



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

*Eastern Virginia Rivers National Wildlife Refuge Complex*

*Rappahannock River Valley NWR*

*336 Wilna Road*

*Warsaw, VA 22572*

*Phone: 804/333-1470 Fax: 804/333-3396*

Dear Hunter:

We are pleased that you are interested in participating in one or more of the 2025/26 hunts at the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). Please see Table 2 or 3 below for available hunting opportunities. As a reminder, Refuge permits and the use of an online check in/check out system are required for most of our hunting opportunities. Three units, Mothershead, Franklin, and Wright, do not require a permit, only the use of the online check in/check out system.

As is the case each year, for most fall and winter hunting seasons, permits become available beginning on the first Sunday in August, at noon (this year that date will be **August 3**). Hunters can acquire up to one archery, one muzzleloader and/or one shotgun permit during a 2-week, first-come first-served, time period. After this 2-week period, all remaining permits are available on a first-come first-served basis, with no restrictions on how many a hunter can purchase, until all permits are sold (that date will be **August 17**, at noon).

For waterfowl opportunities, a lottery is held in October (first waterfowl hunt day this year is November 20). Typically there are several weeks of time prior to the fall waterfowl lottery drawing in which to apply.

Spring turkey (2026) permits become available by the end of February or early March each year, and are sold on a first come-first served basis (first spring turkey hunt is April 11).

**Visit the RecAccess site to get permits and check in/out for hunts at:**

**<https://rappahannock.recaccess.com/>**

Please review all Refuge permits (if required) to be sure they are correct. If you believe there is an error, please call the refuge office at (804) 761-0464. You will need to have all applicable permits (Refuge, State, and Federal) with you during the hunt.

As a reminder, we finalized a new Hunt Plan in 2021. Please find that plan located here:

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/rappahannock-river-valley/visit-us/activities/hunting>

**SCOUTING:** Scouting is permitted upon request from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM on the dates listed below. Please notify the Refuge at least one business day in advance of the day(s) you are requesting to scout. You may make your reservation to scout via email ([william\\_crouch@fws.gov](mailto:william_crouch@fws.gov)). Please include your name, the unit(s) and date(s) you would like to scout, how many people will be in your party, a description of the vehicle that will be driven to the unit(s), and your best contact number.

**Table 1. SCOUT DATES for Deer, Coyote, Turkey, and Small game.**

Deer, Turkey, Coyote - Archery	September 27, 28
Deer, Turkey, Coyote - Muzzleloader	October 26
Deer, Turkey, Coyote - Shotgun	November 2, 9
Rabbit/Squirrel	Dec 14, 21, January 11
Spring Gobbler (2026)	April 4, 5

**HUNTING:** Refuge units will be open no earlier than one hour before legal shooting hours to one hour past legal sunset for permitted hunters or those who have used the online check-in system (depending on the unit) on designated hunt dates.

There is no Sunday hunting on any Refuge unit.

Turkey and small game (squirrel/rabbit) hunting require non-lead shot.

All hunting activities on the Refuge will require non-lead ammunition by 2026.

**Table 2. Hunting Opportunities by Hunt**

<b>Hunt:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>	<b>Units:</b>
<u>Archery I &amp; II-</u> Deer, Coyote, Fall Turkey	Oct. 4 – 31*	Cat Point Creek, Fones Cliffs, Hutchinson, Laurel Grove, Port Royal, Tayloe, Thomas, Toby's Point, Wilna, Wright,
	Oct. 4 – Nov. 14*	Franklin, Mothershead
<u>Muzzleloader-</u> Deer, Coyote, Fall Turkey	November 1, 7, 8, & 14	Fones Cliffs, Hutchinson, Laurel Grove, Tayloe, Toby's Point, Wilna
	November 1-14*	Wright
<u>Shotgun-</u> Deer, Coyote, Fall Turkey	Nov. 15, 21-22, -28- 29, Dec. 5-6, and 12-13	Fones Cliffs, Hutchinson, Laurel Grove, Tayloe, Toby's Point, Wilna
	Nov. 15 – Dec. 13*	Wright
Squirrel and Rabbit	Nov 15 – Feb 28*	Franklin, Mothershead
	Dec 15 – Feb 28*	Wright
Waterfowl	Mid-season: Nov. 20-22 and 27-29 Late season: Dec. 19-20*** and 25-27, Jan. 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-24, & 29-31	Cat Point Creek (two Refuge blinds in Menokin Bay)
<u>Shotgun**-</u> Spring Gobbler	April 11, 18, and 25 (½ days)	Franklin, Fones Cliffs, Hutchinson, Laurel Grove, Mothershead, Tayloe, Toby's Point, Wilna, Thomas (**archery only at Thomas)

*\*No Hunting on Sundays, \*\*archery only at Thomas, \*\*\*due to State seasons this is only a two-day hunt*

**Table 3. Hunting Opportunities by Location**

Units	Hunting opportunities
Wilna Hutchinson Laurel Grove Fones Cliffs Tayloe Toby's Point	Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote: Archery – Archery I: Oct 4-17, Archery II: Oct 18-31 (no Sunday hunts). Muzzleloader – November 1, 7, 8, and 14. Shotgun – opening day (single day) 15 Nov, 2-day hunts, Nov 21/22, 28/29, Dec 5/6, and 12/13.  Spring Gobbler: Spring gobbler (shotgun): designated (3) ½ days early season, April 11, 18, and 25.
Mothershead Franklin	Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote (no Sunday hunts) Archery – Oct 4-Nov 14. Squirrel and rabbit: Nov 15 – Feb 28. Turkey: Spring gobbler (shotgun): ½ days early April 11, 18, and 25
Wright	Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote (no Sunday hunts) Archery – Oct 4-31, Muzzleloader – Nov 1-14, Shotgun – Nov 15 - Dec 13 Squirrel and rabbit: Dec 15 – Feb 28 Turkey: Spring gobbler (shotgun): ½ days early season April 11, 18, and 25
Port Royal	Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote Archery – Archery I: Oct 4-17, Archery II: Oct 18-31 (no Sunday hunts)
Thomas	Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote Archery – Archery I: Oct 4-17, Archery II: Oct 18-31 (no Sunday hunts). Turkey: Spring gobbler (archery only): ½ days early season April 11, 18, and 25
Cat Point Creek	Deer, Fall Turkey, Coyote Archery – Archery I: Oct 4-17, Archery II: Oct 18-31 (no Sunday hunts) Waterfowl (Menokin Bay on Cat Point Creek) 2025/26: Mid-season: Nov. 20-22 and 27-29. Late season: Dec. 19-20 and 25-27, Jan. 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-24, & 29-31

**HUNTER ETHICS:** Please respect the land and other hunters by following these simple rules:

- We require stand hunting only. Stand hunting includes the use of portable hunting blinds, portable tree stands, or stationary ground hunting. No deer drives, stalking, or roaming are allowed.
- No damage to trees will be allowed. No nails, screws, bolts, or screw-in steps may be used. Stands and blinds must be removed daily.
- No cameras, nor other photographic or electronic recording devices are permitted.
- We prohibit the use of flagging to mark trails or for any other purpose.
- Be considerate of other hunters; do not intrude in their space and minimize vehicle use.

- Take all your trash with you, including food wrappers and spent shells.
- If you witness violations or experience problems, please report them immediately to the Deputy Refuge Manager at 804-313-7574.

**YOUTH ACCOMPANYING:** The Refuge allows permitted hunters to bring youth with them on Refuge hunts, provided they first notify the Refuge, and also abide by certain requirements. Please contact Deputy Refuge Manager Bill Crouch for further information ([william\\_crouch@fws.gov](mailto:william_crouch@fws.gov)).

**PARKING:** Hunters must park in designated parking locations, where marked. Parking areas include the sides of gravel roads on units that do not have designated parking areas and hunters must be parked in a manner to allow passage by other vehicles along roads and through gates. ATVs/UTVs and trailers are prohibited. While hunting on units that require a permit, hunters must carry a hunting permit and display a parking permit.

**REFUGE MAPS and DIRECTIONS:** Refuge maps are available at our website: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/rappahannock-river-valley/map> Directions to each of the units can be found here <https://www.fws.gov/media/2022-directions-hunt-units>.

**STATE LAWS:** If you need information concerning the state laws regarding hunts, please visit the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources web site at: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/hunting/> or call (804) 367-1000.

Sincerely,

Refuge Staff  
Rappahannock River Valley NWR