



WALTER RABON
COMMISSIONER

CHRIS HARPER
DIRECTOR

April 9, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Board of Natural Resources

FROM: Chris Harper

SUBJECT: **Action on Proposed Amendments to Hunting Regulations, Subject 391-4-2, Pertaining to Migratory Bird Regulations**

Enclosed for your review and favorable consideration are the proposed migratory bird hunting seasons. For your convenience, a one-page summary of migratory bird season dates is included (page A2).

Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the primary authority for regulating migratory birds. The USFWS annually establishes a framework (opening and closing dates, maximum season length, and maximum bag limits) within which the states must set their migratory bird hunting seasons. These frameworks are developed with the input of state wildlife agencies and are informed using biological population, harvest, and habitat parameters.

Our proposed waterfowl hunting seasons maximize hunting opportunity within the approved federal frameworks. We plan to request Board adoption of the enclosed proposals at its meeting on April 28, 2026.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me. Thank you.

CH/klj

Attachments

PROPOSED 2026-2027 MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS

Species	Proposed Season
Canada Goose	September 5-27 October 10-25 November 21-29 December 12 - January 31
Common (Wilson's) Snipe	November 15 - February 28
Coots, Ducks, and Gallinules (including mergansers and sea ducks)	November 21-29 December 12 - January 31
Falconry	September 5-27 October 10-25 November 14-15 November 21 – December 6 December 12 - January 31
Marsh Hens (Clapper, King, Virginia, and Sora Rails)	September 11-14 September 26 - November 30
Mourning Dove	September 5 – October 11 November 21-29 December 19 – January 31
Snow & White-fronted Geese	October 10-25 November 21-29 December 12 - January 31
Teal (Early season)	September 12-20
Woodcock	December 5 – January 17
Youth, Active Military, & Veterans Days	November 14-15

(STRIKETHROUGH VERSION)

**RULES
OF
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**CHAPTER 391-4
WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION**

**SUBJECT 391-4-2
HUNTING REGULATIONS**

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391-4-2-.53	Sea Ducks (Scoters, Eiders, Long-tailed Ducks)

Rule 391-4-2-.43. Canada Geese, Snow Geese, White-fronted Geese and Brant

(1) The open seasons for hunting Canada Geese are the first Saturday in September and 22 days thereafter; the second Saturday in October and 15 days thereafter; the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter; and from December 12 through January 31 ~~the first Saturday after December 5 and 50 days thereafter.~~

(2) Snow Geese (including Blue Geese) and White-Fronted Geese may be taken during open seasons for hunting Canada Geese except during September.

(2) The daily bag limits on Canada Geese and White-Fronted Geese combined are five (5) per day. The daily bag limit on Snow Geese is five (5).

(3) The season is closed on Atlantic Brant.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15(d).

Rule 391-4-2-.45. Coots

(1) The open seasons for hunting coots are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31 ~~the first Saturday after December 5 and 50 days thereafter.~~

(2) The daily bag limit is fifteen (15).

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15(d).

Rule 391-4-2-.47. Ducks

(1) The open seasons for hunting ducks are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31 ~~the first Saturday after December 5 and 50 days thereafter.~~

(2) The department is authorized to annually determine and publish daily or seasonal bag and possession limits for ducks compliant with the federal frameworks established by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(3) The season is closed on harlequin ducks.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15

~~(d).~~

Rule 391-4-2-.49. Gallinules (Common Moorhen)

(1) The open seasons for hunting gallinules are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31 ~~the first Saturday after December 5 and 50 days thereafter.~~

(2) The daily bag limit on gallinules is fifteen (15).

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15(d).

Rule 391-4-2-.50. Mergansers

(1) The open seasons for hunting mergansers are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31 ~~the first Saturday after December 5 and 50 days thereafter.~~

(2) In addition to the limits applying to other ducks during the regular duck season, the daily bag limit on mergansers is five (5).

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15(d).

Rule 391-4-2-.53. Sea Ducks (Scoters, Eiders, Long-tailed Ducks)

(1) The open seasons for hunting scoters, eiders, and long-tailed ducks are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31 ~~the first Saturday after December 5 and 50 days thereafter.~~

(2) The daily bag limit on sea ducks is four (4) and applies to the six (6) duck daily bag limit. This limit cannot include more than three (3) scoters daily; nor more than three (3) eiders daily of which no more than one (1) may be a hen; and no more than three (3) long-tailed ducks daily.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15(d).

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391-4-2-.43 Canada Geese, Snow Geese, White-fronted Geese and Brant.

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(2) Snow Geese (including Blue Geese) and White-Fronted Geese may be taken during open seasons for hunting Canada Geese except during September.

(2) The daily bag limits on Canada Geese and White-Fronted Geese combined are five (5) per day. The daily bag limit on Snow Geese is five (5).

(3) The season is closed on Atlantic Brant.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15.

391-4-2-.45 Coots.

(1) The open seasons for hunting coots are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31.

(2) The daily bag limit is fifteen (15).

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15.

391-4-2-.47 Ducks.

(1) The open seasons for hunting ducks are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31.

(2) The department is authorized to annually determine and publish daily or seasonal bag and possession limits for ducks compliant with the federal frameworks established by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(3) The season is closed on harlequin ducks.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15.

391-4-2-.49 Gallinules (Common Moorhen).

(1) The open seasons for hunting gallinules are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31.

(2) The daily bag limit on gallinules is fifteen (15).

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15.

391-4-2-.50 Mergansers.

(1) The open seasons for hunting mergansers are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31.

(2) In addition to the limits applying to other ducks during the regular duck season, the daily bag limit on mergansers is five (5).

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 27-1-4, 27-3-15.

391-4-2-.53 Sea Ducks (Scoters, Eiders, Long-tailed Ducks).

(1) The open seasons for hunting scoters, eiders, and long-tailed ducks are the Saturday preceding Thanksgiving Day and 8 days thereafter and from December 12 through January 31.

(2) The daily bag limit on sea ducks is four (4) and applies to the six (6) duck daily bag limit. This limit cannot include more than three (3) scoters daily; nor more than three (3) eiders daily of which no more than one (1) may be a hen; and no more than three (3) long-tailed ducks daily.

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