

## Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Migratory game bird hunting regulations are set by the federal government. Due to a change in the federal regulation setting process, migratory game bird seasons are now finalized by mid-June or early July. Final season dates and bag limits are now available in time to be published in the annual hunting guide; pocket references for migratory game bird seasons are also available from regional DEC offices upon request.

## License Requirements

To hunt any migratory game bird in New York, you need a hunting license unless you qualify to hunt without a license.

To hunt any migratory game bird in New York except crows, you must register in New York's Harvest Information Program (HIP). This applies to all hunters, including junior hunters and people who qualify to hunt without a license. To register, go to: [www.NY-HIP.com](http://www.NY-HIP.com) or call 1-888-427-5447. HIP registration is valid from July 1 through June 30 annually (not the same as your hunting license).

## Duck Stamp

If you are 16 years or older and you hunt waterfowl, then you also need a federal migratory game bird hunting stamp ("duck stamp"). The stamp is not needed to hunt coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock, snipe or crows. You may buy a duck stamp at most post offices and many sporting goods stores. They may also be ordered on-line ([www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com)) or by phone (1-800-852-4897). The stamp must be signed in ink across the face to be valid for hunting.

## Consumption of Wild Waterfowl

Every year, tens of thousands of people consume wild waterfowl harvested in New York. There are many ways to cook and enjoy waterfowl, but it's important to remember that some birds may pick up chemical contaminants from the environment. Mergansers are fish-eating birds that tend to be the most heavily contaminated waterfowl and should not be eaten. For all other wild waterfowl, the New York State Department of Health recommends that you remove the skin and fat before cooking, and eat no more than two meals containing waterfowl per month.

## Waterfowl Hunting in Populated Areas

Some excellent waterfowl hunting opportunities occur in shoreline areas of New York that are becoming more populated and developed. Waterfowl hunters have special privileges in New York, but please consider the possible concerns that nearby homeowners may have about noise, safety or invasion of privacy before you go afield. Avoiding such conflicts will help

ensure that waterfowl hunting remains an accepted tradition in fast-developing shoreline areas. For more information, go to: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/94213.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/94213.html).

DEC, in cooperation with the South Shore Waterfowlers Association (SSWA), has produced *A Pocket Reference for Police Officers and Waterfowl Hunters* that summarizes the state laws that pertain to waterfowl hunting in general and includes a "code of ethics" for waterfowl hunters to help ensure that waterfowl hunting remains a viable recreational opportunity in New York. For a copy, call (518) 402-8883.

## Special Snow Goose Harvest Program

Waterfowl hunters in New York will have a special opportunity to harvest snow geese in most areas of the state from January 16 through April 15, 2017. This additional opportunity is offered because of concerns about impacts that snow geese are having on natural ecosystems. For more information, including harvest regulations for 2016–17, go to: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/50514.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/50514.html).

## General Regulations

Following is a summary of state and federal rules that apply to the taking, possession, shipping, transporting and storing of all migratory game birds in New York. For more complete information, consult the specific federal (50 CFR Part 20) and state (6 NYCRR Part 2.30) regulations. You can link to both of these from: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28175.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28175.html).

## Definitions

Migratory game birds are wild ducks, geese, brant, coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock and snipe. Migratory waterfowl are wild ducks, geese, brant and coot.

## License requirements

All migratory game bird hunters must carry a valid New York State hunting license, except for persons not required to have a hunting license. All migratory game bird hunters in New York must also register annually with New York's Harvest Information Program (HIP) and carry proof of compliance whenever going afield. To register, call toll-free 1-888-4ASKHIP (1-888-427-5447) or visit the website: [www.NY-HIP.com](http://www.NY-HIP.com). You will be given a confirmation number that you can record on the back of your hunting license as proof of participation in HIP. HIP registration is valid from July 1–June 30 annually.

## Migratory bird hunting stamp

Each waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must carry on his/her person a valid Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp ("duck stamp") signed in ink across the face. Stamps do not have to be attached to your license. Duck stamps are not required to hunt coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock or snipe. Duck stamps are not required of minors 12 to 15 years of age hunting migratory waterfowl in New York State.

Federal duck stamps are sold at most post offices and many sporting goods stores and cost \$25.00 each. They may also be ordered by calling 1-800-852-4897 or visiting the website [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com). There is a shipping and handling fee for phone or Internet orders.

## Hunting hours

Woodcock may be taken from sunrise to sunset. All other migratory game birds may be taken from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset in all hunting zones. Canada geese may be taken until one-half hour after sunset during the September seasons, except on Youth Waterfowl Hunt Days, when hunting hours end at sunset. Snow geese may be taken until one-half hour after sunset during January 15–April 15 whenever all other waterfowl hunting seasons are closed.

## Non-toxic shot requirement

Non-toxic shot is required for hunting any migratory game bird, except woodcock, everywhere in New York State. Possession or use of shells loaded with shot other than steel, bismuth-tin, iron-tungsten, iron-tungsten-nickel, tungsten-bronze, tungsten-iron-copper-nickel, tungsten-matrix, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-tin-iron, tungsten-tin-bismuth, tungsten-tin-iron-nickel or other shot approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is strictly prohibited when hunting waterfowl, snipe, rails or gallinules.

## Duck hunting blinds

NYS Navigation Law Section 33-b requires that duck blinds placed in the waters of lakes within New York State be prominently marked with the owner's full name and address. All duck blinds placed in lakes must be removed no later than March 15 annually.

## Prohibitions on methods of take

No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, crossbow, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance.



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Join our grouse and woodcock hunting log: [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9351.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9351.html) or call 518-402-8886.

# Migratory Game Birds

- 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. This does not apply to the taking of snow geese in any area or zone, or taking of Canada geese during September, when all other waterfowl seasons are closed.
  - 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, with a permit issued by the Department of Environmental Conservation, 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 or injury to the spinal cord.
  - From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased. Motorboats and sailboats under power may be used to retrieve dead or crippled birds; however, crippled birds may not be shot from such craft under power except in the Special Sea Duck Area described in the Hunting Seasons Table.
  - 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 recorded migratory bird calls or sounds or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls. This does not apply to the taking of snow geese in any area or zone, or taking of Canada geese in September, when all other waterfowl seasons are closed.
  - 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 10 days after the removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation. Migratory game birds may be taken on or over standing crops, flooded harvested crop lands, grain crops properly shocked on the field where grown or grains found scattered solely as a result of the normal agricultural planting or harvesting.
  - Migratory bird preservation facility
  - Post office or common-carrier facility
- No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird and then transport the bird from the field. The head or one fully feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported.

## Possession, tagging, shipment and importation

The possession limit is the maximum number of migratory game birds that any person may possess in total in his/her automobile or principal means of land transportation, personal abode, or in his/her name at any migratory bird preservation facility, post office or common-carrier facility. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit for all waterfowl species except snow geese.

No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place (other than personal abode) or in the custody of another person for picking, cleaning, processing, shipping, transportation, storage (including temporary storage) or taxidermy services, unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

- Hunter's name, address and signature
- Total number of birds involved, by species
- Dates such birds were killed

For more information on regulations pertaining to possession, tagging, shipment and importation of legally killed migratory game birds, consult the specific federal and state regulations cited above.

## Caution/dual violation

More restrictive regulations may apply to national wildlife refuges and state wildlife management areas (WMAs) open to public hunting. Violation of New York State migratory bird hunting regulations is also a violation of federal regulations.

## Wanton waste/possession of live birds

No person shall kill or cripple any migratory game bird without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird and retain it in his/her actual custody. Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be killed immediately and included in the daily bag limit.

## Field possession limit

No more than one daily bag or aggregate daily bag limit of migratory game birds may be possessed or transported, tagged or untagged, at or between the place of taking and:

- His or her automobile or principal means of land transportation
- His or her personal abode or temporary place of lodging



## What is a "Migratory Game Bird"?

Under state and federal laws and regulations, all of the following are considered migratory game birds in New York:

- All wild ducks, mergansers, geese, and brant ("waterfowl")
- All coot, rails, and gallinules (moorhens)
- Woodcock and snipe

Crows are not considered migratory game birds under federal regulations, but most of New York's migratory game bird hunting regulations apply to crows. You should assume they are the same except where differences are noted.

Mourning doves are considered migratory game birds under federal regulations, but they are not defined as such under New York State law so no hunting season has been established for this species (for more information, see: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/59626.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/59626.html)).

# Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

**Woodcock, Crow, Snipe, Rail & Gallinule Seasons**

- Upstate New York**  
(North of Bronx-Westchester County boundary)  
American Woodcock: Oct. 1–Nov. 14  
Crow: Sept. 1–Mar. 31 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday only)  
Snipe, Rail & Gallinule: Sept. 1–Nov. 9
- Long Island**  
(Nassau and Suffolk counties)  
American Woodcock: Oct. 1–Nov. 14  
Crow: Sept. 1–Mar. 31 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday only)  
Snipe, Rail and Gallinule: Closed
- New York City**  
(Bronx, Kings, Queens, New York & Richmond counties)  
Closed for all migratory bird species

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**Woodcock, Crow, Snipe, Rail and Gallinule  
Hunting Season Dates, Bag Limits, and Regulations for 2016–17**

Regulations	Woodcock	Crow	Snipe	Virginia & Sora Rails	Gallinules	Clapper & King Rails
Upstate New York <sup>1,3</sup>	Oct. 1 – Nov. 14	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Closed
Long Island <sup>2,3</sup>	Oct. 1 – Nov. 14	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Bag Limit	3/day 9 in possession	None	8/day 24 in possession	8/day 24 in possession	8/day 24 in possession	n/a
Shooting Hours	Sunrise to Sunset	Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	n/a
Non-Toxic Shot	NOT Required	NOT Required	Required	Required	Required	n/a
HIP Registration	Required	NOT Required	Required	Required	Required	n/a
Other	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	Hunting on Fri., Sat., Sun. & Mon. ONLY; Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required; Rifles and electronically amplified bird calls or sounds permitted	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	n/a

1 Upstate New York includes all of New York State north of the Bronx-Westchester County boundary

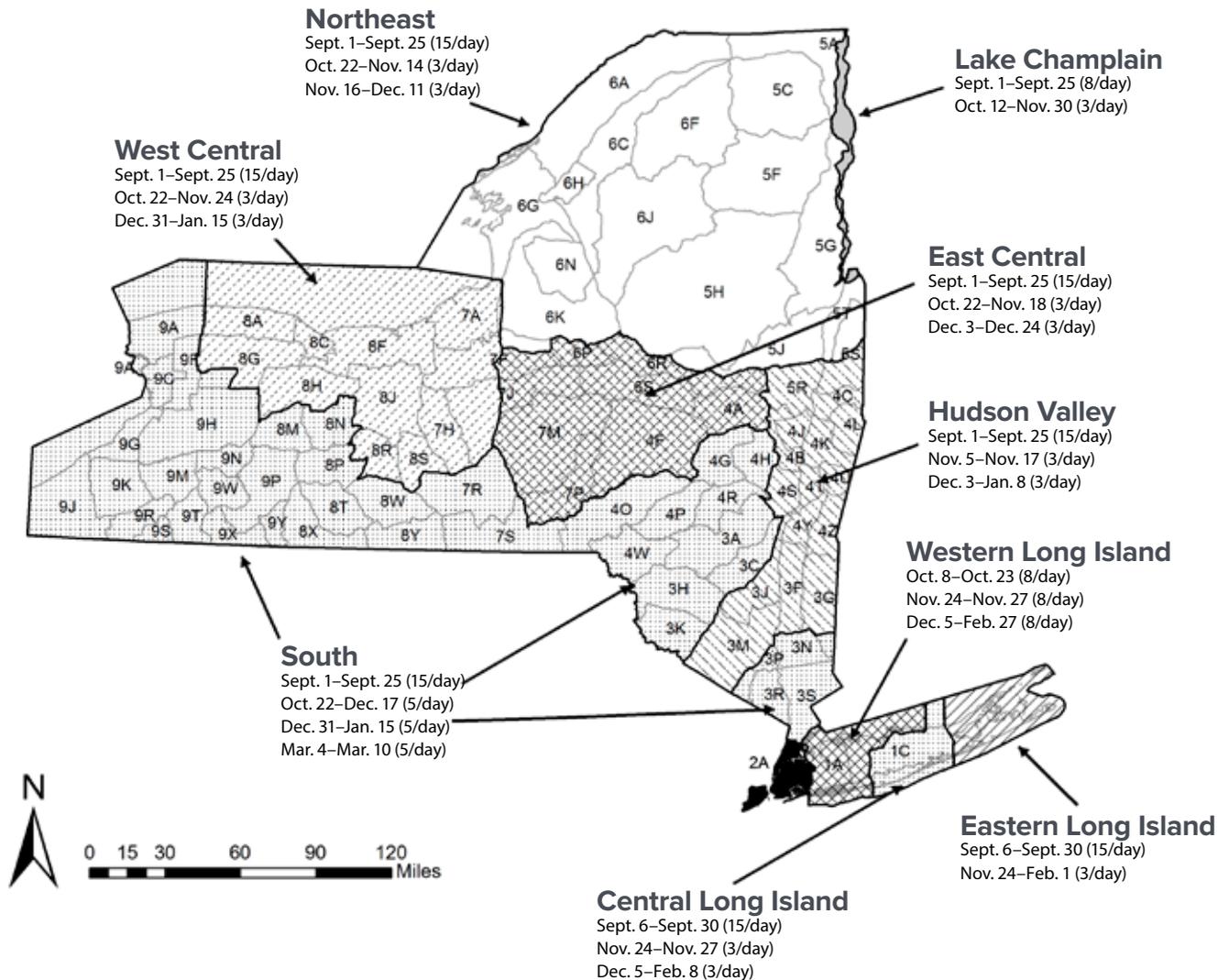
2 Long Island includes all of WMUs 1A and 1C (Nassau and Suffolk counties)

3 Hunting season closed in New York City for all species listed in table; New York City includes all of WMU 2A (Bronx, Kings, Queens, New York, and Richmond counties)

# Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

## 2016–2017 Canada Goose Hunting Areas and Seasons

**Note:** "Goose Hunting Areas" (see map below) have replaced waterfowl hunting zones for setting Canada goose hunting seasons. Season dates are shown below (with the daily bag limit in parentheses).



## Boating Safety

Operators born on or after May 1, 1996 must have a boating safety certificate and be at least 10 years of age.

A boating safety course can be completed online, see <http://nysparks.com/recreation/boating/boating-safety-class.aspx> for more information.

## Life jackets must be worn by:

- Children under the age of 12 aboard pleasure vessels less than 65 feet in length, canoes, kayaks or rowboats unless in a totally enclosed cabin
- Everyone being towed (wakeboarding, water skiing, tubing, etc.)
- Everyone aboard pleasure vessels less than 21 feet in length, including rowboats, canoes, and kayaks, while underway between November 1st and May 1st
- Everyone aboard a PWC

# Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

## Bag Limits

The daily bag limit is the maximum number of birds of each species that any person may take or possess in the field during any one day. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit for all migratory game birds except snow geese.

Species	Daily Limit	Possession Limit
Ducks*/Seaducks**	6	18
Coot	15	45
Canada Geese	See map	See map
Snow Geese***	25	No limit
Brant	2	6
Woodcock	3	9
Snipe, rails, gallinules	8	24

\* The daily limit of 6 ducks includes all mergansers and sea ducks (scoters, eiders and long-tailed ducks) and may include no harlequin ducks and no more than 4 mallards (2 of which may be hens), 3 wood ducks, 1 black duck, 2 pintail, 2 scaup, 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 4 scoters, 4 eiders, 4 long-tailed ducks or 2 hooded mergansers. For all other duck species found in New York, the daily limit is 6.

\*\* Sea ducks count towards the regular duck bag in all areas.

\*\*\* Cackling geese and white-fronted geese may be taken as part of the Canada goose daily and possession limits. Snow geese and Ross' geese may be taken as part of the snow goose limits.

## 2016–2017 Migratory Game Bird Seasons (Regulations in Effect September 2016 to April 2017)

Species	Western Zone	Northeastern Zone	Lake Champlain Zone	Southeastern Zone	Long Island Zone
Ducks, Coot and Mergansers	Oct. 22 – Dec. 4 Dec. 31 – Jan. 15	Oct. 8 – Oct. 30 Nov. 5 – Dec. 11	Oct. 12 – Oct. 16 Oct. 29 – Dec. 22	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10 Nov. 12 – Dec. 31	Nov. 24 – Nov. 27 Dec. 5 – Jan. 29
Sea Ducks*	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above	same as above
Youth Days**	Oct. 1 & Oct. 2	Sept. 17 & Sept. 18	Sept. 24 & Sept. 25	Sept. 17 & Sept. 18	Nov. 12 & Nov. 13
Canada Geese	see other panel	see other panel	see other panel	see other panel	see other panel
Snow Geese	Oct. 1 – Apr. 15	Oct. 1 – Apr. 15	Oct. 12 – Dec. 31 Jan. 16 – Apr. 15	Oct. 1 – Apr. 15	Nov. 24 – Mar. 10
Brant	Oct. 1 – Nov. 29	Oct. 1 – Nov. 29	Oct. 5 – Dec. 3	Oct. 1 – Nov. 29	Nov. 24 – Nov. 27 Dec. 5 – Jan. 29

\* During the period of Oct. 17–Jan. 31, the taking of sea ducks (scoters, eiders and long-tailed ducks) is permitted within the Special Sea Duck Area, defined as the coastal waters of New York State lying in Long Island Sound, Block Island Sound, Great Peconic Bay and associated bays eastward from a line running between Miamogue Point in the Town of Riverhead to Red Cedar Point in the Town of Southampton, and any ocean waters of New York State lying south of Long Island.

\*\* These are additional days for Junior Hunters only (ages 12–15) to hunt ducks, coot, mergansers, Canada geese and brant (see page 36).

For written descriptions of Goose Hunting Areas and Waterfowl Hunting Zones, see page 72.

# Waterfowl Hunting Zone Descriptions

## NY State Goose Hunting Areas

See road boundaries at: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28510.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28510.html)

1. The Lake Champlain Goose Hunting Area is the same as the Lake Champlain Waterfowl Hunting Zone (see other page).
2. The Northeast Goose Hunting Area is the same as the Northeastern Waterfowl Hunting Zone (see other page).
3. The West Central Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 7A, 7H, 8A, 8C, 8F, 8H, 8J, 8R and 8S. The West Central Goose Hunting Area also includes: that part of WMU 6K lying west of a continuous line extending along the north shore of the Salmon River from US Route 11 to Interstate Route 81, then south along Route 81 to Route 49; those parts of WMUs 7F and 7J lying west of Route 81; and that part of WMU 8G lying north and east of a continuous line extending along the New York State Thruway from Crittenden-Murrays Corners Road (near the Erie-Genesee county line) to Exit 48 in Batavia, then south along Route 98 to Route 20.
4. The East Central Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 4A, 4F, 6P, 6R, 6S, 7M and 7P. The East Central Goose Hunting Area also includes those parts of WMUs 7F and 7J lying south of Route 31 and east of Route 81.

5. The Hudson Valley Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 3F, 3J, 3M, 4B, 4C, 4J, 4K, 4L, 4S, 4T, 4U, 4Y, 4Z, 5R; that part of WMU 5S lying south of a continuous line extending east along Route 29 to Route 22, north along Route 22 to Washington County Route 153, then east along Route 153 to the New York-Vermont boundary; and that part of WMU 3G lying in Dutchess County.
6. The South Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 3A, 3C, 3H, 3K, 3N, 3P, 3R, 4G, 4H, 4O, 4P, 4R, 4W, 7R, 7S, 8M, 8N, 8P, 8T, 8W, 8X, 8Y, 9A, 9C, 9F, 9G, 9H, 9J, 9K, 9M, 9N, 9P, 9R, 9S, 9T, 9W, 9X and 9Y. The South Goose Hunting Area also includes: that part of WMU 8G lying south and west of a continuous line extending along the New York State Thruway from Crittenden-Murrays Corners Road (near the Erie-Genesee county line) to Exit 48 in Batavia, then south along State Route 98 to State Route 20; that part of WMU 3G lying in Putnam County; and that part of WMU 3S lying north of Route I-95.
7. The Western Long Island Goose Hunting Area is that area of Westchester County and its tidal waters southeast of Interstate Route 95 and that area of Nassau and Suffolk counties lying west of a line extending from the New York-Connecticut boundary

due south to the northernmost end of the Sunken Meadow State Parkway, south along the Sunken Meadow State Parkway, the Sagtikos State Parkway, and the Robert Moses State Parkway to its southernmost end, then due south to international waters.

8. The Central Long Island Goose Hunting Area is that area of Suffolk County lying between the Western and Eastern Long Island Goose Hunting areas, as defined above and below.
9. The Eastern Long Island Goose Hunting Area is that area of Suffolk County lying east of a continuous line extending due south from the New York-Connecticut boundary to the northernmost end of Roanoke Avenue in the Town of Riverhead, south on Roanoke Avenue (which becomes County Route 73) to State Route 25, west on Route 25 to Peconic Avenue, south on Peconic Avenue to County Route (CR) 104 (Riverleigh Avenue), south on CR 104 to CR 31 (Old Riverhead Road), south on CR 31 to Oak Street, south on Oak Street to Potunk Lane, then west on Stevens Lane, then south on Jessup Avenue (in Westhampton Beach) to Dune Road (CR 89), then due south to international waters.

## Waterfowl Hunting Zones

**Western Zone** – That area west of a continuous line extending from Lake Ontario east along the north shore of the Salmon River to Interstate Route 81 and then south along Interstate Route 81 to the New York-Pennsylvania boundary.

**Northeastern Zone** – That area north of a continuous line extending from Lake Ontario east along the north shore of the Salmon River to Interstate Route 81, south along Interstate Route 81 to Route 31, east along Route 31 to Route 13, north along Route 13 to Route 49, east along Route 49 to Route 365, east along Route 365 to Route 28, east along Route 28 to Route 29, east along Route 29 to Route 22, north along Route 22 to Route 153, east along Route 153 to the New York-Vermont boundary, exclusive of the Lake Champlain Zone.

**Lake Champlain Zone** – That area east and north of a continuous line extending along Route 11 from the New York-Canada boundary south to Route 9B, south along Route 9B to Route 9, south along Route 9 to Route 22 south of Keeseville, south along Route 22 to the west shore of South Bay along and around the shoreline of South Bay to Route 22 on the east shore of South Bay, southeast along Route 22 to Route 4, northeast along Route 4 to the New York-Vermont boundary.

**Southeastern Zone** – That area east of Interstate Route 81 that is south of a continuous line extending from Interstate Route 81 east along Route 31 to Route 13, north along Route 13 to Route 49, east along Route 49 to Route 365, east along Route 365 to Route 28, east along Route 28 to Route 29, east along Route 29 to Route 22, north along Route 22 to Route 153, east along Route 153 to the New York-Vermont boundary, and northwest of Interstate Route 95 in Westchester County.

**Long Island Zone** – That area consisting of Nassau and Suffolk counties and their tidal waters, and that area of Westchester County and its tidal waters southeast of Interstate Route 95.

