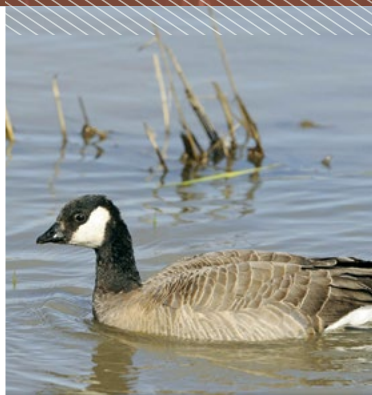
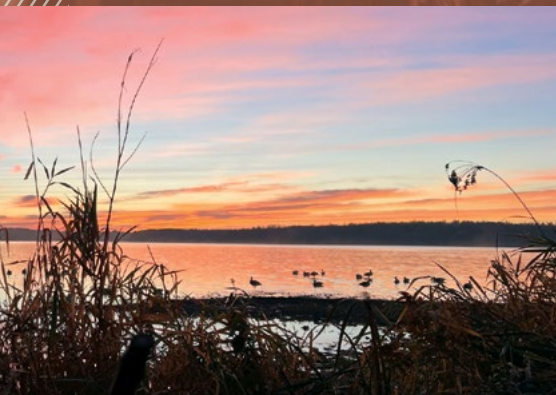


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Effective September
2025
through April 30, 2026

MINNESOTA WATERFOWL HUNTING REGULATIONS



m DEPARTMENT OF
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This booklet covers the basic rules for waterfowl hunting in Minnesota. It's not a full list of all hunting laws and isn't a legal document.



**NEW Electronic
Licensing System
coming soon.
See page 4.**

WATERFOWL HUNTERS



Future hunters are relying on you to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species... do your part.

- ✓ **CLEAN** aquatic plants, animals and mud from all gear, boats, clothing, dogs and vehicles.
- ✓ **DRAIN** all water from boats and equipment and leave drain plugs out when transporting.
- ✓ **DRY** everything for at least 5 days before hunting in other waters.

Learn more at mndnr.gov/ais

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Minnesota State Duck Stamp

Funds raised through the sale of Minnesota state duck stamps pay for waterfowl research, management and habitat thereby improving conditions for the state’s resident and migrating waterfowl.



Cackling goose painting by Kurt Kegler, Mankato, Minnesota.

Cover main image provided by R3 Community Asset Library. Cover habitat image by Tyler Kiehm. Cackling goose photo by George Gentry, USFWS.

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Electronic Licensing System

Impacts of new Electronic Licensing System (ELS)

Updates to the electronic licensing system will impact processes for license purchasing, registration, validation/tagging, and lottery preference points.

The information in this book is accurate **as of the time of publication**. However, the new ELS may go live after publication. Once live, the new ELS will impact processes for purchasing licenses, validation, registering harvests and accessing your lottery preference points.

How do I know if the new ELS is live?

For the most up-to-date information, refer to the online resources and contact information listed below.

Learn more on our website

To learn more about these changes visit MNDNR.gov/elsinfo or scan the QR code below.



Additional questions?

If you have questions, please call the DNR Information Center at 888-MINNDNR (646-6367) or 651-296-6157.

***NEW for 2025**

- Regulation book updates: These changes will improve user experience and accessibility. The organization and presentation of content will be updated in 2025 and 2026.
- White Earth Reservation, Leech Lake Reservation, and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe have specific guidance for early teal season hunting within tribal boundaries. For more details, see page 9.
- Sora and Virginia rails may be taken from September 1 through November 9. See page 12 for details.
- Wilson's Snipe may be taken from September 1 through December 16. See page 12 for details.

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LICENSE INFORMATION



The new ELS may go live prior to 2025 hunting seasons. Once live, it will affect activities on this page. See page 4 for details.

General

Resident and nonresident waterfowl hunters 16 years old or older must have one of the following licenses. (Prices do not include additional issuing fees.)

License	Age	Cost
Resident Senior Citizen Small Game	65 and older	\$13.50
Resident Youth Small Game	16 and 17	\$5
Resident Small Game	18 to 64	\$22
Resident 72-hour Small Game	18 to 64	\$19
Resident Individual Sports	18 and older	\$41
Resident Combination Sports	18 and older	\$57
Resident Individual Super Sports	18 and older	\$100
Resident Combination Super Sports	18 and older	\$126
Resident Lifetime Small Game		Prices vary by age
Resident Lifetime Sports		Prices vary by age
Nonresident Youth Small Game	16 and 17	\$5
Nonresident 72-hour Small Game	18 and older	\$75
Nonresident Small Game	18 and older	\$102

Where can I buy a license or stamp?

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources issues licenses at agent locations throughout Minnesota – sporting goods stores, hunting and fishing supplies stores and some retail chains.

Federal migratory waterfowl stamp validations will be available at all electronic license vendors. The electronic validation for the federal stamp is valid for the entire season. Pictorial stamps will be mailed to purchasers after the close of waterfowl seasons.

How do I buy a license online or by telephone?

Licenses may be purchased via the DNR website at mndnr.gov or by calling 888-665-4236. Additional convenience fees are added for sales via the internet or telephone.



The new ELS may go live prior to 2025 hunting seasons. Once live, it will affect activities on this page. See page 4 for details.

Stamp and apprentice hunter validations

License validations for state migratory waterfowl stamps are legal for hunting without the pictorial stamp. Purchasers can request the optional pictorial stamp for a fee but it is not required for hunting.

Apprentice hunter validation is available for residents and nonresidents who would normally be required to possess a firearms safety certificate to hunt small game or deer. Find details in the *Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations*.

Firearms safety certificate

If you were born after December 31, 1979, you will need one of the following to get a license to hunt wild animals with a firearm in Minnesota:

- A Firearms Safety Certificate
- An Apprentice Hunter Validation
- A past hunting license with a firearms safety mark, or
- Proof of completing a hunter safety course

HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM



Information on how to become HIP certified in the new ELS will be available online. See page 4

Before hunting waterfowl or migratory game birds (except sandhill cranes), **you must be Harvest Information Program (HIP) certified**. When you buy a license, say “yes” if you plan to hunt migratory birds. If you forget, you can still get certified later by getting a HIP receipt online or by phone. Your license will show “HIP Certified,” and you must carry it while hunting.

Why HIP?

DNR waterfowl biologists and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service use HIP information to develop more accurate estimates of all migratory birds harvested across the country.

MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTERS: **DON'T SKIP HIP**

The Harvest Information Program (HIP) is a legally required certification for migratory bird hunters that helps biologists manage migratory birds.



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Migratory game birds include ducks, geese, brant, swans, doves, band-tailed pigeons, cranes, rails, coots, gallinules, woodcock, and snipe.



fws.gov

FAW_0003_25

2025 SEASON DATES

Shooting hours

Shooting hours for sandhill crane, rail, snipe, ducks, coots, moorhens, mergansers and geese are ½ hour before sunrise to sunset for the entire season (except during teal season when shooting hours for teal begin at sunrise).

Possession limit

The possession limit for all migratory birds is 3 times the daily limit.

Teal season (statewide)

Species	Season dates	Daily limit
Blue-winged, green-winged, and cinnamon teal	Sept. 6 - 10 statewide	6 (blue-winged, green-winged, and cinnamon teal combined)

Shooting hours for teal during the teal season are sunrise to sunset. Note that this is different from other waterfowl seasons.

*NEW—Early teal season shooting restrictions

Early-season teal hunting restrictions (September 6-10) occur within the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation, the Leech Lake Reservation, and the White Earth Nation Reservation. Contact the respective tribal authorities for additional information:

- Within the boundaries of the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation, the taking of teal during the early-teal season is prohibited on wild rice beds that are posted open to rice harvest by tribal authorities. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe: <https://millelacsband.com> or at 320-532-7896.
- Within the boundaries of the Leech Lake Reservation, the taking of teal during the early-teal season is prohibited within ½ mile of wild rice beds that are posted open to rice harvest by tribal authorities. Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe: <https://llojibwe.org/drm/> or at 218-368-4767.
- Within the boundaries of the White Earth Reservation, the taking of teal during the early-teal season is prohibited on wild rice waters identified by tribal authorities. White Earth Nation: <https://whiteearth.com>, 218-935-3933 (office), or 218-850-8035 (cell).

Duck, coot, moorhen and merganser

Season dates	Species	Daily limit
North Zone Sept. 27 - Nov. 25	Duck	6
	Coot and moorhen (gallinules)	15
	Merganser	5 (no more than 2 can be hooded mergansers)
Central Zone Sept. 27 - Oct. 5; Oct. 11 - Nov. 30	Duck	6
	Coot and moorhen (gallinules)	15
	Merganser	5 (no more than 2 can be hooded mergansers)
South Zone Sept. 27 - Oct. 5; Oct. 18 - Dec. 7	Duck	6
	Coot and moorhen (gallinules)	15 each
	Merganser	5 (no more than 2 can be hooded mergansers)

Duck species bag limits

If not listed, up to 6 ducks of a species may be taken daily until the possession limit is reached.

Scaup (bluebill) daily limit is 1 through October 11 in the north zone, through October 16 in the central zone, and through October 23 in the south zone. After that time, the daily limit is 2 scaup per day through the remainder of the season in each zone.

Duck daily limit includes no more than any of the following duck species: 4 mallards (2 hen mallards), 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 2 pintail, scaup (bluebill) limit dependent on dates.

Regular goose season

Season dates	Species	Daily limits
North Zone Sept. 27 - Dec. 26	Canada, white-fronted and brant	5 combined
	Snow, blue snow and Ross's	20
Central Zone Sept. 27 - Oct. 5; Oct. 11 - Dec. 31	Canada, white-fronted and brant	5 combined
	Snow, blue snow and Ross's	20
South Zone Sept. 27 - Oct. 5; Oct. 18 - Jan. 7	Canada, white-fronted and brant	5 combined
	Snow, blue snow and Ross's	20

September goose season (statewide)

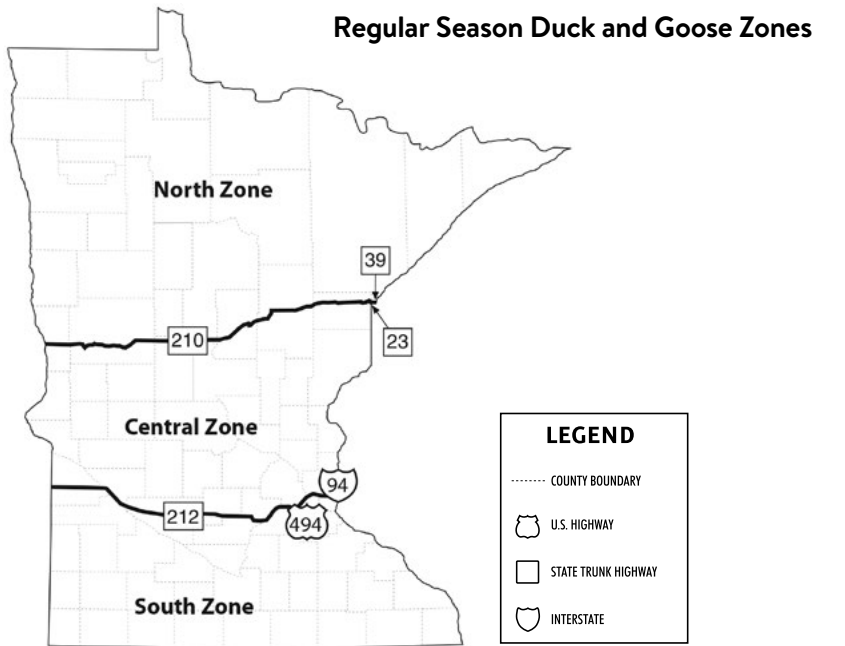
Season dates	Species	Daily limits
Sept. 6 - 21	Canada, white-fronted and brant	5 combined
	Snow, blue snow and Ross's	20

Hunting over water

During the September goose season, hunting over water is legal statewide.

Required licenses

A special permit is no longer required for the September goose season. Hunters may still need a small game license, state waterfowl stamp, federal duck stamp, and HIP certification. See pages 6-7 for requirements.



Spring Snow Goose Season

(Light Goose Conservation Action)

Minnesota again plans to participate in a cooperative light goose conservation action in February, March and April 2026. This action is being taken in an attempt to reduce an overabundance of snow geese that is threatening their arctic breeding habitat. All participants must have a Light Goose Conservation Permit in their possession while attempting to take light geese.

Other migratory birds

Species	Season dates	Daily limit	Possession limit
Mourning doves	Sept. 1 - Nov. 29	15	45
Woodcock	Sept. 20 - Nov. 3	3	9
Sora and Virginia rail	Sept. 1 - Nov. 9	25 combined	75 combined
Common snipe (Wilson's)	Sept. 1 - Dec. 16	8	24
Sandhill crane (Sandhill Crane Zone only)	Sept. 13 - Oct. 19	2	6

Special falconry season

Hunting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to sunset.

Species	Season dates	Daily limits	Possession limit
Duck, coot, mergansers, moorhen (Gallinules), and geese	North Zone Sept. 27 - Oct. 25 Dec. 13 - Jan. 21	3 combined for ALL migratory game birds	9 combined for ALL migratory game birds
Duck, coot, mergansers, moorhen (Gallinules), and geese	Central Zone Sept. 28 - Oct. 5; Oct. 11 - Nov. 30; Dec. 13 - Jan. 21		
Duck, coot, mergansers, moorhen (Gallinules), and geese	South Zone Sept. 27 - Oct. 5 Oct. 18 - Dec. 7 Dec. 13 - Jan. 21		
Woodcock, sora, rail, doves, and snipe	Sept. 1 - Dec. 16		

YOUTH HUNT

On September 13 - 14, 2025, waterfowl hunters age 17 and younger, when accompanied by a non-hunting adult (age 18 and older) may take ducks, geese, mergansers, coots and moorhens from ½ hour before sunrise to sunset.

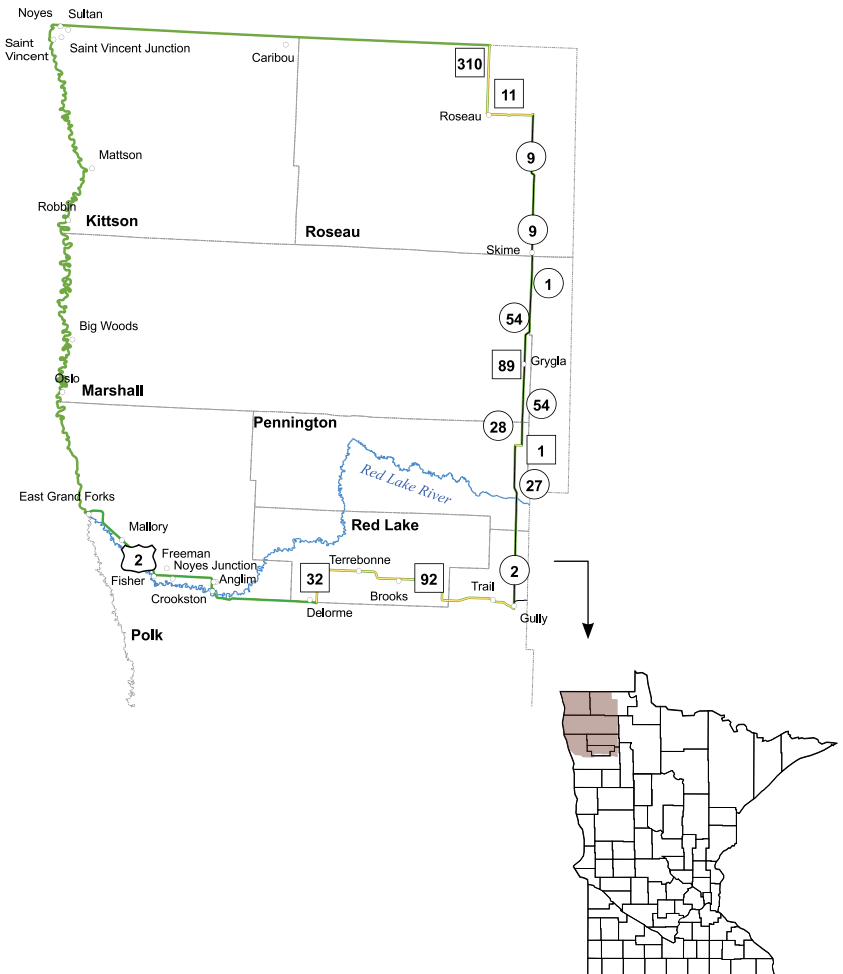
- Daily limits are the same as the regular duck and goose seasons.
- Hunters ages 13 to 17 must have a firearms safety certificate or apprentice hunter validation in their possession.
- No hunting license or state waterfowl stamps are required, except all youths age 16 and older must have a Federal Duck Stamp.
- All other migratory bird hunting regulations apply.

SANDHILL CRANE SEASON

Species	Season	Daily limit	Possession limit	Shooting hours
Sandhill crane (Sandhill Crane Zone only)	Sept. 13 - Oct. 19	2	6	½ before sunrise to sunset

- License: small game
- Stamps: not required
- Sandhill Crane Permit (\$3): all hunters
- Nontoxic shot required

Sandhill Crane Zone



Avoid Spreading Invasive Species

It is illegal to transport aquatic plants, zebra mussels, snails or other prohibited invasive species in or on boats, trailers, or other equipment such as decoys and waders. Waterfowl hunters may use emergent aquatic plants, such as cattails and bulrushes, cut above the waterline, for building blinds or camouflage.

- ✓ **Clean** aquatic plants, animals and mud from your boat, trailer, waders or hip boots, push poles, clothing, decoy and lines, dogs, and ATV or truck.
- ✓ **Drain** all water from boats and equipment and leave drain plugs out when transporting.
- ✓ **Dry** everything for at least 5 days before hunting in other waters.

Use elliptical, bulb-shaped or strap decoy anchors to reduce snagging aquatic plants.



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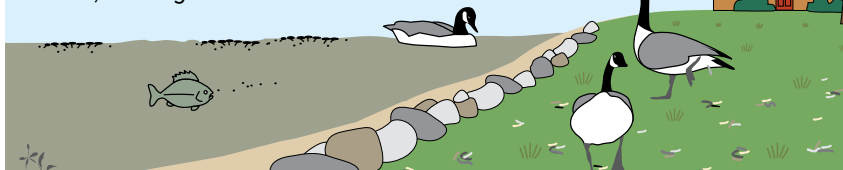


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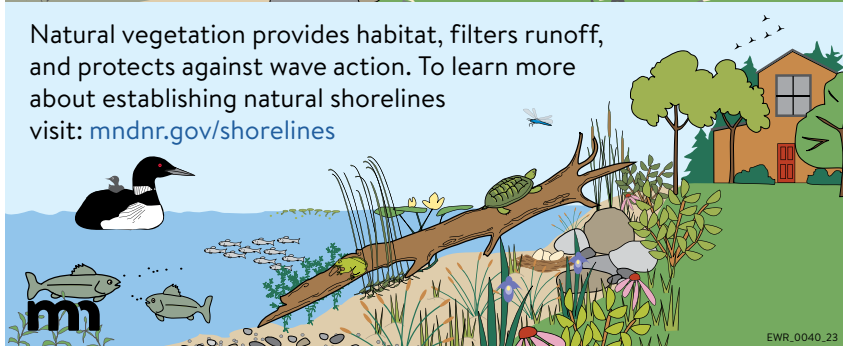
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POOP PROBLEMS?

Manicured lawns extending to the water's edge attract nuisance geese and contribute to erosion, murky water, and algae blooms.



Natural vegetation provides habitat, filters runoff, and protects against wave action. To learn more about establishing natural shorelines visit: mndnr.gov/shorelines



Aquatic Invasive Species Alert: Faucet Snail

The faucet snail carries a parasite that has killed thousands of diving ducks and coots in Minnesota. Faucet snails can be moved to new lakes on waterfowl hunting equipment – they can attach to your gear, be hidden in mud, or attached to plants. You can help prevent the spread of faucet snails by taking a few moments to check your boat, waders, push poles, decoys, and decoy anchors before leaving the water access:



- ✓ Clean aquatic plants, animals and mud from all gear, boats, clothing, dogs and vehicles.
- ✓ Drain all water from boats and equipment, and leave drain plugs out when transporting.
- ✓ Dry everything for at least 5 days before hunting in other waters.
- ✓ Check your gear before you go back out to hunt – faucet snails can live out of water for more than 5 days.

Visit mndnr.gov/AIS for more information.

GENERAL WATERFOWL REGULATIONS

Definitions

Migratory game birds

Ducks, geese, mergansers, coots, moorhens (gallinules), woodcock, rails, snipe, sandhill cranes, and mourning doves.

Migratory waterfowl

Ducks, geese, and mergansers.

Undressed bird

Ducks, or geese or other migratory game birds with one fully-feathered wing attached.

Non-toxic shot required

It is unlawful to take geese, ducks, mergansers, coots, moorhens, or sandhill cranes with lead shot or while having any lead shot in possession. Only shot approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be used.

Don't shoot a swan

Both tundra and trumpeter swans are found in Minnesota and are not legal game birds. Trumpeter swans are entirely white with a black bill and black legs. They weigh over 25 pounds. Young swans are gray-brown in color.

Opening day possession limit

On opening day of the season, no person may possess more than the daily limit.

Retrieval

A person may not kill or injure a migratory game bird without making a reasonable effort to find it and include it in the daily limit.

Taking in open water

A person may not take migratory waterfowl, coots, or rails in open water unless that person is:

1. within a natural growth of vegetation sufficient to be partially concealed by natural vegetation (including their boat), or
2. pursuing or shooting wounded birds, or
3. on a river or stream that is not more than 100 yards wide, or
4. hunting on one of the following water bodies:
 - a) Mississippi River from the Highway 61 bridge at Hastings to the Iowa border: hunting is allowed from anchored boats not more than 100 feet from any shoreline, including islands.
 - b) Lake Pepin, Lake of the Woods, and Lake Mille Lacs: open-water hunting is allowed from anchored boats.
 - c) Lake Superior: open water hunting from an anchored boat is allowed on the Minnesota waters north and east of the Minnesota/Park Point peninsula.

Watercraft

- A person using watercraft to take migratory waterfowl must comply with the requirements for “Taking in open water.” See page 16.
 - › You can take migratory waterfowl from a boat if it’s drifting, anchored, beached, moored, or being moved with paddle, oars, or a pole.
 - › You can take migratory waterfowl from a motorboat or sailboat only if the motor is off, the sails are rolled up, and the boat is not moving.
- When traveling by boat to or from a hunting spot, firearms can be unloaded and uncased if the boat has a motor or sail. Firearms must be unloaded and cased when:
 - › Within Anoka, Hennepin and Ramsey counties.
 - › Within the boundaries of a city with a population of 2,500 or more.
 - › As otherwise restricted by game refuge, shining or night vision laws.
- The following are life jacket requirements in Minnesota:
 - › State law requires children under 10 years old to wear a properly fitted life jacket while a boat is underway. Underway means not securely fastened to a permanent mooring or tied to a dock.
 - › A readily accessible and wearable life jacket is required for each person on board a boat, this includes canoes, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, paddleboats and waterfowl boats.
 - › One Type IV throwable is required on boats 16 feet or longer (except canoes and kayaks) and must be immediately available.
 - › Personal watercraft operators and passengers must each wear a life jacket.
- During waterfowl season, you cannot leave a hunting boat unattended on public waters between sunset and one hour before sunrise, unless it is next to private land you own or control, and there is not enough natural vegetation to hide the hunter or boat.
- A waterfowl boat does not have to be licensed when used for waterfowl hunting.
- Before leaving state waters, you must drain all water from your boat, live wells, and bilges by removing the drain plug before transporting the boat and equipment. When transporting a boat on public roads, you must remove or open the drain plugs, bailers, valves, or any devices used to drain water from ballast tanks, bilges, and live wells.

Report Your Bands at reportband.gov

Each year, state and federal waterfowl biologists mark thousands of waterfowl with numbered leg bands. Hunters who report recovered bands receive specific information on where and when the bird was banded while providing important information for waterfowl management.

Bands may be reported online at reportband.gov

Blinds and sink boxes

You cannot set up a blind in public waters or on public land more than one hour before waterfowl season starts.

- It is illegal to take migratory waterfowl, coots, or rails using a sink box or from a permanent blind in public waters. A sink box is a structure that allows a hunter to hide beneath the water surface. Layout boats are not sink boxes.
- Any blind left unused on public land or in public waters belongs to the public, not the person who built it. Using force to take someone else's blind is illegal.
- Hunters can use aquatic plants like cattails and bulrushes, cut above the waterline, to build blinds.

Decoys

You cannot place decoys in public waters more than one hour before the open season for waterfowl.

- Decoys may not be placed on public lands or in public waters more than two hours before legal shooting hours for waterfowl.
- Decoys cannot be left on public waters between sunset and two hours before shooting time. Decoys cannot be unattended for more than three hours. However, you can leave decoys in waters near private land you control if there isn't enough vegetation to hide a hunter. Decoys cannot be left on public waters between sunset and one hour before shooting time if they are a navigation hazard.

Motorized decoy

Motorized decoys are legal and may be used statewide during the waterfowl seasons.

Whitefish netting season open

The whitefish netting season on Leech Lake and other lakes is open during duck season. Be careful when near buoys.

Use of aeration systems

Aeration systems may not be used to create open water areas to attract or delay the migration of wild waterfowl on public waters.

Possessing and transporting migratory waterfowl and game birds

Ducks and all other migratory game birds must be transported with a feathered wing attached. Exception: doves may be fully dressed (wings and feet may be removed).

Migratory Waterfowl Feeding and Resting Areas

The following areas have been designated Migratory Waterfowl Feeding and Resting Areas. Motorized boats are limited to trolling motors 12 volts or less during waterfowl season on the lakes listed below.

County	Lakes
Beltrami	Puposky Lake and Little Puposky Lake
Carver	Tiger Lake
Faribault	Part of Minnesota Lake
Freeborn	Bear Lake and Upper Twin Lake
Jackson	Part of South Heron Lake, all of North Heron Lake except Winzer Bay and North Marsh
Kandiyohi	Wakanda Lake, Lake Lillian
LeSueur	Dora, Diamond and Sanborn
McLeod	Bakers Lake and the unnamed lake (Penn Marsh) in Sec. 28, Twp 114N, R 29W (Penn Twp.)
Polk	Turtle Lake
Pope	Nelson Lake
Traverse	Part of Mud Lake

Lakes banning motorized boats during waterfowl seasons

County	Lakes
Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift	Part of Marsh Lake, Thielke Lake
Blue Earth	Cottonwood Lake
Cass	Big Rice, Goose, Mud Lakes
Clearwater	Upper Rice Lake
Grant and Douglas	Part of Lake Christina
Itasca	Rice Lake (near Max) and Nature's Lake
LeSueur	Henry, Rice and Scotch lakes
Nicollet	Oakleaf Lake
Otter Tail	That part of Lake Lizzie, also known as Rush Lake, located in Sec. 3-9, Twp 136 N, R. 42 (Lida Twp.); and Mud Lake in Aastad Twp.
Pope	Lake Johanna
Scott	Pleasant Lake
Sibley	Washington Lake and Mud (Erin) Lake in Washington Lake Twp.

Outboard motor use on state and federal lands

The use of outboard motors (including trolling motors) or motorized water vehicles is prohibited on most state wildlife management areas, federal waterfowl production areas or national wildlife refuges. See the *Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations* for more details.

Airboat use on designated wildlife lakes

The use of airboats is prohibited at all times on the following lakes. Additional restrictions may be posted at access points.

County	Lake
Aitkin	White Elk
Anoka	Fish
Blue Earth	Cottonwood
Blue Earth	Perch
Blue Earth	Eagle
Blue Earth	Rice
Brown	Hanska
Big Stone	Lake 14
Carver	Patterson
Carver	Tiger
Cass	Big Rice
Cottonwood	Augusta
Cottonwood	Bolstad Slough
Cottonwood	Long Lake
Crow Wing	Dog
Douglas	Anka
Douglas	Jennie
Douglas/Grant	Christina
Faribault	Rice
Faribault	Minnesota
Freeborn	Bear
Freeborn	Lower Twin
Freeborn	Geneva
Freeborn	Upper Twin
Grant	Ash
Grant	Denton Slough
Grant	Towner
Jackson	Heron
Jackson	Teal
Kandiyohi	Middle
LeSueur	Sanborn

County	Lake
Lyon	Mahlke Marsh
Martin	Pierce
Mahnomen	Beaulieu
McLeod	Eagle
McLeod	Ward
Mille Lacs	Onamia
Murray	Maria
Murray	Round
Murray	South Badger
Murray	North Badger
Nicollet	Swan
Otter Tail	Mud
Otter Tail	Upper Lightning
Pope	Simon
St. Louis	Little Rice
St. Louis	Big Rice
Sibley	Indian Lake
Sibley	Sand
Stearns	Cedar
Steele/Dodge	Rice
Swift	Hassel
Waseca	Buffalo
Waseca	Goose
Waseca	Willis
Watonwan	Sulem
Wright	Pelican
Wright	Smith
Yellow Medicine	Curtis
Yellow Medicine	Spellman (North and South)
Yellow Medicine	Timm Lake

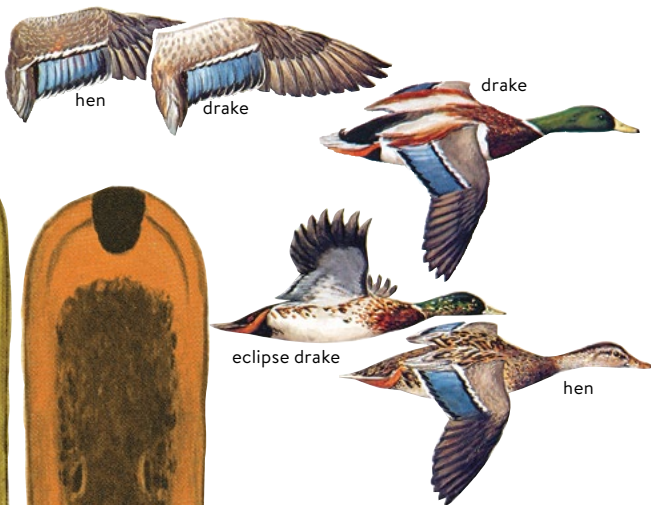
ILLUSTRATED DUCKS AND GEESE OF MINNESOTA

(Not all species are depicted)

MALLARD

Length 24"

Weight 2.75 lbs.



The mallard is the state's most common duck. Typical Minnesota harvest: 270,000.

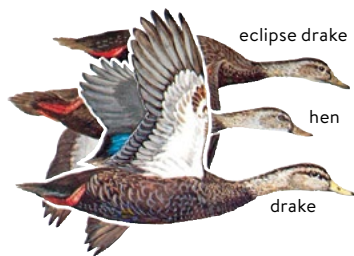
drake

hen

BLACK DUCK

Length 24"

Weight 2.75 lbs.



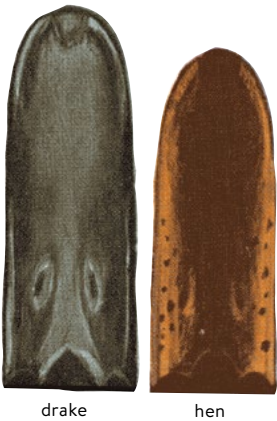
Primarily found in the Atlantic Flyway and, to a lesser extent, the Mississippi. There is a small breeding population in northeast Minnesota. Typical Minnesota harvest: 1,000.

drake

hen

GADWALL

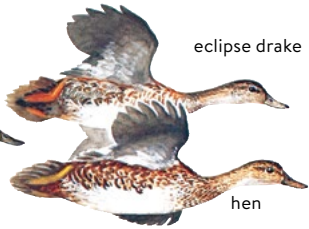
Length 21"
Weight 2 lbs.



drake



drake



eclipse drake

hen



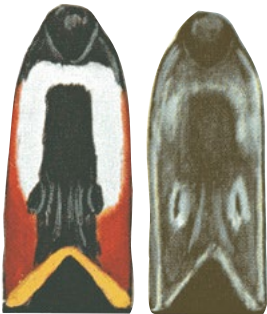
hen

drake

Often called “gray mallards” or “gray ducks,” gadwalls are one of the earliest migrants. Typical Minnesota harvest: 36,000.

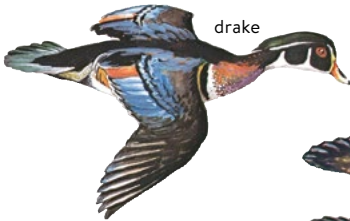
WOOD DUCK

Length 18.5"
Weight 1.5 lbs.

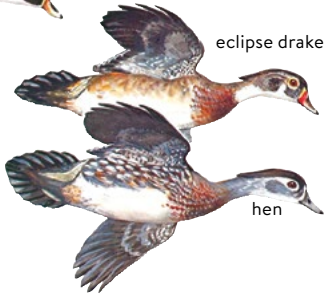


drake

hen



drake



eclipse drake

hen



hen

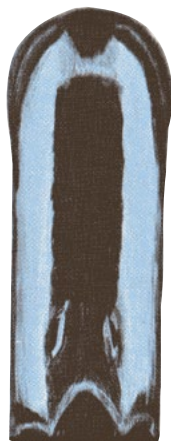
drake

Found in all flyways; most numerous in the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways. Typical Minnesota harvest: 125,000.

PINTAIL

Length 26"

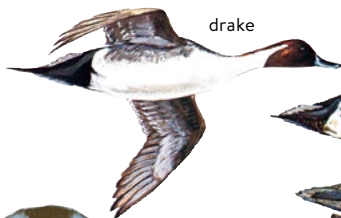
Weight 1.75 lbs.



drake



hen



drake



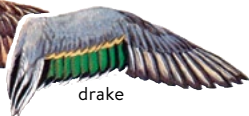
eclipse drake



hen



hen



drake

These ducks use all 4 flyways but are most plentiful in the west.
Typical Minnesota harvest: 15,000.

HOODED MERGANSER

Length 18"

Weight 1.5 lbs.



drake



hen



eclipse drake



hen



drake



hen



drake

Often seen in pairs or very small flocks. Typical Minnesota harvest: 9,000.

SCAUP

Greater:

Length 18.5"

Weight 2 lbs.

Lesser:

Length 17"

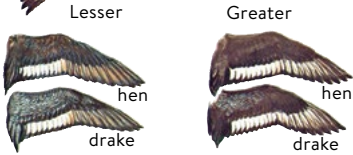
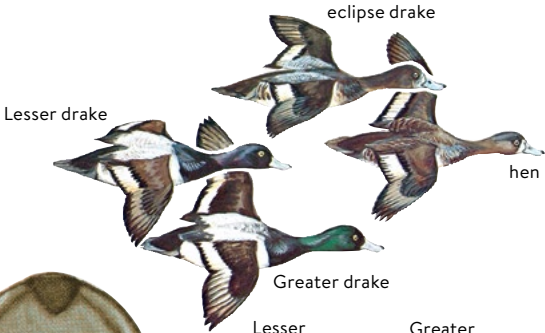
Weight 1.75 lbs.



drake



hen



Except for the wing marks, greater and lesser scaup appear nearly identical in the field. The North American breeding population has rebounded in recent years. Minnesota harvest is at historic low levels and averages only about 10,000 birds.

RINGNECK

Length 17"

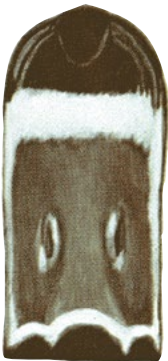
Weight 1.5 lbs.



drake



hen



drake



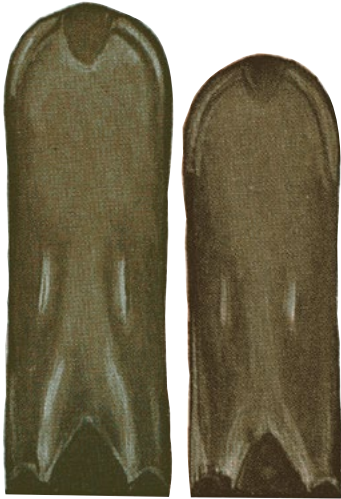
hen



Similar in appearance to scaup but more often found in fresh marshes and wooded ponds. Flocks of up to 200,000 stage on north central Minnesota refuges. Typical Minnesota harvest: 80,000.

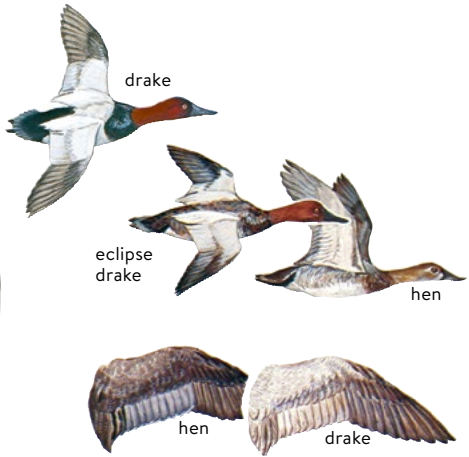
CANVASBACK

Length 22"
Weight 3 lbs.



drake

hen



drake

eclipse
drake

hen

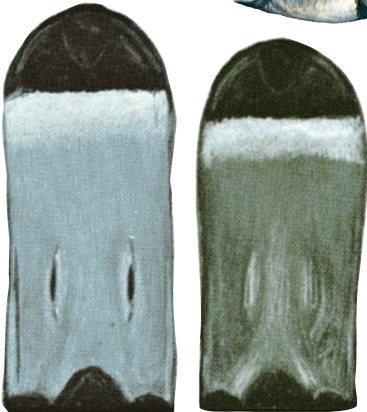
hen

drake

Tend to favor open-water areas.
Normally late to start south.
Typical Minnesota harvest: 3,000.

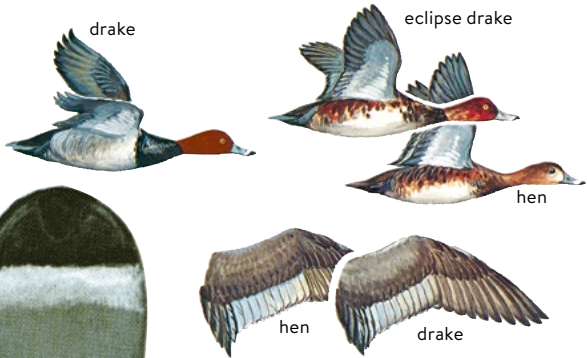
REDHEAD

Length 20"
Weight 2.5 lbs.



drake

hen



drake

eclipse drake

hen

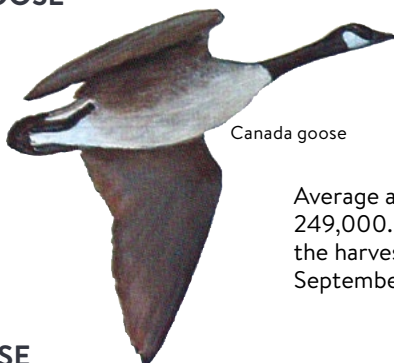
hen

drake

Range coast to coast with the
largest numbers in the Central
Flyway. Often found associating
with canvasback. Typical Minnesota
harvest: 14,000.

CANADA GOOSE

Length 25-43"



Canada goose

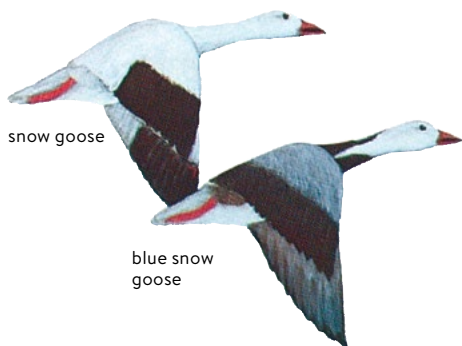
Average annual Minnesota harvest: 249,000. About 36 percent of the harvest occurs during the September season.

SNOW GOOSE

Length 25-38"

BLUE SNOW GOOSE

Length 25-30"



snow goose

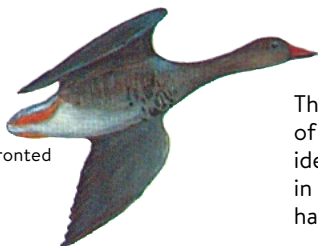
blue snow
goose

Black "grin patch" on bill is found only on snow geese.

The "blue" snow goose is a variation of the lesser snow goose species. Average annual Minnesota harvest of snow geese and blue snow geese: 3,000.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Length 25-30"



white-fronted
goose

The pinkish bill, white patch on front of head and dark bars on the belly identify this species. Uncommon in Minnesota, the average annual harvest is fewer than 200 birds.

ACCESSIBLE BLINDS FOR HUNTERS

The following areas have duck or goose hunting blinds for hunters with mobility issues. For more information, contact:

- Lac qui Parle WMA, 14047 20th St NW, Watson, MN 56295, 320-734-4450
- Talcot Lake WMA, 40249 County Rd 7, Dundee, MN 56131, 507-873-5650
- Whitewater WMA, 15035 Hwy 74, Altura, MN 55910, 507-468-2248
- Thief Lake WMA, 42280 240th Ave NE, Middle River, MN 56737, 218-222-3747
- Roseau River WMA, 27952 400th St, Roseau, MN 56751, 218-463-1557

STATE REFUGES OPEN TO GOOSE HUNTING

County	Refuge	Open season
Beltrami	Bemidji Game Refuge (except Lake Bemidji, Lake Irving, Mississippi River and Stump Lake)	Early goose Sept. 6 - 21
Clay	Clay County Game Refuge	Early goose Sept. 6 - 21
Dakota	Vermillion Highlands Research, Recreation and WMA	Goose Dec. 16 - 26
Dodge	Claremont Game Refuge	Goose hunting
Douglas	Evansville Game Refuge	Waterfowl hunting Early goose Sept. 6 - 21
Freeborn	Moscow Game Refuge	Goose hunting
Isanti	Elizabeth Lake Game Refuge German Lake Game Refuge	Early goose season and youth participating in a designated hunting/mentoring program only.
Martin	Mud Bardwell Game Refuge	Goose hunting Oct. 12 - Dec. 26
	Fox Lake Game Refuge	Goose hunting Nov. 25 - Dec. 26
Nobles	Ocheda Lake Game Refuge	Youth Waterfowl Weekend and Early goose Sept. 6 - 21, Dec. 7 - 26
Olmsted	Rochester Game Refuge	Early goose Sept. 6 - 21
Steele	Rickert Waterfowl Refuge except Myron Buelow Waterfowl Sanctuary WMA	Early goose Sept. 6 - 21
Stevens	Harstad Slough Waterfowl Refuge	Early goose Sept. 6 - 21
Watsonwan	Saint James Game Refuge	Goose hunting Sept. 6 - 21

CONTROLLED HUNTING ZONES

General restrictions

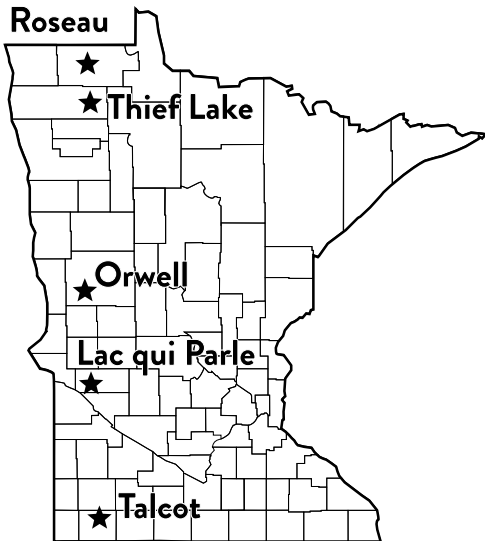
The following regulations apply to designated hunting stations in game refuges or controlled hunting zones at Roseau River, Thief Lake, Orwell, Lac qui Parle, and Talcot Lake.

- Designated hunting stations are on a first-come, first-served basis.
- No one may occupy or park in any hunting station from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.
- General regulations for wildlife management areas and state game refuges, all waterfowl and general hunting regulations apply to hunters using designated blinds.
- No refuse, offal, or feathers can be left on public lands.
- Alcoholic beverages are not allowed at any hunting stations.

Lac qui Parle Game Refuge (Chippewa and Lac qui Parle counties)

Waterfowl hunting allowed at designated hunting stations only from October 17 through the end of the goose season. Small game other than waterfowl may not be taken from October 12 through November 30.

Stations Designated for Waterfowl Hunting



Talcot Lake Game Refuge (Cottonwood County)

The Talcot Lake Game Refuge is open to waterfowl hunting at designated hunting stations only during the Canada goose season.

- All waterfowl hunting is prohibited upon or from the 1.5 miles of Minnesota Highway 62 and its right-of-way along the south boundary of the Talcot Lake Waterfowl Refuge (between the Cottonwood County line on the west and County Highway 7 on the east).
- The Talcot Lake Waterfowl Refuge is closed to waterfowl hunting except for persons with disabilities hunting geese at designated hunting stations.

Thief Lake Controlled Hunting Zone

The Thief Lake Controlled Hunt Zone boundary has changed slightly. Signs are posted in the areas that have changed.

Take part in a CRITICAL SUCCESS



This Critical Habitat license plate features previously unpublished work by Minnesota wildlife artist Les Kouba. When you purchase any of Minnesota's Critical Habitat license plates, your \$30 annual contribution is used to match private donations at a rate of \$2 for every \$1 donated.

Call of the Moose Minnesota is a partnership between the Minnesota DNR and Les Kouba Outdoors. Portions of the proceeds from sales of Call of the Moose artwork and licensed products support DNR moose management and research.

mndnr.gov
leskoubaoutdoors.com

FAW_0097_2025

SUMMARY OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

In addition to state regulations, the following federal rules apply.

The following material is a summary. Each hunter should consult the federal regulations found in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.



Illegal hunting methods

You may not hunt migratory waterfowl:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10 gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fish hook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance.
- From a sink box or similar device.
- From a motorboat or sailboat, unless you shut the motor off or furl the sail and the vessel is no longer in motion.
- Using live birds as decoys.
- Using recorded or electrically amplified bird calls or sounds or imitations of these calls and sounds.
- While possessing any shot other than approved nontoxic shot.
A list of approved shot is available online at: fws.gov/story/2022-04/nontoxic-shot-regulations-hunting-waterfowl-and-coots-us
- With a shotgun that can hold more than 3 shells, unless you plug it with a 1-piece filler that cannot be removed without disassembling the gun.
- From any motor vehicle, motor-driven land conveyance, or aircraft.
- By the aid of baiting or on or over a baited area where a person knows or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited. A baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after removal of bait.

Possession limit

No person shall possess more migratory game birds than the possession limit or the aggregate possession limit, whichever applies.

Field possession limit

You cannot have more than the daily limit of migratory game birds, tagged or not, while transporting them in your vehicle, home, lodging, a preservation facility, post office, or common carrier.

Wanton waste

You must make a reasonable effort to retrieve all migratory game birds that you kill or wound and keep these birds in your custody while in the field. You must keep them with you in the field. Any wounded birds you retrieve must be killed immediately and will count toward your daily limit. Birds cannot be given to someone else in the field, even if they are tagged.

Tagging

You cannot leave migratory game birds at any location or with another person unless you tag them with your signature, address, number of birds, species, and the date killed.

Rallying

You may not hunt migratory game birds that have been gathered, driven, or disturbed by a motorized vehicle or sailboat.

Dressing

You may not completely field dress migratory birds (except doves) before taking them from the field. See page 16.

Dual violation

A violation of a federal migratory game bird regulation is also a violation of state regulations.

Protected birds

It is illegal to kill nongame migratory birds.

For more information

If you have additional questions, contact Division of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5600 American Blvd. W, Suite 990, Bloomington, MN 55437-1458, 612-713-5320.

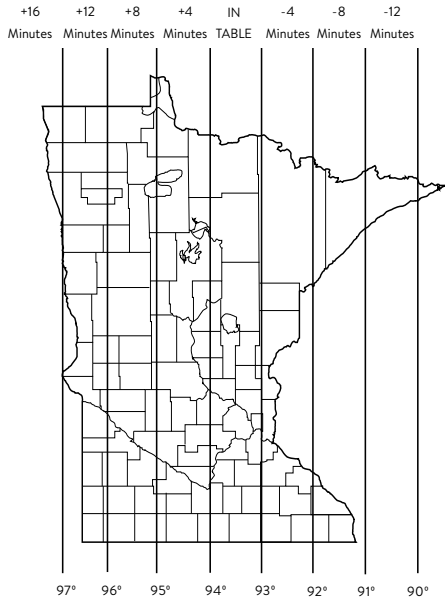
National Wildlife Refuge

Specific regulations may differ from state regulations. Please consult the refuge specific hunting regulations at fws.gov

SHOOTING HOURS

Shooting hours for migratory game birds are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset the entire season, except during teal season when shooting hours are sunrise to sunset.

Nine hunting time zones are shown on the state map (right). Use the sunrise and sunset times in the table for the “In Table” zone. For other zones, adjust the time by adding or subtracting the minutes listed at the top of the state map.



Source: U.S. Naval Observatory

Just wear it.



Waterfowlers are more likely to drown in a duck boat capsizing accident than they are to be accidentally injured in a firearms mishap.

For a free brochure on duck boat safety contact the Minnesota DNR.
Call 888-MINNDNR or email
info.dnr@state.mn.us

m DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Sunrise/sunset table

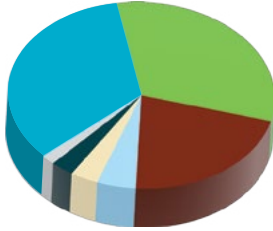
Times shown in the table vary by specific location. For the exact time in your area check online at mndnr.gov/sunrise-sunset

Date	Sept. Sunrise	Sept. Sunset	Oct. Sunrise	Oct. Sunset	Nov. Sunrise	Nov. Sunset	Dec. Sunrise	Dec. Sunset
1	6:35	7:51	7:11	6:54	7:51	6:02	7:31	4:33
2	6:36	7:49	7:12	6:52	7:52	6:00	7:32	4:33
3	6:37	7:47	7:13	6:51	6:54	5:00	7:33	4:33
4	6:38	7:45	7:14	6:49	6:55	4:58	7:34	4:32
5	6:39	7:44	7:16	6:47	6:57	4:57	7:35	4:32
6	6:41	7:42	7:17	6:45	6:58	4:55	7:36	4:32
7	6:42	7:40	7:18	6:43	7:00	4:54	7:37	4:32
8	6:43	7:38	7:19	6:41	7:01	4:53	7:38	4:32
9	6:44	7:36	7:21	6:40	7:02	4:51	7:39	4:32
10	6:45	7:34	7:22	6:38	7:04	4:50	7:40	4:32
11	6:47	7:32	7:23	6:36	7:05	4:49	7:41	4:32
12	6:48	7:30	7:25	6:34	7:06	4:48	7:42	4:32
13	6:49	7:28	7:26	6:32	7:08	4:47	7:43	4:32
14	6:50	7:27	7:27	6:31	7:09	4:46	7:44	4:32
15	6:51	7:25	7:28	6:29	7:10	4:45	7:44	4:32
16	6:53	7:23	7:30	6:27	7:12	4:44	7:45	4:32
17	6:54	7:21	7:31	6:25	7:13	4:43	7:46	4:33
18	6:55	7:19	7:32	6:24	7:14	4:42	7:46	4:33
19	6:56	7:17	7:34	6:22	7:16	4:41	7:47	4:33
20	6:57	7:15	7:35	6:20	7:17	4:40	7:48	4:34
21	6:59	7:13	7:36	6:19	7:18	4:39	7:48	4:34
22	7:00	7:11	7:38	6:17	7:20	4:39	7:49	4:35
23	7:01	7:09	7:39	6:16	7:21	4:38	7:49	4:35
24	7:02	7:08	7:40	6:14	7:22	4:37	7:50	4:36
25	7:03	7:06	7:42	6:12	7:24	4:36	7:50	4:37
26	7:05	7:04	7:43	6:11	7:25	4:36	7:50	4:37
27	7:06	7:02	7:44	6:09	7:26	4:35	7:51	4:38
28	7:07	7:00	7:46	6:08	7:27	4:35	7:51	4:39
29	7:08	6:58	7:46	6:07	7:28	4:34	7:51	4:39
30	7:09	6:56	7:48	6:05	7:30	4:34	7:51	4:40
31			7:50	6:03			7:51	4:41

Your License Dollars at Work

License dollars improve fishing, hunting, wildlife and habitat to maintain and create outdoor recreation opportunities

How DNR Spends a License Dollar



- › Fisheries - 34.4 cents
- › Wildlife - 29.8 cents
- › Conservation officers - 24.4 cents
- › Clean water - 5.7 cents
- › Licensing - 3.3 cents
- › Boat ramps and accesses - 1.5 cents
- › Sustainable forests - 1 cent

To learn more visit:

mndnr.gov/LicenseDollarsAtWork

CALL US

Interpreters are available to answer all of your questions.

License, titling and registration: M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

General information: M-F 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

888-MINNDNR (646-6367) or 651-296-6157

info.dnr@state.mn.us



@mnfishwildlife



@mndnr



@minnesotadnr

TURN IN POACHERS

24-hour hotline; 800-652-9093



**DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

888-MINNDNR (646-6367) or 651-296-6157

mndnr.gov

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FAW_0062_25

OFFICE OF THE MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE



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CWD — statewide opportunities to get your deer tested



Mandatory sampling

CWD sample submission is mandatory in all CWD zones during the opening weekend of the firearms A season (November 8-9).

In CWD management and surveillance zones, hunters must provide a sample from deer 1 year or older within 24 hours of harvest during the opening weekend of the firearms A season. Sampling stations, either staffed or self-service, will be available in both zones.

Partner sampling

The DNR has partnered with taxidermists and others to collect samples from deer that are dropped off by hunters. These partners will remove the samples and submit them to the DNR. Additional services provided by the partner may require a fee. Results will be posted online. A list of partners can be found by scanning the QR code or online at mndnr.gov/cwd/cwd-testing.html.



Mail-in sampling

The DNR will provide a free kit that includes instructions, all necessary forms and plastic bags to submit a sample by mail. Hunters who use this option will need to extract the lymph node sample from the deer, provide the harvest location and hunter contact information on the forms, and deliver the kit to the shipping vendor. Kits are free and may be requested by scanning the QR code or online at mndnr.gov/cwd/cwd-testing.html. A list of wildlife offices where kits may be obtained is also available online. Hunters throughout the state may use the mail-in sampling kit program, regardless of harvest location. Return shipping labels from kits received prior to November 1, 2024 are no longer valid, please request a new shipping label by visiting the mail-in kit website listed above. Any kit received after November 1, 2024 is still valid to use this year.

