



## Hunting Regulations

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Patuxent Research Refuge  
North, Central, and South Tracts



2017-2018 Season



# Have a Safe and Enjoyable Hunting Season!

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# Patuxent Research Refuge Hunting Regulations 2017-2018 Season

Revised 6-28-2017

**NOTE: All State of Maryland and federal hunting regulations are in effect unless otherwise noted here or posted at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hunting Control Station.**

## **Hunting at Patuxent Research Refuge is a privilege!**

### **REMEMBER - HUNTERS ARE REQUIRED TO:**

- Read and understand these regulations prior to hunting.
- Provide the Refuge Hunt Permit in order to hunt or scout on the refuge.
- Stay within their designated area and know the hunting seasons.
- Report dead deer and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) to Hunting Control Station immediately.
- Possess a Refuge Hunt Permit in order to apply for the deer and turkey lotteries. Deer lottery applications will be accepted up to two weeks prior to the hunt. Turkey lottery applications will be accepted starting September 1 through January 31.
- Remove all equipment and trash when leaving designated hunt zone for any reason.

### **HUNTING REGULATION CHANGES THIS YEAR:**

- All upland game hunting is allowed during Youth Deer Firearms Hunts and deer muzzleloader and firearms hunting seasons.
- Bow season will open on September 8, 2017 same as the state.
- Scouting is allowed Monday through Saturday, from September 1 through September 7 from sunrise to sunset.
- The minimum height requirement of 10 feet off the ground for portable tree stands at Schafer Farm, Central Tract and South Tract has been removed.
- Efforts are underway to align with state hunting guidelines where practical.

### **GOALS OF THE HUNTING PROGRAM**

- A. To assist in the management of white-tailed deer and resident Canada goose populations on Patuxent Research Refuge.
- B. To provide wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities.

## I. GENERAL HUNTING INFORMATION

1. **Adverse Weather or Emergency Closures:** Call 301-725-0416, the weather closure line, for information regarding refuge closures. If Patuxent Research Refuge is closed for the day, no hunting will be permitted. If the South Tract, Central Tract, and Schafer Farm are closed but North Tract remains open, hunting will remain open on North Tract; however, hunting will not be permitted on South Tract, Central Tract, and Schafer Farm. If North Tract is closed, then all hunting will be closed. The Refuge Manager or designee can close any section of the refuge at any time.
2. **Hunting Permits:** Hunting permits (PRR Hunt Cards) are purchased through the Meade Natural Heritage Association (MNHA) in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Patuxent Research Refuge through a cooperative agreement. Permits will be sold at the USFWS Hunting Control Station (HCS) at Bald Eagle Drive, located on the refuge’s North Tract starting in August on Saturdays from 10 – 2 PM and on Wednesdays from 6 PM to sunset. Permits will be sold daily, September 1 through January 31, except for Sundays and federal holidays. For specific hunting information call 301-317-3819 or visit the MNHA website at <http://www.mnha.net/> or the Patuxent Research Refuge website at <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/patuxent/>. In order to purchase a Patuxent Research Refuge hunting permit and hunt specific species, you must present the following documents:
  1. Current Maryland Hunting License
  2. Hunter Safety Card (U.S., Germany, Great Britain, or Canada)
  3. Hunting stamps as required by the State of Maryland
  4. Copy of the Maryland DNR-issued “Universal Disability Pass” must be presented to the HCS manager at time of permit purchase in order to hunt from a vehicle.
  5. Turkey hunters must present a Federal or Maryland State documentation of disabled eligibility when purchasing a permit if hunting in the disabled turkey lottery hunt.
3. **Fees:** A schedule of the fees for hunting permits will be posted at the HCS and included in announcements on the Hunter Information Line (301-317-3825). Senior and Youth Hunters may hunt at a reduced fee. Golden Age and Golden Eagle Passports or other entrance fee programs are not applicable towards hunting permit fees.
- D. **Hunting Opening Hours:** Hunters may check in at the HCS Monday through Saturday (closed on Sundays and all federal holidays) beginning at 5 AM during the hunting season (September 1 – January 31); Hunter access to the refuge before 5 AM is prohibited except:
  1. Hunters may check in at 4:30 AM on the FIRST day of Resident Canada goose and the FIRST day of Firearms seasons.
  2. Hunters may arrive at the HCS at 4:30 AM for the remainder of the Resident Canada Goose season (September 1-25) however; check in starts at 5AM.
  3. Hunters must check in from 4:30 – 5:00 AM for the Spring Wild Turkey lottery hunts and can go afield starting at 5 AM.
5. **Hunting Closing Hours:** Closing time varies according to sunset. The latest time a hunter may leave the HCS to begin hunting at North Tract is 1 hour before sunset. The latest time a hunter may leave HCS for Schafer Farm and South Tract will be 1½ hours before sunset to allow for travel time. The HCS will remain open 2 hours after sunset. All hunters must

check out by that time.

6. **Holidays:** Hunting ends at 12:00 PM on Thanksgiving Eve (Nov. 22), Christmas Eve (Dec. 24), and New Year's Eve (Dec. 31) and the HCS will close at 1:00 P.M. No hunting will take place on the following holidays: Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, and Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day or any other day the Federal Government closes.
7. **Scouting:** Scouting is allowed Monday through Saturday, from September 1 through September 7 from sunrise to sunset. Scouting in South Tract and Schafer Farm is allowed only when the area is open to hunting. Hunters participating in scouting activities must be unarmed, unless otherwise authorized by the State of Maryland, and must be checked out at the HCS as scouting for a specific area of the refuge. Individuals scouting must wear fluorescent orange in accordance with State regulations. Scouting is not allowed for spring turkey hunting.
8. **Penalties:** Failure to comply with any refuge regulation, state or other federal laws may result in the following:
  1. Maximum of \$100,000 fine and/or 1-year imprisonment
  2. Arrest, seizure and/or forfeiture of hunting equipment and vehicles
  3. Forfeiture of harvested game
  4. Hunting permits may be revoked by Federal Wildlife Officers and/or Refuge Management discretion. Maximum revocation of permit is infinite.

## II. HUNTING REGULATIONS FOR ALL HUNTERS

- A. Hunters are required to check in and out at the HCS every time they enter or exit the refuge, change hunting weapons, or change hunting areas including North Tract, Central Tract (CT) Headquarters and M-R Lottery Hunts, Schafer Farm, and South Tract hunting areas. Hunters leaving their designated hunt zone for any reason must proceed directly to the HCS to check out. Hunters must check back in when returning. No hunting spots will be reserved.
- B. The following areas are closed to all hunting:
  1. The forested area between Range 1 and Range 2 in Area "D". See map posted at the HCS.
  2. The area around Wildlife Viewing Area and trail system in Area I. The area is marked with orange carsonite markers and No Hunting Zone signs along the Wildlife Loop and trail.
  3. The forested area north of the road to Lake Allen
- C. Check-in procedures:
  1. Exchange refuge hunting permit for daily hunting or scouting pass and vehicle pass. Hunters will NOT be allowed to check in without their refuge hunting permit.
  2. Select hunting area. (Authorized hunting areas are indicated on a map displayed in the HCS.)
  3. Indicate activity (i.e. scouting, deer, duck, squirrel hunting, etc.) and weapon.
- D. Hunters will be restricted to the selected area and specified weapon until they check out at

the HCS. Upon checking into an area, the hunter MUST report directly to the area they are checked into.

**E. While hunting:**

1. The hunter must have in their possession the following items and must be able to present these to any Law Enforcement Officer upon request.
  - a. Daily hunting or scouting pass
  - b. Valid Maryland State hunting license
  - c. Special permits for disabled eligibility, where applicable
  - d. Any other applicable stamps and permits
  - e. Driver's license or a valid government photo ID
2. Daily vehicle pass must be visibly displayed on vehicle dashboard at all times.
3. Vehicles must be parked inside the boundaries of their selected area. It is illegal to park vehicles in such a manner to block gates or other vehicle traffic.
4. Hunters must use designated and authorized roads and parking areas only.

**F. Check-out procedures:**

1. Exchange daily passes for refuge hunting permit.
2. Notify HCS manager of any game harvested.
3. Bring any game harvested on the refuge to the weigh-in shed (check station) located next to the HCS for biological data collection.
4. No harvested game, or parts thereof, once removed from the refuge, may be returned for disposal.
5. Hunters returning to the HCS after the designated checkout hours for that day will be subject to law enforcement actions.

**G. Harvested Deer/Turkey Tagging and Check-in Procedures:**

1. Hunters must tag their harvested game in accordance with state regulations. Please refer to the Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping (available where hunting licenses are sold, HCS, and online at <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/huntersguide/index.asp>.) Anyone found in violation of any of the tagging/check-in requirements will be subject to law enforcement action.

**H. Hunting is not allowed on, from or across any road (paved, gravel, dirt, opened and/or closed), within 50 yards of any road, within 150 yards of any building or shed, and within 25 yards of any designated "No Hunting" or "Safety Zone" areas, except:**

1. You may hunt from the vehicle, at designated areas, if you possess a Maryland State "Universal Disability Pass." Hunting from the vehicle is not allowed from the Wildlife Loop or Bald Eagle Drive.
2. You may hunt from the road, no less than 50 yards beyond the gate at Blue Heron Pond.
3. You may hunt from the road, no less than 50 yards beyond the barricade at Wood Duck Pond.
4. You may hunt waterfowl (goose/duck) from North Tract refuge permanent photo/hunt blinds.

**I. The use of all-terrain vehicles and utility vehicles is prohibited on the refuge, except under special circumstances and with prior approval from the Refuge Manager.**

- J.** Baiting of game animals, including the use of any natural or man-made food sources, such as grain, salt, corn, or commercial licks, “Deer Caine”, etc. is prohibited on the refuge. All deer attractants like Buck Bomb, scent pads and cotton balls are allowed and are considered litter and subject to law enforcement action if left behind.
- K.** Spotlighting or use of artificial light to spot wildlife is prohibited.
- L.** Any harassment of wildlife is prohibited.
- M.** Engagement or interference by any MNHA member or hunter with any law enforcement activity is prohibited. Be a good witness and report violations.
- N.** Possession or use of drugs and/or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited on the refuge.
- O.** **ALL** flagging and any other personal property must be removed at the end of **EACH** hunt visit. The use of reflective pins or nails is prohibited.
- P.** Every hunter pursuing a wounded animal or bird is expected to make every effort to recover the game, except for Sundays and federal holidays.
- Q.** No hunting or scouting is permitted on Sundays or federal holidays. No hunt-related activities (archery target shooting, tracking, etc.) may take place unless the HCS is open.
- R.** Hunters who see dogs are instructed to notify the HCS manager as soon as possible. Do not shoot dogs!
- S.** Shooting of any non-target species, which includes but not limited to coyotes and foxes, is prohibited on the refuge.
- T.** The range impact areas (D, E, F, and G) will remain closed Monday through Thursday throughout the season with the exception of the firearms and muzzleloader seasons. During the early goose season only, the impact areas (D, E, F, and G) will be open until 8:00 AM, except for Lake Allen and Range 1 which will remain open until noon for the early resident goose season, September 1-25.
- U.** Area Z is open to waterfowl hunters only.
- V.** The use of nails, wire, screws or bolts to attach a stand or any other equipment to a tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven to support a hunter is prohibited on National Wildlife Refuges. No screw-in steps or stands will be permitted. Report any permanent tree stands to the HCS manager; mark the stand so it can be relocated.
- W.** All hunters are encouraged to carry a flashlight, whistle (or other noise making device), compass, cell phone, and/or GPS when hunting all areas.
- X.** Accommodations may be made for hunters with disabilities in the following locations: CT

Headquarters and M-R Lottery Hunts, Schafer Farm, South Tract, and other areas approved by the Refuge Manager/Refuge Law Enforcement. Hunters are required to request accommodations prior to checking into a hunting area.

- Y.** Report dead deer and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) to the HCS manager immediately.
- Z.** Ground hunting blinds are permitted; however, no natural vegetation, from either on-refuge or off-refuge, may be used to supplement the blind material. During the firearms and muzzleloader seasons, visible orange shall be placed either on or near any ground blind set up. Hunters must remove all equipment when they leave their designated hunt zone for any reason.
- AA.** Hunters are allowed to have no more than two observers with them afield. All observers must sign out, or in the case of a youth, a parent or guardian must sign for them.
- BB.** Hunters, who are checked out for one species, may harvest another species if it is in-season and using the appropriate weapon/ammunition. For example, someone hunting doves may harvest a squirrel so long as both are in season.

### **III. FIREARMS AND BOW REGULATIONS**

- A.** **Shotguns, bows/crossbows, .22 caliber rimfire rifles, air rifles and muzzleloaders (approved black powder rifles as stated in the current "Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping") are the only weapons allowed to hunt wildlife on the refuge.** Black powder handguns are prohibited. No other types of weapons are permitted on the refuge for hunting.
- B.** We require hunters to secure longbows, recurve bows, compound bows, and crossbows in accordance with state regulations.
- C.** Hunters are allowed one weapon to hunt with in the field. Additional weapons must be secured in the vehicle in accordance with state regulations.
- D.** The discharge of any weapon or firearms before or after legal shooting hours, which includes the unloading of muzzleloaders, is prohibited.
- E.** Possession of buckshot is prohibited.
- F.** Use of approved non-toxic shot is required to hunt ducks, geese, doves and upland game. Shotgun size must be 28 gauge or larger. Possession or use of lead shot is prohibited on the refuge except for deer hunting with slugs, muzzleloaders, and .22 caliber rimfire rifles.



#### **IV. HUNTER ORANGE**

- A.** All hunters must wear fluorescent orange in accordance with Maryland state regulations and are subject to the additional refuge conditions as identified in the Migratory Game Bird, Upland Game, and Deer Hunting specific sections of these regulations.
- B.** Fluorescent orange must be visible 360 degrees while carrying-in and carrying-out equipment (e.g. portable blinds, portable tree stands).

#### **V. YOUTH HUNTING**

- A.** Definitions (per Refuge Regulations):
  - 1. Youth Hunter is anyone 17 years of age or younger at the start of the hunting season. If a youth turns 18 years old during the hunt season (September 1 – May 21, 2018), they have the option to purchase an adult hunting license and pay all associated fees or to remain as a youth hunter. Any hunter that converts to an adult hunting license will forfeit all their youth privileges.
  - 2. Junior (Waterfowl) Hunter is anyone 15 years of age or younger.
- B.** Youth Hunters must:
  - 1. Have a parent or legal guardian present to countersign/obtain a Refuge Hunting Permit;
  - 2. Be accompanied by a licensed Refuge permitted adult who is at least 21 years of age while hunting on the refuge and they must maintain visual contact with each other within a 50 yard distance.
- C.** Special Youth/Junior Hunting Days:
  - 1. Special youth and junior hunting days are applicable on the NT of the refuge only.
  - 2. Youth must be accompanied by a licensed refuge permitted unarmed adult age 21 or older.
  - 3. Youth Deer Hunts:
    - a. Youth FIREARMS hunts are November 11 and 18, 2017. The lesser weapon rule, as specified by Maryland DNR, is applicable.
    - b. The 6 point or better rule for harvested bucks does not apply. Youth may harvest any size buck but they must abide by the bag limits for each location
  - 4. Youth Turkey Hunt Dates: April 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, and 19, 2018.
  - 5. Junior Waterfowl Hunt: November 4, 2017.

#### **VI. MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING**

Migratory game birds are limited to the following: geese, ducks, and mourning doves on the North Tract in accordance with all federal and state regulations and subject to the following conditions:

- A.** Use of approved non-toxic shot is required to hunt ducks, geese and doves. Gun size must be 28 gauge or larger. Possession or use of lead shot is prohibited.

- B. Migratory game bird hunters must wear solid fluorescent orange color (size and amount in accordance with state regulations) when walking to and from their vehicle to their hunting site. "Jump shooters" must wear solid fluorescent orange color hat or cap while hunting. If you stop and stand, you may remove it.
- C. Area Z is open to waterfowl hunters only due to Area Z being majority marsh habitat.
- D. Wading is prohibited in all impounded waters except for the placement and retrieval of decoys.

**E. Canada Goose Hunting:**

1. Hunters may take Canada geese only during the established early resident Canada goose season and the late migratory Atlantic population of Canada goose season. Refer to Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping for specific hunting hours and regulations.
2. Those possessing a Refuge Hunt Permit may pre-register for the opening day of the early resident Canada goose season starting at 10 AM on Saturday, August 13. The hunter must pre-register in person at the HCS and the hunter is allowed to pre-register two other individuals.
3. Resident Canada goose hunters may hunt on Range 1 in Area "D" and Lake Allen in Area "D" from September 1 – 25, 2017, Monday through Thursday, from one-half hour before sunrise to 12 PM. The remaining areas of D, E, F, and G will be open Monday through Thursday from one-half hour before sunrise until 12:00 PM. Fridays and Saturdays; areas D, E, F and G will be open all day. **This only applies during the early resident Canada goose season from September 1 through September 25, 2017** for areas D,E,F and G.
4. Resident Canada goose hunters may drive on Range 1 in Area "D" interior roads to set-up and retrieve goose decoys. However, vehicles must be parked along the Range 1 exterior roads and not behind the berm.
- 5.

Mourning dove hunters are not allowed to check-in prior to 12 PM from Sept. 1 – Oct. 7.

<b>NORTH TRACT – MIGRATORY GAME BIRD SEASON &amp; BAG LIMIT</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Early Resident Canada Goose	Sept. 1 – Sept. 25	8 per day	
Mourning Dove	Sept. 1 – Oct. 7 (12 PM to sunset only) Oct. 8 – Oct 14 Oct. 26 – Nov. 18 Dec. 16 - Jan. 6	15 per day	
Junior Waterfowl Hunt	Nov. 4	*Ducks-6 per day Geese- 2 per day	
Ducks	Oct. 14 - 21 Nov. 11 -24 Dec. 12 – Jan 27	*6 per day	
Atlantic population of Canada Goose Seasons	Nov. 18 - 24 Dec. 15 - Jan. 31	2 per day	

\*The daily bag limit of ducks (including mergansers) is 6. The 6-duck limit shall consist of no more than 5 sea ducks (no more than 4 long-tailed ducks, 4 scoters, or 4 eiders), 4 mallards (max. 2 hens), 3 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 1 pintails, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black duck (during black duck open season), 1 fulvous tree duck, and 1 mottled duck. All other species of ducks (except harlequin duck) may be taken up to the 6-duck limit. The possession is three times the daily bag limit.

## **VII. UPLAND GAME HUNTING/ FOREST GAME BIRD**

Upland game is limited to gray squirrels, eastern cottontail rabbits, and woodchuck on the North Tract. Wild Turkey (Forest Game Bird) is hunted only on North Tract and the M-R area of Central Tract (only during the Spring Wild Turkey Lottery Hunt). Hunting these species is in accordance with all federal and state regulations and subject to the following conditions:

- A.** Use of approved non-toxic shot is required to hunt upland game. Gun size must be 28 gauge or larger. Possession or use of lead shot is prohibited, except for .22 caliber rimfire rifles.
- B.** All upland game hunting is allowed during the Youth Deer Firearms Hunts (Nov. 11 and 18) and deer muzzleloader and firearms hunting seasons.
- C.** We prohibit the use of dogs to hunt Upland/ Forest Game.

### **D. Spring Wild Turkey Lottery Hunt**

- 1 Hunters must purchase a Refuge Hunting Permit and submit a lottery slip prior to Jan. 31. Refuge staff conducts the computerized lottery.
- 2 The Spring Wild Turkey hunt will follow all rules and regulations listed in Section II with the exception that turkey hunters are exempt from the hunter orange regulations. However, turkey hunters are highly encouraged to use fluorescent orange while hunting.
- 3 Spring Wild Turkey Hunt hours are from one half hour before sunrise until noon when all hunters must check out at the HCS.
- 4 Separate lottery hunts will be available for youth, disabled, and general hunters. Saturdays are youth hunts where three youth will be drawn per hunt date. Mondays are for the general and disabled hunters. Two disabled and four general hunters will be drawn per hunt date. Hunters can only submit their names into one of the following categories:
  - a. Youth Hunters: Individuals that possess a refuge youth hunting permit.
  - b. Disabled Hunters: Individuals with a physical or intellectual impairments, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, that have met the requirements to hunt on the refuge may enter the lottery for the zone(s) reserved for hunters with disabilities. The refuge requires hunters with disabilities to provide written verification of disability at the time of entry into the lottery. This written verification may take the form of a certification from a State or Federal agency authorized to give such certifications; or a letter and/or a "Disability Eligibility Certification" form from a medical doctor with an original physician's signature and physician's license number, verifying the individual's disability.
  - c. General Hunters: Individuals who do not qualify as a Youth or Disabled hunter are considered a general hunter.

- 5 Turkey hunters should attend a National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) clinic if they have not attended one in the past. Each hunter must pattern their shotgun or qualify with their bow and arrow prior to hunting turkey on the refuge.
- 6 Turkey hunters must use shotguns loaded with #4, or smaller, non-toxic shot, vertical bows or crossbows. All weapons must be used in accordance with state regulations.
- 7 Turkey hunters are allowed to take one bearded turkey according to Maryland state regulations. Hunters are limited to one turkey per season on the refuge. All turkeys harvested count toward the Maryland state bag limit.
- 8 Ground blinds may be used; however, no natural vegetation, from either on-refuge or off-refuge, may be used to supplement the blind material. Blinds must be removed from the refuge at the end of the hunt visit.
- 9 The NWTF and MNHA will offer turkey hunting assistants for those requesting them prior to the date of the hunt.
- 10 All members of the turkey hunting party should wear a solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange cap while moving. Successful hunters should also tie an orange ribbon or cloth around the neck of the turkey when carrying it out of the woods, or completely conceal it in a game bag.
- 11 Hunters may only be drawn once for the hunt season as a primary hunter (youth, disabled, and general). Once a hunter is selected as a primary hunter, their name will be removed from remaining lotteries. Exception: If there is insufficient number of hunters per category to completely fill up the primary and alternate slots for the season then a hunter may be drawn again.
  - a. If a hunter that has been drawn more than once harvests a turkey, their subsequent hunt spot(s) goes to the next Alternate for that category.
  - b. The Alternate will be notified by phone and/or email as soon as possible and no later than five days before the hunt.
- 12 Hunters are allowed to switch zones for which they are drawn on the morning of the hunt, only if both hunters agree to the change prior to going afield. The Federal Wildlife Officer must be notified of the change.
- 13 Alternate and standby hunters will be allowed to wait at the HCS on the mornings of each hunt. If the selected hunter does not show on the day of the hunt the vacated spot will be given to another hunter in the following order:
  - a. Alternate hunters on the list in numerical order starting with alternate hunter #1.
  - b. If no alternate hunter is available, then there will be a lottery selection of the standby hunters conducted at the HCS. Standby hunters must be among those that had applied for the lottery.
  - c. On Saturdays, only youth may be selected. On Mondays, only adults can be selected.
- 14 If a turkey is harvested before 9 AM on any hunt day:
  - a. The vacated zone can be filled in the following order:
    - i Any hunter in the field may report in person to the HCS to request permission to move to an open zone(s). If they move, then their vacated zone is available.
    - ii Alternate hunters on the list in numerical order starting with alternate hunter #1.
    - iii If no alternate hunter is available, then there will be a lottery selection

of the standby hunters conducted at the HCS. Standby hunters must be among those that had applied for the lottery.

- b. The Federal Wildlife Officer must be notified of any and all moves to another zone(s) prior to the move occurring.
- c. On Mondays, any hunter (general or disabled) can hunt a vacated zone.

- 15 The refuge may authorize one additional weekday morning during the turkey hunt season for a "wounded warrior" hunt, in coordination with MNHA, NWTF, and Wheeling Sportsman, specifically for returning wounded combat veterans.
- 16 Upon harvesting a turkey, the hunter must tag the bird in accordance with state regulation. All harvested turkeys must be checked in at the Hunting Control Station. Age, sex, weight, beard, spur line, location harvested, and date will be recorded for each bird on a Turkey Harvest Data Sheet.

**E. Winter Wild Turkey Hunt**

- 1 The season is only open on North Tract (Jan. 18 – 20)
- 2 The Winter Wild Turkey hunt will follow all rules and regulations listed in Section II with the exception that turkey hunters are exempt from the hunter orange regulations. However, turkey hunters are highly encouraged to use fluorescent orange while hunting.
- 3 Turkeys harvested on the refuge do apply to your state bag limit. In accordance with state regulation, the winter bag limit of one bird, either sex, is combined with the fall bag limit.
- 4 Upon harvesting a turkey, the hunter must tag the bird in accordance with state regulation. All harvested turkeys must be checked in at the Hunting Control Station. Age, sex, weight, beard, spur line, location harvested, and date will be recorded for each bird on a Turkey Harvest Data Sheet.
- 5 Turkey hunters must use shotguns loaded with #4, or smaller non-toxic shot, vertical bows or crossbows. All weapons must be used in accordance with state regulations.

<b>NORTH TRACT – UPLAND GAME/ FOREST GAME BIRD SEASON &amp; BAG LIMIT</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>

Gray Squirrel	Sept. 2 – Jan. 31	6 per day	
Woodchuck	Sept. 1 – Jan. 31	Unlimited	
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit	Nov. 4 – Jan. 31	4 per day	
Youth Spring Wild Turkey	April 14– May 19	1 per season	Saturdays only for youth who possess a youth hunt permit and were selected for the lottery ½ hr. before sunrise to noon.
Adult Spring Wild Turkey	April 23 – May 21	1 per season	Mondays only for adults who possess a hunt permit and have been selected for the lottery ½ hr. before sunrise to noon.
Wild Turkey Winter Season	Jan. 18-20	1 per season (Fall and Winter combined)	Either sex

### VIII. DEER HUNTING

The taking of mature deer is encouraged for management purposes.

**A. Official Deer Seasons:** There are three official deer hunting seasons at Patuxent Research Refuge: Bow, Firearms, and Muzzleloader.

1. Deer taken from Patuxent Research Refuge shall not count against the Maryland state bag limits and will not require bonus or additional stamps.
2. The refuge follows the State of Maryland’s antlered deer definition as defined in the “Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping”;
3. **All harvested bucks**, except those harvested by youth, **must have a total of six points or better on their antlers**. A point, as defined by Maryland Department of Natural Resources is “any antler projections one inch or more in length and includes the brow tine. The tip of the main beam is also considered a point, regardless of length.”

**B. Weapons:**

1. The hunter must pass a proficiency test with each weapon prior to hunting deer on the refuge.
2. Only shotguns, 20 gauge or larger, loaded with slugs, and muzzleloaders, .40 caliber or larger, with not less than 60 grains of black powder or a black powder equivalent shall be used for hunting deer during the firearms and muzzleloader seasons.
3. The refuge recognizes the lesser weapon rule as defined by the State of Maryland, **except** during the Central Tract lottery hunts.

**C. Hunter Orange:**

1. Bow hunters must wear orange when moving to and from their deer stand or their hunting spot and while tracking or dragging out their deer.
2. We do not require bow hunters to wear fluorescent orange when positioned to hunt except during the North Tract Youth Shotgun Deer Firearms Hunt (November 11 and 18, 2017), during the muzzleloader seasons and the firearms seasons when they must wear it at all times. **This includes Schafer Farm.**

3. Fluorescent orange is also required when ground hunting or stalking.

- D. It is unlawful to drive deer or take part in any deer drive. A “Deer Drive” is defined as an organized or planned effort to pursue, drive, chase or otherwise frighten or cause deer to move in the direction of any person or persons who are part of the organized or planned hunt and known to be waiting for the deer. Organized deer drives without a standing hunter are also prohibited.
- E. Only portable tree stands with Full Body Safety Harnesses are permitted on the refuge. Portable tree stands must be used with a harness, and must be removed when not in use. Tree stands are not required, except for Central Tract, but can be used, and must be removed when not in use. Ground blinds are permitted and must be removed when not in use. All tree stands/ ground blinds must be removed when a hunter checks out of the hunting area
- F. Deer hunters with a Maryland DNR issued “Universal Disability Pass” may hunt from the roadside except on Wildlife Loop and Bald Eagle Drive. The vehicle must be stopped, in park, and the keys out of the ignition prior to loading and firing any weapon. The refuge designated two additional locations where deer hunters that possess the Maryland DNR “Universal Disability Pass” may hunt from their vehicle on a first-come first-serve basis. The areas will be posted “Vehicle Access Only by Hunters with the Universal Disability Pass”. Other hunters will be allowed to hunt within the area, but will not be allowed to drive where the hunter with the “Universal Disability Pass” is allowed to drive. A map is posted at the HCS of the two locations.
- G. Deer harvested on the refuge can be donated to the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry program. The deer must be greater than 60 lbs., no sign of disease, completely field dressed and completely intact with the confirmation number on the tag.
- H. **Wounded Deer and Tracking:**
  1. A hunter wounding a deer in the evening will be expected to return the next day (except Sundays and federal holidays) to continue searching or risk losing their hunting privileges. They must notify the Hunting Control Station Manager immediately.
  2. If deer hunters need assistance tracking wounded game beyond 2 hours after sunset, they must report in person or call the HCS. **The HCS manager will call a Federal Wildlife Officer to gain consent to track.**
  3. **If** permission is granted, the HCS manager will arrange to keep the HCS open. All tracking will end 3 hours after sunset. No person shall kill or cripple deer without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the animal, even if it includes next day tracking, otherwise they risk losing their hunting privileges.
  4. There will be no tracking on Sundays and federal holidays except on a case by case basis and accompanied afield with a Federal Wildlife Officer.

NORTH TRACT – WHITE-TAILED DEER SEASON & BAG LIMIT			
Season	Open Season	Bag Limit	Misc.

Bow/Crossbow	Sept. 8 – Oct. 18 Oct. 23 – Nov. 24 Dec. 11 – Dec. 15 Jan. 2 – Jan. 4 Jan. 8 – Jan. 31	3 deer per year regardless of weapon used.  Two must be antlerless and only one can be antlered All bucks must have six points or better on their antlers. See page 14 for point definition.	Harvest can be in any order.
Muzzleloader	Oct. 19 – Oct. 21 Oct.23 – Oct 28 (antlerless only) Dec. 16 – Dec. 30		
Firearms	Nov. 25 – Dec. 9 Jan. 5 – Jan. 6	Could harvest 3 antlerless deer.	
Youth Firearms	Nov. 11 & Nov. 18 (youth permit holders only)		

**I. Central Tract (CT) Headquarters and M-R Lottery Hunts:**

1. This is a deer management hunt and the lesser weapon rule does not apply. Muzzleloaders are not permitted for the lottery hunts.
2. There are two separate lottery hunts: Nov. 4 and Dec. 9.
3. Signup for the lottery hunts at the HCS at least two weeks prior to the hunting date. Deadlines are: Saturday, October 21 for the November 4 hunt, and Saturday, November 25 for the December 9 hunt.
4. Hunters may place their names in each lottery (shotgun and bow/crossbow) one time per hunt. If drawn for both, the hunter must choose one; the other will be assigned to an alternate.
5. Selection for participation in the Central Tract Headquarters and M-R lottery hunts will be by lottery. There are 3 bow/crossbow and 39 shotgun slots. Nine of the shotguns slots are in the M-R area and are not assigned to a specific site. Only two shotgun sites are reserved for disabled hunters.
6. The use of a tree stand, a minimum of 10' off the ground, and a full body harness is mandatory except for the two disabled shotgun sites when used by a disabled hunter.
7. Lists of selected hunters and check-in times will be posted at the HCS at least one week prior to the scheduled hunt.
8. Selected hunters must check in by the time specified on the letter of notification. After the specified time, any available hunting slots will be issued to alternate hunters, prior to standby hunters, by random drawing. Drawings will be performed at the HCS.
9. Access for all lottery-selected hunters for Central Tract and MR will be via MD Route 197 at the intersection of Powder Mill Road onto American Holly Drive through the gated section.
10. All selected hunters are required to attend a pre-hunt orientation provided by refuge staff on Central Tract prior to going afield.
11. Shotgun stand sites 1-30 and bow stand sites 31-33 are marked with a reflective band on the assigned tree. Zones of fire are marked with arrows. All firing must be within the



zone of fire.

12. Only shotguns with slugs may be used at sites 1-30 and in M-R 1-9. Only bow and arrow/crossbow may be used at sites 31-33.
13. Hunters must leave the field by 12 PM on the morning hunt or by 1 hour after sunset on the evening hunt.

<b>Central Tract &amp; M-R LOTTERY – WHITE-TAILED DEER SEASON &amp; BAG LIMITS</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow/ Crossbow (for sites 31-33)  and  Shotgun	Nov. 4 (12 PM – ½ hr. after sunset)  Dec. 9 (5 AM – 12 PM)	Four (4) deer per day can be harvested.  Only one antlered deer per year-All bucks must have six points or better on their antlers. See page 14 for point definition.	Harvest in any order.
This is a deer management hunt and no species other than deer can be harvested.			

**L. Schafer Farm Hunt:**

1. Only bow and arrow/crossbow may be used at Schafer Farm. Shotguns and muzzleloaders are prohibited.
2. If a tree stand is used, a full body safety harness is required. A ground blind may not contain natural vegetation, from either on-refuge or off –refuge to supplement the blind material.
3. Schafer Farm setback boundaries are marked with orange signs. Stay within boundaries. All access for Schafer Farm will be through Gate # 11 off of MD Route 197.
4. We do not require bow hunters to wear solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange when positioned to hunt **except** during the North Tract Youth Shotgun Deer Firearms Hunts (November 12 and 19, 2016), the muzzleloader seasons and the firearms seasons when it must be worn at all times.

<b>SCHAFFER FARM – WHITE-TAILED DEER SEASON &amp; BAG LIMITS</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow & Crossbow	Oct.2 – Oct.7 Oct. 30 – Nov. 10 Nov. 25- Dec. 9 Dec.16 – 30 Jan. 8-13	4 deer per day can be harvested.  Only one antlered deer per year. All bucks must have six points or better on their antlers. See page 14 for point definition.	Harvest in any order.
This is a deer management hunt and no species other than deer can be harvested.			

**M. South Tract Hunt:**

1. If a tree stand is used, a full body safety harness is required. A ground blind may not contain natural vegetation, from either on-refuge or off –refuge to supplement the blind material.
2. Access to South Tract hunting areas A, B, and C will be through the former Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) Airport. The entrance gate is located off Springfield Road. Designated parking areas include: east and south ends of the old runway, accessible areas of Telegraph Road, and along the tram route (when area C is opened).
3. Access to South Tract hunting area D will be through Gate # 4 off MD Route 197. Parking will be at the boat barn or along the designated parking area.
- 4. No driving or parking along the Entrance and Exit Roads to and from the National Wildlife Visitor Center is allowed for any purpose, including the retrieval of game, when checked out to hunt any area.**
5. Setback boundaries are marked with orange carsonite posts in Area “D”, along the National Wildlife Visitor Center Entrance and Exit Roads, and a portion of Telegraph Road, 50 yards from the road. Please stay within boundaries.
6. No shooting is permitted into any open meadow or field area. These areas may have active research or management activities ongoing throughout the hunting season.

<b>SOUTH TRACT – WHITE-TAILED DEER SEASON &amp; BAG LIMITS</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow/ Crossbow	Sept. 9- Sept. 16 (Areas A, B, and D) Sept. 23-30 Oct. 7-14 (Areas A, B, and D) Oct 23- Nov. 4 (Areas A, B, and D) Nov. 13-18 Jan. 13-20 (Areas A, B, C, and D)	Four (4) deer per season; Only one antlered deer per year, All bucks must have six points or better on their antlers. See page 14 for point definition.	Harvest in any order.
Muzzleloader	Dec. 16 - 30 (Areas A, B, C, and D)	Four (4) deer per season; Only one antlered deer per year All bucks must have six points or better on their antlers. See page 14 for point definition.	Harvest in any order.
Firearms	Nov. 25 - Dec. 9 (Areas A, B, C, and D) Jan. 5 – 6 (Areas A, B, C, and D)	Four (4) deer per season; Only one antlered deer per year All bucks must have six points or better on their antlers. See page 14 for point definition.	Harvest in any order.
This is a deer management hunt and no species other than deer can be harvested.			

**IX. SAFETY INFORMATION**

Avoidance of hunting accidents is of primary concern. Strict compliance with the following rules

for safety is essential.

- A. If at any time while hunting on the refuge any ordnance is encountered (hand grenades, artillery simulators, or any other unknown metal object), do not touch or try to move it. Mark the exact location and immediately report the discovery to the HCS manager who will notify refuge personnel at the Visitor Contact Station.
- B. Hunters must be aware of their safety when hunting around any old building foundations.
- C. If you get lost, stay where you are. A search will be conducted. If you are carrying a personal two-way radio and you are lost or need assistance, set your radio to Channel 1 for MNHA. If you are carrying a cell phone, call the HCS at 301-317-3825.
- D. In the event of an accident or injury, initiate appropriate first aid measures and report the incident immediately to the HCS manager. If the HCS is unstaffed, call 911, and then notify refuge law enforcement personnel (Zone Officer Matt Byre) at 413-835-5252. To ensure rapid response, give the following information:
  - WHERE - Location of the emergency; be specific. Give section letter, distance from road, and accessibility to site (ground and air).
  - PHONE NUMBER - Provide the phone number you are calling from.
  - WHAT HAPPENED - Description of accident or injuries.
  - HOW MANY - Provide the number of possible victims needing care.
  - WHAT IS BEING DONE - Is first aid, CPR, etc. being performed?
  - YOUR NAME - Provide your full legal name.
  - STAY ON THE LINE - Provide any additional information requested.
  - YOU HANG UP LAST - Let the person you called hang up first.
  - ARRANGE FOR SOMEONE TO MEET THE RESCUE SQUAD AT THE ENTRANCE GATE AND ESCORT THEM TO THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT.
- E. Refuge Closure line has a recording of whether or not the refuge is open. Closings are usually weather related. The number is 301-725-0416

**GOOD LUCK TO ALL THE HUNTERS!**