

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Bombay Hook

National Wildlife Refuge

Turkey Hunting Regulations 2025



Welcome

Bombay Hook was established in 1937 as a link in the chain of refuges extending from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. It is primarily a refuge and breeding ground for migrating birds and other wildlife. The value and importance of Bombay Hook for migratory bird protection and conservation has increased through the years, primarily due to the management of the refuge and the loss of high quality habitat along the Atlantic Flyway.

Accessibility Information

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. For more information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/public-civil-rights>.

Firearms

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32.

Legal Firearms, Bows, and Shot Sizes

1. Shotguns (10, 12, 16, 20, 28, and .410 gauge), including smoothbore muzzleloading shotguns – 20, 16, 12, 10 gauge – legal shot sizes: #4 or smaller. All shot types are legal, including those comprised of tungsten super shot (TSS). Federally approved non-toxic shot is strongly encouraged.
2. Longbow/compound/crossbow – Minimum broadhead width of 7/8 inches. Crossbows must meet the same standards as for deer hunting.

Bombay Hook NWR Turkey Hunting Permit 2025

When signed and carried, this serves as your permit for all refuge turkey hunts and acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained herein. This permit is required in addition to the State issued permit. Expires May 10, 2025

Signature (permits are not transferable)

Hunting Regulations

Hunting regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting and fishing are permitted in accordance with Federal regulations governing public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Hunting will be in accordance with applicable State of Delaware regulations subject to the conditions stated below.

Permits

Hunters are required to possess a valid Delaware hunting license and all required stamps, valid government-issued photo identification, and a valid hunting permit issued by the refuge on their person at all times during refuge hunt and scout days. Read and sign this brochure, it serves as your refuge permit.

Turkey permits are issued through the State turkey lottery. Permitted hunters may have 1 non-hunting helper while scouting, roosting, and turkey hunting. Helpers must also possess a copy of this signed brochure.

Vehicles

Licensed motor vehicles are permitted only on public use roads as shown on the map. ATVs and UTVs are prohibited. Hunters may park on roadsides no more than a vehicle width off the road. Do Not Block the Road. All State regulations and laws are applicable.

Boats

Watercraft may not be hunted from or used to access turkey hunting locations.

Tree Stands/Blinds

Portable tree stands, elevated platforms, and ground blinds may be used. All equipment, including decoys, must be removed at the end of each hunt day. The use of nails, wire, bolts, screws, screw-in steps, spikes, or other objects that may damage trees is prohibited. Remaining refuge stands are not maintained. Use at your own risk.

Open to Hunting

Bearded Turkey.

Closed to Hunting

All other species of wildlife not listed above are protected.

Access

Open Areas -see map

Regular Area

The Regular Area is accessible via Dutch Neck Rd.

Fischer Tract

The Fischer Tract is accessible via Route 9 at Hawkey Branch Rd.

Steamboat Landing

Steamboat Landing is accessible via Donas Landing Rd.

South Upland Area

The South Upland Area is accessible via Marshtown Rd.

We require hunters to notify a refuge representative and receive permission from the refuge manager or designee prior to entering a closed area or safety zone to retrieve game.

Days & Times

Hunters may access the refuge on **designated hunt days** up to 2 hours before legal hunting time. Turkey hunting in Delaware ends at 1pm.

No Sunday hunting permitted.

Scouting

Turkey scouting will be allowed April 6-11 during daylight hours, the Sunday during your permitted segment, and after 1pm on hunt days during your permitted segment.

Roosting

Permitted turkey hunters may be on the refuge hunt areas up to 1 hour after sunset to scout/roost birds the evenings before hunt days.

Guided Hunts

Hunt permit holders may not engage in guiding, outfitting, advertising, or audio or visual productions for commercial purposes.

Activity	Season	Open Areas	Special Regulations
Turkey Hunting	Segment A: April 12 - 18, 2025 Segment B: April 19 - 25, 2025 Segment C: April 26 - May 2, 2025 Segment D: May 3 -10, 2025	Regular Area Fischer Tract Steamboat Landing South Upland	State regulations apply. All access to Regular area units is via Dutch Neck Rd. No Sunday Hunting.
State hunting regulations and licensing requirements apply to all hunting on the refuge. Shooting hours and methods of take may differ from the state. Signed refuge hunt brochure must be in possession of hunter. Upon request, hunters and their assistants must display for inspection all licenses, permits, game, equipment, weapons, and ammunition, to Federal and State law enforcement officers.			

Youth and non-ambulatory hunt

Refuge lands are not open for the youth and non-ambulatory hunt. Turkey hunting is limited to hunters issued a permit through the state turkey hunt application system.

Bombay Hook
National Wildlife Refuge
2591 Whitehall Neck Rd
Smyrna, DE 19977
302-653-9345
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1-800-344-WILD
January 2025



Prohibited Activities

By law, recreational activities on national wildlife refuges are prohibited unless expressly permitted. Please check with the office if you have questions.

- Entering hunt areas without possessing authorized hunt permits.
- Hunting and scouting outside designated days.
- Use and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or other intoxicating substances while hunting.
- Permanent tree stands, nails, screw-in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree.
- Building or maintaining any structure on the refuge.
- Leaving any property unattended.
- Cutting and damaging vegetation/trees or the use of cut vegetation/trees or organic material as camouflage for any purpose.
- We require hunters to remove all stands, blinds and marking devices, including flagging or tape, the day of hunt.
- Access to the refuge from private or state property
- Distribution of bait or hunting with the aid of bait, including any grain, salt, minerals and other substances that are consumed.
- Hunting within 100 yards of any public use facility or hunting in designated safety zones as shown on hunting maps.
- Littering.
- Leaving game entrails or other waste within 50 feet of any trail, road, or refuge structure.
- Dogs may not be used to hunt or pursue turkeys.
- Shooting from, across or down any designated refuge road.
- Target shooting or shooting for any purpose other than legal in season hunting.
- Parking in front of or blocking gates.
- Over-night parking, camping and fires
- Searching for or removal of any natural items such as antlers, skulls, plants, historic, and archaeological features.
- Use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices.

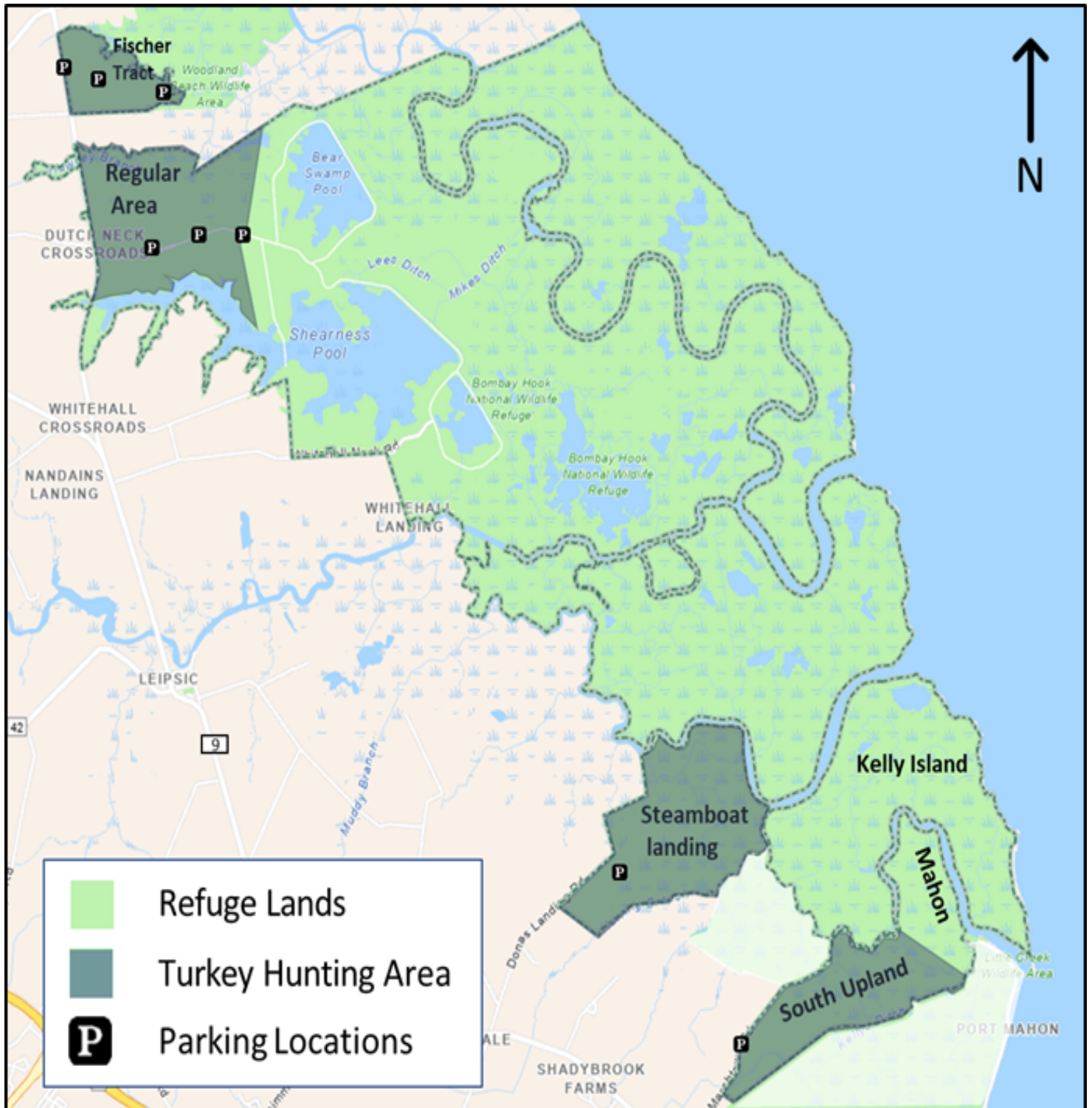
Harvest Reporting

In addition to meeting statewide harvest reporting permitted hunters must complete a Big Game Harvest Report (FWS form 3-2359, available at the refuge headquarters) and return it to the visitor center (in person or by mail 2591 Whitehall Neck Rd, Smyrna, DE 19977), regardless of whether you were successful. Harvest reports must be fully completed and submitted by June 1st. Failure to submit a complete harvest report will result in ineligibility for next years hunt.

Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge

Hunt Unit Map

See supplementary maps online for more detailed information.



THIS MAP IS FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY. THE BOUNDARY LINES SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE. FOR BOUNDARY LINE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE REFUGE OFFICE. PLEASE OBSERVE AND ADHERE TO ALL POSTED AREAS REFER TO REFUGE HUNTING REGULATIONS FOR AVAILABLE HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDING HUNT DATES AND HUNT AREAS. Supplementary maps are available at www.fws.gov/refuge/bombay-hook/visit-us/activities/hunting