



## Hunting Regulations

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



2011 - 2012 Season



# Have a Safe and Enjoyable Hunting Season!

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# **Patuxent Research Refuge Hunting Regulations 2011-2012 Season**

Revised 07-26-2011

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

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

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

- Read and understand these regulations prior to hunting.
- Wear solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange at all required times, unless otherwise noted.
- Keep a valid government photo ID and Maryland hunting license with them at all times.
- Stay within their designated area and know the hunting seasons.
- After taking any deer, properly complete and attach the field tag immediately.
- When authorized, all bucks harvested must have an outside antler spread of 15" or greater.
- Not engage in any law enforcement activity, but are encouraged to report violations.
- Report dead deer and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) to Hunting Control Station immediately.
- Hunters are required to have 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, 2012.
- Hunters must remove all equipment when they leave their designated hunt zone for any reason.

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

- Squirrel hunters can use a .22 caliber rimfire rifle while hunting squirrels. This is a trial basis and only for the month of January 2012.
- The refuge recognizes the lesser weapon rule.
  - Bow hunters hunting under the Deer Muzzleloader Seasons must purchase a Muzzleloader Stamp in addition to the Bow Stamp. All deer harvested will count toward your total harvest at NT and will count toward your muzzleloader count on ST.
  - Bow and muzzleloader hunters hunting under the Deer Firearms Seasons must abide by the Deer Firearms Seasons rules. All deer harvested will count toward your total harvest at NT and will count toward your firearms count on ST.
- The refuge recognized the Early Resident Canada Goose Seasons (Western Zone) and the late Atlantic Population of Canada Goose Seasons
- Duck hunters, hunting during the early muzzleloader season, are restricted to the following areas: Blue Heron Pond, Lake Allen, and Area Z.

## I. 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.

## II. GENERAL HUNTING INFORMATION

- A. **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.
- B. **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 and Sundays 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/northeast/patuxent/MNHA.html>. 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. Additional information required for specific activities may include but not be limited to the following:
    - a. Bow Stamp for Bow Deer Hunters
    - b. Muzzleloader Stamp for Muzzleloader Deer Hunters. Bow hunters, hunting during the muzzleloader seasons, must purchase a Muzzleloader Stamp, except individuals hunting at Schafer Farm.
    - c. State and Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamps for Migratory Bird Hunters. The Federal Stamp must be signed.
    - d. Original Maryland DNR-issued “Hunt from a Vehicle Permit” to document mobility impairment (if applicable) to be given to the HCS manager at time of permit purchase.
    - e. Turkey hunters must present a Federal or MD State documentation of mobility impairment or disability when purchasing license if hunting in mobility impaired or disabled turkey lottery hunt.

- C. 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 Operating Hours:** Entry to the refuge prior to 5 AM (other than Resident Canada Goose season, the first day of Firearms season, and the spring wild turkey lottery hunts) is prohibited except for the on-duty HCS managers and MNHA Board of Directors to conduct official duties. 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), except for the first day of Resident Canada goose and the first day of Firearms seasons where hunters may check in at 4:30 AM. For the rest of Resident Canada Goose season (September 2-24) and the spring wild turkey lottery hunts, the gate will open at 4:30 AM and check in will begin at 5 AM. 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. During times when the Visitor Contact Station is closed, Bald Eagle Drive will be closed to non-hunting refuge visitors.
- E. Holidays:** Hunting ends at 12 PM on Thanksgiving Eve (Nov. 23), Christmas Eve (Dec. 24), and New Year’s Eve (Dec. 31) and the HCS will close at 1 PM. No hunting will take place on the following holidays: Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Christmas Day Observed (Dec. 26), New Year’s Day, New Year’s Day Observed (Jan. 2), Martin Luther King Jr. Day or any other day the Federal Government closes.
- F. Scouting:** Scouting is allowed Monday through Saturday, from September 1 through September 15, after 12 PM until sunset. Scouting is allowed during legal hunting hours after September 15. Scouting in South Tract and Schaffer Farm is allowed only when the area is open to hunting. Hunters participating in scouting activities must be unarmed and must be checked out at the HCS as scouting for a specific area of the refuge. Individuals scouting must wear, in a visible manner and at all times, a minimum of 250 square inches of solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange. Scouting is not allowed for turkey hunting.
- G. 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 Refuge Officers and/or Management discretion.
    - a. Maximum revocation of permit is infinite.
  5. Hunters checking in after checkout hours will receive the following penalties:
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Hunter will receive a written warning
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – Hunting privileges will be revoked for one **WEEK** after date of Offense

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – Hunting privileges will be revoked for one **YEAR** after date of Offense

### **III. 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 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 forested area between Range 1 and Range 2 in Area “D” is closed to all hunting. See map posted at the HCS.
- C.** Hunters will be restricted to the selected area and specified hunt activity until they check out at the HCS. Upon checking in to an area, the hunter **MUST** report directly to the area they are checked in to.
- D.** Check-in procedures:
  - 1. Select hunting area. (Authorized hunting areas are indicated on a map displayed in the HCS.)
  - 2. Exchange refuge permit for daily hunting or scouting pass and vehicle pass.
  - 3. Indicate activity (i.e. scouting, deer, duck, squirrel hunting, etc.) and weapon.
- 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 mobility impaired and physically disabled hunters, where applicable
    - d. Any other applicable stamps and permits
    - e. Drivers license or a valid government photo ID
  - 2. Daily vehicle pass must be visibly displayed on vehicle dashboard at all times.
  - 3. Wildlife Loop is closed to all vehicle traffic from Bailey Bridge to Charlie Gate. U.S. Government vehicles will be patrolling those areas. Parking will be permitted at the Bailey Bridge Parking Lot for areas between Bailey Bridge and Charlie Gate.
  - 4. Vehicles must be parked inside the boundaries of their selected area except for those areas along the Wildlife Loop that are closed.
  - 5. It is illegal to park vehicles in such a manner to block gates or other vehicle traffic. Vehicles must use designated and authorized roads and parking areas only.
- F.** Check-out procedures:
  - 1. Exchange daily passes for refuge permit.
  - 2. Notify HCS manager of any game harvested.
  - 3. Bring any game harvested on the refuge to the weigh-in shed located next to the HCS for

biological data collection. Jaws from all harvested deer will be extracted and tagged properly by HCS managers and/or refuge personnel.

4. No harvested game, or parts thereof, once removed from the refuge, may be returned for disposal.
- G.** Hunting is not allowed on or across any road (paved, gravel, dirt, opened and/or closed), or 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 road, 50 yards beyond the gate at Blue Heron Pond;
  2. You may hunt from the road, 50 yards beyond the barricade at Wood Duck Pond;
  3. You may hunt waterfowl (goose/duck) from any refuge permanent photo/hunt blind.
  4. You may hunt from the roadside for waterfowl in the designated posted portion, of Wildlife Loop at Bailey Marsh.
  5. You may hunt from the roadside for waterfowl at the 5 designated hunting blind sites at Lake Allen.
- H.** Driving of vehicles is restricted to established roads unless noted otherwise.
- I.** Uses of all-terrain and utility vehicles are 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 scent pads and/or cotton balls must be removed at the end of each hunting visit.
- K.** Spotlighting or use of artificial light to spot wildlife is prohibited.
- L.** Any harassment of wildlife is prohibited.
- M.** 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.
- N.** Engagement or interference of any MNHA member or hunter in any law enforcement activity is prohibited. Be a good witness and report violations.
- O. Possession or use of drugs and/or alcohol is prohibited on the refuge.**
- P.** ALL flagging must be removed at the end of each hunting visit. The use of reflective pins or nails is prohibited.
- Q.** Every hunter pursuing a wounded animal or bird is expected to make every effort to recover the game, except for Sundays and federal holidays.

- R.** 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.
- S.** Hunters who see dogs are instructed to notify the HCS manager as soon as possible. Do not shoot dogs!
- T.** Shooting of any non-target species, which includes but not limited to coyotes and foxes, is prohibited on the refuge.
- U.** The 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, 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 opened until noon for the early resident goose season, September 1-24.
- V.** Area Z is open to waterfowl hunters only.
- W.** 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.
- X.** All hunters are encouraged to carry a flashlight, whistle (or other noise making device), compass, cell phone, and/or GPS when hunting all areas.
- Y.** Accommodations may be made for physically disabled hunters in the following locations: CT Headquarters and M-R Lottery Hunts, Schafer Farm, South Tract, and other areas approved by the refuge manager. Hunters are required to request accommodations prior to checking in to a hunting area.
- Z.** Report dead deer and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) to the HCS manager immediately.
- AA.** Hunters are allowed one weapon in the field. Additional weapons are not allowed.
- BB.** Ground hunting blinds are permitted at North Tract; however, no natural vegetation, from either on-refuge or off-refuge, may be used to supplement the blind material. Hunters must remove all equipment when they leave their designated hunt zone for any reason.

#### **IV. FIREARMS AND BOW REGULATIONS**

- A.** Shotguns, bows/crossbows, .22 caliber rimfire 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. The use of .22 caliber rimfire rifles is allowed to hunt gray squirrels only during the month of January. This is on a trial basis. 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, with weapons inaccessible, and while inside the vehicle.
- C.** No discharge of weapons after legal shooting hours which includes unloading of muzzleloaders.
- D.** Possession of buckshot is strictly prohibited.
- E.** Use of approved non-toxic shot is required to hunt ducks, geese, doves and upland game. Shotgun size must be 20 gauge or larger. Possession or use of lead shot is prohibited on the refuge except for deer hunting with slugs, muzzleloaders, and squirrel hunting with .22 caliber rimfire rifles.

## **V. HUNTER ORANGE**

All hunters must wear fluorescent orange in accordance with state regulations subject to the additional following conditions :

1. Your fluorescent orange must be visible 360 degrees while carrying-in and carrying-out equipment (e.g. portable blinds, portable tree stands).
2. “Jump shooters” must wear at least a solid-colored, fluorescent hunter-orange cap while hunting. If you stop and stand, you may remove it.
3. For additional regulations, see species specific.

## **VI. 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, 2012), 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 BOW October 15, 2011 (bow only)

- b. Youth FIREARMS November 12, 2011 and January 14, 2012. Youth may use shotguns, muzzleloaders, bow and arrow, or crossbow as specified by Maryland DNR.
  - c. Youth may harvest any deer without restrictions (3 maximum for NT).
4. Youth Turkey Hunt Dates: April 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, and 19, 2012
  5. Junior Waterfowl Hunt: Date to be announced.

## **VII. MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING**

Migratory game birds include and 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 20 gauge or larger. Possession or use of lead shot is prohibited.
- B.** Migratory game bird hunters are required to wear at least a solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange hat or cap when walking from their vehicle to their hunting site. "Jump shooters" must wear at least a solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange hat or cap while hunting. If they stop and stand, they may replace the solid-colored fluorescent hunter orange hat or cap with a camouflage one.
- C.** Goose, duck and dove hunting is suspended during the youth deer firearms hunts, deer firearms seasons and early deer muzzleloader season. The only exceptions being Blue Heron Pond, Lake Allen and Area Z will remain open for duck hunters during the early muzzleloader season and for Junior Duck hunters during the Junior Waterfowl hunt day. These species can be harvested during the late muzzleloader season.
- D.** Use of adult retrieving dogs are mandatory when hunting ducks and geese within 50 yards of the following impounded waters, Blue Heron Pond, Lake Allen, New Marsh, and Wood Duck Pond. Dogs are required to be under the control of their owner at all times. Law enforcement officers may seize or dispatch dogs running loose or unattended.
- E.** Duck and goose hunters who are hunting impounded waters with another person who is in possession of the required retrieving dog must check in at the HCS with the person in possession of the retriever.
- F.** Area M will be opened to waterfowl hunting until 11 AM daily during the 2011-2012 waterfowl season.
- G.** Area Z is open to waterfowl hunters only during the refuge waterfowl seasons.
- H. Resident 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 which will be

announced later.

2. Those possessing a hunting permit may pre-register for the opening day of the early resident Canada goose season starting at 10 AM on Sunday, August 14. You must pre-register in person at the HCS and you are allowed to pre-register two other individuals.
3. On opening day of early resident Canada goose season, all pre-registered cardholders will be honored only until one hour before sunrise. Remaining areas will be assigned on a first-come-first-served basis by means of the drive-up window only.
4. Resident Canada goose hunters may hunt on Range 1 in Area “D” and Lake Allen in Area “D” from September 1 – 24, 2011, Monday through Thursday, from one-half hour before sunrise to 12 PM. Remaining areas of D, E, F, and G will be open Monday through Thursday from one-half hour before sunrise until 8:00 AM. They may hunt other areas of the refuge that are opened until one-half hour after sunset. Fridays and Saturdays, areas D, E, F and G will be open all day. Resident Canada goose legal hunting hours, during the September seasons, is from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset as stated in the Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping.
5. 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.
6. Wading is prohibited in all impounded waters except for the placement and retrieval of decoys.
7. Canada goose hunting parties will arrive at the sites in groups to reduce disturbance to the birds and other hunters.

**I. Mourning Dove Hunting:**

1. Dove hunters are not allowed to check in prior to 12 PM from Sept. 1 – Oct. 8.

**J. Duck Hunting:**

1. Wading is prohibited in all impounded waters except for the placement and retrieval of decoys.
2. Late duck season to be announced later with information on opening day procedures.

<b>NORTH TRACT – MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Early Resident Canada Goose	Sept. 1 – Sept. 24	8 per day	
Mourning Dove	Sept. 1 – Oct. 8 (12 PM to sunset only) Nov. 12 – Nov. 25 Dec. 21 – Jan. 5, 2012	15 per day	
Junior Waterfowl Hunt	To be announced later		
Ducks & Late Resident Canada Goose	To be announced later		

**VIII. UPLAND GAME HUNTING**

Upland game is limited to gray squirrels, eastern cottontail rabbits, and woodchuck on the North Tract, and wild turkey on North Tract and the MR area of Central Tract in accordance with all federal and state regulations and subject to the following conditions:

- A. Squirrel hunters can use a .22 caliber rimfire rifle while hunting squirrels. This is on a trial basis and only for the month of Jan. 2012.
- B. Use of approved non-toxic shot is required to hunt upland game. Gun size must be 20 gauge or larger. Possession or use of lead shot is prohibited, except for .22 caliber rimfire rifles used to hunt squirrels during the month of Jan. 2012.
- C. All small game hunting is suspended during the Youth Deer Firearms Hunts (Nov. 12 and Jan. 14) and all deer muzzleloader and firearms hunting seasons.
- D. We prohibit the use of dogs to hunt Upland Game.
- E. **Spring Wild Turkey Lottery Hunt**
  - 1. All hunters must purchase a Refuge Hunting Permit and submit a lottery slip prior to Jan. 31, 2012
  - 2. The Spring 2012 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 to noon.
  - 4. Turkey lottery applications will be accepted from Sept. 1, 2011 through Jan. 31, 2012.
  - 5. Separate lottery hunts will be available for youth, disabled, mobility-impaired, and general hunters. Saturdays are youth hunts where 3 youth will be drawn per hunt date. Mondays are the remaining hunts where 1 disabled, 1 mobility-impaired and 2 general hunter's will be drawn per hunt date. Hunters must decide which category to insert their name. The four hunting categories are:
    - a. Youth Hunters: Individuals that possess a youth hunting permit.
    - b. Disabled Hunters: Individuals who are physically or mentally impaired as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. They must show written verification of their disability at the time of permit purchase. This written verification may take the form of a certification from a State or Federal agency authorized to give such certifications: (disabled motor vehicle tags will not be accepted) or a letter and/or "Disabled Eligibility Certification" form from a medical doctor with original physician's signature and physician's license number, verifying the individual's disability.
    - c. Mobility-Impaired Hunters: The refuge defines "mobility-impaired" as a physical condition that severely impairs a person's mobility, which requires the assistance of a wheelchair, braces, crutches, or other similar aids. This includes paraplegics, hemiplegics, and quadriplegics; persons dependent upon a wheelchair for ambulation; persons required to use assisting aids to walk; persons required to use braces or prostheses on both legs; and complete single-leg amputees. They must show written verification of their mobility-impairment at the time of permit purchase. 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 "Mobility-Impaired Eligibility Certification" form from a medical doctor with an original physician's signature and physician's license number,

verifying the individual's permanent mobility-impairment.

- d. General Hunters: Individuals who do not qualify as a Youth, Disabled, or Mobility-Impaired hunter are considered a general hunter and may enter the lottery for the general hunters.
6. Turkey hunters must attend a National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) clinic if they have not attended one in the past. Each hunter must also pattern their shotgun or qualify with their bow and arrow prior to hunting turkey on the refuge.
7. Turkey hunters must use shotguns loaded with #4, #5, or #6 non-toxic shot, vertical bows or crossbows and all must be used in accordance with state regulations.
8. The refuge requires only mature male wild turkeys with a beard over three inches to be harvested. Hunters are limited to one turkey per year. No more than 12 turkeys total may be harvested from the refuge for the 2012 spring season.
9. Turkey decoys may be used in accordance with state regulations, and must be removed from the refuge at the end of hunting visit.
10. 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 hunting visit.
11. The NWTF and MNHA will offer turkey hunting assistants for those requesting them prior to the date of the hunt.
12. 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.

<b>NORTH TRACT – UPLAND GAME HUNTING</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc</b>
Gray Squirrel	Oct. 1 – Jan. 31	6 per day	Excluding the Youth Deer Firearms Hunts, and all deer firearms and muzzleloader seasons.
Woodchuck	Oct. 1 – Jan. 31	unlimited	
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit	Nov. 5 – Jan. 31	4 per day	
Youth Spring Wild Turkey	April 14 – May 19	1 per year	Saturdays only for those that possess a youth hunt permit. ½ hr before sunrise to noon.
Adult Spring Wild Turkey	April 16 – May 21	1 per year	Mondays only. ½ hr before sunrise to noon.
Use of .22 caliber rimfire rifle is allowed to hunt squirrels the month of Jan. 2012 on a trial basis.			

## **IX. 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 stamps.
2. The State of Maryland defines an antlerless deer as a deer that is not antlered.

3. The State of Maryland defines an antlered deer as a deer with 2 or more points to one antler, or a deer with one antler 3 or more inches long, **HOWEVER, the refuge only allows the harvesting of mature bucks with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater.**

**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 in which a hunter may use a muzzleloader or bow during shotgun seasons, or a bow during muzzleloader seasons. The rules of the current season apply regardless of the weapon choice. Any game harvested will count under the weapon season that is open.

**C. Hunter Orange:**

1. All hunters must wear fluorescent orange in accordance with state regulations.
2. Bow hunters must wear orange when moving to and from the deer stand or their hunting spot and while tracking or dragging out their deer. 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, 2011, and January 14, 2012), the muzzleloader seasons and the firearms seasons when they must wear it at all times.
3. Orange is also required when “still hunting” or stalking.

- D.** Only portable tree stands with Full Body Safety Harnesses are permitted on the refuge. Portable tree stands must be used and at minimum of 10 feet off the ground at Schafer Farm, Central Tract and South Tract and must be removed when not in use. Ground blinds are only permitted at North Tract and must be removed when not in use.

- E.** The field tag must be filled out completely and immediately attached on all harvested deer before the deer is moved or transported.

- F.** Deer hunters with a State “Hunt from a Vehicle Permit” may hunt from the roadside except on Wildlife Loop. The vehicle must be stopped, in park, and the keys out of the ignition prior to loading any weapon.

- G.** All deer harvested will have their jaws extracted before leaving the refuge by a HCS manager and/or refuge personnel.

- H.** Deer harvested on the refuge can be donated to the food for hungry program. The deer must be greater than 50 lbs, no sign of disease, completely field dressed and completely intact with the confirmation number on the tag.

**I. 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 Hunting Control immediately.
2. If deer hunters need assistance tracking wounded game beyond 2 hours after sunset, they must report in person to the HCS or call. **The HCS manager will call a refuge law enforcement officer to gain consent to track.**
3. **If** permission is granted, the HCS manager will arrange to keep the HCS open. “Trackers” must be from the official tracking team list approved by the refuge. 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.

**J. North Tract Hunt:**

<b>NORTH TRACT – WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNTING</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow/Crossbow	Sept. 15 – Oct. 19 Oct. 24 – Nov. 25 Dec. 12 – Dec. 16 Jan. 3 – Jan. 5 Jan. 9 – Jan. 31	2 must be antlerless and  Only one antlered deer with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater can be harvested.	3 deer per year no matter what weapon used.
Muzzleloader	Oct. 20 – Oct. 22 Oct. 24 – Oct. 29 (antlerless only) Dec. 17 – Dec. 31	Could harvest 3 antlerless deer.	Harvest can be in any order.
Firearms	Nov. 26 – Dec. 10 Jan. 6 – Jan. 7		
Youth Bow	Oct. 15 (youth permit holders)	Any deer without restrictions.	
Youth Firearms	Nov. 12 and Jan. 14 (youth permit holders)	Any deer without restrictions.	
Youth permit holders may harvest any deer without restrictions on Oct. 15, Nov. 12, and Jan. 14. Deer harvested counts toward their NT bag limit. Note: Tree stands are not mandatory. Ground Blinds can be used.			

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

1. **This is a deer management hunt and the lesser weapons rule does not apply.**
2. There are two separate lottery hunts: Nov. 19 and Dec. 17, 2011.
3. Signup for the lottery hunts at the HCS at least two weeks prior to the hunting date. Deadlines are: Saturday, November 5 for the November 19 hunt, and Saturday, December 3 for the December 17 hunt.
4. An individual may place their name in each lottery (shotgun and bow/crossbow) one time per hunt. If pulled for both, 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 computer 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.
6. Lists of selected hunters and check-in times will be posted at the HCS at least one week

prior to the scheduled hunt.

7. Selected hunters must check in by the time specified on the letter of notification. After specified time, permits will be issued to standby hunters by random drawing, until specified cut-off time. Drawing will be performed at the HCS.
8. Hunters selected for stand sites 1-33 will access Central Tract off MD Route 197 at the intersection of Powder Mill Road. They will be briefed by refuge staff. 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.
9. Shotguns with slugs may be used only at sites 1-30 and in M-R 1-9. Bow and arrow may be used only at sites 31-33. No muzzleloaders may be used.
10. Hunters selected for the M-R 1-9 will be briefed at the HCS by the HCS Manager. They will access the M-R area via Duvall Bridge gate.
11. Hunters must leave the field by 12 PM on the morning hunt or by 1 hour after sunset on evening hunt.
12. There are two assigned spots for the firearms lottery hunt for physically disabled or mobility impaired hunters. Accommodations at other locations may be made and must be coordinated with refuge staff

<b>CT HEADQUARTERS &amp; M-R LOTTERY – WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNTING</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow/ Crossbow	Nov. 19 (12 PM – ½ hr after sunset)	Only one antlered deer with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater can be harvested per year.	Harvest in any order.
and/or	Dec. 17 (5 AM – 12 PM)	Four (4) deer per day can be harvested.	
Shotgun			
This is a deer management hunt and no species other than deer can be harvested. Note: The use of a tree stand and Full Body Safety Harness is mandatory.			

**L Schafer Farm Hunt:**

1. Only bow and arrow/crossbow may be used at Schafer Farm. No shotguns or muzzleloaders may be used.
2. The use of a tree stand and Full Body Safety Harness is mandatory.
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.

<b>SCHAFFER FARM – WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNTING</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow  &  Crossbow	Oct. 15 – Oct. 22 Nov. 5 – Nov. 12 Nov. 26 – Dec. 10 Dec. 17 – Dec. 31 Jan. 7 – Jan. 14	Only one antlered deer with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater can be harvested per year.  4 deer per day can be harvested.	Harvest in any order.
This is a deer management hunt and no species other than deer can be harvested.			

Note: The use of a tree stand and Full Body Safety Harness is mandatory.

**M. South Tract Hunt:**

1. This is a deer management hunt and the lesser weapons rule applies.
2. The use of a tree stand and Full Body Safety Harness is mandatory.
3. All access to South Tract hunting areas A, B, and C will be through the Old Beltsville 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).
4. Access to South Tract hunting area D will be through Gate # 4 off MD Rt. 197. Parking will be at the boat barn or along the designated parking area.
5. 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.
6. Setback boundaries are marked with orange carsonite posts in Area “D” and red and yellow flags on white poles along the National Wildlife Visitor Center Entrance and Exit Roads and a portion of Telegraph Road, at 200 feet. Please stay within boundaries.
7. No shooting is permitted into any open meadow or field area. These areas may have active research or management activity ongoing throughout the hunting season.

<b>SOUTH TRACT – WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNTING</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Bow/ Crossbow	Sept. 17 – Sept. 24 (Areas A, B, and D) Oct. 1 – Oct. 8 (Areas A, B, and D) Oct. 24 – Oct. 29 (Areas A, B, and D) Nov. 5 – Nov. 12 (Areas A, B, and D) Jan. 3 – Jan. 5 (Areas A, B, C, and D) Jan. 14 – Jan. 21 (Areas A, B, C, and D)	Four (4) deer per season; Only one antlered deer with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater can be harvested per year.	Harvest in any order.
Muzzleloader	Dec. 17 – Dec. 31 (Areas A, B, C, and D)	Four (4) deer per season; Only one antlered deer with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater can be harvested per year.	Harvest in any order.
Firearms	Nov. 26 – Dec. 10 (Areas A, B, C, and D) Jan. 6 – Jan. 7 (Areas A, B, C, and D)	Four (4) deer per season; Only one antlered deer with an outside antler spread of 15” or greater can be harvested per year.	Harvest in any order.

This is a deer management hunt and no species other than deer can be harvested.  
 Note: The use of a tree stand and Full Body Safety Harness is mandatory.

**X. 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 at 240-882-9078 or 240-882-0925. 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!**