

## Current harvest policies and management actions and recent changes for the Caribbean, North America and northern South America, 2012-2017

Andres, B. A. 2017. Current harvest policies and management actions and recent changes for the Caribbean, North America and northern South America, 2012-2017. Unpublished report, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Falls Church, Virginia, USA.

### **A. Recent Changes in Shorebird Harvest Policy and Management Actions**

#### *Barbados*

Prior to 2010, the Barbados Wildfowlers Association had begun to proactively set bag limits on certain shorebirds species. In 2010, the Association agreed to release of harvest information to outside sources for the first time. After an objective analysis of hunting data conducted by the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Barbados Wildfowlers Association passed a series of resolutions to voluntarily regulate the hunt (starting in 2012). Although not binding to all shooting swamp members, these recommendations included:

1. Limiting gross annual harvest on the island to 22,500 birds;
2. Allowing no more than 2,500 birds shot per swamp each year;
3. Shooting no more than 300 birds in a given day per swamp;
4. Limiting the Lesser Yellowlegs harvest per swamp to 1,250 birds annually; and
5. Restricting the shooting of American Golden Plovers to 100 birds in any swamp on any given day
6. No use of extension magazines; and
7. Restricting the number of hunters presenting arms to only three at one time.

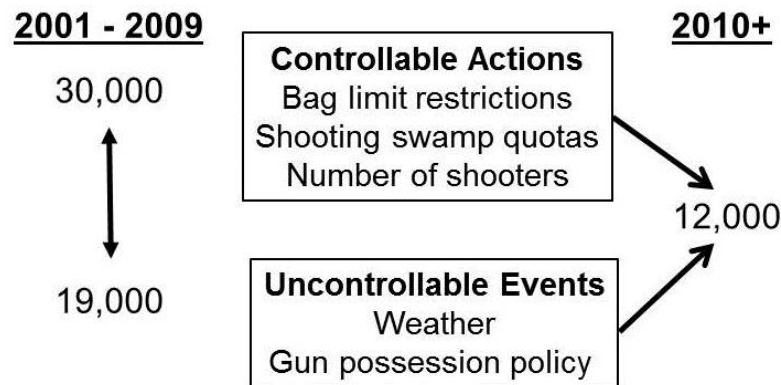
These recommendations were based on the premise that there were 10 active shooting swamps on the island.

For the 2014 season, members of the Congo Road Shooting Swamp voluntarily placed further restrictions on shorebird hunting at their swamp. Starting in 2015, Congo Road is now managed as a no-shooting swamp. Restrictions for 2014 included:

1. Hunting starts August 1 with a daily maximum of 125 shorebirds.
2. No hunting from August 21 to September 1.
3. After September 1, a daily maximum 150 shorebird birds can be taken.
4. After September 21, only Pectoral Sandpipers and ducks can be shot.
5. The moratorium on American Golden-Plovers will continue as the last several years.
6. Closed hunting on World Shorebird Day on 6 September 2014.

Only eight swamps were active in 2013 and only six were active in 2016. Shooting swamps have declined due to rising costs of maintaining wetland habitats, increased gun possession restrictions, decreasing interest in hunting by the younger generation, and a desire to provide no-shooting reserves. Because of the reduced number of shooting swamps and adherence to the recommendations of the Barbados Wildfowlers Association, and some uncontrollable events,

shorebird harvest in the current decade is only 40 – 63% of the harvest of the last decade, based on the analysis of Reed (2012).



### *French Guiana*

In October 2014, the National Council for the Protection of Nature added the Red Knot to the list of protected bird species in French Guiana.

In March of 2015, the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy add protection for the 27 species additional shorebird species, with nine not being protected from hunting (Willet, Greater Yellowlegs, Upland Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Pied Lapwing, Southern Lapwing, South American Snipe, and Ruff). Although confusion among species may make enforcement of some of the restricted species difficult, this is a great first step toward obtaining a sustainable harvest in French Guiana.

Enacted on 28 February 2017, the Ministry of the Environment established a requirement to possess a license to hunt in French Guiana. Establishing a hunting license system in French Guiana is an essential security step forward. Currently, any person living in French Guiana can buy freely a hunting weapon without any proof that they were trained to use it correctly or that they know the wildlife regulations. The new permit will be given only if the applicant passes an hunting exam. Moreover, no one knows exactly how many citizens hunt in French Guiana. Issuing hunting licenses will help to enumerate the exact amount of hunters and firearms and will for a spatial assessment of hunting pressure. The specific regulations are summarized below.

1. No one may now practice hunting in French Guiana if he does not hold a valid hunting license. To obtain a hunting license in French Guiana, potential license holders must successfully take an examination that tests specific characteristics of the territory of French Guiana with regard to hunting, forest, species present and safety rules. A medical certification is needed to receive a license. A score will be needed to pass the examination (over 25/31 points).

2. The Prefect of French Guiana will:

- a. will determine who will provide the hunter training

b. will designate two hunters in the place of the representatives of the federation of hunters in French Guiana.

c. may exempt candidates residing in under-served areas from the medical certificate provided that they produce a declaration on their honor that they are not suffering from a conditions mentioned in the hunting laws.

3. A hunting license issued in France or other documents mentioned in previous hunting laws is validated for French Guiana if the holder proves his knowledge of the forest and the wildlife of French Guiana and the related safety and management rules.

4. In addition, the residence permit of residents in French Guiana may be validated for not more than two adjoining municipalities. The municipality establishes and collects a fee, and the mayor may refuse or cancel a permit.

5. Any person of full age who, on the date of enactment of this Act, is hunting in French Guiana and resides there as a principal is exempted from the examination, according to a certificate issued by the mayor of the municipality of residence or the place of the hunting. The application for the issuance of the permit must be filed on before 1 January 2020 with the Prefect. The issuance of the permit is free of charge. After 1 January 2020, any hunter will have to pass the examination to get a hunting license.

#### *Guadeloupe and Saint-Martin*

Since the shooting of the satellite-tagged Whimbrels Machi and Goshen in 2011, positive steps have been taken by the Ministère de l'Environnement and the Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de la Guadeloupe to place some restrictions on shorebird harvest. Thirteen species of shorebirds are hunted on Guadeloupe and Saint-Martin.

1. The Red Knot (beginning in 2012) and Solitary Sandpiper (2013) were closed to hunting on Guadeloupe and Saint-Martin. The Ministère de l'Environnement in Paris removed the Red Knot from the list of hunted species in August 2013 and protected it.
2. A bag limit of 20 birds per day per hunter was instituted in Guadeloupe and Saint-Martin in 2013 and has remained in effect since then. The bag limit for Whimbrels is set at two birds per day per hunter. In 2014, shorebird hunting was reduced from six to four days per week between 16 August and 30 September on Guadeloupe and hunting is allowed only three days a week on Saint-Martin. On Guadeloupe, the season runs generally from 14 July to the first Sunday in January and on Saint-Martin from the last Sunday in July to the first Sunday in January.

## *Martinique*

Although the shooting of the satellite-tagged Whimbrels Machi and Goshen in 2011 resulted in some positive steps taken by the Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de Martinique, restrictions have been relaxed in recent years. Fourteen species of shorebirds are hunted on Martinique.

1. The Red Knot was closed to hunting on Martinique through a law put in place by the Ministère de l'Environnement in Paris in 2013 and is protected as in Guadeloupe.
2. A three-year moratorium on the shooting of Hudsonian Godwits and Whimbrels was put in place in Martinique in 2013-2015. However, the ban on hunting Whimbrels was lifted early and was suspended in 2014. Bag limits for Whimbrels and godwits are both three birds per day per hunter, with a season limit for both of 15 birds. Season limits are hard to enforce because harvested birds are not tagged. No other species have bag limits. The season on Martinique begins on the last Sunday in July and continues until 15 February. Hunting occurs on all days of the week.
3. Index of harvest on Martinique, presented by Alain Audinay, Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de la Martinique, at the workshop in Barbados in March, 2016 (high = 5, low = 1).

	Index
Lesser Yellowlegs ( <i>Tringa flavipes</i> )	5
Stilt Sandpiper ( <i>Calidris himantopus</i> )	4
Greater Yellowlegs ( <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i> )	3
American Golden-Plover ( <i>Pluvialis dominica</i> )	3
Pectoral Sandpiper ( <i>Calidris melanotos</i> )	3
Short-billed Dowitcher ( <i>Limnodromus griseus</i> )	3
Black-bellied Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> )	2
Whimbrel ( <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> )	2
Wilson's Snipe ( <i>Gallinago delicata</i> )	2
Willet ( <i>Tringa semipalmata</i> )	2
Ruddy Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> )	1
Upland Sandpiper ( <i>Bartramia longicauda</i> )	1
Hudsonian Godwit ( <i>Limosa haemastica</i> )	1

## *Saint-Pierre and Miquelon*

The Conservatoire du Littoral's work with stakeholders on Saint Pierre and Miquelon to produce a management plan for the Miquelon-Langlade Isthmus, the primary shorebird hunting area, has stalled. However, the Grand Barchois remains closed to hunting.

### *Convention on Migratory Species*

In December 2014, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species, 2015-2023 (United Nations Environmental Programme [UNEP]/CMS Resolution 11.2), which included a target that fisheries and hunting have no significant direct or indirect adverse impacts on migratory species, their habitats or their migration routes, and impacts of fisheries and hunting are within safe ecological limits. UNEP/CMS Resolution 11.31, which addressed Fighting Wildlife Crime and Offences within and beyond Borders, was also adopted. Among other things, the resolution suggests that Parties and non-Parties establish cooperative bilateral and multilateral arrangements for the management of shared wildlife populations and habitats with common boundaries, in order to minimize illegal taking and trafficking. Clearly our efforts for migratory shorebird harvest align with these global initiatives.

In November 2014, the Semipalmated Sandpiper was elevated to Appendix I, which recommends strict protection. Other migratory shorebirds in the Western Atlantic Flyway on Appendix I include the rufa Red Knot and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. Those on Appendix II, considered as having unfavorable conservation status, are Black-bellied Plover, Dunlin, Purple Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, Red-necked Phalarope, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, and Whimbrel.

### *Tri-national Agreement*

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in late 2016 and early 2017 among the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada, The Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage of the French Republic and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USA) that related to the conservation of shorebirds in the Western Atlantic Flyway. The purpose of the MOU is to set out provisions for information sharing and collaboration between the three agencies in order to promote sustainable populations of shorebirds in the Western Atlantic Flyway. Specifically, they intend to: 1) share information in a timely manner, including data, reports and other documents about shorebird ecology that will improve their understanding of shorebirds and the management and conservation of their populations in the countries and territories within the Western Atlantic Flyway, as appropriate; 2) share information on and experience with shorebird habitat protection and management, as appropriate; 3) collaborate on specific scientific surveys and shorebird monitoring programs, and harvest assessment methods; 4) provide cooperative support for data analysis and reporting when feasible; and 5) keep each other informed about changes in shorebirds hunting regulations in their respective countries. The MOU's duration is five years with the automatic renewal unless opposed by any of the participants.

Table 1. Current shorebird hunting regulations in select jurisdictions of the Western Hemisphere, as of December 2017. Species listed as allowable to hunt are only those shared by North America, the Caribbean, and northern South America.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>No. of Days</b>	<b>Atlantic Flyway Migrants with Allowable Hunting<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Bag Limits</b>	<b>Hunter Associations (no. licensed hunters)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Barbados	15 Jul – 15 Oct	93	BBPL, AMGP, WIPL, SEPL, RUTU, STSA, SAND, BASA, LESA, WRSA, PESA, SESA, WESA, SBDO, WISN, SPSA, SOSA, GRYE, WILL, LEYE	2,500 birds/swamp; 300 birds/day/swamp; 1,250 LEYE/year; 100 AMGP/swamp/day	local shooting swamps; Barbados Wildfowlers Association (80+)	fewer shooting swamps now than in 2012; REKN and WHIM closed by agreement
Brazil	None				(???)	some illegal harvest on coast
Canada	15 Aug – 6 Jan	≤108	WISN	10/day	(1,233 snipe hunters)	season varies among provinces
French Guiana	1 Jan – 31 Dec	365	UPSA, RUTU, SPSA, GRYE, WILL	none	local association, no departmental federation (500)	license law passed in 2017
Guadeloupe	14 Jul – first Jan Sunday	122	BBPL, AMGP, UPSA, WHIM, HUGO, RUTU, STSA, PESA, SBDO, WISN, GRYE, WILL, LEYE	20 birds/day; 2 WHIM/day	Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de la Guadeloupe (2,800)	no. of hunting days/week altered during season
Guyana	1 Jan – 31 Dec	365	all species allowed to be harvested	none	none (???)	Sold in markets or by personal order
Martinique	last Jul Sunday – 15 Feb	205	BBPL, AMGP, UPSA, WHIM, HUGO, RUTU, STSA, PESA, SBDO, WISN, GRYE, WILL, LEYE	3 WHIM/day, 15/year; 3 HUGO/day, 15/year	Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de la Martinique (1,400)	little reporting and evaluation
Suriname	None				(30,000)	large illegal harvest

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>No. of Days</b>	<b>Shorebird Migrants with Allowable Hunting</b>	<b>Bag Limits</b>	<b>Hunter Associations (no. licensed hunters)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Saint-Barthélemy	None					
Saint-Martin	last Jul Sunday – first Jan Sunday	69	BBPL, AMGP, UPSA, WHIM, HUGO, RUTU, STSA, PESA, SBDO, WISN, GRYE, WILL, LEYE	20 birds/day; 2 WHIM/day	none (100)	no. of hunting days/week altered during season
Saint-Pierre/ Miquelon	31 Aug – 31 Dec or until ice	121	BBPL, AMGP, WHIM, SBDO, WISN, GRYE, LEYE	none	FDC de Saint-Pierre et Miquelon (700)	
Trinidad & Tobago	1 Nov – 28 Feb	120	all species allowed to be harvested	none	??? (???)	complete hunting ban 2013–2015
United States (lower 48 states)	1 Sep – 28 Feb	107	WISN	8/day	(17,300 snipe hunters in 2016)	seasons vary among states
United States (Alaska)	2 Apr – 31 Aug	122	BBPL, RUTU, BASA, LESA, SESA, WESA, SPSA, GRYE, LEYE	none	(???)	open for rural subsistence hunting only; closed during peak nesting

<sup>1</sup> Codes = American Golden-Plover (AMGP), Baird's Sandpiper (BASA), Black-bellied Plover (BBPL), Greater Yellowlegs (GRYE), Hudsonian Godwit (HUGO), Least Sandpiper (LESA), Lesser Yellowlegs (LEYE), Pectoral Sandpiper (PESA), Red Knot (REKN), Ruddy Turnstone (RUTU), Sanderling (SAND), Semipalmated Plover (SEPL), Semipalmated Sandpiper (SESA), Short-billed Dowitcher (SBDO), Solitary Sandpiper (SOSA), Spotted Sandpiper (SPSA), Stilt Sandpiper (STSA), Upland Sandpiper (UPSA), Western Sandpiper (WESA), Whimbrel (WHIM), Willet (WILL), Wilson's Plover (WIPL), Wilson's Snipe (WISN), White-rumped Sandpiper (WRSA).

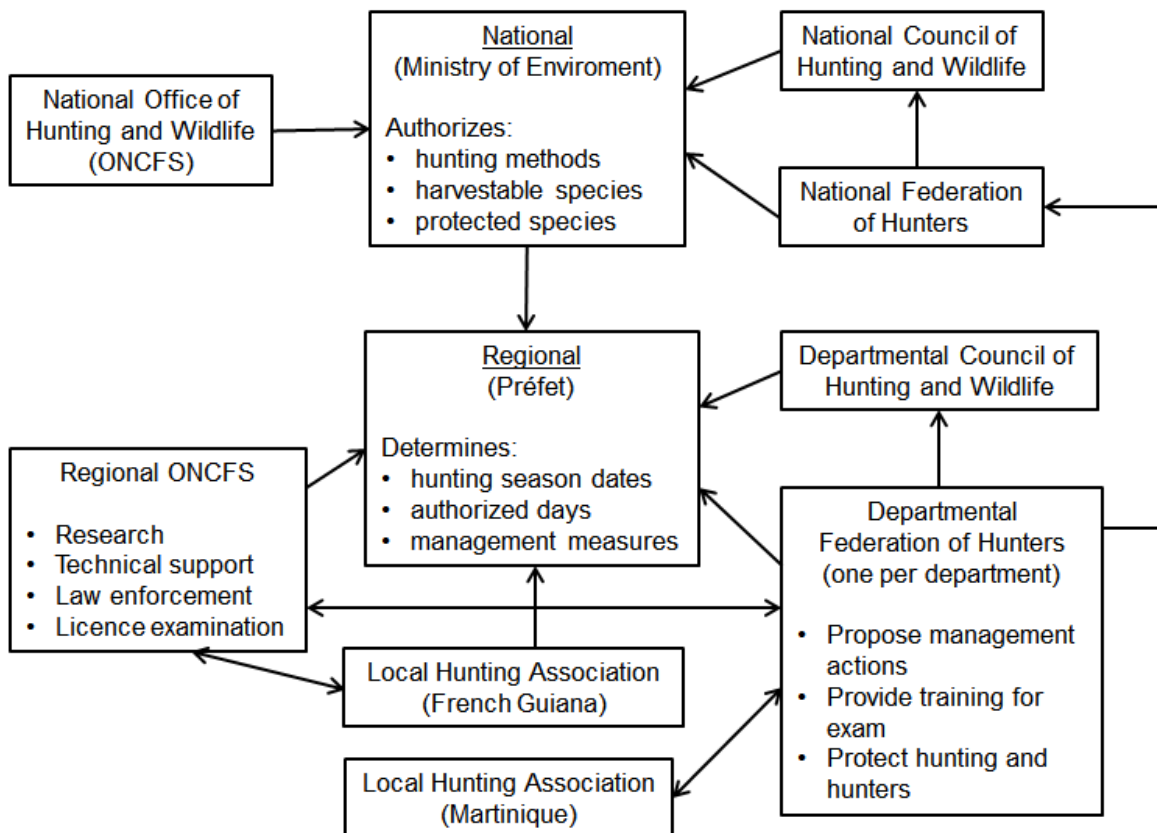
## B. The Hunting Regulation-Setting Process in French Overseas Departments and Territories

The purpose of this section is to describe, in English, the French system of setting hunting regulations in France's Overseas Departments and Collectives. The summary is based on presentations by Blandine Guillemot, ONCFS; Alain Audinay, Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de la Martinique; and on the report: Levesque, A. 2016. État des lieux de la chasse au gibier d'eau en Martinique. Unpublished report, Levesque Birding Enterprise. Lametin, Guadeloupe.

### 1. Fundamental Principles

In France, the setting of hunting regulations is based on three fundamental principles: 1) regulation is the responsibility of the state; 2) the right to hunt belongs to the owner of the land; and 3) game is a public good that belongs to no one.

### 2. Organization



There is no departmental federation in French Guiana. In Martinique, hunters join local associations (19 that hunt waterbirds) that lease or own wetlands for hunting (21 lots).