

# Waterfowl Hunting Season Guide 2008-2009



By Keith Mueller

## Division of Fish & Wildlife

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**R.I. Department of Environmental Management**

### MIGRATORY WATERFOWL HUNTING REGULATIONS SUMMARY

Obtain Title 50-Code of Federal Regulations and Title 20 of the General Laws of Rhode Island for more details, contact the R.I. Division of Fish and Wildlife, Wakefield, RI 02879. Tel. (401) 789-3094 for copies of regulations.

1. Scoter, Eider, Long-tailed Duck (Sea Ducks): Special Sea Duck Hunting Areas are seaward of the first upstream bridge encountered when leaving Narragansett Bay or Mt. Hope Bay and moving into the tributaries.
2. The discharge of firearms within 500 feet of any occupied building or barn is prohibited.
3. Cripples may be pursued, shot and retrieved from a boat under power in coastal waters seaward of the first upstream bridge and all waters and streams seaward from the first upstream bridge; crippled birds must be immediately killed. **Discharge of firearms within 500 feet of occupied buildings is prohibited.**
4. Waterfowl hunting hours are from **one half hour before Sunrise to Sunset.**
5. All hunters 16 years and older must have a valid R.I. hunting license and valid **R.I. waterfowl stamp.**
6. **All regulations pertaining to migratory bird hunting also pertain to falconry hunting. (Permit required 789-3094)**

### 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 that 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 of 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 therefore 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 bird calls.
- By diving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sail boat to put them in the range of hunters.
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt, or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation.

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

**SHOOTING HOUR:** No person shall take migratory birds except during the hours open to shooting.

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

**FIELD POSSESSION LIMIT:** No person shall possess more than one daily bag limit while in the field or while returning from the field to one's car, hunting camp, home, etc.

**WANTON WASTE:** All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.

**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.

No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another unless such birds are property tagged.

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

**SPECIAL PERMITS REQUIRED** for the following waterfowl hunting seasons or areas are available at Great Swamp Field Office 789-0281, and may be obtained by mailing a self addressed stamped envelope to RIDEM, 277 Great Neck Road, West Kingston, R.I. 02892 indicating the permit type requested.

1. Great Swamp Impoundment- Special restrictions
2. Late Resident Canada Goose Season Permit- Hunting Limited to Providence and Kent Counties and Northern Portions of Exeter and North Kingstown only as specified.
3. South Shore Management Area Canada Goose Permit - Regular Season Only.
4. All migratory bird hunters are required by Federal Law to obtain a R.I. Harvest Information Program (HIP) Permit, obtainable at hunting license vendors statewide. A HIP permit must be attached to your R.I. license in order to hunt any migratory game bird.

**SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS**

**WATERFOWL HUNTING HOURS – ONE HALF HOUR BEFORE SUNRISE to SUNSET**

**SEASON DATES:**

SPECIES	ALL DATES INCLUSIVE	BAG LIMITS	
		DAILY	POSSESSION
Sea Ducks* Eider, Long-tailed duck and Scoter	Oct. 11 - Jan. 25	5	10
Ducks** and Coot	Oct. 10-13 Nov. 26-30 Dec. 6 - Jan. 25	6	12
Mergansers***	Oct. 10-13 Nov. 26-30 Dec. 6 - Jan. 25	5	10
Canada Goose Regular Season	Nov. 22-30 Dec. 6-Jan. 25	2	4
Canada Goose Late Season (Special Permit Required)	Jan. 30-Feb. 15	5	10
Brant	Nov. 22-30 Dec. 6-Jan. 25	3	6
Snow Goose/Blue Goose	Oct. 11-Jan. 25	15	No Limit
Scaup	Oct. 10-13 Nov. 26-30 Dec. 6-Jan.5 Jan. 6-Jan.25	1 1 1 2	2 2 2 4

*No Season on Canvasbacks, Harlequin Ducks & Swans*

**SPECIAL DAILY BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS FOR THE FOLLOWING SPECIES:**

*Sea Ducks Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Scoter (only 4 of anyone species per daily bag)	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
**Ducks Mallard	<b>4(2 hens)</b>	<b>8 (4)</b>
Black Duck	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Wood Duck	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
Redhead	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
Pintail	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Coot	<b>15</b>	<b>30</b>
***Merganser Hooded	<b>5</b> <b>2</b>	<b>10</b> <b>4</b>

Except for the periods Oct. 10-13, Nov 26-30, and Dec. 6-25, sea ducks may be taken only in Special Hunting Areas. These areas are seaward of the first upstream bridge, which includes Washington Bridge-Seekonk River; Mt. Hope Bridge-Mt. Hope Bay; and Sakonnet Bridge-Sakonnet River. Sea ducks taken in areas outside of these areas, during the regular duck season, will be considered as part of the regular daily six (6) bird bag limit.

**Special Notice to Sea Duck Hunters**

**Caution:** Harlequin ducks are found in sea duck hunting areas along rocky coastal shores, specifically in the vicinity of Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge. The female Harlequin duck is similar in appearance to female bufflehead, goldeneye, or scoter, and can be mistaken for the latter species.

**Use caution when hunting sea ducks.**

Report Waterfowl leg bands by calling 1-800-327-BAND

**Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days:** October 25 & 26. Restricted to hunters between the ages of 12-14, accompanied by a R.I. licensed waterfowl hunter and may hunt ducks only.

**Violations:** Report violations to the Division of Enforcement, 235 Promenade St., Providence, R.I. 02908. Tel. 222-3070 (24 hour service), or to the Federal Agent 401-364-9124.

**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 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 killed in any foreign country, except Canada, unless such birds are dressed (except as required in 20.63), drawn, and head and feet are removed. 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 his person a **valid Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, or duck stamp, and a R.I. Waterfowl stamp, signed in ink across the face.** Violation of State migratory bird regulations is also a violation of Federal regulations.

**REFERENCE:** Federal regulations related to migratory game birds are located in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.

**CAUTION:** More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting. For additional information on Federal regulations, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agent, 401-364-9124.

**NON-TOXIC SHOT REQUIREMENTS:** No person shall take or attempt to take waterfowl within the State of Rhode Island, including Narragansett Bay and its coastal waters, to the three mile limit, while possessing shells loaded with any shot other than non toxic shot (e.g. steel, bismuth-tin, tungsten-iron, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-matrix, and tungsten-nickel-iron shot) and other shot as approved by USFWS.

**All non-toxic shot larger than BB is prohibited, including duplex loads containing shot larger than BB.**

## CLOSED AREAS

### A. Providence, East Providence, Pawtucket

That portion of the Seekonk River, north of the railroad bridge (a.k.a. Red Bridge) to a line across the Seekonk River running between the intersection of Gulf Road and River Drive (Providence side) to the southerly abutment of the railroad bridge at the outlet of Omega Pond (East Providence side), shall be closed to waterfowl hunting.

The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting on the Seekonk River is restricted to discharge towards open water.

### B. Warwick

Brush Neck Cove, so-called in its entirety.

Buttonwoods Cove, so-called in its entirety.

Mill Cove, so-called in its entirety, including the beach front.

### C. North Kingstown

Mill Cove, Wickford, so-called in its entirety. Fishing Cove, Wickford area west of a line to be determined and marked by the DFW, bisecting Cornelius Island. All discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge in an easterly direction from the line.

**The discharge of firearms within 600 feet of any "Posted Property" in the Town of North Kingstown is prohibited by town ordinance (applies also to recovery of crippled waterfowl).**

### D. Charlestown

Watchaug Pond and Poquiant Brook, or hunting within 100 yards upland of the shore or bank of same.

### E. Tiverton

That unnamed estuary in Tiverton, north of Seapowet Avenue and east of Jack's Island, bounded on the west, south and east shore by the R.I. Audubon Society's Emilie Ruecker Wildlife Refuge, and as posted by Audubon and Department of Environmental Management signs. The effected area includes the inlet of this estuary and marshland on the north side of this outlet in its entirety.

### F. Middletown

Sachuest Point (NWR) shoreline below mean high water to mean low water surrounding the National Wildlife Refuge property is closed to all hunting. (No hunting along the shoreline).

## Additional Restrictions

### A. Little Compton

All waterfowl hunters must have the following to hunt the Simmons Mill Pond Management Area: (a) waterfowl decoys, (b) retrieving breed of hunting dog, or either a boat or canoe without motors.

### B. Barrington

The Barrington River between Central Bridge at Massasoit Avenue and Barrington Bridge #123 at County Road is closed to hunting, except for that section designated by DEM markers on the river off Puritan Avenue and Seabrook Park. Hunting shall be restricted to the water areas below the vegetation line, and between the DEM markers. Discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water.

### C. Bristol-Walker Island

Discharge of firearms is restricted towards open water in the westerly direction (seaward). Local ordinance prohibits hunting above mean high water.

### D. Portsmouth

Prudence Island – the possession of firearms is permitted while enroute to, or during waterfowl hunting. Waterfowl hunters must possess a minimum of six (6) decoys and non-toxic shot **only** as specified by Federal Regulations. Gun hunting 10 feet above mean high water is prohibited except in the period from November 1 to November 30.

### E. Cranston

Washouset Point (Pawtuxet Cove) north to Fields Point including Stillhouse Cove, the discharge of firearms is restricted to discharge towards open water (seaward) only. No hunting within 500 feet of occupied buildings (RIGL 20-13-7) from the shoreline or from a watercraft.

### F. East Providence

The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted toward open water (seaward).

### G. Warwick

Rock Island and it's adjacent groin extending northward off Narragansett Parkway. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted toward open water (seaward).

### H. North Kingstown

Waterfowl hunting on Belleville Pond is restricted to the Northwest Segment of the large pond as designated by DEM signs. The discharge of firearms is restricted toward open waters. Waterfowl hunting is restricted to after November 15 by Town Ordinance. Firearms must remain cased at all times while not in hunting area.

\*Check local ordinances for additional restrictions.

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**2008 Waterfowl Stamp** : "Classic Mallard Decoys": This year's duck stamp is an artistic photo of a pair of mallard decoys. The decoys were hand-carved from renowned artist and carver Keith Mueller. Previous duck stamps created by Mr. Mueller include the Dutch Island Light, Point Judith Light, Conimicut Light, Rose Island Light, Sakonnet Light, and Castle Hill. Proceeds from stamp sales are protected in a restricted receipt account earmarked for the restoration, management, and acquisition of waterfowl habitat. Revenue from the sale of the stamps and from print royalties has been used to install water control structures at Durfee Hill WMA and Buck Hill WMA, restore Galilee Salt Marsh, and purchase the South Shore Management Area in South Kingstown and property adjacent to Seapowet Marsh in Tiverton.

**You can contribute to RI's waterfowl programs** by investing in a limited edition stamp set for your home or office. Stamp collectors may purchase just a RI waterfowl stamp directly from the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife 401-789-3094.

**The R.I. stamp** (\$7.50), in addition to the Federal waterfowl stamp, is mandatory for waterfowl hunting in R.I. The stamp must be signed across the face in ink and carried on the hunter's person, while waterfowl hunting. Hunters may obtain their stamp through town clerks, licensing agents, and at DFW offices. Order forms for all other types of 2008 Rhode Island Waterfowl Stamps may be obtained by contacting the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife, 4808 Tower Hill Road, Suite 220, Wakefield, R.I. 02879, 401-789-3094. The R.I. Division of Fish and Wildlife thanks waterfowl stamp and print collectors for your past support in funding our Waterfowl Programs, and hope you contribute by adding R.I.'s 2008-2009 stamp to your collection.

**If you are concerned** about the future of waterfowling, the best way to support adequate waterfowl populations is by taking the following steps:

- **Purchase federal and R.I. waterfowl stamps**
- **Join and participate in private conservation organizations**
- **Educate and train young hunters and introduce them to waterfowling**
- **Hunt frequently and always obey the game laws**
- **Learn to identify ducks and proper shooting distances to eliminate sky busting and crippling losses.**

#### What Hunters Should Know about Avian Influenza

Avian influenza or "bird flu" is common to both poultry and wild birds. Recently, a highly pathogenic strain of influenza known as Asian H5N1 has occurred causing mortality in domestic and wild birds through Asia and parts of Europe. Avian Influenza is common in many waterfowl species, there are over one hundred varieties but only a few cause human health concerns.

Asian H5N1 has not yet been discovered in North America. However, RI DEM would advise hunters to adhere to the following procedures when handling birds to avoid possible exposure:

- Do not handle or butcher game animals that are obviously sick or are found dead
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning game
- Wear rubber gloves or cover hands with plastic when cleaning game
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds after handling game
- Carry disinfecting wipes or an alcohol-based gel into the field with you for immediate use after handling game
- Wash tools and working surfaces with soap and water, then disinfect with a 10% solution of chlorine bleach
- Cook game meat thoroughly –reaching an internal temperature of 165 F

**ATTENTION HUNTERS:** RI DEM is participating in a nationwide effort of surveillance of wild birds for Asian H5N1. The Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) has, in cooperation with other federal and state agencies, targeted several species for surveillance. The DFW will be soliciting the cooperation of hunters in an effort to obtain hunter-killed samples of dabbling ducks, diver ducks, and Atlantic Brant. If interested, please email: [jay.osenkowski@dem.ri.gov](mailto:jay.osenkowski@dem.ri.gov) or call 789-0281.

Information on avian influenza can be obtained by visiting DEM's website, [www.dem.ri.gov](http://www.dem.ri.gov). Further information can be found of the following websites: [www.nwhc.usgs.gov](http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov); [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

#### SUNRISE & SUNSET TABLE

OCTOBER 2008 - JANUARY 2009

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

**Discrimination:** It is the policy of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to offer its services, facilities and accommodations to all orderly persons, and as required, to all properly licensed persons without regard to race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, or disability.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program activity or facility, or if you deserve further information, please write to the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Washington, DC 20240.