

State News You Can Use!

ILLINOIS

IDNR MONITORING SUSPECTED OUTBREAKS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA DURING FALL WATERFOWL MIGRATION

At least 300 waterbirds, primarily snow geese, have died of suspected avian influenza at public hunting areas throughout southern Illinois, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has confirmed.

Deceased wild birds have been found at Baldwin Lake, Pyramid State Recreation Area, Rend Lake, and Carlyle Lake in recent days.

IDNR will continue to monitor for ongoing outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza, or HPAI, during the fall bird migration. Members of the public are encouraged to report large concentrations of 20 or more deceased birds at one location. Reports can be made to the local IDNR district wildlife biologist at the following link: <https://www.wildlifeillinois.org/sidebar/contact-an-idnr-district-wildlife-biologist/>.

IDNR first announced HPAI was detected in wild Canada geese in Illinois in March 2022 in a joint notice with the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

IDNR continues to remind waterfowl hunters to take precautions by thoroughly cooking game meat to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit and implementing other guidance found here: [Hunters-Protect Your Poultry and Pet Birds from Avian Influenza \(usda.gov\)](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal-health/fsc_hpai_hunters.pdf).

Hunters also should avoid handling sick or dead waterfowl found in the field, and they should not allow dogs or other pets to consume waterfowl that died from unknown causes. Further guidance for hunters can be found at: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal-health/fsc_hpai_hunters.pdf.

Rubber gloves and a mask should be worn when disposing of any deceased wild birds, and carcasses should be double-bagged in sealed plastic bags. The bags can be buried away from scavengers or placed in the garbage if approved by the local waste service provider.

Anyone handling deceased birds should thoroughly wash

their hands and any other clothes or tools with soap and water following disposal.

IOWA

BANNER AND OLOFSON SHOOTING RANGES OFFER DISCOUNTED ANNUAL PASSES

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has discounted its annual passes for the Banner and Olofson shooting ranges for 2023 by \$40 making it the perfect gift for the hard-to-buy-for member of the family.

From Nov. 25 to Dec. 31, individual passes will be available for \$200 and family passes for \$260 (this is a \$40 savings). Annual passes may be purchased at either range and is valid at both shooting ranges. If you currently have a pass this purchase will just add an additional year to your current pass.

Banner Range, between Indianola and Des Moines on Hwy. 65/69 in Warren County, is a multi-use shooting facility that offers a safe, clean shooting environment for handguns, rifles, archery, and shotguns. The range is staffed with professional certified range safety officers during all operating hours. Banner Range is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Wednesday and Thursday.

The Olofson Shooting Range, located off Hwy. 415, about five miles northwest of Polk City, features a classroom, handgun, rifle, Trap/Skeet, and archery ranges. The Olofson Range is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Shooting ranges welcome shooters of all skill levels and abilities. Patrons have the ability to pay \$10 per hour or purchase an annual pass to cover their shooting time. Information on Iowa shooting ranges is available at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Places-to-Hunt->

Shoot/Iowa-Shooting-Ranges

Banner and Olofson shooting ranges are closed December 24, 25, and January 1.

MINNESOTA

DNR WEBINARS COVER TRAINING A HUNTING PUPPY, AND SNOWMOBILING

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources invites people interested in fishing, wildlife and outdoor skills to tune in to upcoming webinars that will discuss training a hunting puppy and snowmobiling in Minnesota.



The first webinar is at noon Wednesday, Dec. 14. Bird hunter Tina Dokken will discuss how to pick out a puppy and train it to become a hunting dog, including basic obedience training, bird retrieval and Dokken's training journey with her new hunting pup.

The second webinar is at noon Wednesday, Dec. 21. Wade Miller, DNR state trails snowmobile consultant, will discuss how to get started in snowmobiling, where to go and what someone needs to know to try this winter-time activity.

The webinars are part of the DNR's Minnesota Outdoor Skills and Stewardship Series. The webinars are free but registration is required. More information is available on the outdoor skills and stewardship page of the [DNR website](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/outdoor/).

EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS THIS WINTER BY HUNTING MINNESOTA SMALL GAME

Hunting pheasants, ruffed grouse, squirrels or rabbits offers opportunities to enjoy the Minnesota outdoors as tempera-

tures fall and snow blankets the landscape.

Pheasants: Hunting season is open through Jan. 1, 2023. On Dec. 1, the daily bag limit increased to three roosters, with a possession limit of nine roosters. The best places to find pheasants at this time of year are in tall grass or cattail marshes. Hunters should remember to exercise caution around thin ice.

Grouse: Hunting season is open through Jan. 1, 2023. Wintertime grouse hunters may find success during the "golden hour," which is the last hour before sunset, when ruffed grouse move out of their snow roosts to feed.

Squirrels: Hunting season is open through Feb. 28, 2023. Winter is breeding season for squirrels, which means they are active and easier to find.

Rabbits: Hunting season is open through Feb. 28, 2023. Hunters will find the most success around thick cover, such as brush piles, thorn tangles and briars.

More information about how or where to hunt can be found on the DNR's [learn to hunt pages](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/outdoor/). Hunters also can find regulations and complete bag limit information on the [DNR website](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/outdoor/).

Additionally, the DNR invites people interested in rabbit hunting to join an upcoming webinar at noon Wednesday, Dec. 7, when DNR staff will share tips and ideas on how to hunt rabbits, return with delicious table fare, and gain lifelong memories in the process. More information is available on the outdoor skills and stewardship page of the [DNR website](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/outdoor/).

NEBRASKA HUNTERS SHOULD AVOID HEAVY EQUIPMENT AT PINTAIL WMA

Hunters are advised to be cautious and avoid heavy equipment performing wetland enhancement work at Pintail Wildlife Management Area in Hamilton County.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission urges the public to stay at least 200 yards from all equipment on the area for their and the equipment operator's safety. Operators will be using T Road, so hunters are advised to avoid using this road to park.

This project will improve wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities by recovering wetland hydrology and improving wetland conditions.

The project is a joint effort of Game and Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and a cooperating landowner.

HEAVY, DRIFTING SNOW CLOSES CLEAR CREEK WMA TO VEHICLE ACCESS

[Jerry Kane](#) December 15, 2022
Comments Off on Heavy, drifting snow closes Clear Creek WMA to vehicle access

Clear Creek Wildlife Management Area in Garden and Keith counties is closed until further notice to all vehicle access due

ing dates to help hunters prepare for hunting seasons.



to high winds and heavy, drifting snow.

The closure includes the Special Hunting Area, where controlled waterfowl hunting takes place from blinds. There will be no drawings for goose pits and no staff present until conditions improve.

NORTH DAKOTA TENTATIVE 2023 SEASON OPENING DATES

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department annually provides its best estimate for open-

Dates become official when approved by governor's proclamation. Tentative opening dates for 2023 include:

Tentative 2023 Season Opening Dates	Season
Tentative Opening Date	
Dove	Sept. 1
Sharptail, Hun, Ruffed Grouse, Squirrel	Sept. 9
Youth Waterfowl	Sept. 16
Early Resident WF	Sept. 23
Youth Pheasant, Regular Waterfowl	Sept. 30
Pheasant	Oct. 7

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