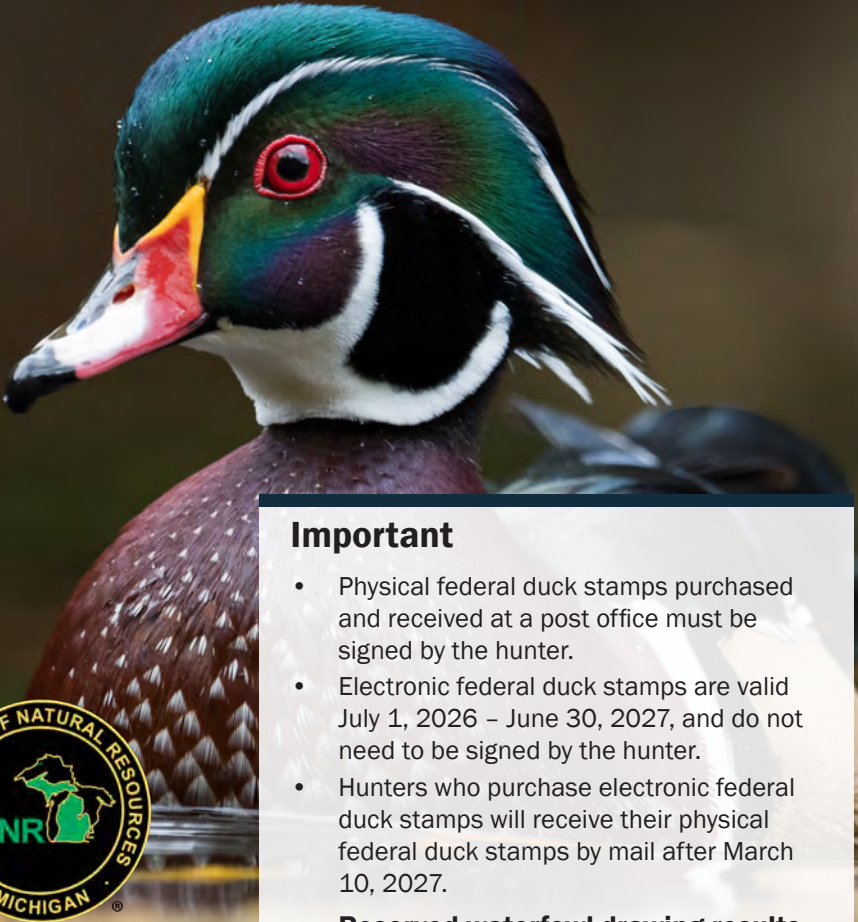


2026

MICHIGAN WATERFOWL HUNTING REGULATIONS SUMMARY



Important

- Physical federal duck stamps purchased and received at a post office must be signed by the hunter.
- Electronic federal duck stamps are valid July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027, and do not need to be signed by the hunter.
- Hunters who purchase electronic federal duck stamps will receive their physical federal duck stamps by mail after March 10, 2027.

**Reserved waterfowl drawing results
available Sept. 14.**

Reserved waterfowl application period: Aug. 1–28, 2026

RAP (Report All Poaching): Call or text 800-292-7800

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Stay on top of the latest news from the Michigan DNR!

Visit Michigan.gov/DNREmail to sign up for email updates!

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission is a seven-member public body whose members are appointed by the governor and subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. The NRC has exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game and sportfish. The commission conducts monthly, public meetings in locations throughout Michigan. Citizens are encouraged to become actively involved in these public forums. For more information, visit Michigan.gov/NRC.

This program receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, or if you need more information, please write to: Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

NOTICE: This document is not a legal notice or a complete collection of hunting regulations and laws. It is a summary of regulations issued for hunters' convenience. Copies of wildlife conservation orders, which contain complete listings of regulations and legal descriptions, are available at Michigan.gov/DNRLaws.



Managing waterfowl

Migratory game bird management in the U.S. is a cooperative effort between state and federal governments. Migratory bird treaties with Canada and Mexico govern the management of migratory birds in the U.S., distinguishing those species that can be hunted from those that cannot and establishing limits on hunting season dates and lengths. Authority lies with the federal governments in the respective countries. For waterfowl management, the U.S. and Canada are divided into four flyways: the Atlantic, Mississippi, Central and Pacific (Michigan lies within the Mississippi flyway). In the U.S., the flyway councils, consisting of representatives from state and provincial game management agencies, recommend

regulations to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for waterfowl and for most migratory, shore and upland game birds.

Flyway technical committees, consisting of state and provincial biologists, advise the councils. These technical committees evaluate species and population status and harvest and hunter-participation data during the development of the council recommendations. The FWS evaluates the council recommendations, considering species status and biology, cumulative effects of regulations and existing regulatory policy, and develops final regulations. (Content modified from [Flyways.us](https://flyways.us)).

Once final federal regulations are known, the Michigan DNR analyzes waterfowl population, migration and hunter opinion data and meets with the Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee. The DNR uses the input from the CWAC and from hunters across the state to develop recommendations for waterfowl hunting seasons that are presented to the Natural Resources Commission. The NRC then makes the final decisions for waterfowl hunting regulations in Michigan.

Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee

CWAC is a 20-member group made up of 13 at-large members and representatives of seven major waterfowl hunting organizations. Its mission is to provide feedback to the DNR on existing and proposed waterfowl regulations and waterfowl hunting issues. CWAC members are charged with presenting views and concerns that represent stakeholders from their areas of the state or their organization and disseminating information learned at committee meetings back to those stakeholders.

Waterfowl monitoring

Population surveys and monitoring programs are critical parts of successful waterfowl management in North America. Results from these surveys are crucial inputs for many waterfowl population models and are used to help guide biologists in setting and evaluating harvest management and habitat management programs. For more information on waterfowl monitoring, visit Michigan.gov/Waterfowl and click on “how waterfowl regulations are set” under Hunting Regulations.



Waterfowl hunting season dates

Area	Season	Season dates
Statewide	Common gallinule, Virginia rail, sora rail and Wilson's snipe	Sept. 1–Nov. 9
Statewide	Early teal ¹	Sept. 1–9
Statewide	Veterans and Active-Duty U.S. Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days ²	Sept. 19–20
Statewide	Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekend ³	Sept. 19–20
North Zone	Coot, duck and merganser	Sept. 26 – Nov. 22 and Nov. 28–29
North Zone	Dark goose ⁴	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
North Zone	Light goose ⁵	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
Middle Zone	Coot, duck and merganser	Oct. 3 – Nov. 29 and Dec. 12–13
Middle Zone	Dark goose ⁴	Sept. 1–30 and Oct. 3 – Dec. 18
Middle Zone	Light goose ⁵	Sept. 1–30 and Oct. 3 – Dec. 18
South Zone	Coot, duck and merganser	Oct. 17 – Dec. 13 and Dec. 26–27
South Zone⁶	Dark goose ⁴	Sept. 1–30, Oct. 17 – Dec. 13, Dec. 26 – Jan. 3 and Feb. 6–15
South Zone⁶	Light goose ⁵	Sept. 1–30, Oct. 17 – Dec. 13, Dec. 26 – Jan. 3 and Feb. 6–15
Allegan County GMU	Dark goose ⁴	Sept. 1–30, Oct. 17 – Nov. 4 and Dec. 19 – Feb. 14
Allegan County GMU	Light goose ⁵	Sept. 1–30, Oct. 17 – Nov. 4 and Dec. 19 – Feb. 14
Muskegon County Wastewater System GMU	Dark goose ⁴	Oct. 20 – Dec. 19
Muskegon County Wastewater System GMU	Light goose ⁵	Oct. 20 – Dec. 19

Table continued ►

¹Open for blue-winged teal and green-winged teal only. Hunting hours begin at sunrise.
²Veterans and active-duty U.S military personnel only.
³Must be a properly licensed youth hunter (16 years old or younger) to participate.
⁴The dark goose season includes brant, Canada goose and white-fronted goose.
⁵The light goose season includes blue goose, Ross's goose and snow goose.
⁶Excludes Allegan County GMU and Muskegon County Wastewater System GMU.

What are the proposed opening days for the 2027 duck seasons?

To achieve consistency and assist waterfowl hunters in planning future duck hunting seasons, the DNR and CWAC developed proposed opening days for the 2025–2027 duck seasons. The proposed opening days for 2028–2030 will be developed in 2027. The proposed opening days are only valid if the federal duck season regulations do not change. Duck season dates will not be finalized until the spring prior to that year’s duck season.

Area	Season	Proposed opening day
North Zone	2027	Sept. 25
Middle Zone	2027	Oct. 2
South Zone	2027	Oct. 16

What is the early teal season?

The early teal season is a statewide waterfowl season that takes place on public and private lands open to waterfowl hunting Sept. 1–9, 2026. Hunting hours for the early teal season differ from regular waterfowl hunting hours. Go to the *Hunting hours* section for more information.

What can I hunt during the early teal season?

Only blue-winged and green-winged teal may be harvested during the early teal season. Hunters are strongly encouraged to refresh their duck identification skills for this season. **Do not shoot if you are not sure of your target.** The daily bag limits and possession limits are the same as those allowed in the regular duck hunting season.

What are some tips for teal hunting?

Here are a few teal hunting tips:

- Decoys will easily attract teal, so use them to bring birds in closer to aid in identification.
- Pass shooting is not recommended.
- Teal prefer shallow waters and areas along shallow margins of ponds and lakes.
- Look for areas with lots of mud flats and sparse vegetation.
- Avoid forested wetlands, where you are likely to encounter wood ducks.

What are the Veterans and Active-Duty U.S. Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days?

The Veterans and Active-Duty U.S. Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days are a statewide waterfowl season that takes place on public and private lands open to waterfowl hunting Sept. 19–20, 2026. This waterfowl season takes place concurrently with the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekend.

- Participating veterans and active-duty U.S. military personnel are required to have documentation afield and must present it upon request of a Michigan conservation officer, tribal conservation officer or any law enforcement officer.
- The following documentation will be accepted as proof of status: military ID, leave papers, duty papers, military orders, copy of DD Form 214, enhanced driver's license or documentation from the Veterans Administration regarding disability status.
- Hunters must have a base license, a waterfowl license (includes HIP) and a federal duck stamp.

What can I hunt during the Veterans and Active-Duty U.S. Military Personnel Waterfowl Hunting Days?

Ducks, mergansers, geese, coots and common gallinules may be harvested. The daily limits and species restrictions are the same as those allowed in the regular waterfowl hunting season.

What is the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekend?

The Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekend is a statewide waterfowl season that takes place on public and private lands open to waterfowl hunting Sept. 19–20, 2026. Youth 16 years old or younger can participate in this season.

- Hunters 9 years old and younger must be licensed through the Mentored Hunting Program and accompanied by a qualified mentor. A migratory bird youth endorsement (includes HIP) is also required.
- Hunters 10–15 years old must have a base license, base apprentice license or an inclusive mentored license. A migratory bird youth endorsement (includes HIP) is also required.
- Hunters who are 16 years old must have a Michigan waterfowl license and a federal duck stamp in addition to their base license, base apprentice license or inclusive mentored license. A HIP endorsement is also required.

What can I hunt during the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekend?

Ducks, mergansers, geese, coots and common gallinules may be harvested; accompanying adults are not permitted to harvest these species during the hunt unless hunting during the September portion of the Canada goose hunting season. The daily limits and species restrictions are the same as those allowed in the regular waterfowl hunting season.

Goose management units

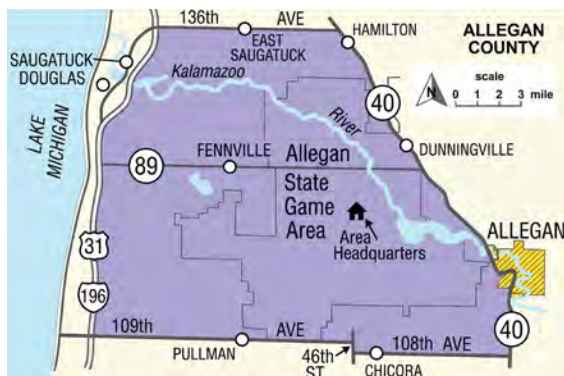
What is the Muskegon County Wastewater System GMU?

The Muskegon County Wastewater System GMU provides primarily goose hunting with the occasional mallard harvest. It is located on 5,700 acres of agricultural fields on the Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center (no open water), south and east of the Muskegon State Game Area headquarters. Hunting is allowed by a drawing held at the Muskegon State Game Area headquarters on Tuesday mornings at 5:30 a.m., Thursday mornings at 11 a.m., and Saturday at 5:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. starting Tuesday, Oct. 20, and ending Saturday, Dec. 19. For late season hunt availability or freeze up conditions, refer to the manager's update at Michigan.gov/WetlandWonders.



What is the Allegan County GMU?

The Allegan County GMU provides goose hunting opportunity on the Fennville Farm Unit of the Allegan State Game Area as well as the surrounding area (detailed in the map below). The Fennville Farm Unit portion is closed to goose hunting Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from Dec. 19 – Feb. 14. The Fennville Farm Unit will be open to goose hunting by self-registration from Sept. 1–30 and Oct. 19 – Nov. 4; and open by drawings on Oct. 17–18 and Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday from Dec. 19 – Feb. 14. Drawings are held at 5:30 a.m., with hunting permitted from shooting time in the morning until 4:30 p.m. Leftover zones will be reissued until 11 a.m.





Bag limits

What are the bag limits for ducks?

The daily bag limit for ducks is six ducks of any species. There may be no more than four mallards (no more than two of which may be hens), three wood ducks, two redheads, two canvasbacks, two black ducks, three northern pintail, and one or two scaup (depending on season date). The possession limit for ducks is three times the daily bag limit. For ducks, the possession limit is 18.

As part of the total daily limit for ducks, the daily bag limit for scaup for the zones and dates specified is as follows:

Area	Season dates	Daily bag limit
North Zone	Sept. 26 – Nov. 9	No more than 2 scaup
North Zone	Nov. 10–22 and Nov. 28–29	No more than 1 scaup
Middle Zone	Oct. 3–18	No more than 1 scaup
Middle Zone	Oct. 19 – Nov. 29 and Dec. 12–13	No more than 2 scaup
South Zone	Oct. 17 – Nov. 1	No more than 1 scaup
South Zone	Nov. 2 – Dec. 13 and Dec. 26–27	No more than 2 scaup

What are the bag limits for mergansers?

The daily bag limit for mergansers is five mergansers, only two of which can be hooded mergansers. The possession limit for mergansers is three times the daily bag limit.

What are the bag limits for dark geese?

For the entire goose season, the dark goose aggregate daily bag limit for Canada geese, white-fronted geese and brant is five in any combination, only one of which can be a brant. The possession limit for dark geese is three times the daily bag limit. For dark geese, the possession limit is 15.

What are the bag limits for light geese?

For the entire goose season, the light goose aggregate daily bag limit for snow geese, blue-phase snow geese and Ross’s geese is 20 in any combination. The possession limit for light geese is three times the daily bag limit. For light geese, the possession limit is 60.

What are the bag limits for common gallinules, coots, rails and snipes?

The daily bag limits and possession limits for common gallinules, coots, rails and snipes are listed below.

Species	Daily bag limit	Possession limit
Common gallinule	1	3
Coot	15	45
Virginia rail and sora rail	25	75
Wilson’s snipe	8	24

Can I harvest more birds after I have reached the daily bag limit?

No. You cannot take or attempt to take in any one day more than one daily limit. You cannot kill or wound any migratory game bird without making a reasonable attempt to retrieve it and include it in your daily bag limit. Wounded birds reduced to possession should be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

Where can I learn more about identifying ducks?

Identification skills for duck species in flight are important. Several duck species have special daily limit restrictions, and the early teal season allows only teal to be harvested. Hunters are advised to practice waterfowl identification before the season begins to build identification skills. Visit Michigan.gov/Waterfowl for duck identification aids.





License types and fees by age					
License type	Youth age 9 and under	Youth age 10–15	Resident age 16–64	Resident senior age 65+	Nonresident age: 16+ ¹
Base license* ² — valid through March 31, 2027.	N/A	\$6	\$11	\$5	\$151
DNR Sportcard ³	\$1	\$1	\$1	\$1	\$1
Federal migratory bird hunting stamp**	N/A	N/A	\$25	\$25	\$25
Harvest Information Program endorsement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Inclusive mentored license ⁴	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Mentored youth license	\$7.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Migratory bird youth endorsement (includes HIP)	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pure Michigan Hunt application	N/A	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5
Reserved waterfowl application	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5
Small game 3-day nonresident license ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$50
Small game 7-day nonresident license ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$80

Table continued ►

License type	Youth age 9 and under	Youth age 10–15	Resident age 16–64	Resident senior age 65+	Nonresident age: 16+ ¹
Waterfowl license (includes HIP)	N/A	N/A	\$12	\$12	\$12

*One dollar from each of these licenses will be used to educate the public on the benefits of hunting, fishing and trapping in Michigan and the impact of these activities on the conservation, preservation and management of the state’s natural resources.

**A service fee of \$5 will apply to federal migratory bird hunting stamps purchased at all license agents, online or through the DNR Hunt Fish app.

¹Nonresidents under 17 years old may purchase a resident base license.

²Hunters 16 years old (including nonresidents) may purchase a base license for \$6.

³The DNR Sportcard is not required if you have a valid state-issued driver’s license or ID card.

⁴The inclusive mentored license package is only available for qualified individuals at DNR offices, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or through the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app.

⁵The small game 3-day nonresident license (\$50) and the small game 7-day nonresident license (\$80) allows the purchase of a waterfowl license without the purchase of a base license.

I am a youth hunter 9 years old or younger. Which licenses and stamps do I need to purchase for waterfowl hunting?

If you are 9 years old or younger, you will need to be licensed under the Mentored Hunting Program and obtain a migratory bird youth endorsement (which includes the HIP endorsement) to hunt waterfowl. You do not need a federal migratory bird hunting stamp or a Michigan waterfowl license.

I am a youth hunter 10–15 years old. Which licenses and stamps do I need to purchase for waterfowl hunting?

If you are 10–15 years old, you will need a base license, base apprentice license or an inclusive mentored license. A migratory bird youth endorsement (which includes the HIP endorsement) is also required to hunt waterfowl. You do not need a federal migratory bird hunting stamp or a Michigan waterfowl license.

I am a Michigan resident 16 years old or older. Which licenses and stamps do I need to purchase for waterfowl hunting?

If you are a Michigan resident and 16 years old or older, you will need a base license, base apprentice license or an inclusive mentored license. A HIP endorsement, a federal migratory bird hunting stamp and a Michigan waterfowl license are also required to hunt waterfowl.

I am 16 years old or older and not a resident of Michigan. Which licenses and stamps do I need to purchase for waterfowl hunting?

If you are 16 years old or older and not a resident of Michigan, you will need a base license, base apprentice license or an inclusive mentored license. A HIP endorsement, a federal migratory bird hunting stamp and a Michigan waterfowl license are also required to hunt waterfowl. Nonresidents may choose to purchase a small game three-day nonresident license or a small game seven-day nonresident license instead of a base license.

I am a youth waterfowl hunter under 16 years old. Do I have to hunt with an adult?

Yes. If you are 10–16 years old, you must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or someone 18 years old or older designated by your parent or guardian. If you are under 10 years old, you must be accompanied by an adult 21 years old or older, and the adult must meet all the provisions of the Mentored Hunting Program.

Hunter education

Is hunter education required for purchasing a license?

Yes. If you were born on or after Jan. 1, 1960, you must present your hunter education certificate or previous hunting license (other than a base apprentice license) to purchase your license. Individuals who are qualified to hunt under the Mentored Hunting Program are exempt from the hunter education requirement (go to the *Mentored hunting* section for more information). A valid hunter education certificate from another state meets this requirement. Michigan's hunter education courses are offered throughout the year around the state. The online course can be found at Michigan.gov/HunterEducation. For a replacement Michigan hunter education certificate, visit Michigan.gov/RecreationalSafety.

What are the rules for a youth hunter 10–16 years old who has a hunter education certificate?

A youth hunter 10–16 years old who has a hunter education certificate must be accompanied by an adult 18 years old or older while hunting, unless the youth is hunting on land where a parent or guardian regularly lives.

Mentored hunting

What is the Mentored Hunting Program?

The Mentored Hunting Program is a set of rules that establishes the mentored youth license package and the inclusive mentored license package.

What are the rules for a mentor participating in the Mentored Hunting Program?

A mentor is responsible for the mentored hunter's actions in the field. A mentor must ensure the hunting device (shotgun, rifle, bow, etc.) used by the mentored hunter is properly fitted and appropriately suited for the mentored hunter. A mentor can only carry two hunting devices in the field. To participate as a mentor in the Mentored Hunting Program, you must meet all of the following qualifications:

- Be at least 21 years old.
- Have previous hunting experience.
- Possess a current-year Michigan base license that is not an apprentice license.

What is the mentored youth license?

The mentored youth license is a license package that allows youth hunters 9

years old and younger to hunt small game, waterfowl, turkey (spring and fall) and deer, trap furbearers and fish for all species with a qualified mentor. It also allows the mentored youth hunter to apply for or purchase additional licenses including antlerless deer, bear and elk. The mentored youth license and kill tags will remain valid for the duration of the license year, even if the mentored youth hunter turns 10 years old during the year.

I am 9 years old or younger and not a resident of Michigan. Can I purchase a mentored youth license?

Yes. The mentored youth license is available to both residents and nonresidents who are 9 years old or younger.

What is the inclusive mentored license?

The inclusive mentored license is a license package that allows individuals with developmental disabilities to hunt small game, waterfowl, turkey (spring and fall) and deer, trap furbearers and fish for all species with a qualified mentor. It also allows the mentored hunter to apply for or purchase additional licenses including antlerless deer, bear and elk. Individuals 16 years old and older must purchase a Michigan waterfowl license (includes HIP) and a federal migratory bird hunting stamp in addition to their inclusive mentored license.

Who qualifies for the inclusive mentored license?

To qualify for the inclusive mentored license, one of the following must apply:

- The mentored individual is a minor child with a developmental disability and is unable to complete hunter education.
- The mentored individual is an adult with a developmental disability, has a guardian appointed under chapter 6 of the mental health code (1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1600 to 330.1644) and is unable to complete hunter education.

Apprentice hunting

What is the Apprentice Hunting Program?

The Apprentice Hunting Program allows a person who does not have a hunter education certificate and is 10 years old or older to hunt during the current hunting seasons with a qualified mentor. An apprentice hunter will need to purchase a base apprentice license to participate. Additional licenses are required to hunt big game, furbearers and waterfowl.

I am not a resident of Michigan. Can I purchase a base apprentice license?

Yes. The base apprentice license is available to residents and nonresidents who do not have a hunter education certificate.

How many times can I purchase a base apprentice license?

You can purchase a base apprentice license for up to two license years before you must successfully complete a hunter education course and purchase a regular base license.

I am an apprentice hunter. Can I hunt by myself?

No. If you are licensed under the Apprentice Hunting Program, you must be accompanied by someone 21 years old or older who has a regular base license and a current-year hunting license for the same game you are hunting. If you are an apprentice hunter who is 10–16 years old, your accompanying mentor must be your parent, guardian or someone designated by your parent or guardian who is at least 21 years old. A mentor can accompany no more than two apprentice hunters while hunting.

How close do I need to be to my accompanying mentor during the hunt?

Your accompanying mentor must be able to come to your immediate aid and stay within a distance that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and auditory contact.

Michigan residents

Do I qualify as a Michigan resident?

To qualify as a Michigan resident, you must meet one of the following criteria:

- Reside in a settled or permanent home or domicile within the boundaries of this state with the intention of remaining in this state. Resident status can only be claimed in one state.
- Be a full-time student at a Michigan college or university and reside in the state during the school year.
- Serve full-time in the U.S. military and be officially stationed in Michigan.
- Serve full-time in the U.S. military and maintain residency in Michigan.

I own land in Michigan but live in a different state. Can I purchase a resident hunting license?

No. The ownership of land in Michigan by itself is not a qualification for a resident license. You would be considered a nonresident.

Michigan veterans with disabilities

I am a Michigan veteran with a disability. Do I get a discount?

Yes. Michigan resident veterans with a service-connected disability are eligible to obtain any hunting license that does not require a separate application free of charge, if one of the following conditions is met:

- You have been determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to be permanently and totally disabled as a result of military service and entitled to veterans' benefits at the 100% rate, for disabilities other than blindness.
- You have been rated by United States Department of Veterans Affairs as individually unemployable.

Documentation of eligibility from the Veterans Administration stating either of the

above conditions should be in the possession of a veteran when obtaining free licenses and while afield.

U.S. military personnel

I am a resident of Michigan and in the military. Do I get a discount?

Yes. If you are a full-time, active-duty member of the federal U.S. military and have maintained Michigan resident status, your hunting license fees are waived, except for hunting licenses obtained through a drawing. You must present military ID, leave papers, duty papers, military orders or other evidence verifying that you are an active-duty member of the military, along with a valid Michigan driver's license or voter registration card.

I am not a resident of Michigan and in the military. Do I get a discount?

No. Hunting license fees are not waived for nonresidents, even if you are a full-time, active-duty member of the federal U.S. military.

Treaty-authorized hunters

Can I hunt with a tribal member?

Yes. You can hunt with a tribal member who is present and actively hunting if you possess a state-issued hunting license for the applicable species and season for which you are hunting. You must still follow all applicable state waterfowl hunting regulations.

DNR Sportcard

What is a DNR Sportcard?

A DNR Sportcard serves as a valid form of identification for people without a driver's license. There are no age restrictions or residency requirements for purchase. A DNR Sportcard is not required if you have a valid state-issued driver's license or ID card. A DNR Sportcard with accurate information can be used from year to year.

Base license

What is a base license?

A base license is required for everyone who hunts in Michigan. A base license provides funding for habitat and conservation work on both public and private land and supports the work of conservation officers and field staff to ensure safe, legal hunting and trapping practices are followed. A base license is not a kill tag and is valid for hunting small game. Additional licenses are required to hunt and trap other species. Hunters are always encouraged to carry their base licenses when hunting.

Armadillos, porcupines and Russian boars may be taken year-round, statewide with a valid base license.

When can I purchase a 2026 base license?

The 2026 base license is currently available for purchase from any license agent, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or through the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app. A 2026 base license is valid through March 31, 2027.

I plan to purchase a nonresident small game three-day or seven-day license. Do I need a base license?

No. A base license is not required to purchase a nonresident small game three-day or seven-day license. Nonresidents may choose to purchase the three-day or seven-day small game license instead of an annual base license. You can purchase multiple three-day or seven-day small game licenses throughout the license year.

Can I use a nonresident small game three-day or seven-day license to purchase a waterfowl license?

Yes. A nonresident three-day or seven-day small game license allows the purchase of a waterfowl license without the purchase of a base license.

Harvest Information Program

What is the Harvest Information Program?

The Harvest Information Program is a cooperative effort between state wildlife agencies and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It was implemented to improve knowledge about the harvest of migratory game birds. Any person who hunts migratory game birds (ducks, geese, woodcock, snipe, rails, etc.) in Michigan is required to register with the HIP. The HIP provides the USFWS with a national registry of potential migratory bird hunters from which they could select participants for federal harvest surveys.

How do I receive a HIP endorsement?

When you purchase a qualifying hunting license, you will be asked HIP survey questions about your migratory bird harvest during the previous year. The HIP endorsement, "Migratory Bird Hunter," will be printed on your hunting license. A current-year HIP endorsement must be carried when hunting migratory birds.

Waterfowl license

What is a waterfowl license?

In Michigan, a waterfowl license is required for all waterfowl hunters 16 years old and older, including those hunting on their own enclosed farmland. The waterfowl license is not a kill tag and includes registration with the HIP.

Are there any migratory bird species I can hunt without a waterfowl license?

Yes. A waterfowl license is not required for hunting coot, rail, Wilson's snipe or woodcock.

Am I contributing to conservation when I purchase a Michigan waterfowl license?

Yes. When you purchase a Michigan waterfowl license, you are also contributing to wetland conservation in Michigan. Nine dollars from each Michigan waterfowl license goes directly toward protection, restoration and enhancement of wetlands and other lands to be managed for the benefit of waterfowl. An additional \$1.93 from each Michigan waterfowl license is used to operate, maintain and develop managed waterfowl areas in Michigan.

Federal migratory bird hunting stamp

What is a federal migratory bird hunting stamp?

A federal migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp (commonly referred to as a federal duck stamp) is a pictorial stamp produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service annually. A federal duck stamp is required for all waterfowl hunters 16 years old and older. Money generated by the sale of federal duck stamps goes directly into protecting wetland habitat in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The federal duck stamp is considered one of the most successful conservation programs ever. For more information, visit [FWS.gov/DuckStamps](https://fws.gov/DuckStamps).

How long is a 2026 electronic federal duck stamp valid for?

A 2026 electronic federal duck stamp purchased after July 1, 2026, will remain valid until June 30, 2027. Hunters are no longer required to receive a physical federal duck stamp within 45 days of purchase. All sales of the electronic federal duck stamp are final and nonrefundable.

When will I receive my physical federal duck stamp?

A physical federal duck stamp will be sent to your designated mailing address after March 10, 2027. A physical duck stamp may be purchased at a post office while supplies last.

Are there any migratory bird species I can hunt without a federal duck stamp?

Yes. A federal duck stamp is not required for hunting coot, rail, Wilson's snipe or woodcock.

Michigan Waterfowl Stamp Program

Who coordinates the Michigan Waterfowl Stamp Program?

Michigan's Waterfowl Stamp Program is coordinated by the Michigan Duck Hunters Association in partnership with the DNR.

What is the Michigan Duck Hunters Association?

The Michigan Duck Hunters Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to waterfowl and wetland conservation.

How are funds from the Michigan Waterfowl Stamp Program used?

Proceeds from Michigan waterfowl stamp sales will be used to fund MDHA projects, with 10% used to match DNR funding for purchasing wetlands.

Who designed the 2026 Michigan waterfowl stamp and print?

Adam Oswald created the artwork for the 2026 Michigan waterfowl stamp and print. The stamp features a pair of canvasbacks.



Do I have to purchase a Michigan waterfowl stamp?

No. Purchase of this stamp is voluntary, and you do not need it to hunt in Michigan. MDHA will mail waterfowl hunters a free copy of the standard-edition stamp (subject to availability) if they send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with a copy of their Michigan waterfowl hunting license to MDHA Waterfowl Stamp Program, P.O. Box 626, Frankfort, MI 49635.

How do I purchase a Michigan waterfowl stamp or print?

First, go to Michigan.gov/Waterfowl and scroll down to “Additional resources,” then click on “MI waterfowl stamp” to visit the online store and purchase. You can also print and mail an order form with a check to MDHA Waterfowl Stamp Program, P.O. Box 626, Frankfort, MI 49635.

How long will it take to receive my stamp or print?

You should receive your stamp or print in four to six weeks.



Pure Michigan Hunt

What is the Pure Michigan Hunt?

The Pure Michigan Hunt is a chance at the hunt of a lifetime for three lucky hunters. Winners will receive one elk (resident only), bear, antlerless deer, spring turkey, fall turkey and base hunting license at no cost. They may also participate in one reserved waterfowl hunt at a managed waterfowl area or have first selection of another hunt choice at any managed waterfowl area if approved by the local area manager. Also, winners will receive a prize package worth thousands and can choose to transfer their Pure Michigan Hunt opportunities to other individuals. Each PMH license will be valid for the applicable 2027 species hunting season and in any open hunt area for that species, except bear hunting on Drummond Island. Licenses will be subject to all 2027 hunting regulations.

How does the Pure Michigan Hunt drawing system work?

Hunters are selected for a Pure Michigan Hunt license package using a random drawing system. In the license drawing, Michigan residents and nonresidents are equally eligible for selection and license purchase.

When is the application period for the 2027 Pure Michigan Hunt drawing?

The application period is Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2026.

How many Pure Michigan Hunt applications can I purchase?

You can purchase as many Pure Michigan Hunt applications as you wish until Dec. 31, 2026.

I am an apprentice hunter. Can I apply in the drawing?

No. You must be eligible to purchase a regular, nonapprentice hunting license to apply in the Pure Michigan Hunt drawing.

I am not a resident of Michigan. Can I apply in the drawing?

Yes. You can apply in the Pure Michigan Hunt drawing as a nonresident. However, if you are selected, you will not be eligible to receive the PMH elk license.

When will the 2027 Pure Michigan Hunt winners be announced?

Three lucky hunters will be drawn in January 2027, and the winners will be announced via Facebook video broadcast, with final confirmation by phone. Drawing results are posted online the week following the video announcement.

Where can I find more information?

For more information on the Pure Michigan Hunt drawing, visit Michigan.gov/PMH.

Identification requirements

Which identification do I need to purchase a license?

To purchase a hunting license in Michigan, you must have one of the following forms of identification:

- Valid Michigan driver's license.
- Valid nonresident driver's license.
- State of Michigan ID card (issued by the Secretary of State).
- Michigan DNR Sportcard.

Do I have to carry my hunting license(s) when hunting?

Yes. When hunting, you must carry your applicable hunting license(s) and the identification used to purchase the license(s) and present them upon demand of a Michigan conservation officer, a tribal conservation officer or any law enforcement officer. If you are using an electronic federal duck stamp, you must be able to present the electronic federal duck stamp on your mobile device.

Where to buy licenses and stamps

Where can I purchase a Michigan hunting license?

You can purchase a Michigan hunting license from any license agent, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or through the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app. The app is available for download at the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. Find a license agent at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenseAgents.

Where can I purchase a federal duck stamp?

You can purchase a federal duck stamp at post offices, at license agents, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or on the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app. A service fee of \$5 will apply to federal migratory bird hunting stamps purchased at all license agents, online or through the DNR Hunt Fish app. You will be issued an electronic federal duck stamp (unless purchased at a post office), which serves as a valid federal duck stamp until June 30, 2027. Amplex will send the physical federal duck stamp to your mailing address after March 10, 2027. If you do not receive your duck stamp in the mail, contact Amplex at 1-800-852-4897.

Where can I purchase the inclusive mentored license package?

You can purchase an inclusive mentored license package from any DNR office, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or through the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app.

Lost licenses and stamps

What do I do if I lost my hunting license?

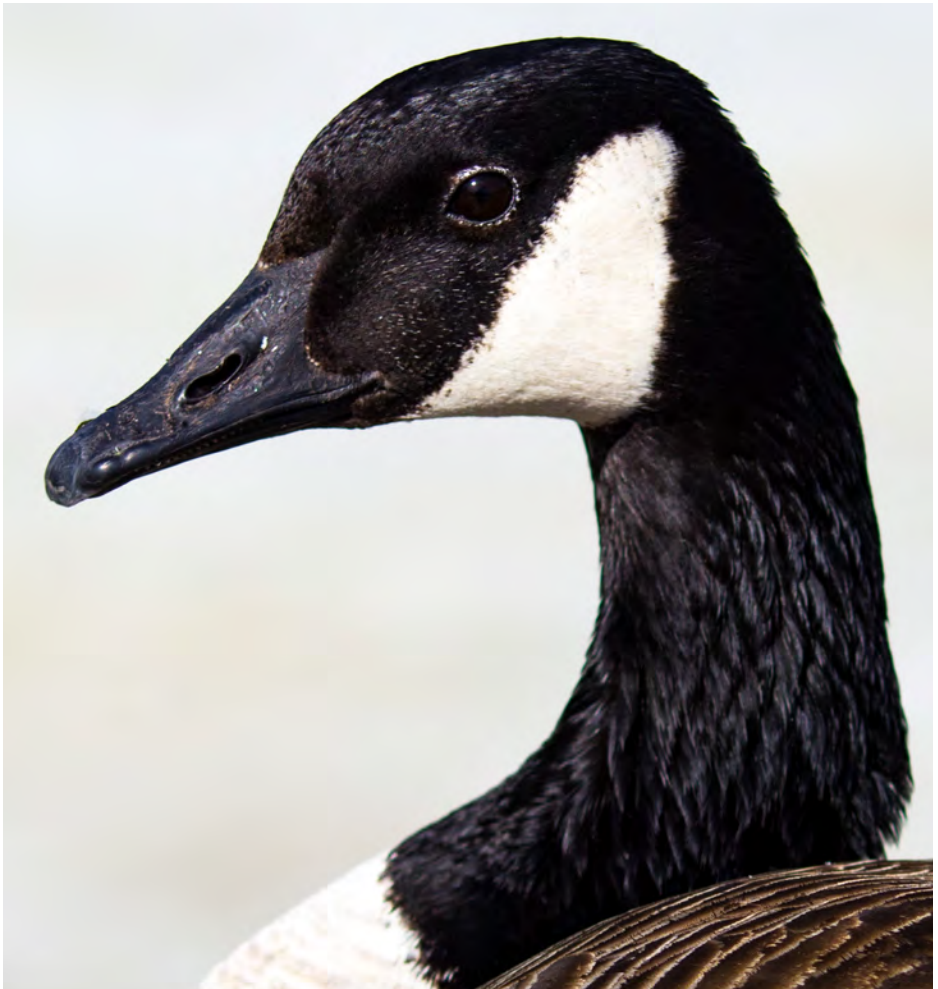
If you originally purchased your hunting license at a license agent or online, you can visit a license agent and have your license(s) reprinted (\$3 for non-kill

tag replacement and full price for kill tag replacement). You must provide the identification number used to purchase the original license.

If you originally purchased your hunting license online, you received an email containing a PDF file of printable licenses (those without kill tags), including your base license. Save your PDF so it can be reprinted if misplaced. If you have an eLicense account, you may log in at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses to reprint your non-kill tag items. Access your purchase history to reprint current licenses. Call 517-284-6057 for licensing assistance.

What do I do if I lost my federal duck stamp?

If you lose your electronic federal duck stamp receipt, you can reprint it by accessing your purchase history on your eLicense account. Lost or destroyed federal duck stamps (electronic or physical) will not be refunded.



Managed waterfowl areas

What is a managed waterfowl area?

Managed waterfowl areas, or Wetland Wonders, offer first-class waterfowl hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities. These areas are managed to provide waterfowl habitat for nesting and migration and for the benefit of other wetland wildlife. The areas have always been funded by hunting license fees and area use fees, but they are open for anyone to visit, use and enjoy most of the year.

Are there special rules at managed waterfowl areas?

Yes. Special rules are enforced, including shell limits, shot size limits, hunting party size, etc. For more information, visit Michigan.gov/WetlandWonders.

What equipment should I bring to a managed waterfowl area?

Use of waders, decoys and calls is highly recommended. While there are walk-in sites, small boats and motors are recommended at many areas. Call ahead of your trip if you have questions about equipment or accessibility.

How do I hunt managed waterfowl areas?

Drawings are conducted locally for free hunting-zone permits throughout the season (go to the *Michigan's Wetland Wonders* section for more information on drawing dates and times).

Are there special draws for youth at the managed waterfowl areas?

Yes. Several areas offer opening-day afternoon youth hunts, as well as other youth priority draws during the season. Opening weekend hunts are by reservation only at several areas.

Are managed waterfowl area drawings ever canceled?

Normal managed-area drawings may be canceled late in the season if extreme weather results in low hunter participation. Area managers will post amended check-station hunting rules a minimum of two days prior to any changes. Late in the season, hunters may wish to call area headquarters to verify that drawings will be held.

Do managed waterfowl areas hold waterfowl reserved hunts?

Yes. Some hunts during the opening weekend of duck season are by reservation. Go to the *Reserved waterfowl drawing* section for application information.

Michigan's Wetland Wonders

There are seven premier managed waterfowl areas located in southern Michigan.

Area (county, nearest town)	Phone	Youth hunting dates	Drawing dates and times
Fennville Farm (Allegan County, Fennville)	269-561-2258	Oct. 17 (a.m.) nonreserved Dec. 26 (a.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from Oct. 17 – 18 and Dec. 19 – Feb. 14. Drawing at 5:30 a.m. Leftover zones will be reissued until 11 a.m. Permits valid until 4:30 p.m. Afternoon hunts: No afternoon draws. No drawings on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from Dec. 19 – Feb. 14. Self-registration available for goose hunting outside of drawing dates from Sept. 1 – 30 and Oct. 17 – Nov. 4 at the Fennville Farm Unit office. Self-registration available for duck hunting outside of drawing dates at the Fennville Farm Unit office during South Zone duck season.
Fish Point (Tuscola County, Unionville)	989-674-2511	Oct. 3 (p.m.) reserved Oct. 24 (p.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Daily at 5:30 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.) Afternoon hunts: Daily at 11 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.)
Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center (Muskegon County, Twin Lake)	231-788-5055	Oct. 24 (a.m. and p.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Tuesdays and Saturdays at 5:30 a.m. Afternoon hunts: Thursdays and Saturdays at 11 a.m. Open to hunting Oct. 20 – Dec. 19. Closed to hunting Thanksgiving Day. Permits for Tuesday morning drawings are valid until close of shooting hours. Note: Dry field hunting only, no water impoundments.

Table continued ►

Nayanquing Point (Bay County, Linwood)	989-697-5101	Oct. 3 (p.m.) reserved Oct. 24 (p.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Daily at 5:30 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.) Afternoon hunts: Daily at 11 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.)
Pointe Mouillee (Wayne County, Rockwood)	734-379-9692	Oct. 17 (p.m.) reserved Nov. 1 (p.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Sundays, Thursdays and Oct. 17 at 5:30 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.) Afternoon hunts: Sundays, Tuesdays and Oct. 17 at 11 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.) Permits for Thursday morning drawings are valid until close of shooting hours.
Shiawassee River (Saginaw County, St. Charles)	989-865-6211	Oct. 17 (p.m.) reserved Nov. 7 (p.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Daily at 5:30 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.) Afternoon hunts: Daily at 11 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.)
St. Clair Flats (Harsens Island, St. Clair County, Algonac)	810-748-9504	Oct. 17 (p.m.) reserved Nov. 7 (p.m.) nonreserved	Morning hunts: Daily at 5:30 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.) Afternoon hunts: Daily at 11:30 a.m. (Reserved hunt opening weekend of duck season.)
Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (Saginaw County, Saginaw)	989-777-5930	N/A	New for the 2026 season, hunters are no longer required to apply for the weekly drawing. Waterfowl hunting will be allowed within the designated waterfowl hunting unit. Morning hunts are available on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from the beginning of legal hunting hours (a.m.) to 12 p.m. Afternoon hunts are available on Thursdays from 12 p.m. to the end of legal hunting hours (p.m.). Hunters should review all current refuge-specific regulations and any updated information prior to their hunt by visiting https://www.fws.gov/refuge/shiawassee/visit-us/activities/hunting .

Veterans preference drawings at managed waterfowl areas

When do the veterans preference drawings take place?

Veterans preference drawings will take place at the following managed waterfowl areas for properly licensed, resident, active-duty U.S. military personnel and veterans. There will not be a veterans preference drawing at Fennville Farm or Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge.

- Pointe Mouillee — Nov. 10
- Fish Point — Nov. 11
- Harsens Island — Nov. 11
- Nayanquing Point — Nov. 11
- Shiawassee River — Nov. 11
- Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center — Nov. 12

What documentation do I need to hunt during the veterans preference drawings?

The following documentation, along with a valid Michigan driver's license or voter registration card, will be accepted as proof of status: military ID, leave papers, duty papers, military orders, copy of DD Form 214, enhanced driver's license or documentation from the Veterans Administration regarding disability status. If you were discharged from the Army or Air Force National Guard, you may provide a copy of NGB Form 22 or NGB Form 23.

Which parties will be eligible for the veterans preference drawing?

To be eligible for the veterans preference drawings, single hunters must be active-duty military personnel or veterans; party hunters must have at least one member in their party who is active-duty military or a veteran.





MiOFO is a cooperative partnership that provides outdoor recreation opportunities for individuals with health challenges and coordinates support networks that facilitate recovery through connecting with nature.



"The freedom of being able to go (into the woods) with dignity deserves my words of gratitude. These hunts give us unity and with unity we give each other strength, understanding, and compassion."

-Ray Norris, MiOFO Hunter

To help get people back to the outdoors, visit mlofo.org.

How does the reserved waterfowl hunt drawing system work?

Hunters are selected for a reserved waterfowl hunt using a random drawing system. In the annual drawing, Michigan residents and nonresidents are equally eligible for selection. For more information on the reserved waterfowl hunt drawing, visit Michigan.gov/Waterfowl.

Reserved waterfowl hunts

Successful applicants must be accompanied by one to three appropriately licensed hunters. Maximum party size is four hunters, but no more than two adults per party during youth hunts. Hunt parties do not need to be determined at the time of application. You cannot change your hunt choice once you are selected. Cash refunds are not permitted. The number of available hunts in 2026 is subject to change.

Location	Hunt date	Hunt hours	Hunts available	Hunt number
Fish Point	Oct. 3	a.m.	35	0017
Fish Point	Oct. 3	p.m., youth*	35	0018
Fish Point	Oct. 4	a.m.	35	0019
Fish Point	Oct. 4	p.m.	35	0020
Harsens Island	Oct. 17	a.m.	35	0001
Harsens Island	Oct. 17	p.m., youth*	35	0002
Harsens Island	Oct. 18	a.m.	35	0003
Harsens Island	Oct. 18	p.m.	35	0004
Nayanquing Point	Oct. 3	a.m.	25	0025
Nayanquing Point	Oct. 3	p.m., youth*	25	0026
Nayanquing Point	Oct. 4	a.m.	25	0027
Nayanquing Point	Oct. 4	p.m.	25	0028
Pointe Mouillee	Oct. 17	a.m.	21	0033
Pointe Mouillee	Oct. 17	p.m., youth*	21	0034
Pointe Mouillee	Oct. 18	a.m.	21	0035
Pointe Mouillee	Oct. 18	p.m.	21	0036
Shiawassee River	Oct. 17	a.m.	40	0009

Table continued ►

RESERVED WATERFOWL DRAWING

Shiawassee River	Oct. 17	p.m., youth*	40	0010
Shiawassee River	Oct. 18	a.m.	40	0011
Shiawassee River	Oct. 18	p.m.	40	0012

*Rules for reserved p.m. youth hunts: Anyone may apply. Hunt parties do not need to be determined at the time of application. Maximum party size is four hunters, with no more than two adults per party. On the day of the hunt, the hunting parties must have at least one licensed youth 16 years old or younger. A parent or legal guardian may not allow a youth hunter 10–16 years old to participate unless accompanied by a licensed adult meeting all other reserved hunt requirements. Youth hunters under 10 must be accompanied by a qualified Mentored Hunting Program mentor.

Application information

When is the application period for the 2026 reserved waterfowl hunt drawing?

The application period is Aug. 1–28, 2026.

How much is an application?

An application is \$5.

How many reserved waterfowl hunt applications can I purchase?

You can only purchase one reserved waterfowl hunt application per year. You can apply for a specific reserved waterfowl hunt during specific season dates.

Do I need to have a base license or waterfowl license before applying?

No. You can apply prior to obtaining your licenses. To avoid delays at check stations, hunters are urged to purchase all licenses in advance of their reserved hunt.

Which identification do I need to purchase an application?

To purchase a reserved waterfowl hunt application in Michigan, you must have one of the following forms of identification:

- Valid Michigan driver’s license.
- Valid nonresident driver’s license.
- State of Michigan ID card (issued by the Secretary of State).
- Michigan DNR Sportcard.

Where can I purchase an application?

You can purchase an application from any license agent, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or on the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app. The app is available for download at the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. Find a license agent at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenseAgents.

Eligible applicants

Who is eligible to apply for the drawing?

The following people are eligible to apply for a reserved waterfowl hunt (unless they have an active revocation or are otherwise ineligible):

- A person who is 9 years old or younger and is licensed under the Mentored Hunting Program.
- A person who is or will be 10 years old or older and has a hunter education certificate.
- A person who is licensed as an apprentice hunter or an inclusive mentored hunter.

Application process

How do I apply for the drawing?

1. Look at the reserved waterfowl hunt table on pages 31–32 and choose the area you want to hunt. Choose your desired season date and time for the area you want to select. Make note of the corresponding hunt number(s) and be sure to select this number when purchasing your application.
2. Purchase an application for the hunt number(s) you chose (you can select two hunt numbers — first and second choice).
3. Check your receipt for accuracy and retain it as proof of your application.

What is the difference between “first hunt choice” and “second hunt choice”?

First hunt choices have priority for selection. When applying, you must choose a first hunt choice and may also choose an optional second hunt choice. If you choose a second hunt choice, it will be considered only if licenses remain for that hunt number after all first hunt choices have been awarded for all applicants. There is no guarantee that licenses will be available for second hunt choices for any hunt number.

The receipt I received is not printed clearly or has an error. What do I do?

You are responsible for obtaining a DNR application receipt that correctly states your customer ID and hunt choice. Do not accept a receipt that is not legible. Check your receipt for accuracy and retain it as proof that you applied. Ensure any application errors are corrected prior to the application deadline. If you submit an invalid application, you will be ineligible for the drawing.

I am having trouble applying. What do I do?

You can call 517-284-9453 for assistance.

Drawing results

When will drawing results be available?

Drawing results will be available on Sept. 14, 2026.

How do I check my drawing results?

You can check your drawing results online at [Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses](https://michigan.gov/DNRLicenses), through the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app or by calling 517-284-9453. You are responsible for obtaining your drawing results.

What happens if I am selected for a hunt in the drawing?

If you are selected for a hunt in the drawing, you will be eligible to participate in a “day-of” drawing at the location, date and time assigned to you. You are not required to provide proof of a successful application in the reserved waterfowl hunting drawing. Local staff will verify your eligibility on location. Hunting conditions (e.g., water levels, crop conditions) may vary, and hunters are encouraged to call area headquarters for the most up-to-date conditions. Managed waterfowl areas enforce special rules (e.g., shell limits, shot sizes, use of motion-winged decoys). Consult area maps or contact area headquarters for more information.

Which species can I harvest during the reserved waterfowl hunt?

During the reserved waterfowl hunt, you can harvest common gallinules, coots, dark geese (Canada, white-fronted and brant), ducks, light geese (snow, blue, Ross’s), mergansers, Virginia rails, sora rails and Wilson’s snipes. Species-specific bag limits must be followed (go to the *Bag limits* section for more information).

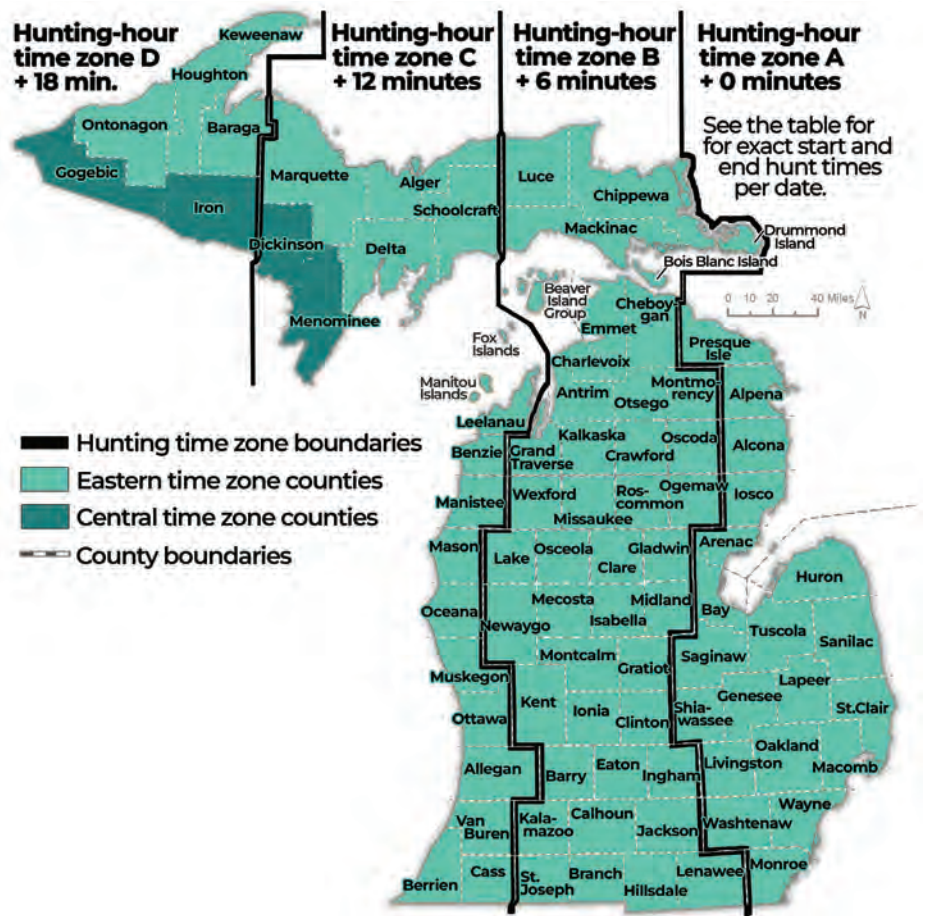


Hunting hours

When is it legal for me to hunt waterfowl?

Legal hunting hours for waterfowl (one half-hour before sunrise to sunset) for Zone A are printed in the table. **Hunting hours for the early teal season differ,** go to the *Zone A early teal season hunting hours table*. To determine the opening (a.m.) or closing (p.m.) time in another zone, add the minutes shown on the map for the zone to the time from the Zone A hunting hours table. The hunting hours listed in the table reflect Eastern Time, adjusted for daylight saving time where appropriate. If you are hunting in Gogebic, Iron, Dickinson or Menominee counties (Central Time), you must make an additional adjustment to the printed time by subtracting one hour.

Hunting time zones map



Isle Royale (not pictured), part of Keweenaw County, is closed to hunting and trapping.

Zone A early teal
season hunting
hours table
(September 2026)

Hunting hours listed for
the early teal season are
sunrise to sunset (adjusted
for daylight saving time).

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Sept. 1	6:58	8:05
Sept. 2	6:59	8:03
Sept. 3	7:00	8:02
Sept. 4	7:01	8:00
Sept. 5	7:02	7:59
Sept. 6	7:03	7:57
Sept. 7	7:04	7:55
Sept. 8	7:05	7:54
Sept. 9	7:06	7:52

Zone A hunting hours table
(September – October 2026)

Hunting hours listed are one half-hour before sunrise to
sunset (adjusted for daylight saving time).

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Sept. 1	6:28	8:05
Sept. 2	6:29	8:03
Sept. 3	6:30	8:02
Sept. 4	6:31	8:00
Sept. 5	6:32	7:59
Sept. 6	6:33	7:57
Sept. 7	6:34	7:55
Sept. 8	6:35	7:54
Sept. 9	6:36	7:52
Sept. 10	6:37	7:51
Sept. 11	6:38	7:49
Sept. 12	6:39	7:47
Sept. 13	6:40	7:46
Sept. 14	6:41	7:44
Sept. 15	6:42	7:42
Sept. 16	6:43	7:41
Sept. 17	6:44	7:39
Sept. 18	6:45	7:37
Sept. 19	6:46	7:36
Sept. 20	6:48	7:34
Sept. 21	6:49	7:32
Sept. 22	6:50	7:31
Sept. 23	6:51	7:29
Sept. 24	6:52	7:27
Sept. 25	6:53	7:26
Sept. 26	6:54	7:24
Sept. 27	6:55	7:23
Sept. 28	6:56	7:21
Sept. 29	6:57	7:19
Sept. 30	6:58	7:18

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Oct. 1	6:59	7:16
Oct. 2	7:00	7:14
Oct. 3	7:02	7:13
Oct. 4	7:03	7:11
Oct. 5	7:04	7:10
Oct. 6	7:05	7:08
Oct. 7	7:06	7:07
Oct. 8	7:07	7:05
Oct. 9	7:08	7:03
Oct. 10	7:09	7:02
Oct. 11	7:11	7:00
Oct. 12	7:12	6:59
Oct. 13	7:13	6:57
Oct. 14	7:14	6:56
Oct. 15	7:15	6:54
Oct. 16	7:16	6:53
Oct. 17	7:17	6:51
Oct. 18	7:19	6:50
Oct. 19	7:20	6:49
Oct. 20	7:21	6:47
Oct. 21	7:22	6:46
Oct. 22	7:23	6:44
Oct. 23	7:25	6:43
Oct. 24	7:26	6:42
Oct. 25	7:27	6:40
Oct. 26	7:28	6:39
Oct. 27	7:29	6:38
Oct. 28	7:31	6:36
Oct. 29	7:32	6:35
Oct. 30	7:33	6:34
Oct. 31	7:34	6:33

Zone A hunting hours table (November – December 2026)

Hunting hours listed are one half-hour before sunrise to sunset (adjusted for daylight saving time).

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Nov. 1	6:36	5:32
Nov. 2	6:37	5:31
Nov. 3	6:38	5:29
Nov. 4	6:39	5:28
Nov. 5	6:41	5:27
Nov. 6	6:42	5:26
Nov. 7	6:43	5:25
Nov. 8	6:44	5:24
Nov. 9	6:46	5:23
Nov. 10	6:47	5:22
Nov. 11	6:48	5:21
Nov. 12	6:49	5:20
Nov. 13	6:51	5:20
Nov. 14	6:52	5:19
Nov. 15	6:53	5:18
Nov. 16	6:54	5:17
Nov. 17	6:55	5:17
Nov. 18	6:57	5:16
Nov. 19	6:58	5:15
Nov. 20	6:59	5:15
Nov. 21	7:00	5:14
Nov. 22	7:02	5:13
Nov. 23	7:03	5:13
Nov. 24	7:04	5:12
Nov. 25	7:05	5:12
Nov. 26	7:06	5:12
Nov. 27	7:07	5:11
Nov. 28	7:08	5:11
Nov. 29	7:10	5:10
Nov. 30	7:11	5:10

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Dec. 1	7:12	5:10
Dec. 2	7:13	5:10
Dec. 3	7:14	5:10
Dec. 4	7:15	5:09
Dec. 5	7:16	5:09
Dec. 6	7:17	5:09
Dec. 7	7:18	5:09
Dec. 8	7:19	5:09
Dec. 9	7:20	5:09
Dec. 10	7:20	5:10
Dec. 11	7:21	5:10
Dec. 12	7:22	5:10
Dec. 13	7:23	5:10
Dec. 14	7:24	5:10
Dec. 15	7:24	5:11
Dec. 16	7:25	5:11
Dec. 17	7:26	5:11
Dec. 18	7:26	5:12
Dec. 19	7:27	5:12
Dec. 20	7:27	5:13
Dec. 21	7:28	5:13
Dec. 22	7:28	5:14
Dec. 23	7:29	5:14
Dec. 24	7:29	5:15
Dec. 25	7:30	5:15
Dec. 26	7:30	5:16
Dec. 27	7:30	5:17
Dec. 28	7:31	5:17
Dec. 29	7:31	5:18
Dec. 30	7:31	5:19
Dec. 31	7:31	5:20

Zone A hunting hours table (January – February 2027)

Hunting hours listed are one half-hour before sunrise to sunset.

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Jan. 1	7:31	5:10
Jan. 2	7:31	5:11
Jan. 3	7:31	5:12
Jan. 4	7:31	5:13
Jan. 5	7:31	5:14
Jan. 6	7:31	5:15
Jan. 7	7:31	5:16
Jan. 8	7:31	5:17
Jan. 9	7:31	5:18
Jan. 10	7:31	5:19
Jan. 11	7:30	5:20
Jan. 12	7:30	5:21
Jan. 13	7:30	5:22
Jan. 14	7:29	5:24
Jan. 15	7:29	5:25
Jan. 16	7:28	5:26
Jan. 17	7:28	5:27
Jan. 18	7:27	5:28
Jan. 19	7:27	5:30
Jan. 20	7:26	5:31
Jan. 21	7:25	5:32
Jan. 22	7:25	5:33
Jan. 23	7:24	5:35
Jan. 24	7:23	5:36
Jan. 25	7:22	5:37
Jan. 26	7:21	5:38
Jan. 27	7:21	5:40
Jan. 28	7:20	5:41
Jan. 29	7:19	5:42
Jan. 30	7:18	5:44
Jan. 31	7:17	5:45

Date	Time Zone A a.m.	Time Zone A p.m.
Feb. 1	7:16	5:46
Feb. 2	7:15	5:47
Feb. 3	7:14	5:49
Feb. 4	7:13	5:50
Feb. 5	7:11	5:51
Feb. 6	7:10	5:53
Feb. 7	7:09	5:54
Feb. 8	7:08	5:55
Feb. 9	7:07	5:57
Feb. 10	7:05	5:58
Feb. 11	7:04	5:59
Feb. 12	7:03	6:01
Feb. 13	7:02	6:02
Feb. 14	7:00	6:03
Feb. 15	6:59	6:04

Waterfowl hunting zones

What are the waterfowl hunting zones?

Michigan is divided into waterfowl (duck, coot, common gallinule and goose) hunting zones: North, Middle and South. The North Zone includes all of the Upper Peninsula. The dividing line between the Middle Zone and South Zone is a line beginning at the Wisconsin border in Lake Michigan, due west of the mouth of Stony Creek in Oceana County; then due east to, and southeasterly along the south shore of Stony Creek to Scenic Drive, southeasterly along Scenic Drive to Stony Lake Road, easterly along Stony Lake and Garfield Roads to M-20, east along M-20 to U.S. 10 Business Route (BR) in the city of Midland, east along U.S. 10 BR to U.S. 10, easterly on U.S. 10 then crossing U.S. 75 to state highway M-25 (west of the town of Bay City), easterly along M-25 into Tuscola County then northeasterly and easterly on M-25 through Tuscola County into Huron County, turning southeasterly on M-25 (near the town of Huron City; also locally named North Shore Road) to the centerline of Willow Creek in Section 4, T18N R14E, Huron County, then northerly along the centerline of Willow Creek to the mouth of Willow Creek into Lake Huron, then directly due east along a line from the mouth of Willow Creek heading east into Lake Huron to a point due east and on the Michigan/USA-Canadian border.



Safety zones

What are the safety zones around buildings when hunting with a firearm?

Safety zones are all areas within 150 yards (450 feet) of an occupied building, dwelling, house, residence, cabin or any barn or other building used in a farm operation. No person may hunt in, shoot through or shoot at any wild animal or wild bird with a firearm within a safety zone without the written permission of the owner or occupant of the property. The safety zone applies to hunting only. It does not apply to indoor or outdoor shooting ranges, target shooting, law enforcement activities or the lawful discharge of firearms for any nonhunting purpose.

National wildlife refuges and waterfowl production areas

Can I hunt on national wildlife refuges and waterfowl production areas?

Federal waterfowl production areas are open to public hunting except where prohibited. National wildlife refuges are closed to hunting unless expressly permitted. All state laws apply to national wildlife refuge lands. Additional federal regulations also apply and can be found in 50 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) at [FWS.gov](https://www.fws.gov). Please consult the appropriate national wildlife refuge office for refuge-specific regulations.

DNR-managed public lands

Over 4.5 million acres of public lands are managed by the DNR and open to hunting!

Where can I find public hunting lands near me?

You can find places to hunt by visiting Michigan.gov/MiHunt. The interactive DNR map application Mi-HUNT can help you plan your hunting and other outdoor recreation adventures. It is the responsibility of the users of these maps to be aware of all regulations relevant to their hunting activities and locations. These maps show approximate boundaries of the lands open to public hunting. Please note that Mi-HUNT may be unavailable due to maintenance.

Where do I find the rules for DNR-managed public lands?

You can find the DNR-managed public land use rules at Michigan.gov/DNRLaws. Please keep in mind that you cannot:

- Cut branches, limbs, trees or other vegetation for shooting lanes on public lands.
- Block any gate, road or trail on public lands.
- Camp on public lands without a permit. Free permits and applicable rules are available at Michigan.gov/Camping or at most DNR offices. Permits must be posted at your campsite. Dispersed camping is not allowed in state parks, state recreation areas, state forest campgrounds and some state game areas.

A fee is charged for camping at designated campsites in state parks, state recreation areas, state forest campgrounds and some state game areas.

State parks and recreation areas

Can I hunt in state parks or recreation areas?

Yes. Some state parks and recreation areas are open to hunting. State parks are closed to hunting. State parks are closed to hunting unless opened by law (visit [Michigan.gov/DNRLaws](https://www.michigan.gov/DNRLaws) for more information). State recreation areas are open to hunting unless closed by law. Approximately 92% of state park and state recreation area lands are open to hunting. Contact your local DNR Parks and Recreation or Wildlife office for more information.

Portions of the following state parks and scenic sites are open to waterfowl hunting during established seasons.

- Algonac State Park
- Bay City State Park
- Coldwater Lake State Park
- Craig Lake State Park
- Duck Lake State Park
- Fisherman’s Island State Park
- Fort Wilkins Stark Park
- Grand Mere State Park
- Hartwick Pines State Park
- J. W. Wells State Park
- Laughing Whitefish Falls State Park
- Mitchell State Park
- Negwegon State Park
- North Higgins Lake State Park
- Old Mission Point State Park
- Palms Book State Park
- Port Crescent State Park
- Sleeper State Park
- South Higgins Lake State Park
- Sturgeon Point State Park
- Thompson’s Harbor State Park
- Van Buren State Park
- Van Riper State Park
- Wagner Falls Scenic Site
- Warren Dunes State Park
- Watkins Lake State Park

The following state parks and recreation areas are closed entirely to waterfowl hunting from Sept. 1–7. The locations or portions of them are open after Labor Day.

- Cheboygan State Park
- Fayette State Park
- Fort Custer Recreation Area
- Hoeft State Park
- Indian Lake State Park
- Island Lake Recreation Area
- Leelanau State Park
- Ludington State Park
- McLain State Park
- Metamora-Hadley Recreation Area
- Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park
- Rifle River Recreation Area
- Silver Lake State Park
- Sterling State Park
- Tahquamenon Falls State Park
- Wilderness State Park

WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

Portions of the following state parks and recreation areas are closed to waterfowl hunting from Sept. 5–7. Portions are open after Labor Day.

- Seven Lakes State Park

Portions of the following state parks and recreation areas are closed to waterfowl hunting from Sept. 1–7. Portions are open after Labor Day.

- Holly Recreation Area
- Pinckney Recreation Area
- Sleepy Hollow State Park

Portions of the following state recreation areas are closed to waterfowl hunting from Sept. 1–15. Portions are open beginning Sept. 16.

- Brighton Recreation Area
- Fort Custer Recreation Area
- Ionia Recreation Area
- Island Lake Recreation Area
- Lake Hudson Recreation Area
- Metamora-Hadley Recreation Area
- Ortonville Recreation Area
- Pontiac Lake Recreation Area
- Waterloo Recreation Area

Portions of the following state recreation areas are closed to waterfowl hunting.

- Highland Recreation Area
- Lime Island Recreation Area
- Proud Lake Recreation Area
- Yankee Springs Recreation Area

Local municipalities

Are there any local municipalities with hunting or trapping restrictions?

Yes. Some local municipalities may be closed to hunting, trapping or the discharge of firearms. Please contact the local municipality office or local law enforcement agency to find out about restrictions.

Are there areas off-limits to waterfowl hunting?

Yes. Areas are posted to alert hunters that they are off-limits to hunting:

- In Grand Traverse County: Boardman Lake and those waters of the Boardman River lying north of Airport Road and south of the 8th Street Bridge are closed to waterfowl hunting.
- In Roscommon County: Mud Lake, Lake St. Helen and the South Branch of the Au Sable River connecting these two lakes are closed to public waterfowl hunting.

- There are also other closed areas in the state. Refer to chapter 8 of the Wildlife Conservation Order for more information.

Waterways

Can I float hunt along waterways?

Hunting and trapping are exclusive rights of landowner(s) bordering the waterway and their invited guests. You must secure permission from the landowner(s) before float hunting along those waterways that are protected by the recreational trespass law. You can float hunt on and along waterways that are surrounded by public lands and open to hunting.

Rights of way

Can I hunt within a road right of way?

You can hunt within a road right of way where the adjoining property is publicly owned. If the adjacent property is privately owned, you must have permission from the landowner.

Can I hunt within a railroad right of way?

Railroad rights of way are private property. Trespassing on railroad property is a misdemeanor. You must have written permission from the railroad company to be exempt from trespass.

Can I hunt within a utility right of way on private property?

No. Utility rights of way, such as underground gas lines and overhead power lines, on private property are closed to public access. You must have written permission from the utility company to be exempt from trespass.

Trespassing

Do I need permission to hunt on someone's private land?

Yes. Trespassing is unlawful and erodes support for recreational hunting. Written or verbal permission is required from the landowner or leaseholder before you hunt on any farmlands, connected woodlots, private land or property that is fenced or enclosed. Hunters are required to produce their hunting licenses for landowners upon request. Unless previously prohibited by the landowner, a person not possessing a firearm may enter on foot upon the property of another person for the sole purpose of retrieving a hunting dog. The person cannot remain on

What if the game animal I wounded goes onto private land?

If you wound a game animal and it goes onto private property, you have no legal right to pursue it without permission from the landowner and would be subject to prosecution for trespassing.

Are there any types of equipment I cannot use to hunt migratory birds?

Yes. You cannot use any of the following types of equipment to hunt migratory birds in Michigan:

- Snares, traps, cages, nets, fishhooks, pitfalls or deadfalls.
- Spears, slingshots, swivel guns, punt guns, battery guns, machine guns, fully automatic firearms, airbows or mechanical devices other than bows, crossbows and firearms.
- Single-projectile shotshells.
- Drugs, poisons, anticoagulants, stupefying substances, smoke, gas or explosives.

Go to the *Bows, crossbows and firearms* section for more information on equipment restrictions.

Hunter orange

Do I need to wear hunter orange while waterfowl hunting?

No. If you are hunting waterfowl, you are exempt from the hunter orange requirement.

Elevated platforms and ground blinds

Can I hunt migratory birds from an elevated platform?

You may only hunt migratory birds from an elevated platform over submerged bottomlands. Elevated platforms constructed over public waters must meet marking and removal requirements.

Can I hunt waterfowl from a ground blind on public lands and waters?

Yes. You can hunt waterfowl from a ground blind. However, you may not erect or use a hunting blind on any public waters without permanently affixing to the exterior, in waterproof letters not less than 3 inches high, the name and address of the person who placed it there. You also cannot leave any hunting blind or part thereof anchored or affixed to the bottomlands of any public waters within the state of Michigan prior to Aug. 15 or later than Jan. 16. Any unoccupied blind on the Great Lakes or Lake St. Clair may be used by the first person to occupy it each day. Contact the Plainwell DNR office (269-685-6851) regarding blind rules for Allegan County.

Can I hunt from a sinkbox?

No. You cannot hunt from a sinkbox. A sinkbox is a low, floating device with a depression, affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water.

I am placing an elevated platform or ground blind on public lands. What information must I tag the elevated platform or ground blind with?

In legible English, you must permanently affix your name and address or Michigan driver's license number or DNR Sportcard number to the elevated platform or ground blind if it is placed on public lands.

Bows, crossbows and firearms

Which equipment can I use to hunt migratory birds?

You can use a bow, a crossbow or a shotgun 10-gauge or smaller.

Which equipment can a mentor carry in the field when mentoring?

A mentor is limited to two hunting devices (shotgun, bow or crossbow) in the field while mentoring, and the mentored hunter must always be within arm's length of the mentor. The mentor will be held responsible for all actions of the mentored hunter while in the field.

Which equipment can a mentored hunter use?

A licensed mentored hunter can use a bow, a crossbow or a shotgun 10-gauge or smaller. Any hunting device possessed by a mentored hunter must be sized appropriately to fit the physical abilities of the mentored hunter.

Can I use a pneumatic gun to hunt migratory birds?

Yes. You can use a pneumatic gun to hunt migratory birds if it meets the firearm requirements for the season, species hunted and zone you are hunting in.

How many firearms can I hunt migratory birds with?

You can only use or possess one firearm while hunting migratory birds.

How many firearms can a hunting party use to hunt migratory birds?

Each licensed person in the hunting party can use or possess one firearm.

Are there shell capacity restrictions for hunting migratory birds with a shotgun?

Yes. You cannot hunt migratory birds with a shotgun that can hold more than three shells. Shotguns capable of holding more than three shells should be plugged with a one-piece filler incapable of removal without disassembling the gun, so that the total capacity of the shotgun does not exceed three shells.

Do I have to use lead-free shot when hunting waterfowl?

Yes. The use of lead-free shot is required statewide for all waterfowl hunting. If you are hunting ducks, geese, mergansers, coots, common gallinules, rails or Wilson's snipe anywhere in Michigan, you cannot possess or use shotshells loaded with a material other than lead-free steel, bismuth, tungsten-iron, tungsten-polymer, tungsten matrix or other shot determined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be lead-free. Waterfowl hunters using muzzleloaders must also use USFWS-approved lead-free shot.

Transporting bows, crossbows and firearms

How should I transport my bow, crossbow or firearm when afield outside the legal hunting hours?

Firearms must be unloaded in the barrel and all arrows must be in a quiver when you are afield outside the legal hunting hours.

How should I transport my bow, crossbow or firearm while in or on a motor vehicle?

These rules apply whether your vehicle is parked, stopped or moving. At all times when carried in or on a motor vehicle:

- Shotguns and all other firearms must be unloaded in both barrel and magazine and enclosed in a case or carried in the trunk of a vehicle on private or public property.
- Crossbows and bows must be unloaded and uncocked or enclosed in a case or carried in the trunk of a vehicle while that vehicle is operated on public land or on a highway, road or street.
- A person holding a valid permit to hunt from a standing vehicle may transport or possess an uncased firearm with a loaded magazine on a personal assistive mobility device if the action is open.

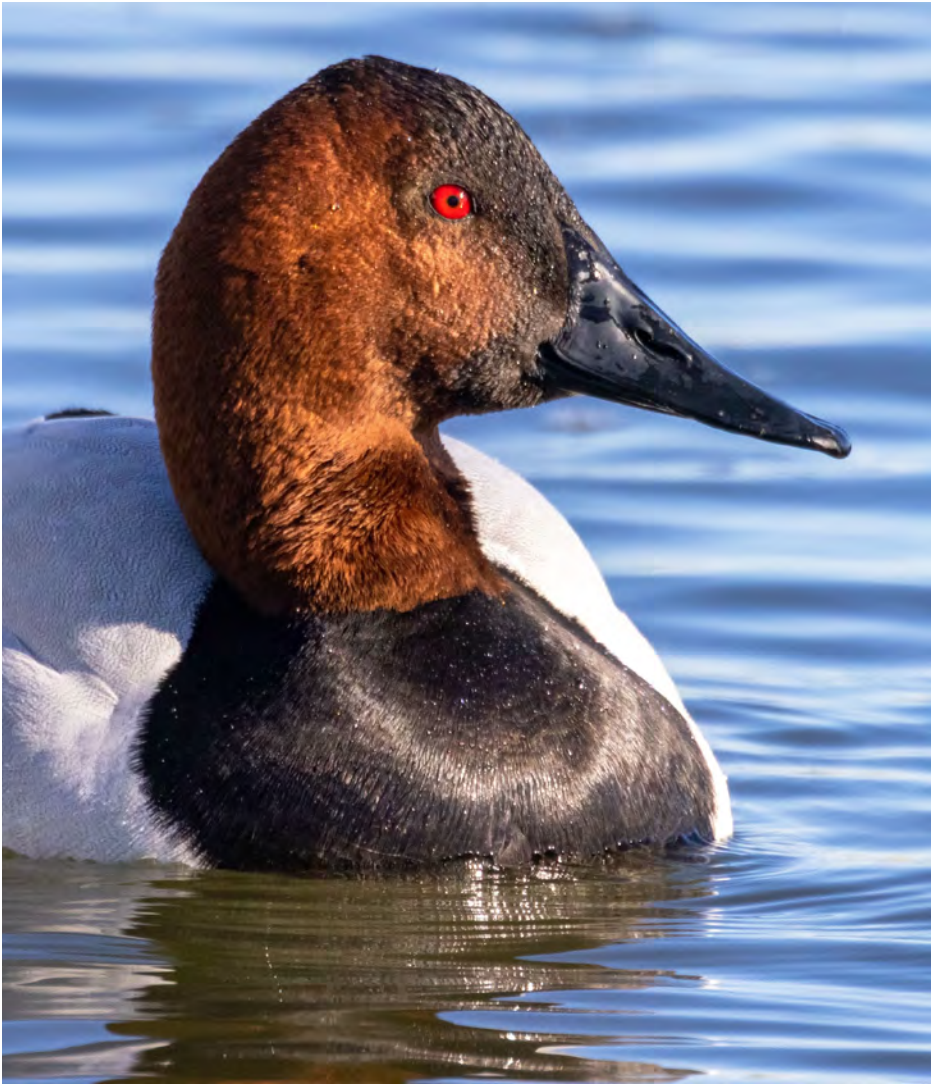
How should I transport my bow, crossbow or firearm while in or on an off-road vehicle?

These rules apply whether your off-road vehicle is parked, stopped or moving. At all times, when carried in or on an off-road vehicle:

- Shotguns and all other firearms must be unloaded in both barrel and magazine and enclosed in a case or equipped with and made inoperative by a manufactured, key-locked, trigger-housing mechanism.
- Crossbows and bows must be unloaded and uncocked or enclosed in a case or carried in the trunk of a vehicle while that vehicle is operated on public land or on a highway, road or street.
- A person holding a valid permit to hunt from a standing vehicle may transport or possess an uncased firearm with a loaded magazine on a personal assistive mobility device if the action is open.

How should I transport my firearm while in or on a boat?

These rules apply when the vessel is under power and until forward motion has ceased. Once the vessel is no longer under power and forward motion has ceased, firearms can be loaded. When carried in or on a motor-propelled boat or sailboat, while the vessel is under power or forward motion is occurring: shotguns and all other firearms must be unloaded in both barrel and magazine.



Can I hire a hunting guide for waterfowl hunting?

Yes. You can hire a commercial hunting guide for waterfowl hunting in Michigan. A list of licensed commercial hunting guides is available at Michigan.gov/WildlifePermits.

Can I hunt from a vehicle?

No. You cannot hunt or pursue waterfowl from a car, snowmobile, aircraft, drone, off-road vehicle or other motorized vehicle. Certain regulations apply while hunting waterfowl from a watercraft. Special permits may apply. Visit Michigan.gov/DNRAccessibility for more information for hunters with disabilities.

Can I hunt while my boat motor is running or while my boat is propelled by the wind?

No. You cannot hunt from or by means of any motorboat, power boat or other craft having a motor attached, any sailboat or any floating craft or device of any kind propelled or towed by power or sail, unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sails furled and its progress ceased. A craft under power can be used to retrieve dead or crippled birds. However, crippled birds cannot be shot from such craft while under power or until forward progress has ceased.

Can I drive, rally or chase migratory birds with my boat?

No. You cannot drive, rally or chase birds with any motorized conveyance or any sailboat to put them in the range of hunters.

Can I hunt waterfowl while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances?

No. You cannot hunt waterfowl while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances.

Decoys and calls

Can I use live decoys to hunt migratory birds?

No. You cannot use live decoys to hunt migratory birds. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese should 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.

Can I use mechanical or electronic decoys to hunt migratory birds?

Yes. You can use mechanical or electronic decoys to hunt migratory birds during the respective hunting seasons. You cannot use mechanical or electronic decoys that produce bird sounds or calls.

I hunt on public lands and waters. Are there restrictions for setting out decoys?

Yes. You cannot leave decoys set out between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. in waters of the Great Lakes and connecting waters and lakes wholly enclosed by publicly owned lands.

Can I use electronic migratory bird calls to hunt migratory birds?

No. You cannot use electronic devices that imitate migratory bird calls while hunting migratory birds. This includes recorded or electronically amplified bird calls, imitations of bird calls, bird sounds and imitations of bird sounds.

Baiting

Can I use bait while hunting migratory birds?

No. You cannot use bait to aid in the taking of migratory birds. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of

the bait. This does not apply to standing farm crops (normal agricultural practices) or other naturally growing grains, fruits or vegetables.

Can I use nonfood imitations while hunting migratory birds?

Yes. You can use nonfood imitations to aid in the taking of migratory birds. Nonfood imitations may include plastic corncobs.

Falconry

Can I use falconry to hunt migratory game birds?

Yes. If you are a licensed falconer, you can hunt migratory game birds with the use of falconry. Migratory game birds that can be taken using falconry include common gallinules, coots, ducks, geese, mergansers, rails, Wilson's snipe and woodcock.

When can I use falconry to hunt migratory game birds?

The open seasons for hunting common gallinules, coots, ducks, geese, mergansers, rails, Wilson's snipe and woodcock with the use of falconry are the same dates as the regular seasons in the respective zones and goose management units for each species (go to the *Waterfowl hunting season dates* for more information). In addition, common gallinules, coots, ducks and mergansers may be taken statewide with the use of falconry from Dec. 28, 2026, through Jan. 10, 2027, and Feb. 20 – March 10, 2027.

What are the daily bag limits and possession limits for falconry?

The daily bag limit is three birds of a single or combined species. The possession limit is nine birds.

Do I need to wear hunter orange while participating in falconry?

No. If you are engaged in the sport of falconry, you are exempt from the hunter orange requirement.

Hunting with dogs

Can I use a dog to hunt migratory birds?

Yes. You can hunt migratory birds, including waterfowl, with a dog.

Can I retrieve my hunting dog if it runs on to private property?

Yes. Unless previously prohibited by the landowner, you can enter on foot the property of another person for the sole purpose of retrieving a hunting dog. You cannot be in possession of a firearm when retrieving a dog from private property. You should not remain on the property beyond the reasonable time necessary to retrieve the dog.

How can I prevent the spread of invasive species when hunting waterfowl with a dog?

Before leaving the hunting location, remove plant debris, dirt and mud from your dog to protect its health and habitat quality.

What if I see a sick-looking animal while scouting or hunting?

The DNR encourages you to report any sightings of sick or dead wildlife at [Michigan.gov/EyesInTheField](https://www.michigan.gov/EyesInTheField). You should provide information about the location, number and condition of the animals you observed. Contact the DNR Wildlife Health Section at 517-336-5030 if you have any questions.

What is avian influenza?

Avian influenza, or “bird flu,” is caused by viruses that infect both wild and domestic birds and mammals. These viruses impact poultry and wild birds in different ways. In poultry, avian influenza is typically extremely contagious, resulting in high death loss and associated economic losses to poultry producers. Wild birds can carry the viruses but don’t always get sick or die. Visit [Michigan.gov/WildlifeDisease](https://www.michigan.gov/WildlifeDisease) or [Michigan.gov/BirdFlu](https://www.michigan.gov/BirdFlu) for more information.

Am I at risk of avian influenza when hunting waterfowl?

Although human risk is considered to be low, precautions should be taken when handling wild birds (go to the *Handling and processing game meat* for more information). Wild birds can carry bird flu without appearing sick. As a general precaution, people should not harvest or handle wild birds that are obviously sick or found dead. Hunters who handle wild birds should dress game birds in the field when possible and practice good biosecurity to prevent any potential disease spread.

Is my hunting dog at risk of avian influenza?

The risk of hunting dogs acquiring bird flu is likely low since they are not consuming the bird, but exposure to the virus may occur when mouthing or biting the bird. If you want to share game meat with your dog, thoroughly cook it first.

Should I be concerned about dioxin?

Health assessors from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Michigan DNR determined that samples of wild game from the floodplains of the Tittabawassee River and Saginaw River downstream of Midland contained high levels of dioxin and dioxin-like compounds. Wild game tested include deer, turkey, cottontail rabbit, squirrel, wood duck and Canada goose. As a result, the MDHHS advises hunters and their families to follow these recommendations related to waterfowl:

- Remove the skin of waterfowl before cooking and discard the liver and other internal organs.
- Limit duck consumption to two servings per month (provided that the skin is removed), and limit goose consumption to four servings per month. A serving varies based on body weight – for example, a serving for an 180-pound individual is 8 ounces.

More information on wild game guidelines for the Saginaw and Tittabawassee River floodplains, including a map of the area covered by these guidelines, can be found at [Michigan.gov/EatSafeFish](https://www.michigan.gov/EatSafeFish) under “Eat Safe Wild Game.” For additional information regarding dioxin, dioxin-like compounds and wild game advisories for the Tittabawassee River and Saginaw River floodplains, go to [Michigan.gov/Dioxin](https://www.michigan.gov/Dioxin).

What if I see an invasive species while scouting or hunting?

The DNR encourages you to learn how to identify and report invasive species at [MISIN.MSU.edu](https://www.misin.msu.edu). For more information on invasive species management or your local cooperative invasive species management area, visit Michigan.gov/Invasives.

What should I do if I see a nutria?

Although nutria have not yet been detected in Michigan, they could cause damage to wetlands if they become established. You are encouraged to report nutria that you have seen or trapped, especially pictures of the teeth and tail, at [MISIN.MSU.edu/Report](https://www.misin.msu.edu/Report).

Can I harvest Russian boar?

Yes. Russian boar can be hunted and trapped, year-round, statewide with a valid base license. Russian boar can be taken on public land by anyone possessing a valid hunting license or a concealed pistol license, or on private land with the landowner's permission. You are encouraged to report all Russian boar seen or taken at Michigan.gov/RussianBoar or by calling 517-336-1928.

Can I possess invasive plants in Michigan?

No. You cannot move or possess invasive plants, including for use in blinds. For a complete list of prohibited and restricted species, visit Michigan.gov/Invasives.

How can I help stop the spread of invasive species?

Invasive plants and animals can cause significant harm to wildlife habitat, reduce hunting opportunities and damage equipment.

Invasive species are often spread unintentionally. Microscopic organisms and aquatic vegetation readily attach to equipment, and they are unknowingly transported from one waterbody to another. Plants may also spread in dirt, mud and debris on people, pets and equipment. Forest pests can travel in firewood when moved to new locations.

To help prevent the spread of invasive species and protect habitat, hunters should take the following precautions:

- Always PlayCleanGo: Arrive clean and leave clean.
 - ◊ Inspect all gear and equipment before and after use, including anchors, decoys and lines, blinds, waders and clothing. Remove any plant debris, animals, dirt and mud.
 - ◊ Clean shoes, apparel, dogs and equipment (blinds, vehicles and more) of mud and debris before moving to a new site.
- Use anchor designs that prevent aquatic plants from becoming attached.
- Do not use phragmites (common reed) as part of a blind.

Am I required to remove aquatic plants from my equipment?

Yes. Michigan law requires that you remove all aquatic plants from watercraft, watercraft equipment and trailers before placing these into Michigan waters.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Prior to transporting any watercraft over land, boaters are required to do all of the following:

- Remove all drain plugs from bilges, ballast tanks and live wells.
- Drain all water from any live wells and bilges.
- Ensure that the watercraft, trailer and any conveyance used to transport the watercraft or trailer are free of aquatic organisms, including plants

This means that after trailering boats, and before getting on the road, boaters must pull plugs, drain water and remove plants and debris. Violation of the law is a state civil infraction, and violators may be subject to fines up to \$100. For more information on this law, see Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 of 1994) Part 413.



Transporting game animals

What are the rules for transporting game animals?

You can transport your own and another person's lawfully taken game. You cannot destroy the identity or evidence of the sex of any bird. If you are transporting migratory birds, one fully feathered wing must be left on the bird. If transporting another person's migratory birds, they must be tagged with the person's name, signature and home address, and the number of birds by species, dates of kill and hunting license number.

How should I tag my birds if I want to leave them in the possession of another person?

No person or business may receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are properly tagged. If you are leaving your migratory birds in the custody of another person, you must tag the birds with the following information:

- Your signature.
- Your address.
- Your current base license or Sportcard number.
- The total number of birds involved by species.
- The dates these birds were killed.

How many migratory birds can I possess or transport?

You cannot possess or transport more than the daily limit of migratory birds at or between the place where the birds were taken and whichever one of the following locations you arrive at first:

- Your automobile or principal means of land transportation.
- Your personal abode or temporary or transient place of lodging.
- A commercial preservation facility.
- A post office or common carrier facility.

Can I ship migratory birds?

Yes. You can ship migratory game birds. The package must be marked on the outside with: (1) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (2) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent and (3) the number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

Where can I learn more about importing migratory birds hunted in other countries?

For information regarding the importation of migratory birds killed in another country, you should consult 50 CFR 20.61 - 20.66 or contact Senior Resident Law Enforcement Agent, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 3800 Packard Road, Suite 160, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. One fully feathered wing must remain attached to all

migratory game birds being transported between a port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility. No person may import migratory game birds killed in any foreign country, except Canada, unless such birds are dressed (except as required above), drawn, and the head and feet removed. No person may import migratory game birds belonging to another person.

Migratory bird band reporting

I harvested a migratory bird with a leg band. Should I report it?

Yes. You can promote sound waterfowl management by promptly reporting all banded birds harvested, including date and location taken. This information is used to determine annual survival, migration routes and contribution to the state harvest from different breeding grounds. To report bands, go online to ReportBand.gov. Please note that even if the band you recover is inscribed with a 1-800 telephone number, you can only report it at ReportBand.gov.

Handling and processing game meat

How should I handle and process game meat?

Keep yourself and others healthy by taking care of your harvested meat. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services recommends proper food safety practices when handling and processing game meat, as well as any other meat or poultry.

What are the precautions I should take when processing waterfowl?

- Harvest only waterfowl that act and look healthy.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth when handling birds.
- Do not eat, drink, vape or smoke while handling carcasses.
- Field-dress and prepare game animals outdoors or in a well-ventilated area.
- Wear disposable or rubber gloves while handling and cleaning game animals. Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand cleanser even if the hands are not visibly soiled.
- Remove and discard intestines soon after harvesting and avoid direct contact with the intestinal contents and fecal material.
- Wash hands, utensils and work surfaces before and after handling any meat.
- Keep waterfowl cool (either with ice or refrigeration), below 45 degrees Fahrenheit, until processed, then refrigerate or freeze.
- Cook waterfowl to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Wash hands and change clothes before having contact with domestic poultry and birds.

Buying and selling game animals

Can I buy or sell game animals?

No. You cannot buy or sell game animals, dead or alive, except as provided by Wildlife Conservation Order 4.3, available at Michigan.gov/DNRLaws.

Migratory bird hunter surveys

Is there a way for me to give feedback or provide information about my hunting season?

Yes. Some hunters are randomly selected each year to participate in state or federal harvest surveys, including collection of birds' wings, tails and other body parts. Accurate and complete reporting is essential for biologists to estimate the annual harvest and impact of hunting. Please do your part to help manage waterfowl by responding to surveys. The knowledge gained permits selection of annual regulations that maximize hunting opportunities while perpetuating healthy waterfowl populations for future hunters.



REPORT ALL POACHING

Violations of state migratory bird regulations are also violations of federal regulations.

What is the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact?

Michigan is a member of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, an agreement where participating states share information about fish and game violators and honor each other's decision to deny licenses and permits. If your hunting, fishing or trapping license is revoked in Michigan, you may lose your privileges in the other 45 participating states as well. And, if your license is revoked in any of those states, it also may be revoked in Michigan.

What are the penalties for waterfowl hunting violations?

Violations of waterfowl hunting regulations are misdemeanors and may be punishable by up to \$500 in fines per animal.

How do I report suspected poaching?

If you witness a natural resource violation or have information on the illegal killing of game animals in Michigan, report it immediately. You can do this by texting or calling 800-292-7800. Phone lines are open 24/7. You may remain anonymous.

REPORT ALL POACHING





Report poaching immediately.

Tipsters may remain anonymous.

Tipsters may be eligible for a cash reward.

CALL OR TEXT
1-800-292-7800

Accompany — to go along with another individual under circumstances that allow one to come to the immediate aid of the other individual while staying within a distance from the other individual that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and auditory communication.

Apprentice hunter — a person 10 years old or older without a hunter education certificate who is licensed under the Apprentice Hunting Program.

Bait — a substance composed of grains, fruits, vegetables or other food placed to lure or entice migratory birds. This does not apply to standing farm crops (normal agricultural practices) or other naturally growing grains, fruits or vegetables.

Bow — a device for propelling an arrow from a string drawn, held and released by hand if the force used to hold the string in the drawn position is provided by the archer's muscles.

Buy/sell — an exchange or attempt or offer to exchange for money, barter or anything of value.

Chase — to follow animals with dogs or other wild or domestic animals trained for that purpose.

Crossbow — a device consisting of a bow, with a draw weight of 100 pounds or more, mounted transversely on a stock or frame and designed to fire an arrow, bolt or quarrel by the release of a bow string controlled by a mechanical or electric trigger with a working safety.

Daily bag limit — the maximum number of game birds or animals of a single species or combination of species permitted to be taken by one person in any one day during the open season.

Developmental disability — a severe, chronic condition as defined in section 100a of the mental health code, 16 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1100a.

Elevated platform — any horizontal surface, constructed or manufactured by a person, that increases the field of vision of a person using it beyond the field of vision that normally would be attained by that person standing on the ground. Elevated platforms include scaffolds, raised platforms, ladders, steps and any other device that is used to assist in climbing a tree.

Firearm — any device that will, is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by action of an explosive.

Fixed shotgun shell — a self-contained shotgun shell consisting of the case, primer, propellant charge, and projective or projectiles.

Game animal — any species of wildlife designated by the Legislature or the Natural Resources Commission as game under Section 40110 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act and any of the following animals: badger, bear, beaver, bobcat, brant, coot, coyote, crow, deer, duck, elk, fisher, Florida gallinule, fox, goose, hare, Hungarian partridge, marten, mink, muskrat, opossum, otter, pheasant, quail, rabbit, raccoon, ruffed grouse, sharp-

tailed grouse, skunk, snipe, sora rail, squirrel, Virginia rail, weasel, wild turkey, woodchuck and woodcock.

Ground blind — a structure, enclosure or any material, natural or manufactured, placed on the ground to assist in concealing or disguising a person for the purpose of harvesting an animal.

Hunt or hunting — to pursue, capture, shoot, kill, chase, follow, harass, harm, rob or trap a wild animal, or to attempt to engage in such an activity.

Hunter education/safety — a certification course used to train hunters on understanding wildlife management, wildlife identification, ethics, laws and regulations, and firearms safety and handling.

Hunter orange — the highly visible color commonly referred to as hunter orange that includes blaze orange, flame orange and fluorescent blaze orange.

Identification — a driver license issued by Michigan, another state or a Canadian province as accepted by the DNR, a State of Michigan identification card issued by the Secretary of State or a Sportcard issued by the DNR.

License — a document or a tag, stamp, plastic card or other device that may include a stamp or a tag that authorizes the licensee to hunt, fish, trap or possess wild animals or aquatic species and other identification required by the DNR.

Mechanical decoy — any device that, by design or construction, uses motion as a visual stimulus to attract an animal.

Mentor — a person at least 21 years old who has a valid license to hunt and previous hunting experience and is participating in the Mentored Hunting Program.

Migratory bird — any bird listed in the Code of Federal Regulations under Title 50 Part 10.13.

Nonresident — a person who is not a resident of Michigan.

Pneumatic gun — any implement, designed as a gun, that will expel a BB or pellet by spring, gas or air.

Poaching — the illegal shooting, trapping or taking of game, fish or other natural resources from private or public property.

Possession limit — the maximum number of game birds or animals of a single species or combination of species permitted to be possessed by any one person when lawfully taken in Michigan.

Protected wildlife — bear cubs, bear sows accompanied by cubs, cougars, eagles, flying squirrels, hawks, lynx, moose, nongame birds (except starlings, house sparrows and feral pigeons), owls, spruce grouse and wolverines. Protected wildlife cannot be taken at any time.

Residence — a permanent building serving as a temporary or permanent home. Residence may include a cottage, cabin or mobile home, but does not include a

structure designed primarily for taking game, a tree blind, a tent, a recreational or other vehicle, or a camper.

Resident — a person who resides in a settled or permanent home or domicile within the boundaries of this state with the intention of remaining in this state; a student who is enrolled in a full-time course at a college or university within this state and who resides in the state during the school year; a person regularly enlisted or commissioned as an officer in the armed forces of the United States and officially stationed in this state; a person regularly enlisted or commissioned as an officer in the armed forces of the United States who, at the time of enlistment, was a resident of this state and has maintained his or her residence in this state for purposes of obtaining a driver license or voter registration, or both.

Safety zone — all areas within 150 yards (450 feet) of an occupied building, dwelling, house, residence, cabin or any barn or other building used in a farm operation.

Season dates — the legal dates that may be hunted or trapped.

Shotgun — a firearm designed to be fired from the shoulder that uses the energy of the explosive in a fixed shotgun shell to fire through a smooth bore either a number of ball shot or a single projectile for each single function of the trigger.

Sinkbox — a low, floating device with a depression, affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water.

Take — to hunt with any weapon, dog, raptor or other wild or domestic animal trained for that purpose; kill; chase; follow; harass; harm; pursue; shoot; rob; trap; capture or collect animals, or to attempt to engage in such an activity.

Transport — to carry or ship animals within this state or to points outside this state.

Uncocked bow — a bow that is not in the drawn position.

Uncocked crossbow — a crossbow that is not in the cocked position.

Unloaded bow — a bow that does not have an arrow nocked.

Unloaded crossbow — a crossbow that does not have a bolt in the flight groove.

Unloaded firearm — a firearm that does not have ammunition in the barrel, chamber, cylinder, clip or magazine when the barrel, chamber, cylinder, clip or magazine is part of or attached to the firearm. Muzzleloading firearms are considered unloaded when the cap is removed or priming powder is removed from the pan, or when the battery is removed on electronic systems. The ball and powder can remain in the barrel.

Waterfowl — ducks, geese, gallinules and mergansers.

Wild animal — a mammal, bird, fish, reptile, amphibian or crustacean of a wild nature indigenous to this state or introduced to this state by the DNR or a species determined by the DNR to be of public benefit.

Need information?

Contact a DNR office listed below or visit us online. Customer service center (CSC) hours of operation can be found at Michigan.gov/ContactDNR.

Baraga CSC

427 U.S. 41 N.
Baraga, MI 49908
906-353-6651

Bay City CSC

3580 State Park Drive
Bay City, MI 48706
989-684-9141

Cadillac CSC

8015 Mackinaw Trail
Cadillac, MI 49601
231-775-9727

Crystal Falls Field Office

1420 W. U.S. 2
Crystal Falls, MI 49920
906-875-6622

Detroit Metro CSC

1801 Atwater St.
Detroit, MI 48207
313-396-6890

Escanaba CSC

6833 U.S. 2, U.S. 41 and M-35
Gladstone, MI 49837
906-786-2351

Gaylord CSC

1732 W. M-32
Gaylord, MI 49735
989-732-3541

Lansing CSC

4166 Legacy Parkway
Lansing, MI 48911
517-284-4720

Marquette CSC

1990 U.S. 41 S.
Marquette, MI 49855
906-228-6561

Naubinway Field Office

P.O. Box 287
W11569 U.S. 2 E.
Naubinway, MI 49762
906-477-6048

Newberry CSC

5666 M-123
Newberry, MI 49868
906-293-5131

Norway Field Office

520 W. U.S. 2
Norway, MI 49870
906-563-9247

Plainwell CSC

621 10th St.
Plainwell, MI 49080
269-685-6851

Roscommon CSC

I-75 and M-18 S.
8717 N. Roscommon Road
Roscommon, MI 48653
989-275-5151

Sault Ste. Marie CSC

4131 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
906-635-6161

Traverse City CSC

2122 S. M-37
Traverse City, MI 49685
231-922-5280

Helpful URLs:

Find us on Facebook at Facebook.com/MichiganDNR
Follow us on Threads at Threads.com/@MichiganDNR
Follow us on Instagram at Instagram.com/MichiganDNR

Direct DNR website URLs:

DNR hunting regulations: Michigan.gov/DNRRegs
Wildlife diseases: Michigan.gov/WildlifeDisease
Hunter education: Michigan.gov/HunterEducation
Hunting: Michigan.gov/Hunting
Invasive species: Michigan.gov/InvasiveSpecies
Mi-HUNT: Michigan.gov/MiHunt
Pure Michigan Hunt: Michigan.gov/PMH
Shooting ranges: Michigan.gov/ShootingRanges
Trapping/fur harvesting: Michigan.gov/Trapping

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Wildlife Division

525 W. Allegan St.

P.O. Box 30444

Lansing, MI 48933

517-284-9453

Contact hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.