

Under the Treaty, no open season may be declared for the hunting of migratory insectivorous birds or migratory non-game birds. Open seasons for migratory game birds may be provided by the Canadian and United States Governments, but no such open seasons may begin before Sept. 1 in any year or may last beyond Mar. 10, or may be more than three and one-half months in length. In practice, opening dates for the various species and districts are generally later than Sept. 1, except in northern Canada, and only in limited areas and for particular species do any seasons extend beyond the end of January.

Many of the migratory game birds have enjoyed a continuous close season throughout Canada and the United States since the provisions of the Treaty came into effect, and have indeed ceased to be generally considered as game birds. Other species were never very popular for food or sport and, although open seasons may be provided for them, they are taken by comparatively few hunters.

The most important game birds in Canada are certain species of geese (including brant) and ducks. Swans and cranes enjoy virtually permanent protection, no open season on them having been declared since the Treaty came into effect. Open seasons for woodcock and Wilson's snipe are provided, although not in all provinces, but there have been no open seasons for other species of shore-birds since 1927. Most provinces have open seasons on some or all species in the rail group. In British Columbia there is an annual open season on band-tailed pigeons, but elsewhere in Canada it is not customary to hunt pigeons or doves and there is no open season for them.

In view of the importance of ducks and geese, special surveys of these birds are made by the wildlife authorities of Canada and the United States, working in close collaboration. A count is made at midwinter, when waterfowl are concentrated chiefly in the United States, with relatively small numbers on the eastern and western coasts of Canada and a few stragglers in the central provinces. This count, taken at a time when hunting of waterfowl has almost or quite ceased throughout the two countries, makes possible a fairly close estimate of the breeding population available for the following spring.

The coming of spring is the signal for the majority of North American waterfowl to forsake their winter resorts in favour of breeding-grounds farther north or at a higher altitude. A large proportion of the duck population selects the sloughs, marshes and lake-shores of the Prairie Provinces as their favoured nesting area. Trumpeter swans prefer to winter in British Columbia and to rear their young on the high prairies of Alberta and in some other remote areas, the locations of which are still in doubt. The little Ross's goose, a more ambitious bird, winters in California and nests near the mouth of the Perry River, north of the Arctic Circle. In fact, almost every district in Canada where suitable nesting territory is available receives its quota of one or more species of waterfowl during the breeding season.

Weather conditions during the spring and summer are of great importance to the stock of North American waterfowl. A cold, wet spring has serious adverse effects on the early attempts at nesting. Also an unusually hot and dry summer,