



SPECIAL TEAL SEASON

BIRD ID

SEASON INFORMATION

HUNTING TIPS



Lowell Washburn

Iowans have the opportunity to participate in a special teal-only season that is timed to take advantage of the peak migration of teal through Iowa.

Although all teal species are legal during this special season, blue-winged teal will be, by far, the most prevalent in Iowa.

Bluewings are a common nester throughout the prairie pothole region of North America and the second most abundant duck. The mallard is number one.

Blue-winged teal are also Iowa's earliest migrating duck, leaving their nesting grounds in August and September.

BIRD IDENTIFICATION

Proper identification is critical during this special season because only teal are legal.

Teal are the smallest ducks that migrate through Iowa. During early fall, both species are in non-breeding or eclipse plumage, so the drakes and hens of both species look like hens. Bluewings, as their name suggests have a sky-blue shoulder patch readily visible in flight. Greenwings, which are slightly smaller than bluewings, have brown feathers on their shoulders where the bluewings have their blue patch. Greenwings get their

name from the longer green feathers that lie behind the shoulder feathers.

Teal are speedy and erratic fliers. Flocks will dart around a marsh in unison, like a school of minnows. Quite often teal fly low over a marsh making one or two swings before abruptly touching down.

Hunters can benefit from preseason scouting. Proper identification of duck features and habits, particularly in flight, are critical to ensuring only teal are shot during this special season.

SPECIAL TEAL SEASON INFORMATION

Teal regulations will appear in the *Iowa Migratory Game Bird Hunting* regulations online and from license retailers in late August.



Lowell Washburn

SEASON DATES:	September 5-20, 2015
SHOOTING HOURS:	SUNRISE to sunset
AMMO REQUIREMENTS:	Non-toxic shot is required.
BAG LIMITS:	Blue- and green-winged teal Daily limit of 6, possession limit of 18; any combination
LOCATIONS:	Entire state is open to hunting
LICENSE AND FEES:	Small game license, habitat fee, Iowa migratory game fee and federal duck stamp (if required)

HUNTING TIPS

GUN CHOICE:

Any gauge or type of shotgun will work for teal hunting but 20 and 12 gauges are most popular. Because shooting typically takes place at distances of 30 yards or less, an open- to moderate-choke will increase a shooter's chances of success.

Teal fly quickly and erratically. Knowing how your shotgun patterns and practicing with clay targets prior to the season will increase your success.

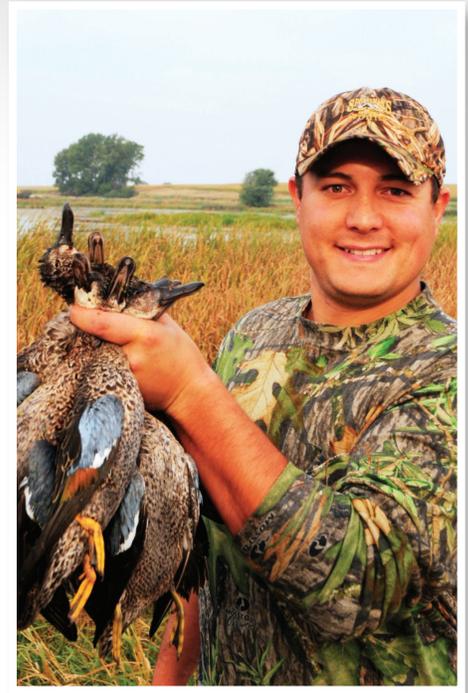
AMMO CHOICE:

Light hunting loads with 7/8, 1 or 1-1/8 ounces of non-toxic shot are adequate for teal hunting. Non-toxic shot is required while hunting all waterfowl, including teal. Sizes 5 or 6 steel shot are good choices.

WHEN TO HUNT:

Teal migrations through Iowa are based on weather conditions. A cold front or night time temperatures in the 40s will move teal. They are typically more active in mornings, which is often the best time to hunt. Hunters can locate good areas by observing where teal are flying, feeding and loafing in wetlands.

Shooting hours during the special teal season differ from shooting hours for regular waterfowl seasons. During the special teal season, hunters can only shoot from SUNRISE to sunset.



Lowell Washburn

TEAL FOR THE TABLE

Teal are easy to pluck and are excellent table fare. Any favorite duck recipe will work for teal. They are also excellent plucked and thrown on the grill, maybe surrounded with a strip of bacon. Make sure to not overcook them. Duck is best served medium rare. The quickest way to ruin the meat is to cook it well-done and dry it out.



Lowell Washburn

WHERE TO HUNT TEAL IN IOWA:

Prior to migration, teal feed heavily on vegetation, including seeds. Shallow water and mudflats are favorite feeding areas leading up to and during migration. Teal prefer shallow wetlands (less than a foot of water) with a mix of vegetation, particularly annual vegetation. Artificially flooded impoundments with moist soil vegetation and large wetland complexes with shallow water and mudflats are all attractive to teal.

Hunters should avoid heavily wooded wetlands due to a higher chance of encountering wood ducks or other species of ducks that are not legal during the special teal season.

Many DNR wildlife management areas have wetlands that will attract teal. Please visit www.iowadnr.gov/tealhunting or contact your local wildlife biologist for more information.

HOW TO HUNT:

Teal are readily attracted with decoys and calls. Teal-specific calls and decoys are generally more effective than standard mallard decoys and calls. Teal are often not as wary as other ducks but they do have excellent eyesight. Hunters should wear camouflage clothing and consider hunting from a blind or place of concealment. **All standard federal and state waterfowl hunting regulations apply to hunting teal during this special teal-only season.** However, shooting hours during the special teal season differ from shooting hours for regular waterfowl seasons. **During the special teal season, hunters can only shoot from SUNRISE to sunset, NOT one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.**

SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE:

- Be courteous and careful when hunting near other hunters especially on public areas.
- Do not set up too close to other groups.
- Wearing an orange cap while going to and from the field is a good practice.
- Do not load your firearm until you are at the hunting site.
- Always be aware of what is beyond a bird before you shoot.
- Carry out any trash including empty shells.
- Always ask permission to hunt on private lands.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
on where to hunt in your local area,
contact your regional DNR wildlife biologist.