

NDG&F September 2nd Newsletter

Youth Waterfowl Weekend is Sept. 17-18

North Dakota's two-day youth waterfowl season is Sept. 17-18. Legally licensed resident and nonresident youth waterfowl hunters age 15 and younger may hunt ducks, geese, coots and mergansers statewide.

The daily bag limit and species restrictions for the youth season are the same as for regular duck and goose seasons. Exception: the additional two blue-winged teal allowed during the first 16 days of the regular season are not allowed during the youth season.

Resident and qualifying nonresident youth waterfowl hunters must possess a general game and habitat license and a fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate. Nonresidents from states that do not provide a reciprocal licensing agreement for North Dakota residents must purchase the entire nonresident waterfowl license package.

In addition, all youth hunters must be [Harvest Information Program](#) certified, and youth ages 12 and older need to have passed a certified hunter education course. Hunters age 15 and younger do not need a federal duck stamp.

Hunters who do not HIP certify when they [buy a North Dakota license](#), can add it by visiting the Game and Fish website at gf.nd.gov, or by calling 888-634-4798 and recording the HIP number on their printed license.

Shooting hours for the youth waterfowl season are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. An adult of at least 18 years of age must accompany the resident youth hunter into the field, and a licensed adult is required to accompany a nonresident youth hunter. The two-day weekend hunt does not count against a nonresident adult hunter's 14-day regular season waterfowl dates.

Deer Season for Young Hunters Opens Sept. 16

Friday, Sept. 16 at noon signals the start of a nine-and-a-half-day deer hunting season for youth ages 12-15.

Licensed residents ages 12 and 13, and 11-year-olds who turn age 12 in 2016, are allowed to hunt statewide, but only for antlerless white-tailed deer. Resident deer gun hunters age 14 or 15, and 13-year-olds who turn age 14 in 2016, with a "youth season" license, can hunt statewide for any deer, except antlerless mule deer in units 4A, 4B and 4C. In addition, a special license is required to hunt antlered mule deer in units 3B1, 3B2, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E and 4F.

After opening day, hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. Solid daylight fluorescent orange vests or coats, and hats are required for all young hunters and their adult mentors.

Each youth deer hunter must be under direct supervision of an adult while in the field.

In addition to the deer license, hunters must possess a general game and habitat license and hunting certificate.

The youth deer season closes Sunday, Sept. 25.

2015 Pheasant Season Summarized

The number of pheasants taken last year in North Dakota was similar to 2014, according to statistics compiled by the State Game and Fish Department.

Last year, more than 85,000 hunters (up 9 percent) harvested nearly 590,000 roosters (up 0.4 percent). In 2014, 78,000 hunters took 587,000 roosters.

Counties with the highest percentage of pheasants taken by resident hunters in 2015 were Morton, 7.4 percent; Hettinger, 6.4; Grant, 5.8; Stark, 5.8; and McLean, 5.7.

Top counties for nonresident hunters were Hettinger, 20.3 percent; Bowman, 11.7; Divide, 6.8; Adams, 5.8; and Emmons, 5.1.

Annual pheasant season statistics are determined by a mail survey of resident and nonresident hunters.

Grouse and Partridge Seasons Open Sept. 10

North Dakota's grouse and partridge hunting seasons open Sept. 10, and hunters can expect somewhat lower bird numbers compared to 2015.

Aaron Robinson, upland game management supervisor for the State Game and Fish Department, said last year's harvest results suggest a good population heading into the 2015 fall hunting season.

"Hunters were able to find birds last year, and we are hopeful that with a little hard work this trend will continue for the 2016 fall hunting season," Robinson said.

Harvest results for the 2015 season show more than 23,000 sharp-tailed grouse hunters (up 10 percent from 2014) harvested 83,000 birds (up 15 percent), while more than 18,000 Hungarian partridge hunters (up 13 percent) bagged 59,000 Huns (up 60 percent).

Ruffed grouse are primarily found in the native aspen woodlands of Rolette, Bottineau, Pembina, Walsh, Cavalier and portions of McHenry counties. While the ruffed grouse population remains low, Robinson said the birds are in an upward cycle and with good production an improved population is expected.

Shooting hours for the upcoming season are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Sharptails, ruffed grouse and Huns each have a daily limit of three and a possession limit of 12.

Hunters, regardless of age, must have a fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate and general game and habitat license. In addition, hunters age 16 and older need a small game license.

For further season information and regulations, hunters should consult the [North Dakota 2016-17 Small Game Hunting Guide](#).

Landowners Seek Doe Hunters

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is currently working with landowners in 10 hunting units across the state who would like to host hunters with antlerless deer licenses in 2016.

Participating landowners are located in hunting units 2I, 2J2, 2K1, 2K2, 3A4, 3B3, 3D2, 3F1, 3F2 and 4E.

The program is not intended for buck hunters, but designed to direct hunters with antlerless licenses to specific areas to reduce deer populations.

Interested hunters can get their [name on a list of possible participants](#) by accessing the Game and Fish Department's website at gf.nd.gov. Hunters who do not have internet access can call the department's main office in Bismarck at 701-328-6300.

Hunters will provide their address, hunting unit(s) where they hold valid antlerless licenses, and if using rifle, muzzleloader or bow. From this list the department will select the number of hunters landowners have agreed to host. These hunters will be sent the landowner's name, phone number and any information relating to the landowner's specific situation.

Hunters must have a valid 2016 deer gun license – the Game and Fish Department does not provide a hunting license with this program.

Not everyone who signs up will end up with a new place to hunt, because not everyone's schedule will match up with a landowner's, and more people will likely put their name on the list than there are openings. Participating landowners currently have openings for about 110 doe hunters.

North Dakota's 2016 regular deer gun season runs from Nov. 4-20. In addition, the archery season extends through Jan. 8, 2017; the youth season is Sept. 16-25; and muzzleloader runs from Nov. 25 – Dec. 11.