

NDG&F September 21st Newsletter

Whooping Crane Migration

Whooping cranes are in the midst of their fall migration and sightings will increase as they make their way through North Dakota over the next several weeks. Anyone seeing these birds as they move through the state is asked to report sightings so the birds can be tracked.

Whoopers stand about five feet tall and have a wingspan of about seven feet from tip to tip. They are bright white with black wing tips, which are visible only when the wings are outspread. In flight they extend their long necks straight forward, while their long, slender legs extend out behind the tail. Whooping cranes typically migrate singly, or in groups of 2-3 birds, and may be associated with sandhill cranes.

Other white birds such as snow geese, swans and egrets are often mistaken for whooping cranes. The most common misidentification is pelicans, because their wingspan is similar and they tuck their pouch in flight, leaving a silhouette similar to a crane when viewed from below.

Anyone sighting whoopers should not disturb them, but record the date, time, location, and the birds' activity. Observers should also look closely for and report colored bands which may occur on one or both legs. Whooping cranes have been marked with colored leg bands to help determine their identity.

Whooping crane sightings should be reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office at Lostwood, 701-848-2466, or Long Lake, 701-387-4397, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department in Bismarck, 701-328-6300, or to local game wardens across the state. Reports help biologists locate important whooping crane habitat areas, monitor marked birds, determine survival and population numbers, and identify times and migration routes.

Youth Pheasant Weekend Oct. 3-4

North Dakota's two-day youth pheasant season is Oct. 3-4. Legally licensed residents and nonresidents ages 15 and younger may hunt roosters statewide.

Resident youth hunters, regardless of age, must possess a fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate and general game and habitat license. Nonresident youth hunters from states that provide a reciprocal licensing agreement for North Dakota residents qualify for North Dakota resident licenses. Otherwise, nonresident youth hunters must purchase a nonresident small game license.

Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Youth ages 12 and older need to have passed a certified hunter education course. The daily bag limit and all other regulations for the regular pheasant season apply.

An adult at least 18 years of age must accompany the youth hunter in the field. The adult may not carry a firearm.

See the [2015 North Dakota Small Game Hunting Guide](#) for additional information.

All Deer Gun Licenses Issued

The 43,275 deer gun licenses that were allocated by proclamation for the 2015 hunting season have all been issued, according to Randy Meissner, licensing manager for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

Meissner said according to state law, the number of deer gun licenses issued, including those licenses issued as gratis, cannot exceed the number of licenses authorized by the governor's proclamation.

The deer gun season opens Friday, Nov. 6 at noon central time.

Archery licenses can still be purchased through the end of the bow season on Jan. 3.

Youth Waterfowl Trailer Available

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department and Ducks Unlimited co-sponsor a trailer full of waterfowl hunting gear that is available to families with young hunters.

Purchased by the Game and Fish Department's Encouraging Tomorrow's Hunters grant program, the trailer is designed for families who don't have the appropriate gear for their young hunters to hunt waterfowl. The equipment is donated by Avery Outdoors.

Use of the trailer is free, and it is equipped with goose and duck decoys for field hunting, and two bags of floating duck decoys and marsh seats for hunting a wetland.

For more information, or to reserve equipment, contact the Ducks Unlimited office in Bismarck at 701-355-3500.

Teddy Roosevelt Family Day Sept. 27

Families looking for a fun afternoon filled with outdoor activities are invited to attend Teddy Roosevelt Family Day on Sunday, Sept. 27 at McDowell Dam just east of Bismarck.

The free event runs from 1-4 p.m. and families can come and go at any time. It features many hands-on activities including archery, BB gun shooting, fishing, animal identification, prizes and more.

The first 750 kids who attend also receive a free Teddy Roosevelt patch.

Organized by area Boy Scout, Girl Scout and 4-H organizations, Teddy Roosevelt Family Day is sponsored by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Scheels All Sports, Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

McDowell Dam is 3.5 miles east of Bismarck on ND Highway 10, then one mile north.