



# Dove Hunting 101



# Why do we hunt dove in Georgia?

- It helps preserve the habitats and populations of over 300,000 birds in Georgia.
- Purchasing licenses and equipment funds conservation.
- Doves are hunted in 37 states. They are the number one game bird in the country.
- It's fun!



# Dove Hunting Rules and Regulations

- Depends largely upon practices carried out in the Eastern Dove Management Unit, comprising all the Eastern United States from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sets rules and regulations.
- These rules and regulations are largely based on annual nationwide surveys which inform biologist, who make decisions which keep the dove population healthiest.

# Identifying Mourning Doves



- Round head that appears too small for its body.
- Slender and delicate appearance.
- The beak is tapered and sharp at the tip.
- Its most distinctive feature is its tail, which is very long and tapers to a point. No other dove has this feature.

# Learn more about Mourning Doves

You can find more information about Mourning Dove (and other migratory specie) management, biology, and more at:

<https://georgiawildlife.com/hunting/waterfowl>

# The Mourning Dove Habitat

- Found year round in a wide variety of habitats, but especially: Grasslands, farmlands, open woods and roadside.
- Feed on plants, seeds, native grasses and sometimes insects.
- Nest in close proximity to ponds, puddles or streams with little vegetation.
- Avoids swamps and thick forests.

# Preparing for a Dove Hunt

- Hunting License and Migratory Bird Stamp.
- Shotgun.
- Ammunition.
- A legal place to hunt.
- Practicing shooting skills by skeet shooting is recommended.

# What can you hunt Dove with?

- Shotguns, 10 gauge or smaller plugged to allow only 3 shots using standard No. 2 shot or smaller.
- Raptors (predatory birds), only by properly permitted falconers.





# Specialized Gear

- Ear Plugs, Eye Protection.
- Camouflage.
- Sunscreen.
- Insect repellent.
- Hat with a brim.
- Water.
- Decoys.



# Where can I hunt dove?



# Private Land

- Requires Permission in order to Hunt.
- Includes regular landowners and hunting clubs.
- Permission must be gained in writing.
- Private lands offer exclusive opportunities to hunters that are sometimes not offered on Public Land.

# Public Land

- There are many opportunities to hunt public lands in Georgia. A full list of the WMAs and other government owned properties where dove hunting is allowed can be found in the Georgia hunting regulations.
- It is important to note that some WMAs and public lands have specific rules that pertain to them, and it is the hunter's responsibility to know the rules ahead of time and abide by them while hunting.



# Pittman Robertson Act

- Pittman Robertson (PR) Act is an excise tax on hunting and fishing equipment.
- The excise tax is set by law at 11% of the wholesale price for long guns and ammunition and 10% for handguns. It is paid by manufacturers, producers, and importers and applies to all commercial sales and imports, whether their purpose is hunting, sport shooting, or personal defense. This tax is handled by the Department of the Treasury, which turns the funds over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for apportionments to states.
- This money goes toward Wildlife Restoration only.

# How are Pittman Robertson Funds distributed?

- 1) \$8 million is dedicated to Enhanced [Hunter Education](#) programs, including the construction or maintenance of public target ranges.
- 2) \$3 million is set aside for projects that require cooperation among the states.
- 3) One-half of the excise tax collected on handguns is set aside for Basic Hunter Education programs.

The remainder of the trust fund is then divided in half with 50 percent apportioned to states based on the land area of the state in proportion to the total land area of the country. The remaining 50 percent is apportioned based on the number of individual paid hunting license holders in the state in proportion to the national total.

# Wildlife and Sport Restoration Program

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) works with states, insular areas and the District of Columbia to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats, and the hunting, sport fishing and recreational boating opportunities they provide. Insuring they will be available for generations to come.

# How can I learn more?

- There are many books, websites and pod cast dedicated to the subject.
- Find a friend or family member who is an experienced hunter and talk to them or see if they will be a hunting mentor for you.
- Videos and shows on television and online.
- By visiting <https://georgiawildlife.com/LearntoHuntFish>.