


HUNTING GUIDE



**2022
Complete
Guide to
Hunting in
Southeast
Arkansas**

2022-23 hunting, trapping season dates for Southeast Arkansas summary

DEER

Archery
Statewide: Sept. 24-Feb. 28

Muzzleloader
Deer zones 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11: Oct. 15-23 and Dec. 10-12
Deer zones 4A, 5A, 14 and 15: Oct. 15-23 and Dec. 17-19
Deer zones 9, 12, 13, 16, 16A and 17: Oct. 15-23

Deer zones 4 and 5: closed

Modern gun
Deer zones 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11: Nov. 12-Dec. 4
Deer zones 4 and 5: Nov. 12-20
Deer zones 4A, 5A, 14 and 15: Nov. 12-Dec. 11
Deer zones 9, 12 and 13: Nov. 12-Dec. 18
Deer zones 16, 16A and 17: Nov. 12-Dec. 25

Christmas holiday modern gun deer hunt
Statewide (excluding WMAs that are closed during modern gun deer season): Dec. 26-28

Special modern gun youth deer hunt
All zones (excludes certain WMAs where a modern gun or muzzleloader permit is required to hunt): Nov. 5-6 and Jan. 7-8

Private land antlerless only

modern gun deer hunt

Deer zones statewide: Dec. 29-31

ELK

Core Elk Management Zone (all private and public lands within Boone, Carroll, Madison, Newton and Searcy counties)

Public Land

Elk zones 1, 2, 3, and 4: Oct. 3-7 and Oct. 31-Nov. 4 (Permit required)

Youth Hunts: Oct. 1-2 and Oct. 29-30 (Permit required)

Private Land

Private Land Core Elk Zone (Boone, Carroll, Madison, Newton and Searcy counties; excludes Boxley Valley): Oct. 3-7 and Oct. 31-Nov. 4 (Permit required)

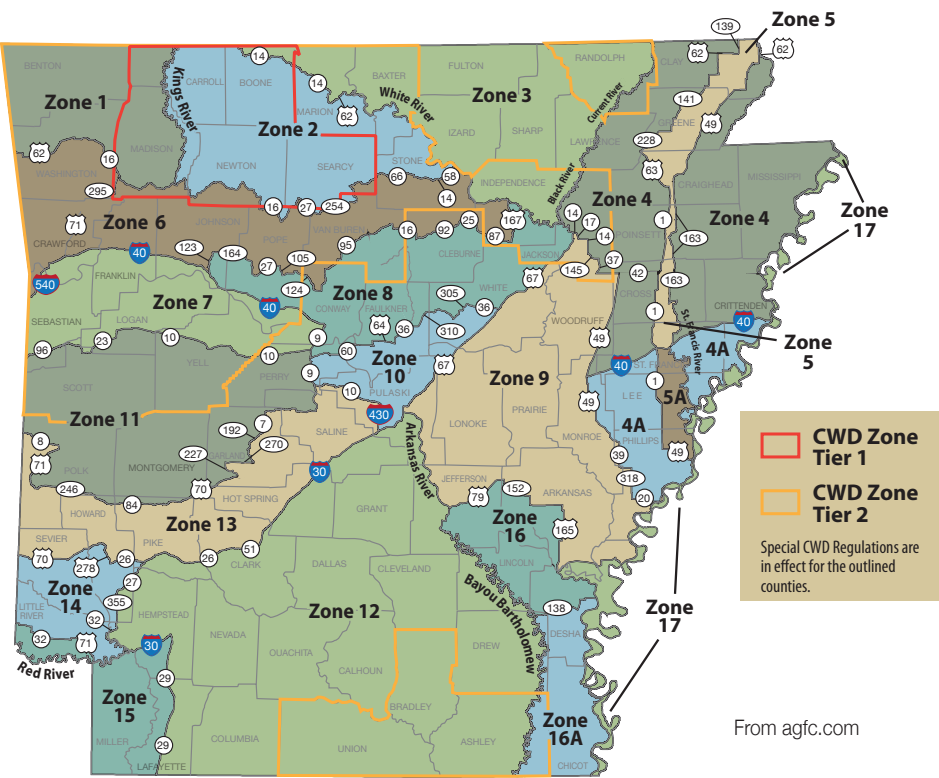
Youth Hunt: Core Elk Zone (Boone, Carroll, Madison, Newton and Searcy counties; excludes Boxley Valley) Oct. 1-2 and Oct. 29-30 (Permit required)

Elk found outside of the Core Elk Management Zone may be taken during deer season with weapon legal for that season.

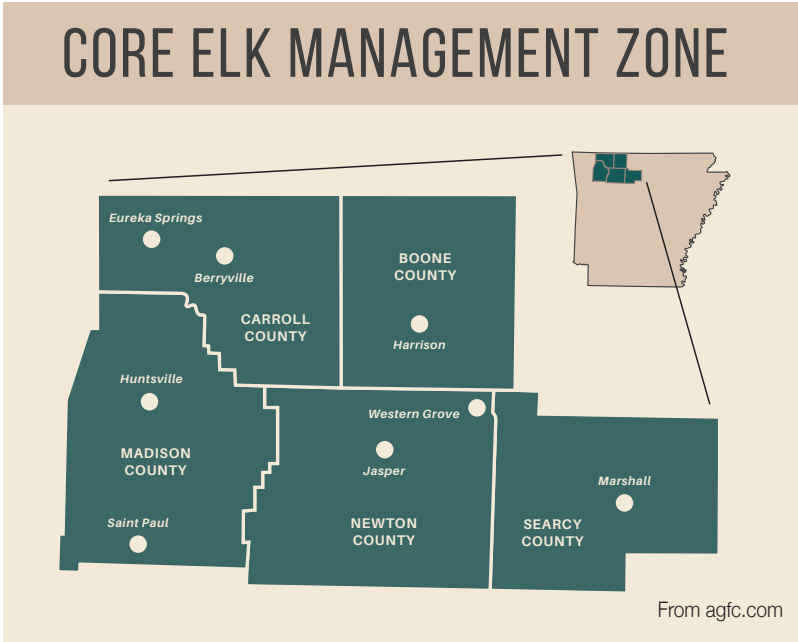
Elk Permit Application Period – May 1-June 1

CROW

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 20. (Thursday-Monday hunting only)



2022-23 Deer Zone Map



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2022-23 migratory bird season dates summary

Migratory bird hunters in Arkansas 16 or older are required to carry proof of Arkansas Harvest Information Program (HIP) registration when hunting ducks, geese, doves, coots, woodcock, snipe, rails or gallinules. HIP registration should be completed when purchasing a license at any Arkansas Game and Fish Commission office or online at www.agfc.com.

Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise until sunset, except during teal season, which begins at sunrise. During duck season, WMAs close to waterfowl hunting at noon. Waterfowl hunters must leave waterfowl hunting areas by 1 p.m. except on George H. Dunklin Jr. Bayou Meto and Dave Donaldson Black River WMAs where hunters must leave by noon. Waterfowl rest areas are

closed to all access Nov. 1-Feb. 15.

Duck daily bag limit – six. Limit may include no more than four mallards (no more than two of which may be hens), one scaup, three wood ducks, one pintail, two redheads, two canvasbacks, two black ducks and one mottled duck. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit. Coot daily bag limit – 15. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

Merganser daily bag limit – five. No more than two may be hooded mergansers. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

SPECIAL YOUTH AND VETERAN WATERFOWL HUNT:

Dec. 3, 2022, and Feb. 4, 2023
On these days, youths 15 and younger as well as veteran and active duty military may hunt

ducks, geese, coots and mergansers. Youths who have completed a hunter education course must be accompanied by a mentor who is 18 or older. Youths who have not completed a hunter education course must be accompanied by a mentor who is 21 or older. Mentors may not hunt ducks, geese, coots or mergansers, but may call waterfowl and hunt other in-season game. Shooting hours and bag limits are the same as regular waterfowl season. Hunting is allowed on WMAs from one half-hour before sunrise until sunset.

DUCK, COOT AND MERGANSER

Nov. 19-27, 2022, Dec 10-23, 2022 and Dec. 26, 2022-Jan. 31, 2023

SNOW, BLUE AND ROSS'S

See **BIRDS** Page 5

SEASON

Continued from Page 3
12-sunset, Feb. 28

Coyote trapping: sunrise, Aug. 1-sunset, March 31

Beaver, nutria trapping: sunrise, Nov. 12-sunset, March 31

Gray fox, mink, muskrat, red fox hunting: sunrise, Sept.1-sunset, Feb. 28

Raccoon, opossum, striped skunk day or night hunting: Jan. 1-Dec. 31

Bobcat hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1- sunset, Feb. 28 and during turkey season.

Coyote day hunting: Jan. 1- Dec. 31

River otter hunting: sunrise, Nov. 12-sunset, Feb. 28

Nutria, beaver hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, March 31

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AIM FOR GUN SAFETY DURING HUNTING SEASON

1. Become familiar with your firearm. Know how to carry it, load it, unload it, and know what to expect when you pull the trigger.
2. Always assume every gun is loaded and always point the muzzle in a safe direction. Never point your gun at or toward another person.
3. Never put your finger on the trigger unless you intend to shoot.
4. Your firearm has a safety. Keep it in the 'On' position until you intend to shoot.
5. Be sure of your target and what is behind it before pulling the trigger.

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GOOSE

Oct. 29-Nov. 11, 2022, Nov. 19-27, 2022, Dec. 10-23, 2022 and Dec. 26, 2022-Jan. 31, 2023

Bag Limit – 20
Light Goose Conservation Order

Feb. 1-3, 2023 and Feb. 5-April 25, 2023

Bag Limit – None

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Oct. 29-Nov. 11, 2022, Nov. 19-27, 2022, Dec. 10-23, 2022 and Dec. 26, 2022-Jan. 31, 2023

Daily Limit – 3
Possession Limit – 9

CANADA GOOSE

Sept. 1-Oct. 15, 2022,
Daily Limit - 5
Possession Limit - 15
Nov. 19-27, 2022, Dec. 10-23, 2022 and Dec. 26, 2022-Jan. 31, 2023 (statewide)

Daily Limit – 2
Possession Limit – 6

MOURNING DOVE, WHITE-

WINGED AND EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVES

Sept. 3-Oct. 23, 2022
Dec. 8, 2022-Jan. 15, 2023
Mourning and white-winged dove daily limit – 15
Mourning and white-winged dove possession limit – 45
Eurasian collared-doves – No daily bag or possession limit

VIRGINIA RAIL AND SORA

Sept. 10-Nov. 18, 2022
Daily Limit – 25
Possession Limit – 75 (combined)

SPECIAL EARLY TEAL

Sept. 15-30, 2022
Daily Limit – 6 (blue-winged, green-winged and cinnamon teal combined)
Possession Limit – 18

WILSON'S SNIPE

Nov. 1, 2022-Feb. 15, 2023
Daily Limit – 8

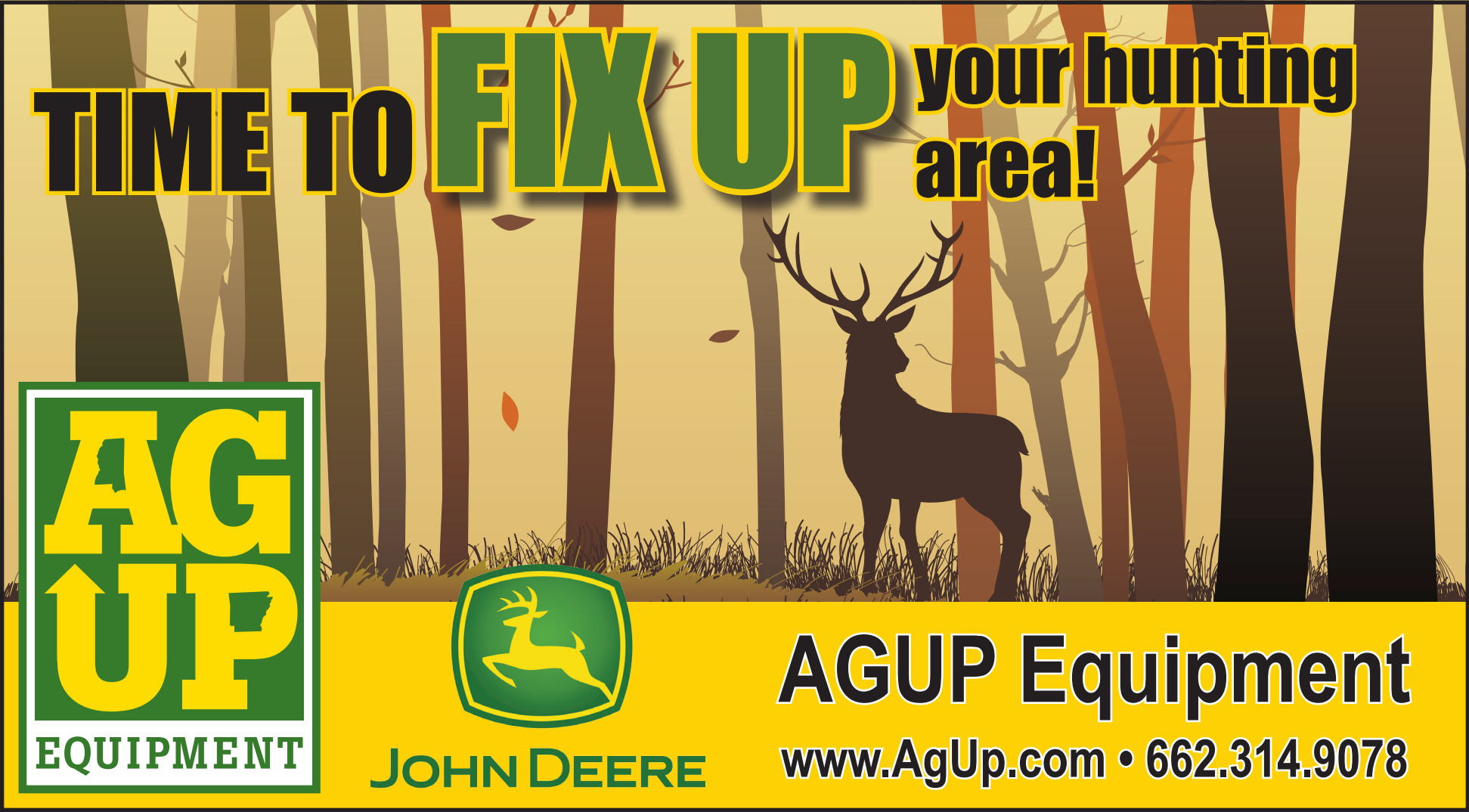
See BIRDS Page 8



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New Youth Hunters must obtain a CID number to check big-game animals

Youth Customer ID Number

All hunters need an AGFC Customer ID to check big-game animals or participate in permit hunts. Hunters under 16 who do not have a license may obtain a free, non-expiring Customer ID through the AGFC’s licensing system. Every hunter regardless of age must have a CID number to check big game.

Lost license replacement

AGFC’s licensing system allows purchasers to print and reprint their own license at home or print them at license vendors around the state. License information also can be retrieved via smartphone/mobile device.

Buying a license

Licenses are available over the counter at AGFC

regional offices nature centers and many sporting goods stores across the state.

- Phone – Call 800-364-GAME (4263) between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
- Online – Visit www.agfc.com, click “Buy Licenses.”

Telephone and online purchases must be made by credit card. Disability and commercial licenses are not available by phone or online.

Who needs a hunter education card?

A hunter born after 1968 must carry a valid hunter education card, unless ‘HE-VERIFIED’ is noted on your hunting license. Hunters under 16 do not need to have a card if they are under the direct supervision of an adult who is at least 21 years of age. Arkansas honors the home state hunter education cards of nonresidents. Call 800-482-5795 or check www.agfc.com

for a class schedule. To replace a lost card, visit ilostmycard.com or call 800-830-2268.

Deferred Hunter Education Code (DHE)

A free Deferred Hunter Education Code (DHE) can take the place of the hunter education requirement for hunters 16 and older. The code is available at any license purchasing agent, by phone or online:

- The hunter must possess a valid Arkansas hunting license while hunting.
- The hunter must be in the direct supervision of a licensed hunter at least 21 years old who is either certified in hunter education or was born on or before Dec. 31, 1968.
- The hunter may not have been convicted or forfeited bond for prior hunter education certification violations or other AGFC-sanctioned hunting privilege revocations.

New this year

- Three South Arkansas counties are added to the CWD Management Zone. CWD Management Zone regulations now apply in Ashley, Bradley, Randolph and Union counties.
- A new South Arkansas bear season. A bear season was established in Bear Zones 3 and 4. (Zone 4 covers most of South Arkansas, see AGFC.com or the Hunting Guidebook for maps and boundaries) Modern Gun Dec. 10-16 (Season closes when quota is reached.)
- Any deer, turkey or bear killed by vehicle accident and taken into possession must be reported to the AGFC Radio Room (800-482-9262).
- Buckshot size 4 or larger will be

allowed to be fired from a muzzle-loader during deer or bear season.

- It is now unlawful to guide while under the influence.
- An annual camping permit or a valid hunting or fishing license is required to camp on AGFC-owned WMAs with designated campsites.
- All trail cameras on WMAs are required to have owner’s identification visibly affixed.
- Permit requirements were removed on Longview Saline Disabled Veteran hunt, Maumelle River and Warren Prairie WMAs.

Chronic Wasting Disease

What Is CWD?

Chronic wasting disease is a fatal neurological disease that affects members of the deer/elk family (cervids). It was first described in 1967 in Colorado and has spread to 30 additional states, Canada, Finland, South Korea, Norway and Sweden. CWD is similar to scrapie in sheep/goats and “mad cow disease” in cattle. These diseases are caused by misshapen proteins called prions, which accumulate in the tissues of affected animals, especially the brain, spinal cord and lymph nodes. Infected animals will not show signs of disease for a long time, but late in the disease process they will be thin and may demonstrate weakness, abnormal be-

havior, excessive thirst or drooling. Animals generally die soon after the onset of these signs. For additional information visit www.agfc.com/cwd.

Can CWD Spread to Humans or Livestock?


There is no scientific evidence of CWD transmission to humans, pets or livestock under natural conditions. However, feeding domestic animals meat from sick or diseased wildlife is not recommended. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend having your deer tested for CWD when hunting areas where the disease occurs. For more information from the CDC, visit www.cdc.gov.


Where in Arkansas Has It

See **CWD** Page 7

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CWD

Continued from Page 6

Been Found?

AGFC has been conducting CWD surveillance in elk since 1998 and in deer statewide since 2002; however the disease was not detected until February 2016. CWD has been detected in or near Ashley, Baxter, Benton, Boone, Bradley, Carroll, Crawford, Franklin, Independence, Jackson, Johnson, Logan, Madison, Marion, Newton, Pope, Randolph, Scott, Searcy, Sebastian, Stone, Union, Van Buren and Washington counties. AGFC continues statewide surveillance and encourages Arkansans to report all

What Can Be Done to Manage CWD?

Research suggests the CWD prion can be passed through contact with feces, urine, saliva, CWD-infected carcasses, or contaminated soil. Practices that unnaturally congregate cervids (e.g. baiting and feeding) and improper disposal of carcasses can increase CWD transmission. Steps to reduce the spread and environmental accumulation of CWD prions include: avoiding activities that congregate deer and elk, reducing deer and elk densities, limiting the movement of potentially infected carcasses, and limiting the dispersal of infected animals.

Deer and Elk Carcass Movement

- It is unlawful to possess in Arkansas any portion of deer, elk, moose or caribou harvested outside the state (see Page 25 of the Hunting Guidebook for carcass importation restrictions), except the following low-risk materials:
 - Antlers and/or antlers attached to clean skull plates or cleaned skulls (where no meat or tissue is attached to skull)
 - Meat with bones removed
 - Cleaned teeth
 - Finished taxidermy products
 - Hides and tanned products
 - It is unlawful to possess any deer or elk harvested within the CWD

Management Zone outside the management zone, except the low-risk items listed above.

- It is unlawful to possess any deer or elk harvested within Tier 1 of the CWD Management Zone (red) in Tier 2 (orange), except the low-risk materials listed above; please note:
 - Intact carcasses harvested in a Tier 1 (red) county may be moved freely between the Tier 1 counties, but only low-risk materials may be moved into Tier 2 (orange) counties or outside the CWD Management Zone.
 - Intact carcasses harvested in a Tier 2 (orange) county may be moved freely between the Tier 2 counties or into Tier 1 counties, but only low-risk materials may be moved outside the CWD Management Zone.

CWD testing

AGFC is offering a variety of options to have harvested deer tested for CWD. For complete details and testing results, visit www.agfc.com/cwd.

- CWD Testing Drop-off Containers: A network of refrigerated drop-off containers is available during the 2022-23 deer season. Hunters can bring the head (antlers removed) with approximately 6 inches of neck attached from their harvested deer to one of these locations (details available at www.agfc.com/cwd). Deer submitted at these locations will be tested free of charge. Instructions will be at the containers.

• In South Arkansas containers are located at:

Arkansas County

- Arkansas County NRCS Field Office - 1015 W 2nd Street, DeWitt - Mon-Fri, 8:00-5:00

Ashley County

- Hamburg Police Station/City Hall - 305 E. Adams Street, Hamburg - 24 hours
- Pruitt Taxidermy - 116 Jones Road, Crossett
- True Value Hardware - 801 W 1st Avenue, Crossett - 24 hours

Bradley

- Warren Fire Station - 200 Alabama Street, Warren - Mon-Sat, 8:00-4:30

Calhoun

- Calhoun County Sheriff's office - 449 9th Street, Hampton - 24 hours

Chicot

- Lake Village State Park - 2542

Hwy 257 - Lake Village - Mon-Sat, 8:00-4:30

Cleveland

- Arkansas Forestry Commission - 50 Maple Street, Kingsland - Mon-Fri, 8:00-5:00

Dallas

- Tulip Volunteer Fire Department - 4606 AR 9, Leola - 24 hours

Deshia

- Dumas Seed Inc. - 115 East Choctaw Street, Dumas - Mon-Fri 6:30-5:30 & Sat 6:30-1:00

Drew

- AGFC Monticello Regional Office - 771 Jordan Drive, Monticello - 24 hours
- Cupped 'N' Committed - 1765 Hwy 138, Monticello -

Lincoln

- ArDOT Maintenance Headquarters - 1413 N Lincoln Ave, Star City - 24 hours

Union

- Union County Sheriff's Office - 250 American Road, El Dorado - 24 hours
- Felsenthal Fish Company - 9661 Strong Highway, Strong - 24 hours
- Lisbon Fire Department - 5600 Lisbon Road, El Dorado - 24 hours
- Taxidermists: Many taxidermists can collect CWD samples and submit for free testing throughout deer season. Please check www.agfc.com/cwd for the complete list and call ahead to verify availability.

See **TESTING** Page 9

Chronic Wasting Disease regulations

Statewide Regulations:

- It is unlawful to use scents or lures that contain natural deer and elk urine or other biofluids.
- It is unlawful to rehabilitate deer or elk.

CWD Management Zone Regula-

tions apply to Bradley, Ashley and Union Counties in South Arkansas

Ashley, Baxter, Benton, Boone, Bradley, Carroll, Crawford, Franklin, Independence, Jackson, Johnson, Logan, Madison, Marion, Newton,

See **REGULATIONS** Page 9

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Saturday 9a-12p/Sunday Closed



BIRDS

Continued from Page

Possession Limit – 24
COMMON AND PURPLE GAL-
LINULE

Sept.1-Nov. 9, 2022
Daily Limit – 15
Possession Limit – 45
WOODCOCK
Nov. 5-Dec. 19, 2022
Daily Limit – 3
Possession Limit – 9

If you shoot a banded migratory bird, please visit www.reportband.gov.

Daily Bag Limit – The total limit of a specific migratory game bird species that may be taken in one day.
Possession Limit – The total limit of a specific migratory game bird species that may be in your possession at any time, whether on your person or stored in another location.

Advance-Monticellonian will publish your game pictures

This is a reminder to readers that the Advance-Monticellonian will be more than happy to publish any and all game pictures received during hunting and/or fishing seasons—at no charge.

Contributors are simply asked to follow these simple steps:

- If possible, the photo should be emailed to editor@monticellonews.net. Make sure the email program does not downsize the file to make it send quicker. The original file size of the photo must be received; otherwise, the photo will be unfit for printing.
- The information needed to publish a photograph are the hunter/fisherman’s name, age, hometown and school attended (if hunter/fisherman is a youth); where hunt took place or where fish was caught; who was with the hunter/fisherman; and parents’ names (if picture is of a youth).
- The type of weapon or tackle that was used by the hunter or fisherman is needed.

Send all submissions to editor@monticellonews.net or bring the pictures by the Advance-Monticellonian office, 314 North Main Street. Should the pictures be dropped off, please include a sheet with all the information needed—in legible form, please. The picture will be scanned and returned.

If contributors wish, they may follow up email submissions with a call to the Advance at 870-367-5325. Photographs without all the above information can not be published.

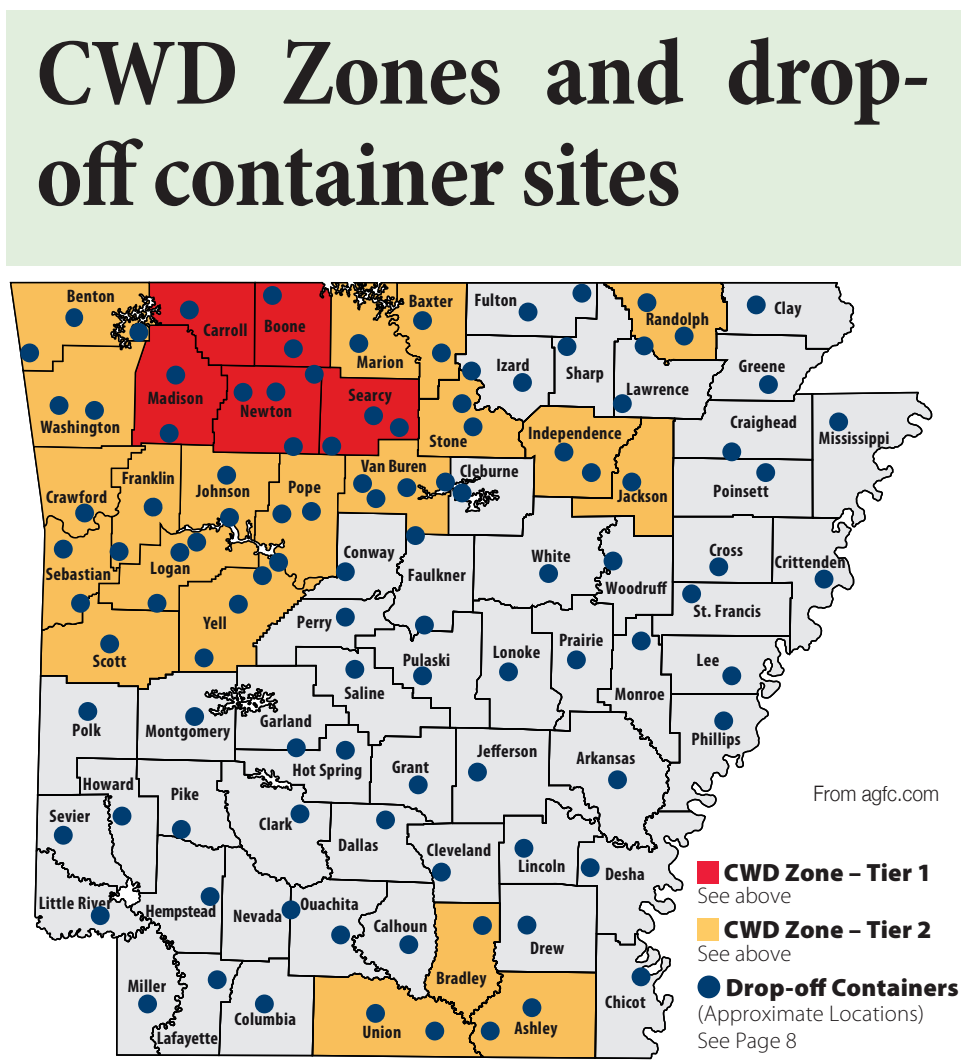
Transfer of wildlife to someone else

Possess wildlife taken by someone else unless accompanied by a signed statement from the taker stating name, address, species, date taken and license number. This requirement also applies to deer camps, commercial storage/processing facilities and taxidermists. See example of Transfer Tag below.

Transferring fish or wildlife to another person?

Stay legal. Make sure you provide this information with the transfer.

I, _____, _____
give possession to _____
the following wildlife (quantity and type) _____,
taken on _____ Date Today's Date
Signature of Giver
Address of Giver
Check Number (required for big game) _____
* A hunter education card number or date of birth may be substituted for hunters under 16.



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Carcass Identification Tag

If the head is removed from harvested big game, harvest information must remain with all other portions until point of final storage, including while in transit. Use this tag to label all portions of harvested big game.

Name _____

Address _____

Species _____ Sex _____

Date _____ Check # _____

Permission to Hunt Card

I have given _____
sportman's name

permission to _____ on my land
hunt, fish, trap, release dogs or pursue wildlife with dogs

(_____) for this period of time.
location

_____ state beginning and ending days, months and years

Signed, _____
landowner or lessee signature

_____ landowner or lessee name, printed

Phone _____ Today's date _____

REGULATIONS

Continued from Page 7

Pope, Randolph, Scott, Searcy, Sebastian, Stone, Union, Van Buren,

Washington and Yell counties:

- Any buck may be legally harvested; Three-Point Rule has been removed.
- Bag limit has been liberalized. Reference Deer Zone bag limits in the Hunting Guidebook or AGFC.com. Refer to pages 78-126 for WMA- and NWR-specific regulations.

It is unlawful to feed wildlife within the CWD Management Zone, except:

- Bait may be used to hunt deer and elk on private land from Sept. 1-Dec. 31 during an open season.
- Food plots may be used year-round.
- Baiting bears, see the AGFC Hunting Guidebook or AGFC.com.

- Hunting or trapping furbearers with the use of bait during open furbearer trapping seasons on private land
- Incidental feeding of wildlife from livestock operations.
- Normal agricultural, gardening or soil stabilization practices are allowed.
- Attracting or feeding birds and squirrels with birdfeeders, bird baths and grain completely submerged in water.

Baiting for management, research or nuisance wildlife control with approval by the AGFC Chief of Wildlife Management.

Landowners within the CWD Management Zone may contact their local private lands biologist to apply for deer tags to harvest additional deer. Visit www.agfc.com/cwd for more information.

TESTING

Continued from Page 7

- AGFC Regional Offices: Many AGFC offices can collect CWD samples for free. Hunters should call ahead to ensure a wildlife biologist is available to collect a sample. Contact the AGFC of-

fice or visit www.agfc.com/cwd.

- Veterinarians: Many veterinarians are offering CWD sampling at a cost. Please visit www.agfc.com/cwd for a list of participating veterinarians or contact your local veterinarian to determine if they are participating.

Please refer to www.agfc.com/cwd for any CWD updates.

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Know before you hunt on WMAs

Hunters should review specific Wildlife Management Area regulations for the area they plan to hunt. Hunters should also check WMA road closures before heading out to hunt, fish or camp on specific WMAs by calling 1-800-440-1477.

On property owned, leased or cooperatively managed by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, you may not:

- Damage ACFG buildings, structures, signs or property
- Remove rocks, fruits, nuts, acorns, artifacts, plants or any other objects (except shed deer antlers)
- Burn any non-combustible materials in campsites (glass, nails, etc.)
- Burn wood, brush or grass outside of designated campsites
- Leave a fire unattended or allow one to escape from control
- Discharge or possess fireworks
- Build, attach or occupy a permanent hunting stand, building, shelter or moored houseboat
- Operate a boat in a negligent or reckless manner. This may result in a one-year ban on all WMAs (See page 76 of 2021-22 AGFC Arkansas Hunting Guidebook)
- Use cutting devices other than hunting knives, pocket knives and pocket saws
- Cut trees or use chemical defoliants
- Leave personal property on a WMA, except trail cameras and legal portable stands and blinds (See page 73 of 2021-22 AGFC Arkansas Hunting Guidebook)
- Bait wildlife, except in legally set traps for furbearers
- Post signs or disobey signs

Rules of safety for all hunters, experienced or not

1. Treat every firearm with the same respect due a loaded firearm.
2. Control the direction of your firearm's muzzle.
3. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.
4. Be sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions.
5. Unload firearms when not in use.
6. Never point a firearm at anything you do not want to shoot.
7. Never climb a fence or tree, or jump a log or ditch, with a loaded firearm.
8. Never shoot a bullet at a flat, hard surface or water.
9. Store firearms and ammunition separately.
10. Avoid alcoholic beverages or other mood-altering drugs before or while shooting.

Simple safety protocols that can protect hunters

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Hunting is big business in North America. In 2017, more than 15 million people hunted in the United States. The National Shooting Sports Foundation reports that sportsmen and women contribute nearly \$9.4 million to the economy every day.

Millions of hunters take to forests and fields every year. Seasoned hunters and novices alike can benefit from revisiting some safety procedures before their first outing this season.

Weather

Weather should be a consideration whenever people spend a significant amount of time outdoors. Hunters typically leave before dawn and arrive home after dusk. Hypothermia is a very real risk for hunters who may be out in snow or wet conditions. It's possible to get hypothermia by overdressing as well. Sweating and then being exposed to dropping temperatures puts people at risk for hypothermia. Hunters should dress in layers with moisture-wicking


materials and a water-repellant outer layer. In addition, check the weather forecast before heading out as a last second precautionary measure.

Firearm safety

Firearm safety is a critical component of safe hunting. Hunters use rifles, shotguns and other firearms. Each gun is different, so hunters need to familiarize themselves with new firearms before using them. The following are some additional firearm safety tips, courtesy of State Farm Insurance and Southern Land Exchange.

- Always treat a firearm as if it is loaded.
- Keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
- Only point at what you plan to shoot.
- Clearly identify your target and what is beyond it.
- Fire within the zone-of-fire, which is the 45-degree area directly in front of each hunter.
- Firearm chambers should be emp-

See **SAFETY** Page 11



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Must-have hunting gear

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Hunting is popular throughout North America. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said that 40 percent of the population of the United States ages 16 and older participated in wildlife-related activities in 2016, the most recent year for data. Hunting also is popular in Canada, where it's difficult to paint a picture of that popularity because hunting is regulated at the provincial level. However, Wild Alberta reports that, in 2020, there were 151,724 resident hunters in Alberta alone.

As is the case with many hobbies and pastimes, hunting requires some unique gear. Hunters need to bring some essential gear along on each trip to ensure their safety, while other gear and gadgets are all about convenience.

- **Proper clothing:** Hunting clothing comes in two main varieties: camouflage and blaze orange. Camo patterns mimic real-life foliage or use a digital pattern of natural colors to trick the animals' eyes, preventing them from detecting the hunters' outlines. Blaze orange hunting gear, from coats to hats to coveralls, is designed to make hunters visible to other hunters. Some game, like whitetail deer, cannot detect the orange color spectrum, so hunters need not worry that they will be compromising their hunting efforts. Depending on the hunting area and its specific regulations, camo or orange clothing will be required. Hunting clothing also should be comfortable for the weather and the conditions. Waterproof or water-resistant clothing can protect hunters from the elements as well. In cold climates, layer up and wear insulated materials.

- **Weapon and ammo:** Hunters should always look for ammunition details for the animals they will be hunting so they choose the correct weapon and ammunition type. Weapons should be maintained and cleaned for safety, and all hunters should consider taking a course in the proper handling of weapons.

- **Knife:** Knives are a staple for every hunting trip and can be used for multiple purposes. Most hunters prefer a dedicated knife for field dressing the animal, which includes gutting, boning, skinning, and butchering. Some knives fold and others are fixed blades.

- **Legal documents:** Hunters should always carry their hunting licenses and have game tags on hand to mark their kills appropriately. Depending on where one lives and hunts, licenses may need to be visible on the person.

- **Calls and scents:** It may be possible to lure game closer with special calls or scents. In addition, hunters may want to utilize scent killers, which are sprays and washes that remove human scents from clothing and gear so game are unaware that hunters are present.

- **Binoculars:** While one may be able to use the scope on a weapon to spot game, binoculars are more efficient.

- **First aid kit and other safety gear:** Hunters should stock a first aid kit, emergency phone, water and snacks to stay hydrated and fed, and a foldable paper map in the event cell phone signals fade or prove unreliable.

Hunting requires patience, dedication and essential gear. With the right supplies, a hunting venture is that much more enjoyable.



SAFETY

Continued from Page 10

tied when guns are not in use.

- Use appropriate ammunition.
- Never modify or alter the gun.
- Never cross a fence, jump a ditch or climb a tree with a loaded gun.
- Never rely on a gun's safety.

Additional safety tips

Hunters should always let others know where they will be when leaving in the morning. If something should happen, people back home can alert authorities if something goes awry.

Always check equipment and maintain it properly. Equipment should include gear colored in hunter's orange. That extends to dogs if they are accompanying hunters on a trip. This makes hunters more visible to other hunters. Also, carry a first aid kit, a charged mobile phone or a satellite phone to maintain contact with others in case of emergencies.

These are just some of the safety protocols that should be followed when hunting. Non-hunters should exercise caution during hunting seasons, particularly when entering forests and areas that hunters frequent.



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How to field dress wild game properly and safely

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Fishing and hunting are popular outdoor activities. Many outdoor enthusiasts engage in angling or hunting so they can have trophies to put up on their walls. Others rely on hunting and fishing for supplemental food sources. Game animals will have to be cleaned and processed properly whether they're headed to the dinner table or to the taxidermist.

Pathogen contamination is one of the biggest risks when field dressing an animal. As with any animal, game can contain harmful bacteria, such as salmonella and strains of E. coli. Other animals, such as wild hogs, can infect people with a flu-like illness called brucellosis, which can be caught through contact with blood, fluid or tissue of an infected hog. Deer, elk and moose also may have chronic wasting disease, or CWD. Although there is no evidence that links CWD to human illness, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises caution.

Proper field dressing techniques

and game transport can help reduce the risk of pathogenic contamination. Here are some tips for getting started, courtesy of Penn State and the CDC.

- Wear safety gear. When handling any game animals, protect yourself with rubber gloves. This will prevent the blood and fluids from the game animal from getting on your skin. Eye protection is also advised when handling carcasses.

- Work quickly. The elapsed time from when the animal is downed until it is processed can affect the safety and the quality of the meat if it will be consumed, according to Martin Bucknavage, food safety extension associate in the Penn State Department of Food Science. Field dress as soon as possible to ensure rapid loss of the animal's body heat, to prevent surface bacteria from growing and to preserve the quality of the meat. Eviscerate the animal to help the carcass dissipate heat and remove the internal organs, where spoilage tends to occur more

See **FIELD DRESS** Page 13

Important Contact Numbers/Websites

Stop Poaching Hotline

Toll-free: 800-482-9262 #TIP (#847) for AT&T users (charges apply)
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Text a Tip (TIP411)

Text AGFC and your tip to TIP411 (847411)
Texts are completely anonymous

Game Checking

Toll-free: 877-731-5627 24 hours a day,
7 days a week www.agfc.com, or use the AGFC mobile app

Wildlife Hotline

Toll - free: 800-440-1477

Boating Education Classes

Toll - free: 877-493-6424 (office hours only)

Triple Trophy Program

501-223-6351 (office hours only)

Get Your License, Duck Stamps and HIP

Toll - free: 800-364-4263 (office hours only), or www.agfc.com

Hunter Education Classes

Toll - free: 800-482-5795, or register-ed.com

Replace a Lost Hunter Education Card

Toll - free: 800-830-2268, or ilostmycard.com

Waterfowl Report

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FIELD DRESS

Continued from Page 12
quickly.

- Watch out for internal organs. Avoid cutting into internal organs, especially the intestines, where the largest amount of bad bacteria tend to reside.
 - Chill the carcass. Deterioration will occur more quickly in temperatures greater than 40 F. Therefore, insert plastic bags of ice or snow into the body cavity of the animal to keep the carcass chilled. Move the carcass into a cooler or refrigerator as soon as possible after field dress.
 - Choose tools wisely. Use clean, sharp knives when field dressing and butchering to make it easier to cut through and process the carcass. Use clean water, premoistened wipes or alcohol wipes to clean the knife frequently between cuts to prevent bacterial contamination.
 - Hang game by hind legs. Hang the animal by its hind legs with its head down when aging or butchering. This prevents brain and spinal fluids from contacting the meat.
- Most importantly during field dress, if any of the internal organs smell or look offensive, or if there is oddly colored discharge, do not consume the meat. Hunters and anglers are advised

to learn more about field dress techniques to hone their skills. Speak with local fish and game officials about nearby courses.



Did you know?

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Hunting enthusiasts anxiously look forward to the first day of hunting season, a date chosen after local gaming authorities carefully consider a host of factors. Conservation of both game and the hobby hunters love so much are two of the driving forces that determine when hunting seasons begin. Local gaming authorities want to protect wildlife from overhunting, and they also want to ensure hunters won't have to confront dwindling animal populations that will affect their hunting. Estimates of local animal populations are one of the main factors gaming authorities consider when trying to figure out the best time to start a hunting season. If local authorities deem that the animal population is too large, thereby adversely affecting local residents, they will time hunting season in such a way as to give hunters an advantage. This can help control local wildlife populations and make communities safer. On the opposite end of the spectrum, if population estimates are especially low, authorities will time hunting season so fewer animals are likely to be killed. These efforts at managing local animal populations can benefit hunters, animals and even local residents who don't participate when hunting season begins.

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FILE STORY

Of all the things you might do to prepare for deer season, properly sighting-in your rifle is among the most important. It is setting the scope or sights so the bullet hits where it should, and making sure it hasn't been knocked out of alignment since last season.

Shooting a few shots off the hood of a truck isn't an adequate test for a gun used for hunting. An ethical hunter will demand more of himself and his rifle.

Unload the gun and tighten all screws, scope mounts and rings and make sure the barrel is clear. Using a steady rest, such as a shooting bench, shoot at a dime-sized dot on a target at 25 yards. Adjust the scope until it hits the dot. It takes four times as much adjustment to move the bullet at this range as it does at 100 yards. If one "click" equals an inch at 100 yards, it equals only one-quarter inch at 25 yards. Knowing this can save ammunition. Shoot a shot or two, then calculate the proper adjustment and adjust the scope.

Move out to 100 yards and shoot at a standard sighting-in target. Shoot three steady shots and adjust for windage (left or right). The bullet should be one to two inches high at 100 yards. Holding in the middle of a deer's chest, that small amount won't cause a miss.

You can now shoot to around 250 yards with the same point of aim. At

300 yards, you may need to hold on the deer's backbone to hit the center of the animal. Practice at targets at 100, 200, 250 and 300 yards to learn your rifle's trajectory. If it's a flat-shooting caliber, check it at 350 and even 400 yards.

Three shots at each distance will cost you a box of shells, but it will give you invaluable practice and confidence, make you accurate out to 300 yards or more, and improve your overall accuracy and success.

Sight-in with one shot

You're ready for deer season, bedding down for the night, when your gun gets knocked over or dropped. The scope isn't broken, but you have a sickening feeling that the scope may be off. What can you do?

Set up a target 25 yards away and illuminate it with headlights from a vehicle. Be sure you have a safe backstop! Draw a dime-sized bull's-eye and shoot one carefully-aimed shot. If it hits the center of the bull's-eye at 25 yards, you're ready.

If it doesn't, put the rifle in a shooting vise and lock it down. Aim it exactly at the bull's-eye and pad it with sandbags so it won't move. While holding the rifle steady, have a buddy adjust the scope so that the crosshairs move from the bull's-eye to the single bullet hole you just shot.

Crosshairs actually move opposite from the direction marked on the adjustment screws (down is up, left is right), but that's correct. This moves the aiming point from where it was pointed to where it is actually hitting. This only works if the gun does not



Special to the Advance

TAKE THE TIME TO PREPARE Properly sighting-in your rifle before you find that big buck can save you a lot of headaches.

move while adjusting the scope.

Finally, double-check by shooting one more carefully-aimed shot at the bull's-eye at 25 yards. It should now be shooting exactly where it is "looking" and should hit the bull's-eye. If so, you're ready to go hunting and can confidently take shots out to 100 yards or so. Check the gun on the range as soon as possible before taking longer shots.

Patterning your shotgun

No two shotguns shoot the same ammo alike. Patterning your gun is simply finding the type of ammunition, brand, shot size and choke combination that produces the best

results in your gun.

Before buying lots of ammo, get several brands and shot sizes. Try them in your shotgun with various chokes, shooting one shot per target at 40 yards. The target should be a 30-inch circle with a distinct bullseye in the center.

Hold the gun steady and squeeze off each shot, then write the information on the target and put up a new one. Change the ammo or choke and shoot again. Repeat as needed to obtain one target for every combination of ammo brand, shot size and choke.

Finally, compare targets. Count the

See **FIREARMS** Page 15

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The basics of hunting seasons

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Hunting has been around a long time. According to Britannica, hunting as many know it today began in ancient Greece. Various game were hunted to provide food, fuel and materials to make clothing and blankets. In the Middle Ages, hunting was the privilege of nobility and linked to land ownership. Hunting is now strictly regulated in many countries and is typically used as a way to control wildlife populations that would otherwise overrun certain areas.

Hunting limits and clearly defined hunting seasons are often spelled out in detail in local hunting laws. Wildlife commissions across states, provinces and territories set up strict time periods that govern which game can be hunted. Legislation also dictates size limits and the amount of game that can be killed. The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission breaks down hunting seasons into big game, waterfowl, small game, and webless migratory game birds. Seasons vary depending on where hunters live.

The hunting education resource Hunter-Ed says hunting seasons are determined by the type of animal, the environment and animal characteristics like mating season. Wildlife biologists in various



regions study animal populations and make recommendations on hunting seasons. “Open season” is when a species may be legally hunted, and tends to coincide with when the population of that species is at its highest, without interfering with breeding times.

Many hunters eagerly await “opening day” so they can start their hunting right away. The season is “closed” when hunters are no longer allowed to go after that game. Food shortages, extreme tempera-

tures and low population numbers may affect season duration. Archery seasons tend to begin before firearm seasons in many states. Hunting outside of seasons is known as poaching and is punishable by law.

Turkey is typically hunted in the spring or fall. Migratory waterfowl hunting tends to open in late September and early October. The seasons to hunt deer, and their close cousins like caribou, moose and reindeer, open in late September and early October, continuing into November for firearms hunting. However, according to the hunting guide CleverHunters.com, deer seasons open up in the summer in Florida, South Carolina and Idaho.

Hunters will be required to obtain a hunting license. At the time of licensure, hunters also may be given tags for their game animals. A tag is a physical permit the hunter carries

with him or her that must be attached to an animal immediately after it is felled. Hunters are reigned in by the number of tags they have, which will coordinate with game limits. The tag will need to be completed with the date and time of harvest and the location.

To learn more about hunting seasons where you live, contact your local fish and wildlife organization or visit www.huntingseasonhq.com for a state-by-state listing of hunting seasons.

FIREARMS

Continued from Page 11

number of pellets inside the circle. Make sure there are no “clumps” of pellets in one section, or “holes” in the pattern in another. Pellets should be evenly spread in the circle.

The best target indicates the preferred ammo for that particular gun. Chances are slim it will change over the years. Pattern the shotgun with lead shot for upland game, buckshot or slugs for deer hunting, or steel shot for waterfowl.

Unless the ammo is discontinued or unavailable, you won’t have to pattern that gun again. The process will help you find the best ammo, and keep it on hand for future use.

Know the range for long shots

A hunter with a bow or crossbow

will miss if he misjudges the range by more than a few yards. A replica black powder gun begins dropping fairly quickly, and knowing the difference between 100 and 125 yards could save a shot. Riflemen need to know the range when it’s beyond the distance called point-blank range, where a center hold will make a clean kill.

So, how can you know the range? The best bet may be a laser range-finder. These are not too expensive these days. Still, it’s something else to buy and carry. If you don’t want the cost or the weight, there are other ways to know distance.

Hunters can easily mark distances by stepping them off along shooting lanes, and marking distances with wooden stakes, or by tying surveyor’s tape on branches. The deer won’t notice either.

Some rifle scopes and binoculars have ranging devices, as do some cameras. The worst plan is to simply guess. Even with lots of practice humans aren’t very accurate. If you’re accustomed to the woods, and take a trip out West, you’ll make huge errors in range estimation.

If most of your shots will be close, you won’t need to worry much about the range. As distance increases, though, it becomes critical. If you plan to shoot at long range, buy a good quality ranging device. It could help you make the shot of a lifetime, on the deer of a lifetime, on a hunt of a lifetime. And that makes it well worth the cost.

Beware mixing ammo

Never carry more than one size of ammo, and always clean out your vest or hunting coat carefully when

changing to another gauge or caliber. Shoot only the correct ammo for your gun. Otherwise, you could blow up your gun and cause severe damage to your vision and hearing, not to mention lost fingers or limbs.

It is possible for a 20-gauge shot-shell to fall way down the barrel of a 12-gauge shotgun and lodge there. If you then load a 12-gauge shell behind it and pull the trigger, it will make a heck of a mess. It is literally a bomb waiting to go off. If you’re hunting ducks with a 12-gauge and are quickly trying to reload while watching the ducks, a 20-gauge shell in your bag can be very dangerous.

That’s why it’s so important to be dead sure you only have one size of ammo with you at any given time. Your life, or your friend’s life, could depend on it.



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