



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Aug. 16, 2022**

- [Iowa's teal-only hunting season opens Sept. 1](#)
- [Iowa's dove season begins Sept. 1](#)

## Iowa's teal-only hunting season opens Sept. 1

Iowa's 16-day teal only hunting season begins statewide Sept. 1, offering hunters an opportunity to enjoy Iowa's wetlands and shallow lakes during the mild late summer weather.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service makes the September teal season available when the teal population is above certain levels. It offers hunters 16 bonus hunting days and does not take any days away from the regular duck hunting seasons.

"The teal season is a good opportunity to introduce young or novice hunters to duck hunting because these birds will fly all day and decoy fairly well," said Orrin Jones, state waterfowl biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Breeding conditions in North and South Dakota, Minnesota and prairie Canada were favorable this spring, meaning there should be young birds in the migration this year. Teal will be moving in to Iowa in mid to late August and bird numbers can improve overnight with the change in weather up north.

Teal favor mudflats and shallow water and recent rains across North Iowa have improved wetland conditions in that region, but conditions vary statewide and Jones advised hunters to scout the areas before opening day.

"Get out, assess the water levels and vegetation. Check out the wetlands before you go, especially for the first hunt of the season," he said. "Hunting success often depends on the weather and our extended forecast calls for cooler temperatures with scattered chances of rain."

Since this season is only open for teal, it is important that hunters properly identify their target to avoid shooting other species. "Hunters need to take that into account when planning their hunt," Jones said. "Keep the sun at your back – it's much more difficult to identify ducks when looking into the sun."

Legal shooting hours begin at sunrise, which is different from the regular duck season. Hunters are required to have the state migratory game bird fee and federal duck stamp.

**New way to register for the Harvest Information Program (HIP)**

All hunters who pursue migratory game birds are required to register for Harvest Information Program (HIP) either through the Go Outdoors Iowa app on their smartphone, through a link at [www.iowadnr.gov/waterfowl](http://www.iowadnr.gov/waterfowl) or at [www.gooutdoorsiowa.com](http://www.gooutdoorsiowa.com). The DNR has detailed instructions on how to register for HIP online at [www.iowadnr.gov/waterfowl](http://www.iowadnr.gov/waterfowl).

Migratory game birds mean more than ducks and geese; in Iowa it includes mourning doves, ducks, geese, coots, doves, woodcock, rails, and snipe.

Once registered, hunters will need to write a confirmation number on their license, print an updated copy of their license with the confirmation or take a screenshot of their confirmation on their phone to show proof of registration. Requiring a confirmation number will allow the DNR to better track migratory bird hunters – a federal requirement.

“Hunters need to be sure not to skip HIP,” Jones said. “If you’re having trouble, call our customer service number and our staff can help to get you registered over the phone.”

The customer service number is 515-725-8200.

**Media Contact:** Orrin Jones, State Waterfowl Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-231-1957.

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## Iowa's dove season begins Sept. 1

Iowa's sunflower and wheat fields will be popular places on Sept. 1, when thousands of hunters slip into the standing flowers and field edges in the early morning darkness for the opening day of dove hunting season.

Fast paced and fun, dove hunting can be done by nearly everyone regardless of skill level or mobility. It doesn't require expensive equipment to participate, only clothes that blend in to the background, a bucket and plenty of shells. There's a lot of action with a steady stream of doves coming in.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) includes a list of wildlife areas at [www.iowadnr.gov/doves](http://www.iowadnr.gov/doves) where dove plots were planted and identifies the access point nearest the plot. Hunters are encouraged to do some preseason scouting to see if the sunflower planting was successful or if it was stunted or damaged from the summer heat wave or hail storms.

“It really comes down to getting out there and looking at the area to check the condition of the dove field, then scout it a day or two ahead of the season to see if and how the doves are using it,” said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist with the Iowa DNR. “Doves have moved in to the state in larger numbers after we broke from our high heat wave. Success will depend on how many remain here on opening day and that depends on how many cold nights we have between now and the opener.”

Hunters looking for Plan B may want to focus on private land silage or hay fields, or where farmers harvested small grain fields, grazed pastures or feedlots.

Dove plots are getting increasing busy on opening day and hunters are encouraged to be courteous to one another, to pick up their spent shell casings and other trash and leave the field in good condition. Dove hunting is a good opportunity to introduce someone new to the sport because there is often a lot action.

Dove season is Sept. 1-Nov. 29. Shooting hours are one half hour before sunrise to sunset. Daily bag limit is 15 (mourning or Eurasian collared) with a possession limit of 30.

Hunters are reminded that their gun must be plugged to hold no more than three shells. If hunting public areas north of I-80, hunters should check to see if nontoxic shot is required. The Iowa online Hunting Atlas at <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Places-to-Hunt-Shoot> identifies all county, state and federal land open to hunting, zone information and nontoxic shot requirements.

All dove hunters are required to register with the Harvest Information Program (HIP). It's free, fast and the information is used to help determine participation and harvest.

### **New way to register for the Harvest Information Program (HIP)**

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**Media Contact:** Todd Bogenschutz, Upland Wildlife Research Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-979-0828.