

## **NDG&F September 3rd Newsletter**

### **Grouse and Partridge Seasons Open Sept. 11**

When North Dakota's grouse and partridge seasons open Sept. 11, hunters should expect to see more grouse than last year, but not as many partridge.

Aaron Robinson, upland game biologist for the [North Dakota Game and Fish Department](#) in Dickinson, said sharp-tailed grouse numbers have rebounded from the past two years, and are similar to 2007-08. "Sharptails are not going to be everywhere, but there will be more than last year," Robinson said. "This year's age ratio of juveniles to adults (three per adult) is extremely high, which indicates better production than the last couple years and an increasing population."

Preliminary results from July and August roadside counts indicate sharp-tailed grouse are up nearly 47 percent statewide from last year, with the number of broods observed up 30 percent. The average brood size is about the same as in 2008, but the age ratio is up 43 percent.

Hungarian partridge were negatively influenced by the wet spring and the past two severe winters. Robinson said the statewide population is down about 35 percent from 2009, and the number of broods observed is down 38 percent. "Huns need dry, warm weather to flourish, and we haven't had that for a few years," he added. "We need mild weather over the next few years to bring these birds back."

North Dakota's spring ruffed grouse survey indicated a 10 percent population increase statewide compared to 2009. The number of male grouse heard drumming in the Pembina Hills was up 23 percent from last year, while the Turtle Mountains had a 4 percent increase. Overall, the 2010 count was 98 percent higher than two years ago.

The Turtle Mountains in Bottineau and Rolette counties and the Pembina Hills area of Cavalier and Pembina counties should provide ruffed grouse hunters with the best opportunities this fall.

The sage grouse season will remain closed in 2010 due to a low population. In addition, the prairie chicken season will be closed this fall due to low bird numbers.

Shooting hours 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 2010-11 Small Game Hunting Guide](#).

### **Grouse Hunters Encouraged to Submit Wing Envelopes**

The [North Dakota Game and Fish Department](#) is asking grouse hunters for help with bird management by simply collecting some feathers and sending in wing envelopes this fall.

Aaron Robinson, upland game bird biologist in Dickinson, said wing data provides valuable information for managing the state's bird population. "It allows us to monitor production, reconcile bird counts and get a better understanding of the harvest ratio of males to females, and juveniles to adults," Robinson said.

Submitting wing data doesn't take much time, Robinson said, with the instructions printed on the envelope. "Remove one wing, two central tail feathers and several head feathers, and enclose them in the postage-paid return envelope," he added.

Hunters interested in receiving wing envelopes should contact the Game and Fish Department's main office in Bismarck at (701) 328-6300, or by [e-mail](#). In addition, Game and Fish district offices have a supply of wing envelopes for distribution.

### **Deer Season for Youth Ages 12-15 Opens Sept. 17**

Friday, Sept. 17 at noon signals the start of a nine-and-a-half day deer hunting season for youth ages 12-15.

Licensed youth ages 12 and 13 are allowed to hunt statewide, but for only antlerless white-tailed deer. First-time deer hunters age 14 or 15 with a "youth season" license can hunt statewide for any deer, except for restricted licenses and units in western North Dakota.

In addition, 14- and 15-year-olds with special "youth season" licenses can use additional concurrent season antlerless deer licenses during this youth deer season. Hunters must follow the unit and species restrictions listed on the license.

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 season closes Sunday, Sept. 26.

### **Youth Waterfowl Season is Sept. 18-19**

North Dakota's two-day youth waterfowl season is Sept. 18-19. 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.

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 purchase a license through the [North Dakota Game and Fish Department](#) can easily get HIP certified. Otherwise, hunters must call (888) 634-4798, or log on to the Game and Fish website, and record the HIP number on their fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate.

Shooting hours for the youth waterfowl season are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. An adult 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.

### **Sandhill Crane Season Opens Sept. 18**

North Dakota's sandhill crane season opens Sept. 18. Hunters are urged to use caution and identify birds to prevent shooting at whooping cranes as they begin their fall migration.

The sandhill crane season is open through Nov. 14 in unit 1 (west of U.S. Highway 281), and through Oct. 24 in unit 2 (east of U.S. Highway 281). Limits are three daily and six in possession in unit 1, and two daily and four in possession in unit 2. Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to 1 p.m. each day through Nov. 6. Beginning Nov. 7, shooting hours are extended until 2 p.m. each day.

In addition to other licenses required, prospective hunters need a \$5 crane permit. Hunters can apply online, or print out a resident or nonresident application for mailing, at the [North Dakota Game and Fish Department](#) website. Harvest Information Program certification is required. To get HIP certified, access the department's website, or call (888) 634-4798.

Hunters can also send the permit fee, along with personal information, including height, weight, social security number, date of birth, color of hair and eyes, and hunter education number and state issued, to Crane Permit, NDGF, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501.