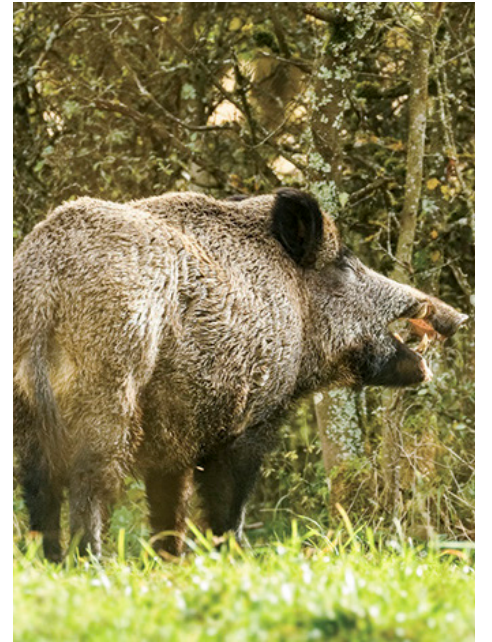
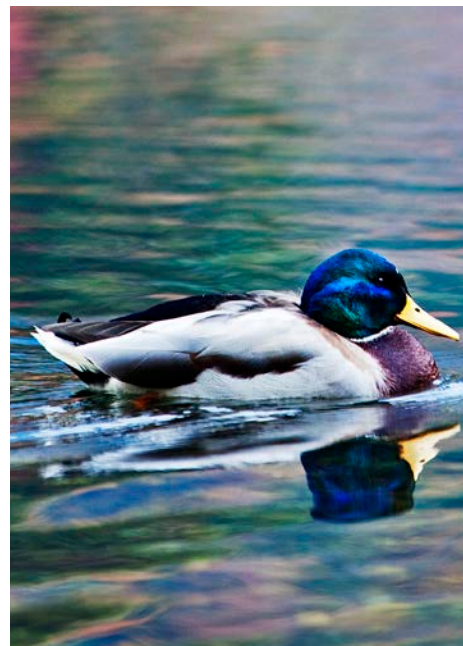


HUNTING GUIDE



Advance-Monticellonian



2023 Complete Guide to Hunting in Southeast Arkansas

2023-24 hunting, trapping season dates for Southeast Arkansas summary

Some wildlife management areas and national wildlife refuges require hunters to draw a permit before hunting.

Permit applications are available at agfc.com or your local regional office June 1-July 1.

DEER

Archery

Statewide, Sept. 23-Feb. 29.

Muzzleloader

Deer zones 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11: Oct. 21-29 and Dec. 9-11.

Deer zones 4A, 5A, 14, 15: Oct. 21-29 and Dec. 16-18.

Deer zones 9, 12, 13, 16, 16A, 17: Oct. 21-29.

Deer zones 4 and 5: closed

Modern gun

Deer zones 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11: Nov. 11-Dec. 3.

Deer zones 4, 5: Nov. 11-19.

Deer zones 4A, 5A, 14, 15:

Nov. 11-Dec. 10.

Deer zones 9, 12, 13: Nov. 11-Dec. 17.

Deer zones 16, 16A, 17: Nov. 11-Dec. 25.

Special Youth Hunt – Nov. 4-5 and Jan. 6-7 (statewide except WMAs closed during modern gun deer season).

Christmas Holiday Hunt – Dec. 26-28 (statewide except WMAs closed during modern gun deer season).

Private Land Antlerless Hunt – Dec. 29-31 (all private land zones).

WMA Deer Hunt Permit Application Period – June 1-30.

ELK

Public Land (permit required) – Zones 1, 2, 3, 4: Oct. 2-6 and Oct. 30-Nov. 3.

Public Land Youth Hunts –

Oct. 7-8 and Oct. 28-29.

Private Land – Boone, Carroll, Madison, Newton and Searcy counties):

Oct. 2-6 and Oct. 30-Nov. 3.

Private Land Youth Hunts – Oct. 7-8 and Oct. 28-29.

Statewide – Elk found outside of Boone, Carroll, Madison, Newton and Searcy counties may be taken during deer season with weapon legal for that season.

Public Land Elk Hunt Permit Application Period – May 1-June 1.

BEAR

Archery

Bear zones 1, 2: Sept. 13-Nov. 30. (Zone 1 closes earlier if quota is reached).

Muzzleloader

Bear zones 1, 2: Oct. 21-29. (Zone 1 closes earlier if quota is

reached).

Modern Gun

Bear zones 1, 2: Nov. 11-30. (Zone 1 closes earlier if quota is reached).

Bear zones: 3, 4: Dec. 9-15. (closes earlier if quota is reached).

Bear Zone 5: Nov. 25-Dec. 3 (closes earlier if quota is reached)

Bear zone: 5A: Nov. 18-Dec. 3. (closes earlier if quota is reached).

Bear zones 6, 7: closed.

Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt – Bear zones 1, 2: Nov. 4-5.

Bear zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6, 7: closed.

TURKEY

Regular Turkey Season – Turkey zone 1– April 15-23.

Turkey zone 2– April 15-May 5.

Youth Hunt – Turkey zones 1, 2: April 6-7.

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WMA Turkey Hunt Permit Application Period – Jan. 15-Feb. 15.

SQUIRREL

Statewide: May 15-Feb. 29

RABBIT

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 29

QUAIL

Statewide: Nov. 1-Feb. 5.

FURBEARERS

Hunting

Beaver and Nutria – sunrise Sept. 1-sunset March 31 (day hunting only).

Bobcat – sunrise Sept. 1-sunset Feb. 29 and April 15-May 5 (day hunting only).

Coyote, Opossum, Raccoon and Striped Skunk – year-round (sunrise to sunset for coyote only).

Gray Fox, Mink, Muskrat and Red Fox – sunrise Sept. 1-sunset Feb. 29 (day hunting

only).

River Otter – sunrise Nov. 11-sunset Feb. 29 (day hunting only).

Trapping

Coyote – sunrise Aug. 1-sunset March 31.

Beaver and Nutria – sunrise Nov. 11-sunset March 31.

Furbearers other than Beaver, Coyote and Nutria – sunrise Nov. 11-sunset Feb. 29.

ALLIGATOR

Zones 1, 2, 3 – Sept. 15-18 and Sept. 22-25 (night hunting only; permit required).

BULLFROG

April 15-Dec. 31.

CROW

Statewide, Sept. 1-Feb. 19 (Thursday-Monday only).

See Page 4 for zone maps.

2023-24 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 is available only at Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Offices and online at www.agfc.com/license.

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

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.

See **BIRDS** Page 5

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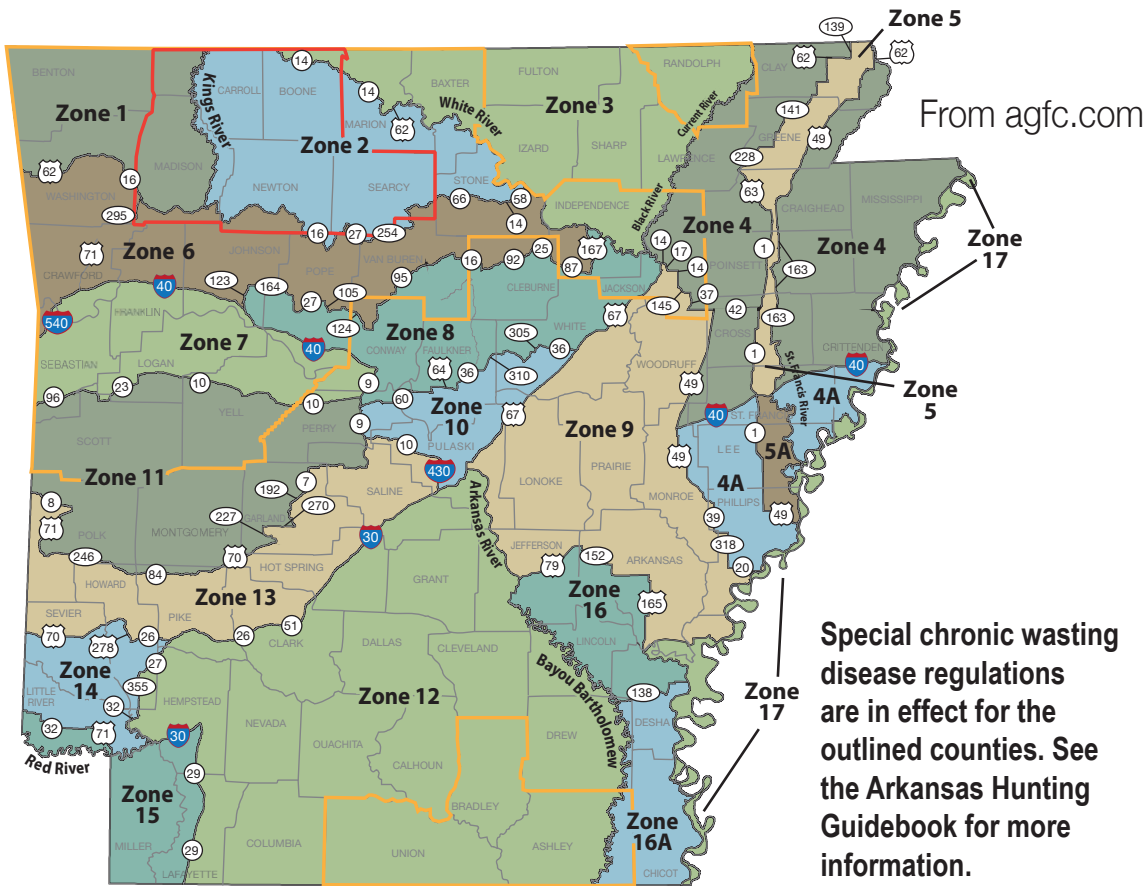
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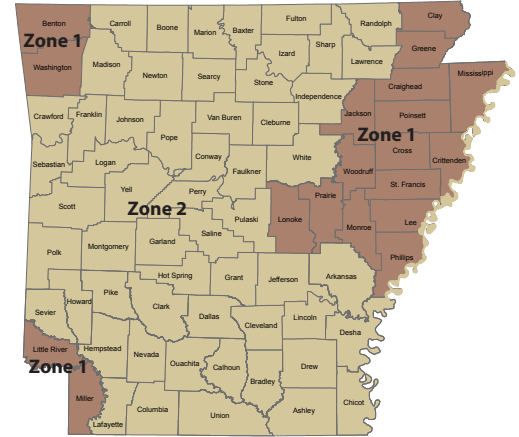
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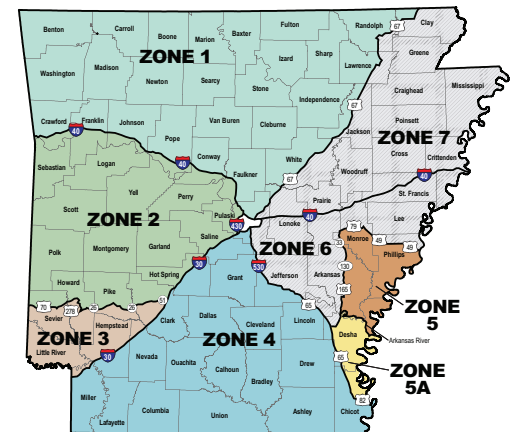
2023-24 Deer Zones



2024 Turkey Zones



2023 Bear Zones



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BIRDS

Continued from Page 3

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

SPECIAL YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT:

Dec. 2, 2023, and Feb. 3, 2024

On these days, youths 15 and younger 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. Shooting hours and bag limits are the same as regular waterfowl season. Hunting is allowed on WMAs from one half-hour before sunrise until sun-

set.

VETERAN AND ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY WATERFOWL HUNT:

Feb. 3, 2024

On this day, veteran and active duty military may hunt ducks, geese, coots and mergansers. Mentors may accompany these hunters to call waterfowl but may not hunt. 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 MERGAN-SER

Nov. 18-26, 2023, Dec. 9-23, 2023 and Dec. 27, 2023-Jan. 31, 2024

SNOW, BLUE AND ROSS'S GOOSE

Oct. 28-Nov. 10, 2023, Nov. 18-26, 2023, Dec. 9-23, 2023 and Dec. 27, 2023-Jan. 31, 2024

Bag Limit – 20

Light Goose Conservation

Order

Feb. 1-2, 2024 and Feb. 4-April 25, 2024

Bag Limit – None

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Oct. 28-Nov. 10, 2023, Nov. 18-26, 2023, Dec. 9-23, 2023 and Dec. 27, 2023-Jan. 31, 2024

Daily Limit – 3

Possession Limit – 9

CANADA GOOSE

Sept. 1-Oct. 15, 2023

Daily Limit - 5

Possession Limit - 15

Nov. 18-26, 2023, Dec. 9-23, 2023 and Dec. 27, 2023-Jan. 31, 2024

Daily Limit – 2

Possession Limit – 6

MOURNING DOVE, WHITE-WINGED AND EURASIAN COL-LARED-DOVES

Sept. 2-Oct. 22, 2023 and Dec.

See BIRDS Page 6

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BIRDS

Continued from Page 5

8, 2023-Jan. 15, 2024

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. 9-Nov. 17, 2023

Daily Limit – 25

Possession Limit – 75 (combined)

SPECIAL EARLY TEAL

Sept. 15-30, 2023

Daily Limit – 6 (blue-winged, green-winged and cinnamon teal combined)

Possession Limit – 18

WILSON'S SNIPE

Nov. 1, 2023-Feb. 15, 2024

Daily Limit – 8

Possession Limit – 24

COMMON AND PURPLE GALLINULE

Sept. 1-Nov. 9, 2023

Daily Limit – 15 (combined)

Possession Limit – 45

WOODCOCK

Nov. 4-Dec. 18, 2023

Daily Limit – 3

Possession Limit – 9

Turkey tips

1. Better to be early than late. It is preferable to be sitting in the dark waiting for the grey in the eastern sky and set up in position at least 30 minutes before the first call of the hens or first gobbler. It gives the woods some time to settle down after walking into the roosting area.

It also gives you time to go to plan B if something goes wrong prior to your setup. Another advantage to being early is usually that puts you ahead of other hunters. Being early will never work against you.

2. Carry more calls than you need.

It is good to have several diaphragms, slates, and box calls. Sometimes the birds will especially like one call or another. The worst feeling in the world is not having the right call.

Don't be afraid to take a gobbler call either (be very careful using the gobbler call on public land).

3. Locator calls don't have to be perfect. Locator calls such as coyote howler, owl hooter or peacock don't have to sound exactly like the natural thing to be effective in getting birds to gobble in the roost.

Quite the contrary, the external reed coyote howler by Primos which does not sound near as natural or authentic as a diaphragm coyote yelp, seems to get more of a response by roosted gobblers.

Remember, you are looking for a shocking response so sometimes the worst shrieking noise you can make will be the best for getting a gobbler to answer.

4. Don't blow a coyote howler at roosted birds. In the morning when you're too close, the roosted male turkey might answer but they will be very leery to come into your hen yelps because they think a coyote is close and they don't want to get eaten.

An owl hooter is a much better choice when you are close to the roosted bird, within 200 yards of a rooster gobbler.

5. Pinpoint where they roost. When roosting a gobbler in the evening, make

sure you try to pinpoint the exact tree that the gobbler is roosted in. Try to get them to shock gobble and then sneak in as close as possible.

Then plan your setup for the morning. Things to be looking for while pinpointing the exact tree are:

- easiest way into the setup since it will be pitch dark.
- exactly which tree you want to be leaning against and set up under.
- which way the bird will fly down.
- which way the bird won't go, etc.

Mark the spot where you will setup on GPS and allow the breadcrumb feature to bring you right into the setup spot the following morning. Be careful not to let the roosted gobbler see your light on the GPS.

6. Tactics once they're on the ground. In the morning or afternoon, when the birds are already on the ground, and you are just prospecting for gobblers by walking ridges, if you get a gobbler to respond move as close to his position without being detected as you can.

Once in close to the gobbler (within 100 yards) set up and try to call again. This works way better than calling from the original position. Now, if you are moving towards his direction and he gobbles loudly and in your direction like he is coming immediately get setup.

7. Play hard to get! Make the gobbler want to come to you. If you get a bird gobbling sometimes just shutting up is the deadliest tactic. It's good to fire them up and then shut up.

Let them gobble twice before calling again. Usually, they will come hard if you use this tactic. You may risk a bird walking off because you shut up but if they are halfway interested, they will be headed your way.

8. Be patient. In the evenings be in the roost area and be patient. Sit and call about every fifteen minutes. The last 30 minutes before fly-up is primetime. Let's say it is 30 minutes before fly-up and you make a series of yelps and a gobbler answers off in the distance.

Hit him right back with a series of excited cuts and then just shut up. More

than likely he will come to inspect. If they come in but not in shooting range just sit still and watch them fly up into their roost trees. Then you can attack in the morning.

One thing to keep in mind while hunting Merriam's turkeys is that they typically like to roost on a ridgeline or at least where there is a contour break. The birds like to walk uphill from their roost tree and then coast horizontally into the branch.

This tactic helps them conserve energy by less flying. Sometimes you can roost turkeys without hearing them gobble by just listening for the ruckus of their wings flapping when they fly up.

9. Go for round two. When the evening hunt does not produce a roosted gobbler for the next morning. There are several options for the following early morning hunt.

Go into an area where you have heard gobblers before and sit tight. Listen at prime time for gobblers in the area. If you can move while it is still dark, then pursue them. If not, wait until they hit the ground and sneak in close to them.

10. Use the roads to your advantage. Another option is to cover as much country as possible in hopes of hearing a roosted bird. This can be done either on foot or in a vehicle.

Wake up extra early and drive to an area where you have seen or heard turkeys. Stop every half a mile and blow your peacock or coyote howler.

11. Get as close as you can. Always try and get as close to a gobbler before calling to him. If you spot a gobbler with your binoculars try and move in very close to him without being detected.

Try to get within at least 100 yards or closer if the terrain and vegetation will allow prior to making your first call. Your success goes up tenfold if you practice this method.

12. Calling cadence outweighs tone and sound. The cadence of your calling is more important than the tone and sound of your call. This opinion is debatable but your success will go up if you can mimic the cadence of an actual hen

See **TURKEY TIPS** Page 7

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Ten habits of highly successful hunters

1. Pay Attention to Details. A less-than-successful deer hunter doesn't sweat those details. A hunter may know he or she saw three bucks last night from a hunting stand good for a west wind. But they don't note the wind direction was actually WSW when they saw the deer, and they didn't notice that every one of the bucks entered the food source on a different trail, but from the same direction, because they were quartering downwind to more efficiently check for scent. When that hunter returns the next time to hunt when there's a west wind, they won't realize the reason they didn't see any bucks is because the wind was due west and discouraged the bucks from approaching in the same manner. Are those extremely subtle details? Yep. But they matter.

2. Watch for Patterns. Highly successful deer hunters do not see a big buck and consider themselves lucky to have had the experience. Instead, they see a big buck and try to decipher every moment of that encounter to identify a repeatable pattern they can act on when that deer repeats it.

3. Be Prepared. Follow some highly successful deer hunters that have social

media chops and you'll quickly realize that they spend an inordinate amount of time preparing. They scout; they work the land they hunt; they practice shooting; they plan.

Moving in on a trophy or once-in-a-life-time buck is not unlike a top athlete following a daily training program. Practice and preparation will help you control as many variables in the field that you can control.

4. Don't Hesitate. The most successful hunters close more deals than they leave open. Why? They don't hesitate. Successful hunters are very good at making the right decision and making it in a hurry. They are very good at taking the first good shot presented to them and making it count.

5. Know Your Gear. Highly successful deer hunters do not believe in luck. They work very hard to prevent mishaps, and that begins and ends with proficiency and familiarity. They don't miss shots because their gun or bow is off. They don't miss opportunities because they were five minutes late getting on stand because they couldn't find their bow release. Highly effective deer hunters know the ins and outs

of every piece of gear they own and they are proficient with everything they use.

6. Manage Time. If you're more efficient when scouting, you'll scout more ground. If you spend less time hunting unproductive areas and more time hunting the best areas, you'll be more successful. The best deer hunters I know don't waste time—ever. They perform tasks with a purpose and they do so as efficiently as possible.

7. Focus on learning. Details. Proficiency. Familiarity. Time management. Patterns. Each a habit, a trait of learned behavior, a process honed through trial, error, and learned behavior.

Each hunter has their own theories, preferences, positions, and approach. But they also have some commonalities, not the least of which is this: All were focused on learning as much as they can about the deer they hunted.

8. Make Shots Count. Lots of guys can stand 50 yards from a target and drill arrows into a 5-inch circle. But how many of them can do that in the woods when adrenaline is racing and the target is capable of reacting to the shot? I'd wager not very many of them. The best deer hunters

I know don't have to do that because they take high-percentage shots and set themselves up specifically for those shots.

9. Shoot Deer in the Ribs. Shoot the deer in the ribs, not "just behind the shoulder" and not "three ribs back when quartering away." Most highly successful hunters aren't trying for heart shots with their bow, and they aren't tucking it tight behind the shoulder either. Instead, they are looking for a double lung shot on every deer they harvest, and this is done by aiming for the ribs. They are still picking a focus spot, but they are not over complicating things.

10. Hunt More. The most successful hunters seem like they were born with some special gift that allows them to understand deer and the environment. In actuality, they have spent a whole lot of time watching, hunting, and studying deer. They also spend hours learning a deer's habits. These hunters spend far more time in the woods than the average hunter. The fact that they seem to have more success than the average hunter isn't just a coincidence. They have made themselves more likely to be successful by putting in the time needed to do so.

TURKEY TIPS

Continued from Page 7
turkey.

The key is to listen to the hens and focus on the cadence or timing/rhythm of their call.

13. Decoy positioning. Position your turkey decoys at a 45-degree angle from the hunter on the opposite side of where you think the gobbler will come in from. Decoys can be a huge asset if you use them correctly.

On the flip side, they can hurt you if they are positioned on the wrong side of where

you want the birds to end up. An example of the correct way to set them up would be: If the gobbler answers your calls to your left it would be best to set the decoys out to your right about 25 yards.

In this case, the bird will come to your call but when he gets close, he will see the decoys and walk right by you (or the hunter) on the way to the decoys to your right.

Remember when the gobbler gets close to remain silent and very still because he will be really looking for the turkey he heard. He should then spot the decoys. You will then be able to have a clear shot as they focus on the decoys.

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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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