

# Dove season coming soon

The Sept. 1 opening of dove season is fast approaching. While a blistering summer may have punished crops and people, mourning doves seem to thrive in hot, dry weather. Reports from many parts of the state suggest ample numbers of this elusive, fast-flying quarry.

Although the mourning dove is the primary quarry, Kansas hunters enjoy pursuing four species of doves in split fall and winter seasons. The season for all doves runs Sept. 1-Oct. 31 and Nov. 5-13. During these segments, two native species (mourning and white-winged doves) as well as two exotic species (Eurasian collared and ringed turtle doves) may be taken. In addition, an exotic species season runs Nov. 20-Feb. 28, 2012. During this time, only Eurasian collared and ringed turtle doves may be taken.

To enhance public hunting opportunities, the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism manages fields specifically to attract doves. Dove fields may include standing or mowed sunflowers, unharvested strips of wheat and burned crop stubble, mowed wheat, mixed plantings, or any combination of techniques.

Some areas have restricted hunting dates or times, and others may be restricted to youth, novice, and/or disabled hunters. Some may also require hunters using managed dove fields to obtain and complete a daily hunt permit or obtain access through a drawing. Others are open to the general public. Fields within waterfowl management areas require non-toxic shot only.

Use [www.kdwpt.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwpt.state.ks.us), to find details on areas specially managed for doves. Click "Hunting/Migratory Birds/Doves/Managed Hunting Areas" for details on the nearest managed dove area.

Hunters are reminded that there are no bag and possession limits for Eurasian collared doves and

ringed turtle doves. However, during the regular dove season — Sept. 1 through Oct. 31 and Nov. 5-13 — if the take of exotic doves exceeds a hunter's daily bag of 15 mourning and white-winged doves (single species or in combination), the exotic doves must be transported with a fully-feathered wing attached. The possession limit for mourning and white-winged doves is 30.

On Aug. 11, the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission will approve final regulations for ducks and geese. Once that action is complete, the department can post the 2011 Kansas Hunting and Furharvesting Regulations Summary on the agency's website where hunters can go online to learn more about identifying dove species. Click "Hunting/Hunting Regulations" to view or download this booklet, which has all the information needed for hunting doves, including color pictures of the doves that may be legally taken. Information on all other game species is included, as well.

Doves are excellent table fare. Whether wrapped in bacon and grilled, baked in a pie, or skewered for shish-ka-bobs, this game bird is a favorite of many. But don't wait until Sept. 1 to get ready. Hunters should be scouting areas and obtaining permission on private ground or planning for a public land hunt now. Shooting clay targets for a couple of weeks will save shells once the season opens, but stock up on shells anyway; this is one of the most difficult game birds to hit. These things done, all that remains is knowing the law and cleaning the grill.

Printed copies of the 2011 Kansas Hunting and Furharvesting Regulations Summary, as well as the Kansas Hunting Atlas, will be available where licenses are sold the first week in September.

## Special Hunts application deadline approaching soon

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Special Hunts Program offers a variety of limited hunts, many designed to introduce youth and novices to hunting in an uncrowded setting with good opportunity for success. Three types of hunts are offered: youth hunts, mentor hunts, and open hunts.

New this year is that only youth will be able to apply for youth hunts. The department will no longer consider an application from an applicant over the age restriction for a youth hunt. Mentors may apply for youth/mentor hunts. Open hunts are open to anyone, and some non-draw special hunts are also offered.

Also new this year is that applicants for draw hunts are required to choose the dates they want for special hunts. In the past, the choice of "Any" was offered, but this is no longer an option. Hunters must select the hunt dates that are offered.

The first application deadline — for special hunts in September and October — is midnight Aug. 14. A random drawing for these hunts will occur the week of Aug. 15, with email notification to successful applicants. The permit and map will be included with this email notification.

The application period for November, December, and January hunts will begin Sept. 1 and run through midnight Sept. 30, with the draw occurring the week of Oct. 3. Successful applicants for these hunts will also receive email notification with a permit and map.

Each special hunt targets specific game species, including doves, upland game, waterfowl, and deer. Some take place during the special youth/disabled deer season Sept. 10-18, some during the youth upland game season Nov. 5-6, and others during special youth waterfowl seasons, which have yet to be set. Still others occur during regular hunting seasons. Special hunts will be conducted in all regions of the state on both public and private land.

Youth hunts are generally open to hunters 15 or younger who must be accompanied by an adult 18 or older, who may not hunt. Mentor hunts are open to youth 17 or younger or anyone who hasn't hunted in the last three years, and each must be accompanied by a licensed adult mentor. Mentors may participate in mentor hunts. Requirements for each special hunt are outlined in the hunt narratives on the website.

Many veteran hunters find new satisfaction in serving as mentors, introducing a relative, friend, or neighbor to the wonder of the hunt in a wildlife-rich setting. Parents or grandparents may take children or grandchildren who have never hunted but are now showing an interest, but mentors and novices do not have to be related.

Hunter education is not required for youth 15 and younger accompanied by an adult 18 or older. However, persons 16 and older must have a hunting license and hunter education certification. Those 16 and older who do not have hunter education may still participate by obtaining a one-time apprentice hunting license, which exempts them from the hunter education requirement through the calendar year in which it is purchased.

For more detailed information or to apply, go online to [www.kdwpt.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwpt.state.ks.us) and click "Hunting/Special Hunts Information." Those who do not have computer access may apply by telephone at 620-672-0791.

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# Don't forget to wear your blaze orange when hunting

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