

# GAME BIRD REGULATIONS

Since the fall of 2008 there is no longer a prohibition on the Sunday hunting of game birds (migratory and upland).

## Please Remember

Federal regulations prohibit the use of lead shot or cross-bows for hunting waterfowl.

All birds are protected except the following: Starlings, Crows, Pigeons, House (English) Sparrows, Magpies, Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Ravens (hunted on private land by residents) and any other birds for which an open season has been declared by the regulations as indicated in this summary.

## Falconry Hunting

Falconers are permitted to hunt upland game birds and migratory birds, by means of falconry, in all areas of the province except in national parks and those restricted areas identified on pages 33 through 37.

To hunt any game birds by means of falconry, a Resident holder of a Recreational Falconry Permit requires a WIN Card and a Wildlife Certificate, plus

- a Game Bird Licence to hunt grouse, partridge or ptarmigan;
- a Game Bird Licence and a Pheasant Licence to hunt pheasant, or
- a Game Bird Licence and a Federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit to hunt waterfowl.

To hunt any game birds by means of falconry, a Non-resident (Canadian) hunter requires an Import permit, a WIN Card and a Wildlife Certificate, plus

- either a Game Bird Licence or 3-Day Game Bird Licence to hunt grouse, partridge or ptarmigan;
- either a Game Bird Licence or a 3-Day Game Bird Licence, and a Pheasant Licence to hunt pheasant, or
- either a Game Bird Licence or a 3-Day Game Bird Licence, and a Federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit to hunt waterfowl.

To hunt any game birds by means of falconry, a Non-resident Alien hunter requires an Import permit, a WIN Card and a Non-Resident Alien Wildlife Certificate, plus

- an Upland Game Bird Licence to hunt grouse, partridge or ptarmigan;
- an Upland Game Bird Licence and a Pheasant Licence to hunt pheasant, or
- a 6-Day Waterfowl Licence and a Federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit to hunt waterfowl.

## Seasons

The open season to hunt upland game birds by means of falconry is from August 15, 2011 to March 31, 2012 (Sundays included). Migratory game birds may be hunted by means of falconry during the designated open season for migratory birds (Sundays included) (page 63).

## IN ALBERTA SAGE GROUSE ARE PROTECTED!

Sage grouse are listed as an endangered species in Alberta. If you hunt upland game birds within the range of sage grouse, be sure your target is not a sage grouse.

## Bowhunting

Hunters wishing to hunt game birds with a bow and arrow, other than a cross-bow, require a Bowhunting Permit in addition to the other applicable licences.

## Designated Pheasant Release Sites

The operation of the pheasant hatchery at Brooks was privatized in April 2000 with a non-government partnership, the Canadian Pheasant Company. For more information about the pheasant release program, please contact the Canadian Pheasant Company (403-362-4122). During the open season for male pheasants, the hunting of game birds, including pheasants, is not permitted in the following designated pheasant release sites after 2:00 p.m. on any day, except Saturdays.

### WMU

- 152 Millicent Buck for Wildlife Project (NE19 and 30-20-13-W4)
- 206 Buffalo Lake Buck for Wildlife Project (9 and SW10-40-21-W4)
- 210 Bigelow Buck for Wildlife Project (3, E9, SW10 & LSD 12 and 13 of 10-34-25-W4)

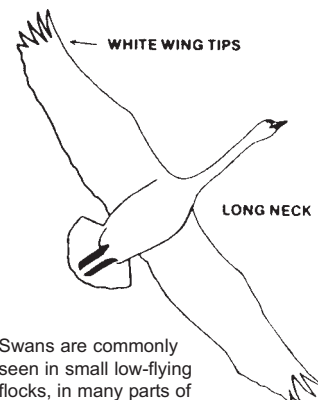
## Special Hunting Areas

In WMUs 212 and 248 the hunting of game birds is only permitted with bows and arrows, cross-bows, shotguns or a falconry bird. Cross-bows cannot be used to hunt migratory birds.

In WMU 410 the hunting of game birds is permitted only with bows and arrows or a falconry bird.



**SNOW GOOSE**



Swans are commonly seen in small low-flying flocks, in many parts of Alberta during the late fall.

**SWAN** (Do Not Shoot)

## WATERFOWLER HERITAGE DAYS

The first Saturday and Sunday in September are designated as Waterfowler Heritage Days in WMUs 102-166, 210-214 and 300-314. Within the applicable WMUs, youth (age 12-17) may hunt waterfowl on these dates without a licence (provincial or federal) provided they are qualified to do so (see Licensing requirements for first-time hunters, page 20 and 21) and are accompanied by an adult migratory game bird hunting permit holder. The adult permit holder may not have in their possession or use a firearm, or accompany more than 2 minors at one time. The youth can only hunt waterfowl species for which there will be an open season in that WMU. Regular bag limits and possession limits apply.

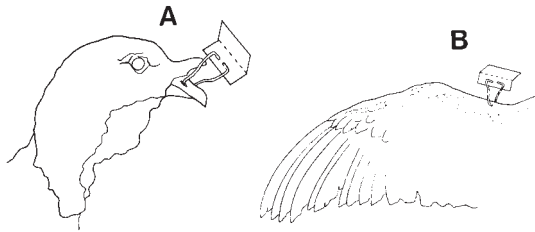
# MERRIAM'S TURKEY DRAW

Merriam's Turkey Special Licences are issued through a draw. Licences will be valid in all of WMU 300-308, 400 and 402. The season is from May 1 to May 31, 2012 with a bag limit of one bearded Merriam's turkey per special licence holder. Hunters interested in this hunt must have applied in the draw by June 23, 2011.

Each Merriam's turkey harvested must be tagged

- immediately after the bird is killed, and
- in the manner described below with the paper tag supplied with each licence. All instructions on the back of the paper tag must be followed.

## Merriam's Turkey Tagging Instructions



Tagging Instructions: (A) place wire through the nares, or (B) through the patagium between the tendon and the bones of the wing.

Tags must remain affixed until the carcass is delivered to

- the usual residence of the person who killed it, and is butchered, cut and packaged for consumption, or
- to a premises in respect of which there is a Food Establishment Permit issued under the *Public Health Act* or Licence for the Operation of an Abattoir issued under the *Meat Inspection Act*.

Please refer to items 2, 12 and 13 of Prohibitions, Game Bird section (page 19) for additional requirements concerning weapons and evidence of sex and species for Merriam's turkey.

## ATTENTION TURKEY HUNTERS

The Fish and Wildlife Division will be conducting a hunter harvest survey after the fall hunting season to obtain information required for turkey management. Your cooperation and assistance in collecting and providing the necessary information is required. We request that you keep track of the number of days hunted in each WMU.

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## Description of Birds and General Behaviour

Adult males weigh 6.5 to 9 kilograms (14 to 20 pounds) and adult females weigh 3.5 to 4.5 kilograms (8 to 10 pounds). The plumage is an iridescent bronze colour but reflected sunlight can give the appearance of green, blue, red and purple shades. The wings and tail feathers are barred with alternating light and dark bands. Females appear lighter brown because their body feathers are white or buff tipped while males have black tips.

The head and neck of the gobbler (male) have several features which are lacking in the female. The male has a fleshy growth (wattle) which hangs from the under side of the throat or chin. Males also exhibit fatty growths (caruncles) located on the side and back of the neck and on the lower throat. A fleshy projection above the bill of males (snood, or dew bill) will also distinguish males from females. Another primary difference between males and females is the presence of a pronounced "beard" on the lower neck of the male. This beard consists of a group of coarse feathers resembling a bristly, black rope and may be up to 25 centimetres (10 inches) long. The beard is usually absent or very small in females.



**Beards L-R:**  
old male,  
second-year male,  
first-year male,  
old hen

## Heads

The non-feathered area of the head and neck of the male may appear to be red, white or blue depending on the turkey's activity. In the spring, when strutting or threatened, a male may exhibit a bright red head; and when frightened, the head may be pale blue. Females exhibit a less colourful grey-brown to grey-blue head.



**Hen**  
Smaller and blacker than tom. Scattering of short, black, velvety, hair-like feathers.

**Tom**  
Bald with narrow band of feathers up back of neck. Colours bright reddish-blue in spring.

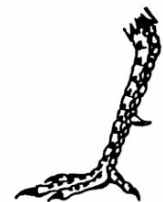
## Common Characteristics to Differentiate Males and Females

Characteristic	Female	Male
Beard	Very rare, short	Regularly, up to 25cm (10") long
Gobble	Never	Frequently, especially in spring
Head Colour	Grey-brown, grey-blue	Bright turquoise blue, bright red, bright blue, sometimes grayish white

## Spurs



**Hen**  
Very small or absent spurs.



**Tom**  
Obvious spurs.

Merriam's Turkey Draw continued on page 65

# MERRIAM'S TURKEY DRAW (continued)

## Breast Feathers



Hen  
White tip.



Tom  
Black tip.

It is unlawful to hunt any wildlife or **discharge a firearm** between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise.

### Sunrise/Sunset Table (Mountain Daylight Time)

Date	Sunrise	Sunset
May 01, 2012	6:13 a.m.	8:54 p.m.
May 05, 2012	6:06 a.m.	9:00 p.m.
May 10, 2012	5:48 a.m.	9:07 p.m.
May 15, 2012	5:41 a.m.	9:14 p.m.
May 20, 2012	5:45 a.m.	9:21 p.m.
May 25, 2012	5:39 a.m.	9:27 p.m.
May 30, 2012	5:35 a.m.	9:32 p.m.

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