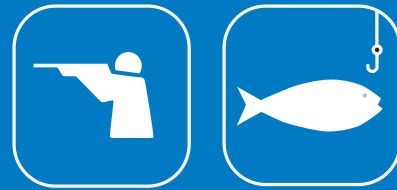


Lake Ophelia

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations 2009-2010



To:

Lake Ophelia
National Wildlife Refuge
401 Island Road
Marksville, LA 71351
318/253 4238
<http://www.fws.gov/lakeophelia>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD

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Please note : All changes to the 2009-2010 Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations are denoted in Red Ink for quick reference.

The Refuge

Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1988 primarily to preserve wintering and breeding habitat for waterfowl, is located in the Red River floodplain in east central Louisiana, approximately 10 miles northeast of Marksville. Public hunting and fishing is permitted on approximately 12,000 acres during specific times of the year. Special arrangements can be made to accommodate persons who require the use of a wheelchair by contacting the refuge office.

Individuals utilizing the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, hunting equipment, bag limits, boats, vehicles, and their contents by refuge officers.

To ensure your safety and enjoyment while visiting Lake Ophelia, please take the time to become familiar with the following regulations.

General Regulations

Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to protect the sportsman as well as wildlife populations. The regulations below govern hunting and fishing on national wildlife refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. Hunting and fishing will be in accordance with applicable state regulations, expect where otherwise stated.

The refuge is open to public access from 4 am to two hours after sunset. The refuge boundary is marked with boundary signs and yellow boundary paint.

Weapons and Ammunition

Longbows, compound bows, and crossbows or any bows drawn, held, or released by a mechanical means will be a legal means of take during the deer archery season.

Legal primitive firearms for primitive firearm season include: 1) Rifles, .44 caliber minimum, all of which must load exclusively from the muzzle or cap and ball cylinder, use of black powder or approved substitute only, take ball or bullet projectile only, including sabot bullets, including muzzleloaders known as "inline" muzzleloaders. 2) Single shot, breech loading rifles, .38 caliber or larger of a kind or type manufactured prior to 1900 and replicas, reproductions, or reintroductions of that type of rifle having an exposed hammer that use metallic cartridges loaded with black powder or modern smokeless powder. All of the above may be fitted with magnified scopes.

When traversing the refuge by boat or land conveyance (vehicle), including ATVs, all firearms (including muzzleloaders) and archery equipment must be unloaded and cased. An unloaded firearm is defined as having no ammunition in the chamber, magazine, cylinder, or clip when attached to the firearm. An unloaded muzzleloader is defined as having the percussion cap completely

removed. Unloaded archery equipment is defined as having the arrow removed from the string. Crossbows must also be uncocked. Handguns are not permitted on the refuge.

Possession of shot larger than that legal for waterfowl hunting is prohibited; use or possession of lead shot is prohibited refuge wide.

Exceptions

During quota deer and turkey hunts, lead ammunition legal for taking deer and turkey may be used. Small game may be hunted with up to .22 caliber rimfire lead ammunition during open seasons.

Permits

An annual Special Recreational Activity Permit is required for all hunters and fishermen 16 years old and older, and for all terrain vehicle (ATV) use on the refuge. The Central LA NWR Special Recreational Activity Permit applies to all refuges within the complex (Lake Ophelia, Grand Cote and Catahoula). Permits are available at the Refuge Headquarters located at Grand Cote National Wildlife Refuge, 7 miles west of Marksville, LA on Hwy 1194. Office hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 am to 4 p.m., except for federal holidays when the office is closed. Permits may also be purchased at the Catahoula NWR Office, located on US Highway 84, approximately 12 miles east of Jena, LA, and 1 mile west of the junction of highways US 84 and LA 28. On weekdays and weekends, permits may be purchased at Dupuy's Grocery store, located 7 miles north of Marksville on Highway 452.

To order permits by mail, send us your name, address, phone number and \$15.00 (money order or cashier's check: personal checks not accepted) to the Refuge address shown on the front of this brochure. Refuge permits authorize participation in all refuge hunting and fishing except quota primitive firearms and youth deer hunts. The permit must be signed and in your possession whenever hunting, fishing, or using an ATV on the refuge, and acknowledges your understanding of refuge regulations.

Commercial Activities

Commercial hunting and fishing activities are prohibited. Specifically, we prohibit any person or group acting as a hunting guide, outfitter, or in any other capacity that any other individual pays or promises to pay directly or indirectly for services rendered to any other person(s) hunting on the refuge, regardless of whether such payment is for guiding, outfitting, lodging or club membership. Anyone planning to pursue a commercial activity on refuge land, lake, bayous or waters is advised to contact the refuge manager for information on permitted commercial activities and special use permits.

Lottery Primitive Firearms Deer Hunts
Dec. 5-6, Jan. 9-10, and Jan. 23-24

A new application form will be implemented this year or the lottery primitive firearm deer hunts. Specific instructions on how to apply will accompany each application form.

Lottery hunt applications will be available August 1 at the refuge office and on our internet site at <http://lakeophelia.fws.gov>. Up to five individuals may apply in a group.

There is a \$5.00 application fee for each individual applying for a lottery hunt. Application fees must be in the form of a money order (cash is no longer accepted). You can combine application fees for each member on one money order. This fee is non-refundable and must be received with your application.

Completed applications and the \$5.00 application fee must be returned to the refuge office **by close of business (4 p.m.) on August 31.**

Duplicate, incomplete, or incorrect applications will be removed from consideration.

Applicants will be selected at a public drawing, which is to be held at the refuge headquarters at 10 am Wednesday, September 9, 2009. Successful applicants will be notified by mail.

Permits are non-transferable and must be in the hunter's possession at all times while on the refuge during the permitted hunt. Only hunters with valid lottery permits are permitted on the refuge during Refuge lottery hunts.

Lottery Youth Deer Hunts (Nov. 24, Dec. 12 and Dec. 21)

There will be three lottery deer hunts for youths ages 12-15 (applicants must be 12 by the date of the hunt). A total of 30 youths will be selected (10 per hunt). Applicants previously selected are not eligible to apply.

Ten, 3-man ground blinds will be provided. Each youth must be accompanied by one parent/guardian 21 years or older. A refuge staff/volunteer will also accompany each youth to their blind. Rifles will be allowed.

A new application form will be implemented this year for the lottery youth deer hunts. Specific instructions on how to apply will accompany each application form.

We will accept applications from August 1-31. Applications will be available at the refuge office or on the refuge's website (<http://lakeophelia.fws.gov>). Applicants will be selected at a public drawing, which is to be held at the refuge headquarters at 10 am on Wednesday, September 9, 2009. Successful applicants will be notified by mail.

Spring Turkey Hunts (First 16 days of the State Season)

Certain portions of ATV trails are closed during turkey season. ATV's are restricted to marked trails. The use of turkey gobbler decoys and incidental hog hunting during refuge turkey season is prohibited. Harvested turkeys must be checked at Dupuy's Grocery, located 7 miles south of the refuge on Hwy 452.

Motorized Vehicles

All motorized vehicles are restricted to roads that are delineated on the refuge map. Vehicle wheels with a wheel-tire combination having a radius of 17 inches or more from the center of the hub (measured horizontal to ground) are prohibited. The vehicle speed limit shall not exceed 25 mph except as otherwise legally posted.

All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

Use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) is restricted to designated trails. ATVs are allowed only for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife related activities. ATVs will not exceed 25 mph when driven on the Refuge.

ATVs used on the Refuge will not to exceed the following: weight – 750 lbs., length – 85", and width – 48". ATV tires are restricted to those no larger than 25 x 12 with a maximum lug height of 1" and a maximum allowable tire pressure of 7 p.s.i. as indicated on the tire by the manufacturer. ATV trails are open from September 5 through the last day of the Refuge archery season. Exceptions are the Duck Lake trail which is open all year and certain designated trails open during refuge turkey season.

Boats

Lake Ophelia is open only during the Unit 1B archery deer season, only electric or non-motorized boats may be used. Boats may not be left on the refuge overnight.

Lake Long, Possum Bayou (South of boat ramp), and Dooms Lake are open all year and only electric or non-motorized boats may be used.

Duck, Nicholas, West Cut Lakes, Possum Bayou (North of boat ramp), Palmetto Bayou and Point Basse are open all year, and motors up to 25 horsepower may be used.

Prohibited Activities

The following activities are prohibited on Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge:

■ **Possession or distribution of bait while in the field and hunting with the aid of bait, including any grain, salt, minerals, or any non-naturally occurring food attractant.**

■ **Hunting or the discharge of firearms within 150 feet from the centerline of roads and maintained trails is prohibited.**

■ **Use or possession of any type of material used as flagging or trail markers, except bright eyes or reflective tape.**

■ Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.

■ Littering

■ Camping / overnight parking

■ Taking of wildlife, or parts of, or plants (including cutting trees or brush) other than specified in this brochure.

■ Target practice

■ Hand guns, pellet guns, bb guns

■ Trapping

■ Riding horses or mules

■ Fires

■ Spot-lighting – artificial light may not be used to locate wildlife.

■ Man-drives for deer or feral hogs

■ Crawfishing

■ Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts.

■ Blocking gates or roadways with vehicles or ATV.

■ Driving or screwing a nail, spike or other metal object into a tree or to hunt from any tree in which such an object has been driven; or using climbing spikes.

■ Possession of saws, saw blades, or machetes.

■ Harvest of frogs, turtles, snakes, shells, or mollusks

■ Collection and removal of antlers

■ Use of remote cameras

■ Use of deer or turkey gobbler decoys

■ Geocaching

Specific Hunting Regulations

This year, Refuge hunters will not be required to check in and out at Refuge check stations for hunting, fishing, or scouting activities. Exception: All hunters participating in the Lottery Primitive Firearm deer hunts are still required to check in and out at a manned check station. Likewise, turkey hunters are still required to check out harvested turkeys at Dupuy's Grocery on Hwy 452.

Hunters may enter the Refuge no earlier than 4:00 a.m. and must exit no later than two hours after legal sunset for that day. Waterfowl hunting must cease by 12:00 noon and all decoys and blinds removed from the hunting area by 1:00 p.m.

The International Bowhunters Certification Course is not required for archery hunting.

Only portable deer stands may be used. Deer stands may be erected one day before the archery season and must be removed from the Refuge within one day after the season closes. Hunters may place only one deer stand on the Refuge. Deer stands must have the owners name, address and phone number clearly printed on the stand. Stands must be placed in a non-hunting position when not in use.

Waterfowl, small game and archery hunting is prohibited during quota primitive firearms deer hunts. Archery hunting is prohibited in Units 1B & 2B during youth deer hunts.

State bag limits apply unless otherwise specified. The only seasons open are those listed in this brochure.

Hunting is permitted only in designated areas during dates shown on map.

Youth hunters under the age of 16 must be supervised by an adult at least 21 years of age during all hunts. Two youths may be supervised by one adult during small game hunts. Only one youth may be supervised during big game hunts. Youth must remain within normal voice contact of the adult who is supervising them.

All hunters must wear and display 400 square inches of "hunters orange" and a "hunters orange" cap during the deer gun seasons. Hunters participating in the special dog season for rabbits are required to wear a "hunters orange" cap.

Deer hunters hunting from concealed ground blinds must display a minimum of 400 square inches of "hunters orange" above or around their blinds which is visible from 360 degrees.

All refuge users must enter and exit the refuge only at designated parking lots. Accessing adjacent lands from any part of the refuge or from refuge parking areas is prohibited.

Beaver, raccoon, feral hogs, nutria and coyote may be taken **incidental to any refuge hunt** with weapons legal for that hunt until the daily bag limit of game is taken.

Hunting with pointer/retriever dogs during migratory bird seasons and hunting with rabbit and squirrel dogs during the rabbit season is permitted. However, rabbit dogs are allowed ONLY after the Louisiana modern firearms deer season has closed until the close of the state rabbit season. Use of dogs to trail wounded deer or hogs is prohibited.

No more than two dogs per hunting party for squirrel hunting. Only beagles that do not exceed 15 inches at front shoulders may be used for rabbit hunting. All dogs must be collared with owner's name and phone number. Rabbit hunters must wear a minimum of an unbroken orange cap during special dog season.