

NDG&F August 6th Newsletter

HIP Certification Required for Migratory Bird Hunters

Migratory game bird hunters are reminded to register with the Harvest Information Program prior to hunting in North Dakota this fall.

HIP certification is required for all migratory bird hunters, regardless of age, before hunting ducks, geese, swans, mergansers, coots, cranes, snipe, doves or woodcock.

Hunter compliance is essential in order to obtain reliable national and regional estimates of annual harvest of all migratory game bird species. These estimates provide information biologists need to make sound decisions concerning hunting seasons, bag limits and population management.

Hunters who purchase a license through the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's electronic licensing system (gf.nd.gov) or instant licensing telephone number at (800) 406-6409 can easily get HIP certified.

Otherwise, hunters can access the department's website, or call (888) 634-4798 and record the HIP number on their fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate.

Those who registered to hunt the spring light goose season in North Dakota do not have to register with HIP again, as it is required only once per year. However, hunters must HIP register in each state for which they are licensed before hunting migratory game birds.

Duck Brood Index Up from Last Year

North Dakota's 2012 fall duck flight is expected to have twice as many birds as last year.

Mike Johnson, game management section leader for the State Game and Fish Department, said the fall flight estimate is a combination of the breeding duck survey and the brood survey.

Results from the breeding duck survey in May indicated the duck index was up 16 percent from 2011 and exceeded the long-term average by 112 percent.

May water conditions were down 57 percent from 2011 and 6 percent from the long-term average.

The mid-July waterfowl production survey revealed the duck brood index was up 110 percent from 2011 and 155 percent above the long-term average. Average brood size was 6.9 ducklings, down 0.8 from last year. The long term average is 7.1 ducklings per brood.

The water index in mid-July was down 48 percent from last year, but still 10 percent above the long-term average.

The index does not count every water body or duckling in the state. Instead, representative transects across the state are sampled each year. Over time, survey results provide biologists with trend information that allows annual comparisons of waterfowl production in the state.