service fee is added for license applications made over the phone.

Only North Dakota residents are eligible to apply in the first lottery. Nonresidents can apply for fall turkey licenses that are still available following the first lottery.

An experimental turkey bow hunting season will continue within the city of Bismarck to help control a growing population of birds in residential areas. A maximum of 25 licenses will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis to individuals who are licensed to bow hunt deer within the city. These licenses will be available at the Game and Fish Department in Bismarck once a person has a valid city archery permit.

A maximum of 75 turkey licenses are available for an experimental bow season on the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation land south of Bismarck. Licenses will be available at the Game and Fish Department after a person receives an access permit from NDDOCR.

A maximum of 45 turkey licenses will be issued for an experimental bow season for the city of Fargo and specific surrounding areas. Licenses will be distributed to those licensed to bow hunt deer within the city limits of Fargo, and will be available at the Game and Fish headquarters in Bismarck after a person has received a valid city archery permit.

Hunting units 21 (Hettinger and Adams counties) and 53 (Divide and Williams counties) will remain closed to fall turkey hunting in 2015 because of low turkey numbers.

The fall wild turkey season extends from Oct. 10 through Jan. 3, 2016.

PLOTS Guide Available Online

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's [Private Land Open To Sportsmen Guide](#) for 2015 is now available online at the Department's website, gf.nd.gov. In addition, PLOTS Guides will be available at most license vendors throughout the state in early September.

The guide will feature about 730,000 PLOTS acres. Because the guide is printed in mid-August, some PLOTS tracts highlighted in the guide may have been removed from the program since the time of printing. There will also be some PLOTS tracts where the habitat and condition of the tract will have changed significantly. Conversely, Game and Fish may have added new tracts to the program after the guide went to press.

To minimize possible confusion, Game and Fish will update PLOTS map sheets weekly on its website.

The PLOTS Guide features maps highlighting these walk-in areas, identified in the field by inverted triangular yellow signs, as well as other public lands.

The guides are free, and will be available at county auditor offices and license vendors in the state; by walk-in at the Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office; and at district offices in Riverdale, Harvey (Lonetree), Williston, Dickinson, Jamestown and Devils Lake.

The guides are not available to mail, so hunters will have to pick one up at a local vendor, or print individual maps from the website.

Work Underway at Fish Creek and Raleigh Reservoirs

Water levels at Fish Creek Dam in Morton County and Raleigh Reservoir in Grant County have been lowered while the State Water Commission completes repairs to the outlet structures.

Scott Gangl, North Dakota Game and Fish Department fisheries management section leader, said while both lakes remain open for public use, recreationists should know that boat ramps at each lake are not usable. In addition, he said the low water level has exposed mud around the shoreline, making it difficult for anglers fishing from shore.

Gangl said once work is completed at Fish Creek Dam, the outlet will remain closed and the lake will fill as precipitation and runoff allows.

At Raleigh Reservoir, plans are to keep the lake lowered through the winter to expose and freeze the sediment. "Hopefully this will kill the invasive curly leaf pondweed that has infested the lake," Gangl said.

2015 Waterfowl Regulations Set

North Dakota's 2015 waterfowl season is set, with noteworthy changes including a daily bag limit of two canvasbacks and three white-fronted geese.

Opening day for North Dakota residents is Sept. 26 for ducks, geese, coots and mergansers.

Nonresidents may begin hunting waterfowl in North Dakota Oct. 3. The season for swans opens Oct. 3 for both residents and nonresidents.

Hunters may take six ducks per day with the following restrictions: five mallards of which two may be hens, three wood ducks, three scaup, two redheads, two pintails and two canvasbacks. Similar to last year, an additional two blue-winged teal can be taken from Sept. 26 through Oct. 11. The daily limit of five mergansers may include no more than two hooded mergansers. For ducks and mergansers, the possession limit is three times the daily limit.

The hunting season for Canada geese in the Missouri River zone will close Jan. 1, 2016, while the remainder of the state will close Dec. 24. The season for whitefronts closes Dec. 6, while the season on light geese is open through Jan. 3, 2016. Shooting hours for all geese are one-half hour before sunrise to 1 p.m. each day through Oct. 31. Beginning Nov. 1, shooting hours are extended until 2 p.m. each day.

Extended shooting hours for all geese are permitted from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset on Saturdays and Wednesdays through Nov. 25, and on Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays from Nov. 28 through the end of each season.

The bag limit for Canada geese during the regular season is eight daily and 24 in possession, except in the Missouri River zone where the limit is five daily and 15 in possession.

The daily limit on whitefronts is three with nine in possession, and light goose is 50 daily, with no possession limit.

The special youth waterfowl hunting season is Sept. 19-20. Legally licensed residents and nonresidents 15 years of age or younger can hunt ducks, coots, mergansers and geese statewide. Youth hunters must have a general game and habitat license and a fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate. A licensed adult of at least 18 years of age must accompany the youth hunter into the field.

Nonresidents have the option of buying either a statewide waterfowl license or one with zone restrictions. Nonresidents who designate zones 1 or 2 may hunt that zone for only one seven-day period during the season. Nonresident hunters who chose to hunt in zone 1 or 2 and wish to use the full 14 consecutive days allowed, must use the other seven days in zone 3. Hunters in zone 3 can hunt that zone the entire 14 days.

In accordance with state law, nonresidents are not allowed to hunt on North Dakota Game and Fish Department wildlife management areas or conservation PLOTS (Private Land Open To Sportsmen) areas from Oct. 10-16.

All migratory bird hunters, including waterfowl, must register with the Harvest Information Program prior to hunting. Hunters [purchasing a license](#) from the Game and Fish Department can easily get a HIP number. Otherwise, hunters must call 888-634-4798, or log on to the Game and Fish website at gf.nd.gov, provide the registration information, and record the HIP number on their fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate. Those who HIP registered to hunt this spring's light goose season or early fall Canada goose season do not have to register again, as it is required only once per year.

Hunters should refer to the *2015 North Dakota Waterfowl Hunting Guide* for further details on the waterfowl season. Paper copies will be at license vendors in early September.