

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge

Turkey Hunting



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM

Welcome to Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service established the refuge in 1958 primarily for migratory birds. Public hunting is a priority public use and can provide a quality recreational experience when pursued responsibly. The refuge allows turkey hunting in accordance with state laws and the following refuge specific regulations.

Permits

The refuge allows hunting of turkey during both the spring and fall seasons in accordance with New York State regulations. We require a refuge permit for spring turkey hunting. There is no permit required for fall turkey hunting. We issue a total of 75 permits through a random pre-season drawing. By entering this drawing hunters become eligible for one of two sessions:

- Session 1 runs May 1-15 for which we issue 50 permits.
- Session 2 runs from May 16-31 for which we issue 25 permits.

Permit applications are accepted online at IroquoisNWR.RecAccess.com from March 1-April 1. There is a \$5 application fee to cover administration costs. If selected, hunters will receive email notification, which will include an electronic copy of their permit and harvest report. Hunters are required to have a copy of their permit with them while hunting and scouting. Dogs are authorized for use during the fall turkey season, but not for the spring per State regulations.

Access

Turkey hunting is permitted in all areas of the refuge open to hunting during the State's spring and fall seasons. Hunters may access the refuge 2 hours before legal sunrise until 1 pm during the spring season and 1 hour after sunset during the fall season.

Hunters with Disabilities

We issue a non-ambulatory hunt permit which allows the use of two off-road parking sites. This permit is available to hunters with disabilities who possess a New York State non-ambulatory hunting license. Contact the refuge office for locations. You must apply in person and show proof of disability.

Youth Turkey Hunting

A youth hunt is held on the same days as the New York State Youth Turkey Hunt for junior hunters between 12-15 years of age. The program is free, but space is limited to 25 participants and permits are issued on a first come first serve basis. Participants must apply by completing the permit application online at IroquoisNWR.RecAccess.com. There is no fee for registration. Applications will be accepted from March 1 to the beginning of the season, or until all 25 permits are gone. Hunters will receive an email notification which will include an electronic copy of their permit and vehicle pass. All junior hunters must be accompanied by an adult during the hunt. Adult guides must have a valid New York State hunting license and turkey permit but may not hunt.

No Hunting Zones

No Hunting Zones include but are not limited to: the immediate area around the refuge office; around refuge residences; the vicinity of the Iroquois Job Corps Center; HQ Trail, Swallow Hollow, Kanyoo and Onondaga Nature Trails, and safety zones around private residences adjacent to the refuge. Areas adjacent to bald eagle nests will be closed during the spring turkey season. Permission must be obtained from refuge personnel to enter a "No Hunting Zone" or "Closed Area" for the purpose of tracking and/or retrieving legally taken game animals.

Scouting

Scouting for fall turkey is permitted from September 1 through the last day of season, and for spring turkey from April 22 to April 30, excluding the State Youth Hunt Weekend. Dogs are prohibited during scouting.

Blinds and Stands

Only portable blinds and stands are permitted. All equipment must be removed from the refuge at the end of the day. Hunters cannot use screw-in steps or use nails, spikes, wire, or bolts to attach a stand to a tree. Trail cameras are prohibited.

Vehicles

Vehicles are only allowed on established roads marked open for vehicular travel. Vehicles must be parked off the lane of travel and clear of gates. ATVs and snowmobiles are not allowed.

Non-motorized Boating

Canoes, kayaks and other non-motorized boats may be used on Oak Orchard Creek only, from Knowlesville Road to Route 63. You may launch boats from Route 63, Sour Springs Road and Knowlesville Road. Expect obstructions and variable water levels on the creek.

Prohibited Activities

- The distribution of bait or hunting over a baited area.
- Using illuminating devices, including automobile headlights, for the purpose of spotlighting game species.
- Camping, overnight parking, open fires and littering.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.
- Weapons may not be discharged within, into or across a "No Hunting Zone", or "Closed Area," or from, on or across any refuge road or designated foot trail. Hunting from within 500 feet of any residence or refuge building is prohibited.
- Hunters may not possess axes, hatchets, saws, nails, tacks, paint or flagging for the marking of trees and shrubs.

Harvest Reports

All hunters are required to meet statewide requirements for harvest reporting. Spring Turkey hunters are required to turn in a refuge Big Game Harvest Report (FWS Form 3-2359) no later than June 7, whether or not they hunted.

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge
1101 Casey Road Basom, NY 14013
(585) 948-5445 or Iroquois@fws.gov
Website: fws.gov/refuge/Iroquois

Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing: 1-800-877-8339

Last Updated February 2025