

New Hampshire Migratory Bird Hunting Seasons 2023-2024

Species	Northern Zone	Inland & Ct. River Zone	Coastal Zone	Bag Limit	Possession Limit
Ducks ^A	Oct. 2 – Nov. 30	Oct. 5 – Nov. 3 Nov. 22 – Dec. 21	Oct. 4 – Oct. 10 Nov. 22 – Jan. 13	6	18
Mergansers ^B	Dates same as ducks			5	15
Coots	Dates same as ducks			15	45
Sea Ducks ^C	Dates same as ducks			4	12
Canada Geese (Sept)	Statewide Sep. 1 – Sep. 25			5	15
Canada Geese (Regular)	Dates same as ducks			2	6
Snow Geese	Oct. 2. – Nov. 30	Oct. 5 – Dec. 21	Oct. 4 – Jan. 13	25	NONE
Brant	Oct. 2 – Oct. 31	Oct. 5 – Nov. 3	Oct. 4 – Oct. 10 Nov. 22 – Dec. 14	1	3
Falconry	Dec. 1 – Jan. 14	Nov. 4 – Nov. 21 Dec. 22 – Jan. 17	Jan. 26 – Mar. 10	3	9
Woodcock	Statewide: Oct. 1 – Nov. 14			3	9
Common Snipe	Statewide: Sep. 15 – Nov. 14			8	24
Crow	Statewide: Aug. 15 – Nov. 30, Mar. 16 – Mar. 31			NONE	NONE
Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekend	September 23 & 24				

^A Includes all species of ducks, with the following restrictions: No more than 4 mallards (2 of which may be a hen), 2 black ducks, 3 wood ducks, 1 pintail, 2 canvasbacks, 2 redheads, 1 scaup, and no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks, or 3 eiders (1 of which may be a hen). The harlequin duck season is closed. Possession limits are three times the daily bag limit (e.g. The mallard possession limit is 12, of which 6 may be hens).

^B The daily bag limit of 5 mergansers is in addition to the daily bag limit of 6 ducks. Possession limits are three times the daily bag limit.

*The species-specific restriction of 2 hooded mergansers was removed in the 2022-23 season.

^C The special sea duck season was eliminated starting in the 2022-23 season. Sea ducks are now part of the general duck bag. The daily bag limit for sea ducks is 4 and the possession limit is 12.

Requirements for Migratory Bird Hunting in New Hampshire

Species	NH Hunting License	NH Waterfowl License	Federal Duck Stamp	HIP Permit	Non-Toxic Shot	Firearm Plug
Ducks, mergansers, brant, geese	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Woodcock and snipe	✓			✓		✓
Crow	✓					

SUMMARY OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

In addition to State regulations, the following Federal rules apply to the taking, possession, shipping, transporting, and storing of migratory game birds. This is only a summary. Each hunter should also consult actual Federal regulations, which may be found in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.

RESTRICTION. No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, crossbow, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance.
- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler which is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
- From a sink box (a low floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water).
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with involvement of both legs, usually due to disease or injury to the spinal cord.
- From or by means of any motor boat or sail boat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- Using records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of birds calls.
- By means or aid of any motorized conveyance or any sail boat used for the purpose of or resulting in the driving, rallying, chasing, or stirring up of birds.
- By the aid of baiting, or on or over any baited area, where a person knows or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited. Baiting means the direct or indirect placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering of salt, grain, or other feed that could serve as a lure or attraction for migratory game birds to, on, or over any areas where hunters are attempting to take them. Any such area will remain a baited area for ten days following the complete removal of all such salt, grain or other feed.

CLOSED SEASON. No person shall take migratory game birds during the closed season.

SHOOTING OR HAWKING HOURS. No person shall take migratory game birds except during the hours open to shooting and hawking as prescribed.

DAILY BAG LIMIT. No person shall take in any one day more than one daily bag limit.

TAGGING. No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

1. The hunter's signature.
2. The hunter's address.
3. The total number of birds involved, by species.
4. The dates such birds were killed.

CUSTODY OF BIRDS OF ANOTHER. No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are properly tagged.

FIELD POSSESSION LIMIT. No person shall possess more than one daily bag limit tagged or not tagged while in the field or while returning from the field to one's car, hunting camp, home, etc.

WANTON WASTE. No person shall kill or cripple any migratory game bird without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird and retain it in their actual custody.

POSSESSION OF LIVE BIRDS. Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

DRESSING. No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird (except doves and band-tailed pigeons) and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one fully feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported from the field to one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility.

SHIPMENT. No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

IMPORTATION. For information regarding the importation of migratory birds killed in another country, hunters should consult 50 CFR 20.61 through 20.66. One fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all migratory game birds being transported between the port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility. No person shall import migratory game birds belonging to another person.

MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING AND CONSERVATION STAMP.

The law requires that each waterfowl hunter 16 years of age and over must carry on their person a valid Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, or duck stamp, signed in ink across the face.

DUAL VIOLATION. Violation of State migratory bird regulations is also a violation of Federal regulations.

CAUTION: More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting. For additional information on Federal regulations, contact Resident Special Agent, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 1101, Portsmouth NH 03802, (603) 433-0502. Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge, (603) 431-7511. Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge, (603) 482-3415.

BANDED WATERFOWL: Please report all banded waterfowl at www.reportband.gov

This publication is intended for information purposes only. The officially filed rules may be examined at Administrative Procedures Division – Office of Legislative Services, State House, Concord, New Hampshire 03301.



For more information, contact:

New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-2461 - huntnh.com