

DOVES: New adventures are spurred by early season

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Wing-winged doves count in the daily limit, but sportsmen can also shoot exotic Eurasian collared doves all year long without limit. During dove season, collared doves do not count in the daily limit. Larger than mourning doves, collared doves show distinctive black rings around their necks.

"We have prepared dove fields on most of our wildlife management areas," Maddox explained. "We planted a 10-acre field on Perdido River WMA with millet, corn and sunflowers. Several WMAs also have good natural vegetation, food plots or other fields where doves go."

Perdido River WMA includes 17,337 acres along the Perdido River in Baldwin County. People can hunt doves on the property every Thursday and Saturday from noon to sunset during the



Photo by John N. Felsher

Betsy Chance admires a dove she shot while hunting in a field in south Alabama.

season, except during youth, gun and primitive weapons deer hunts.

The Upper Delta WMA

also allows dove hunting every Saturday during the state season, except during youth, gun, dog and primitive weapons deer hunts. People can also hunt the Mobile-Tensaw Delta/W. L. Holland WMA except for the Jacinto Port Tract every day of the season.

Young sportsmen and accompanying adults could register to participate in several youth dove hunts. Hunters must apply for specific hunts. Only a set number of people will be allowed to hunt each day on a first come, first served basis. After a hunt ends, a participant can then register for another hunt on a space available basis.

"The good thing about these youth hunts is that adults can hunt with the youths as long as they have all their appropriate licenses," Maddox emphasized. "These youth hunts are

great opportunities to teach kids how to hunt on a field that doesn't have a lot of pressure on it."

Two youth hunts will be held near Fairhope in Baldwin County on Oct. 17 and Oct. 24. Other hunts will be held in Monroe County. A young hunter must be 15 years old or younger and accompanied by a parent or adult at least 21 years old. Each adult can bring up to two youths.

Extremely swift and agile fliers, mourning doves can exceed 55 miles per hour while performing maneuvers any fighter pilot would envy. To hunt doves, people must first find them. Doves like open fields, croplands and grassy pastures with nearby tall trees, fencerows, high wires or other places that create perching areas where they can watch for predators.



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