

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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WOODCOCK PESTICIDE SAMPLES BEING TAKEN IN MAINE

The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife announced today that it is cooperating with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Game in a sampling for pesticide levels in woodcock, an increasingly popular game bird in eastern parts of North America.

Specific laboratory information on DDT residues from birds recently taken in Maine will be released as soon as available, Bureau officials added.

The woodcock hunting season was closed recently in New Brunswick because of the high incidence of DDT found in samples taken from that Province.

Woodcock are migratory birds hunted in all States east of the Mississippi River as well as in Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas. Some seasons already are underway, others will be opening soon.

Although woodcock are known to carry large pesticide residues--the species has been monitored by BSWF for many years--their overall population level has remained stable in the past 10 years.

During this period, hunting pressure on this challenging small bird has about doubled. About 1,000,000 are estimated to be taken by American hunters annually, with the biggest harvest coming in the northeastern States.

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