

# Seasons and Bag Limits 2008-09

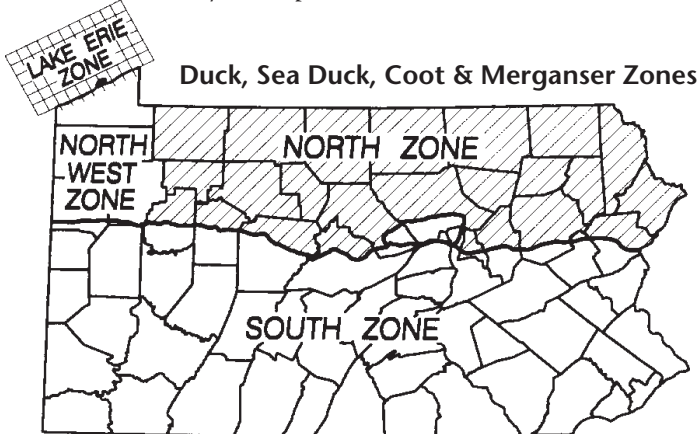
## Ducks, Coots, Mergansers

### Bag Limits

**Ducks:** 6 daily, 12 in possession; daily limit may not include more than 4 mallards including 2 hen mallards, 1 black duck, 1 pintail, 1 mottled duck, 1 fulvous tree duck, 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 4 scoters and 2 scaup during a 20-day consecutive period, 1 scaup during the remainder of the season. Possession limit may not include more than 8 mallards including 4 hens, 2 black ducks, 2 pintails, 2 mottled ducks, 2 fulvous tree ducks, 6 wood ducks, 4 redheads, 8 scoters and 4/2 scaup.

**Mergansers:** 5 daily, 10 in possession, not more than 2 hooded mergansers daily or 4 in possession.

**Coots:** 15 daily, 30 in possession.



**Lake Erie Zone** - Lake Erie, Presque Isle and the area within 150 yards of the Lake Erie shoreline.

**Northwest Zone** - The area bounded on the north by the Lake Erie Zone and including all of Erie and Crawford counties and all of Mercer and Venango counties north of I-80.

**North Zone** - The area east of the Northwest Zone and north of I-80 to Route 220, north from I-80 to I-180, north and east of I-180 from Route 220 to I-80, north of I-80 from I-180 to the Delaware River.

**South Zone** - All of state not in the Lake Erie, Northwest and North Zones.

**Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day (Ducks, Mergansers, Canada Geese, Coots and Moorhens):** September 20. Canada geese may not be taken at Middle Creek, SGL 46, or Pymatuning, SGL 214. See Early Resident Canada Goose Season for area description.

### Season Dates

#### Lake Erie Zone

Ducks, sea ducks, coots and mergansers – Oct. 27 – Jan. 3.  
Daily bag limit of 2 scaup from Oct. 27-Nov. 18; 1 scaup from Nov. 19-Jan. 3.

#### North Zone

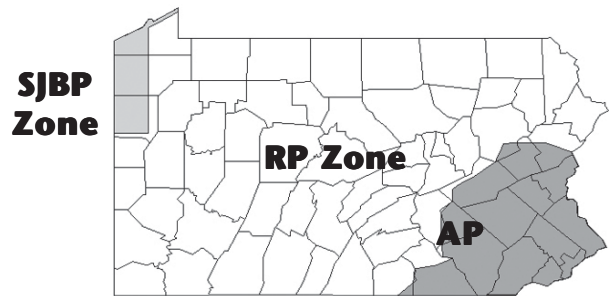
Ducks, sea ducks, coots and mergansers – Oct. 18 – Nov. 1 & Nov. 17-Jan. 9.  
Daily bag limit of 2 scaup from Nov. 17-Dec. 9; 1 scaup from Dec. 10-Jan. 9.

#### Northwest Zone

Ducks, sea ducks, coots and mergansers Oct. 18 – Nov. 29 & Dec. 15 – Jan. 9.  
Daily bag limit of 2 scaup from Oct 18-Nov. 10; 1 scaup from Nov. 11-29 & Dec. 15-Jan. 9.

#### South Zone

Ducks, sea ducks, coots and mergansers – Oct. 11 – 18 & Nov. 15 – Jan. 15.  
Daily bag limit of 2 scaup from Nov. 15-Dec. 8; 1 scaup from Oct. 11-18 & Dec. 9-Jan. 15.



## Canada Geese

(and white-fronted geese)

### Atlantic Population Zone

Nov. 15 – 29 & Dec. 19 – Jan. 24 (3 goose daily limit). **Note:** on SGL 46 (Middle Creek) 1 goose daily, 2 in possession

### Southern James Bay Canada Goose Hunting Zone

Oct. 25 – Nov. 29 & Dec. 15 – Jan. 28 (3 goose daily bag limit)

### Resident Canada Goose Zone.

Oct. 25 – Nov. 1, Nov. 15- 29 & Dec. 22-Feb. 28 (5 daily).

### Early Resident Canada Goose Season – Statewide

September 1 – 25 (8 daily, 16 in possession) **except:**

- (1) In the SJBZ zone the daily limit is 3, possession limit 6.
- (2) In the area south of SR 198 from the Ohio state line to intersection of SR 18, SR 18 south to SR 618, SR 618 south to US Route 6, US Route 6 east to US Route 322/SR 18, US Route 322/SR 18 west to intersection of SR 3013, SR 3013 south to the Crawford/Mercer County line. The daily bag limit is one goose; **except** on SGL 214 where the season is closed to September goose hunting.
- (3) Canada geese may be taken on Pymatuning State Park Reservoir and an area to extend 100 yards inland from the shoreline of the reservoir, excluding the area east of SR 3011 (Hartstown Road). The daily bag limit is 3, possession limit of 6.
- (4) In the area of Lancaster and Lebanon counties north of the Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, east of SR 501 to SR 419, south of SR 419 to Lebanon-Berks county line, west of Lebanon-Berks county line and the Lancaster-Berks county line to SR 1053 (also known as Peartown Road and Greenville Road), west of SR 1053 to Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, the daily bag limit is one goose, possession limit two geese; **except** on SGL 46 (Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area) where the season is closed.

## Atlantic Brant

Oct. 11 – Dec. 19 (3 brant daily, 6 in possession).

## Snow Geese

Nov. 6 – Mar. 10 (15 daily, no possession limit).

### Snow Goose Conservation Season

At press time, the PGC was waiting for publication of the Final Rule by the USFWS that would implement a Conservation Season for Greater Snow geese. If approved, a Conservation Season would be available in spring 2009 that would allow for additional hunting methods and extend the snow goose season to April 1. A free permit would be required for hunters to participate in the Conservation Season. When approved, notice will be made through the news media and on the PGC web page.

## No Open Season: Tundra and Trumpeter Swans and Harlequin Ducks Canada Goose Hunting Zones

### Resident Canada Goose Zone (RP)

All of Pennsylvania **except** for the SJBZ and the Atlantic Population zones.

### Southern James Bay Population (SJBP) Zone

The area north of I-80 and west of I-79 including in the city of Erie west of Bay Front Parkway to and including the Lake Erie Duck zone (Lake Erie, Presque Isle and the area within 150 yds of Lake Erie Shoreline).

### Atlantic Population (AP) Zone

The area east of route SR 97 from Maryland State Line to the intersection of SR 194, east of SR 194 to intersection of US Route 30, south of US Route 30 to SR 441, east of SR 441 to SR 743, east of SR 743 to intersection of I-81, east of I-81 to intersection of I-80, south of I-80 to New Jersey state line.

## Atlantic Flyway Geese

**Atlantic Population (AP)** Canada geese nest across a broad area of Northern Quebec with highest densities occurring in the Ungava Peninsula, and along the Hudson Bay coast. The estimated number of breeding pairs (169,700) was similar to the 2007 estimate of 195,700. The total population estimate in 2008 (989,000) was less than the 2007 estimate of 1.22 million. The total population estimate includes breeding pairs, non-breeders (i.e., those not of breeding age), failed breeders, and molt migrants from other areas and should, therefore, be interpreted cautiously. Nesting and banding studies across the AP breeding range have indicated a strong nesting effort due to an early spring thaw. The forecast is for above average production. A large fall flight with many juveniles is expected from this population.

**Southern James Bay Population (SJBP)** Canada geese nest on Akimiski Island, Nunavut, and the James Bay lowlands of Ontario. The SJBP is the predominant migratory goose population in north-west Pennsylvania, especially at Pymatuning. There were 110,000 Canada geese estimated this spring. Nesting studies on Akimiski Island confirmed good nesting conditions and breeding effort. An average fall flight is expected.

**Atlantic Flyway Resident Population (AFRP)** breeds locally throughout the AF extending into southern Ontario and Quebec. The AFRP overlaps both SJBP and AP geese during the fall and winter periods. The spring breeding population estimate was 1.03 million, similar to 2007 and the long term average. This estimate does not include approximately 500,000 resident geese in southern Ontario and Quebec. Field reports indicate average or better gosling production. Expect another large fall flight of AFRP Canada geese, with many juveniles this hunting season.

In Pennsylvania, the Canada goose population was estimated at 246,000, statistically similar to the average. The highest densities of geese were observed in southeastern and northwestern portions of the Commonwealth. The number of breeding pairs was estimated at 100,000, also similar to average. The trend in Canada goose estimates since 2000 appears stable. This is a result of significant expansion of hunting seasons and other lethal and non-lethal programs implemented to control Canada goose numbers. The number of juveniles per adult female during June leg banding was 1.93, above the 1991-2007 average of 1.62. The number of geese in the 2008 fall population should be higher than in 2007.

**Greater Snow Geese** nest principally on Bylot, Axel Heiberg, Ellesmere, and Baffin Islands in the Canadian Arctic. The 2008 spring population survey in the St. Lawrence Valley estimated 1.004 million birds, unchanged from 2007 and near record high. Nesting studies from the largest known breeding colony on Bylot Island indicated early nest initiation and strong breeding effort. Clutch sizes were larger

than average and nest predation was low. The fall flight is expected to be near record high with above average numbers of juveniles. For more on waterfowl management, visit [www.flyways.us](http://www.flyways.us)

## Webless Migratory Bird Seasons and Daily Limits

Possession limit is twice the daily bag limit.

Species	Open Season	Daily Limit
Doves <sup>A</sup>	Sept. 1 - Sept. 27	15
	Oct. 25 - Nov. 29	15
	Dec. 26 - Jan. 1	15
Woodcock	Oct. 18 - Nov. 15	3
Common Snipe (Wilson's)	Oct. 18 - Nov. 29	8
Rails (Sora and Virginia only) <sup>B</sup>	Sept. 1 - Nov. 8	3 <sup>C</sup>
Moorhens, Gallinules	Sept. 1 - Nov. 8	3

<sup>A</sup> During the Sept. 1-27 portion of the dove season, hunting hours are noon to sunset. During the other seasons, hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

<sup>B</sup> No open seasons on other rails.

<sup>C</sup> Singly or aggregate combinations.

## Licenses Required, in addition to a Pennsylvania hunting license, to hunt ducks and geese:

Persons 16 and older – Federal Duck Stamp, signed in ink across its face, and **Migratory Game Bird License (HIP)**.

Persons 12 through 15 – **Migratory Game Bird License (HIP)**.

**Voluntary:** Pennsylvania Duck Stamp – which helps finance wetland acquisition and development and waterfowl education.

A valid migratory game bird license (HIP) is required to hunt other migratory game birds including doves, woodcock, coots, moorhens, rails and snipe. If you plan to hunt migratory game birds in Pennsylvania, be sure that the licensing agent provides you with a harvest survey card along with your HIP license. By answering the questions on the survey card you will be entered into a pool of hunters from which samples for federal harvest surveys are drawn. Your responses to the questions on the survey card improve efficiency and the quality of the information used to monitor the harvest of migratory birds for management purposes.

## Waterfowl Hunters Urged to Limit Consumption

To minimize potential health impacts, mergansers should not be eaten. Other waterfowl should be skinned and the fat removed before cooking. Discard stuffing (if prepared in this manner) after cooking.

Mergansers are diving ducks; they consume fish and other aquatic organisms that may cause a concentration of contaminants in body tissue. New York officials have found unhealthy levels of PCBs in mergansers taken in the area of Lake Erie. Mergansers from the Lake Erie area could migrate to areas of Pennsylvania.

## What about Avian Influenza?

Again this year, the PGC will be sampling species that migrate from or interact with birds that migrate from Alaska and Europe for avian influenza, including hunter-killed waterfowl during the duck season.

No evidence of the highly pathogenic, H5N1 strain of avian influenza has been detected in North America. Waterfowl hunters, nonetheless, should wear latex or rubber disposable gloves when cleaning

# Summary of Regulations

and handling birds, equipment or surfaces that come in contact with game birds. All avian influenza viruses are killed by heat, so the use of a meat thermometer is recommended to be sure the internal temperature of the birds reach 160 degrees F. Visit [www.pgc.state.pa.us](http://www.pgc.state.pa.us) for further information.

## Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS)

VHS is a viral disease that has caused large-scale mortalities in many fish species. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has implemented measures to help reduce the risk of this disease being transferred into PA. VHS is not a human pathogen; it cannot survive in warm-blooded animals, nor infect humans if they eat fish with the pathogen. VHS is now endemic to the Great Lakes. It has also been found on inland waters in Ohio and New York.

Two ways VHS can spread is by moving infected fish and by moving infected water. Waterfowlers, therefore, may inadvertently help spread this disease by transporting water in their boats or in decoys.

To help ensure you do not transmit this disease into Pennsylvania:

1) Know if you have hunted in an affected watershed. Certainly if you have hunted, fished or boated in any of the Great Lakes or their tributaries (Presque Isle Bay, for example) or any infected inland lake in Ohio or New York, you have been in an infected area.

2) If you're fishing also, do not bring any baitfish from another area. Bait is available locally, and moving baitfish from an infected area may be illegal.

3) If you think you may have been in an infected area, you can disinfect your equipment easily. Using a bleach solution (1/2 cup to 5 gallons) to disinfect and clean boats, decoys and other equipment is very effective in killing VHS. Another method is to completely dry all items in the sunlight for 4 to 6 hours. These methods will also help to deter the spread of other invasives, such as zebra mussels.

If VHS enters Pennsylvania, it will have serious effects on our fish and aquatic ecosystems. Do your part to help avoid spreading this disease.

## Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day:

(Ducks, Mergansers, Canada Geese, Coots and Moorhens Regular season bag limits and other restrictions apply. Note: No Canada goose hunting on SGL 46, Middle Creek, and SGL 214, Pymatuning.)

**Saturday, Sept. 20, 2008**

Licensed junior hunters ages 12 – 15

## Why should hunters report band numbers?

Each year, approximately 380,000 ducks and geese, and 30,000 mourning doves are banded across the U.S. and Canada. By reporting your harvest of a banded bird, you not only assist in managing the resource, but also you could learn interesting facts about your bird.

### Band Reporting

- Call TOLL-FREE, 1-800-327-2263, or report on line at [www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov).
- Operators on duty 24 hours a day during hunting seasons, Monday through Friday. Otherwise 7a.m. – 4:30 p.m. During other hours, leave your telephone number on the voice mail system.
- Information requested: band number, where and what species of bird was killed, your name and address. Hunters can keep the bands and are mailed a certificate.

**TIP Hotline:** 1-888-PGC-8001, for reporting illegal kills of endangered species or multiple big game animals. Report other violations to the appropriate region (see phone numbers).

**Notice:** The material below is only a summary. Each hunter should also consult the actual Federal Regulations which may be found in Title 50, *Code of Federal Regulations*, Part 20. In addition to State regulations, the following Federal rules also apply to the taking, possession, shipping, transporting and storing of migratory game birds.

**Restrictions:** No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, revolver, 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 which 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.
- 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 therefrom 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 driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sailboat 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 30 days after the removal of the bait.

**For additional information on federal regulations, contact:**  
**Senior Resident Agent, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service,**  
**Elizabeth, NJ 07201; 1-908-787-1321**

**Closed Season:** No person shall take migratory game birds during the closed season.

**Waterfowl hunting is not permitted on Sundays.**

**Shooting or Falconry Hours:** No person shall take migratory game birds except during the hours open to shooting and falconry as prescribed.

**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 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: the hunter's signature and address; the total number of birds involved, by species; and the dates such birds were killed. No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are tagged.

**Possession of Live Birds:** Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

**Dressing:** No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird (except doves) 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.

**Nontoxic Shot, Shot Size:** NONTOXIC SHOT must be used while hunting ducks, geese and/or coots in Pennsylvania; the possession of lead shot while hunting ducks, geese and/or coots is unlawful. Shot for waterfowl hunting may not be larger than T size.

Nontoxic shot types approved by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service are: Steel shot, steel shot with coating (1% of either copper, nickel, zinc chromate, or zinc chloride), bismuth-tin, tungsten-iron, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-matrix and tungsten-nickel (HEVI-SHOT), tungsten-bronze-iron shot, tungsten-tin-bismuth, and tungsten-tin-iron-nickel.

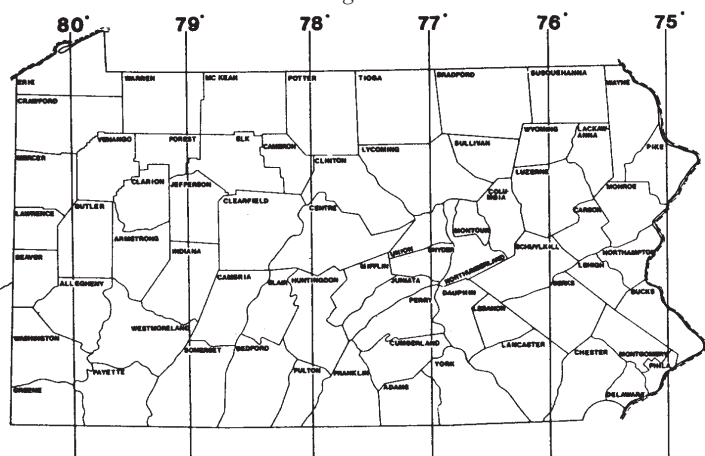
**Decoys:** The use of decoys powered or operated by batteries or any other source of electricity are unlawful for use in Pennsylvania.

**Baiting:** The use of any sort of artificial substance or product as bait or an attractant is prohibited.



# 2008-09 Hunting Hours

\* See exceptions Pymatuning/Middle Creek Wildlife Management Areas.



Dates	Begin a.m.	End p.m.	Dates	Begin a.m.	End p.m.
Aug. 31 - Sept. 6	6:04	7:23	Dec. 7 - 13	6:44	4:36
Sept. 7 - 13	6:10	7:02	Dec. 14 - 20	6:51	4:38
Sept. 14 - 20	6:19	7:00	Dec. 21 - 27	6:49	4:43
Sept. 21 - 27	6:23	6:49	Dec. 28 - Jan. 3	6:53	4:47
Sept. 28 - Oct. 4	6:30	6:37	Jan. 4 - 10	6:53	4:50
Oct. 5 - 11	6:37	6:26	Jan. 11 - 17	6:50	4:56
Oct. 12 - 18	6:45	6:16	Jan. 18 - 24	6:49	5:04
Oct. 19 - 25	6:52	6:06	Jan. 25 - 31	6:45	5:12
Oct. 26 - Nov. 1	7:00	5:58	Feb. 1 - 7	6:39	5:20
Nov. 2 - 8 * Ends	6:08	4:50	Feb. 8 - 14	6:32	5:30
Nov. 9 - 15	6:16	4:44	Feb. 15 - 21	6:23	5:37
Nov. 16 - 22	6:24	4:39	Feb. 22 - 28	6:14	5:45
Nov. 23 - 29	6:32	4:36	Mar. 1 - 7	6:04	5:53
Nov. 30 - Dec. 6	6:38	4:35	Mar. 8 - 14 *Begins	6:53	7:00

\* Daylight Savings Time

For the September Canada goose season, hunting hours are from one half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset. For all other Canada goose seasons and all other migratory game bird seasons (except for the first split of the mourning dove season), hunting hours are one half hour before sunrise to sunset. The accompanying table lists, by date, one half hour before sunrise and sunset times. To determine actual hunting hours for the September Canada goose season, add 30 minutes to the sunset times. These adjustments are made in addition to those based on the meridian map.

### Exceptions:

Blinds at Middle Creek and Pymatuning will not be operational during the September season. During the regular season, shooting days at Middle Creek are Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to 1:30 p.m. Geese and ducks: Nov. 15, (youth-only day), 18, 20, 22, 25, 27 and 29; and Dec. 20, 23, 27 and 30; Jan. 3, 6, 8, 10, 13 and 15. Geese only: Jan. 17, 20, 22 and 24. Shooting days at Pymatuning are Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, one-half hour before sunrise to 12:30 p.m. Ducks: Oct. 18-Nov. 29, Dec. 15-Jan. 9. Geese: Oct. 25-Nov. 29, Dec. 15-Jan. 28. Youth-only day: Nov. 29.

Special youth-only waterfowl hunting days will be held at the controlled hunting blinds at both Middle Creek (Nov. 15) and Pymatuning (Nov. 29) wildlife management areas. A special drawing of applications submitted by junior license holders will be held immediately before the regular drawing for goose blinds. Interested youth should use the same application on page 29 of the 2008-09 Digest. Only one application will be accepted per junior hunter.

### Pennsylvania Game Commission Region Phone Numbers

Northwest: 1-814-432-3187	Southcentral: 1-814-643-1831
Southwest: 1-724-238-9523	Northeast: 1-570-675-1143
Northcentral: 1-570-398-4744	Southeast: 1-610-926-3136

rcm0808

# Pennsylvania 2008-09 Guide to Migratory Game Bird Hunting



2008 Pennsylvania Duck Stamp  
Ontelaunee Redheads, by Scott Calpino

**HELP SUPPORT MIGRATORY GAME BIRD  
MANAGEMENT  
BUY A PA DUCK STAMP**

### Changes for 2008-09

1. Canvasback season is closed.
2. Wood duck daily bag limit has been increased to 3.
3. Scaup season bag limits have been modified to one bird for 40 days and 2 birds for 20 consecutive days within the 60-day season.
4. The daily bag limit for Canada geese has been increased to 3 in the SJBZ zone and the zone boundary has been modified.
5. The Pymatuning zone has been eliminated and is now included within the SJBZ zone. The RP zone boundary has also been modified.
6. The season length and bag limits for Atlantic Brant have been increased to 60 days with a 3-brant daily bag limit.

This publication is only a guide.

For official law see Pennsylvania Game and Wildlife Code and Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50 Part 20.

**REPORT BANDED BIRDS  
1-800-327-BAND or  
www.reportband.gov**



Pennsylvania Game Commission  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797  
717-787-4250  
[www.pgc.state.pa.us](http://www.pgc.state.pa.us)