

# • • INTRODUCTION TO HUNTING WATERFOWL • •

## FISH & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

The Division of Wildlife funds conservation with **license sales and an excise tax** on firearms, archery, and hunting equipment.



## ABOUT WATERFOWL

- Flat bills, webbed feet, require aquatic area as part of habitat
- **Migratory** species, use flyways
- **Dabbling** and **diving** ducks (several species of each)
- **Geese** species include Canada, White-fronted, Snow, Blue, Ross's and Brandt
- Important to **identify** waterfowl species and between gender
- Different species use different habitat



## HUNTING RULES & REGULATIONS



Published annually



Protects animal populations



Covers waterfowl hunting-specific information

## BEFORE THE HUNT

- Scout using satellite imagery first, then get boots on the ground
- Obtain written permission for private property
- Practice with your preferred hunting implement at moving targets
- Be sure to purchase your hunting license, Ohio Wetland Stamp, Federal Duck Stamp, and complete HIP certification

## NEEDED EQUIPMENT

- Shotgun with appropriate choke
  - Shotgun cannot be capable of holding more than 3 shells while hunting migratory birds
  - Archery equipment also legal, not commonly used for waterfowl
- Steel/non-toxic shotgun shells
  - Shot size is determined by species being pursued
- Camo clothes and waders or hip boots if planning to hunt over water
- Bucket or stool to sit on
- Decoys and calls

## HUNTING STRATEGIES

- Waterfowl can be hunted in agricultural fields, from the shores of wetland/ponds, or from a boat
- Set up in an area with suitable habitat or where waterfowl have been seen
- Set decoys in an area where hunters can hide in nearby cover
  - Consider wind direction, the sun, and intended area for birds to land free of decoys
- Use calls to get attention of passing waterfowl/convince them to land
- Be ready for quick follow-up shots

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## CONSIDERATIONS

Depending on where you hunt, you may need chest waders, a blind, or a small boat. There are also layout boats. Some also use trained dogs to help retrieve harvested birds!



## EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Shotgun: shooting hundreds of small BBs
- Pattern your shotgun with different chokes and shot size for desired pattern
- Research different calls and practice with them before a hunt
- Motion decoys can help draw in wary birds

## WHERE TO HUNT



Wildlife areas, especially those with ponds and wetland habitat



Check out controlled hunt opportunities



Harvested crop fields



Large rivers and streams

## PREPARING

- Waterfowl can be de-breasted, or field dressed (removing organs to cool meat, done as soon as possible) and plucked for a whole bird presentation
- Remember that waterfowl have a daily limit, subject to change, that varies by species

## HUNTING LICENSE, STAMPS, & HIP SURVEY

- License required to hunt any species, regardless of age
  - Options available based on age, residency, if hunter education has been completed
  - Apprentice license for those without hunter education
  - Download the HuntFish app to purchase and display hunting licenses
- Hunting migratory birds (such as waterfowl) requires a Harvest Information Program (HIP) certification
  - Consists of survey questions, can be completed online, at store when hunting license purchased
- Waterfowl hunters 18 or older must also have a printed Ohio Wetlands Stamp endorsement
- Waterfowl hunters aged 16 or older must have a signed federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp

## INTERESTED IN TAKING THE NEXT STEP?

- The Wild Ohio Harvest Community offers in-person learning opportunities that build on the content in this module
- Find other learning modules, resources, and more!

