

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fisherman Island & Eastern Shore of Virginia

National Wildlife Refuges
Hunting Regulations 2025–2026



Fisherman Island & Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuges Hunting Permit 2025—2026

When signed and carried, this serves as your permit for all refuge hunts and acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained herein.

Expires February 28, 2026

Signature (permits are not transferable)

Welcome

Fisherman Island and Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuges were established in 1973 and 1984 respectively as an inviolate sanctuary for migratory birds. The refuges' visions are – "Lying at the tip of the Delmarva Peninsula, the Fisherman Island and Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuges are part of a national system of lands managed to ensure the future of wildlife and it's habitats. These refuges serve as one of the country's most valuable stopovers for migratory birds. Nestled between the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay, the refuges include a variety of habitats such as martitime forest, shrub thickets, grasslands, beaches, and tidal wetlands. These habitats provide a vital link for millions of songbirds, raptors, shorebirds, and butterflies to rest and refuel before continuing the rigorous journey to their wintering grounds".

Safety

Areas of the refuge may be closed for management purposes, or other hazardous conditions that pose a threat to human health and safety. Fisherman Island is a dynamic island and areas on the map may not represent true ground conditions.

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).

Firearms and or/muzzleloaders are prohibited in the Archery Only Zone.

Boats

Fisherman, Skidmore and Raccoon Islands are only accessible by boat. You may park your vehicle at the Wise Point Boat Ramp area provided a boat ramp/parking pass is obtained. Parking is limited to first come - first served, obtaining a pass does not guarantee parking will be available.

Dogs

We allow the use of dogs consistent with State and Northampton County regulations only in the General Hunt and Migratory Game Bird Only Hunt Areas.

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>.

For additional information please contact
757-336-6122 ext. 2.

Hunting Regulations

Hunting regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting is 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 Virginia regulations subject to the conditions stated herein. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the refuge headquarters, or from the refuge website.

All members of a hunt party must possess a refuge hunt permit and be actively engaged in hunting. We allow an exception for those persons aiding a disabled person who possesses a valid State-issued Commonwealth of Virginia Disabled Resident Lifetime License or Commonwealth of Virginia Resident Disabled Veteran's Lifetime License.

For Fisherman Island Only

Hunting is only allowed by a boat; you may not hunt from land. Retrieval of fallen game is allowed on land. Hunting is prohibited from any upland or beach habitat.

Access

Hunters may access the refuge two hours before legal sunrise until two hours after legal sunset.

Parking is allowed only in designated areas as shown on the attached map.

Refuge hunt areas adjoin private property and “closed to hunting” areas. It is the hunter’s responsibility to know where they are hunting.

Tree Stands, Blinds & Decoys

We allow the use of portable tree stands, portable blinds and decoys, but you must remove them at the end of each day’s hunt.

Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge
5003 Hallett Circle
Cape Charles, VA 23310

Phone - 757-336-6122 ext. 2
Email - fw5rw_cnwr@fws.gov
Website - <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/eastern-shore-virginia>

Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339 TDD/ 1 800/828 1140 voice

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

July 2025



Activity	Season Dates	Hunting Areas	Method of Take	Other Regulations
White-tailed Deer	Hunting is allowed during the <u>State season dates</u> that fall between September 1- February 28	Archery Only Zone, General Hunt Zone	Firearms and/or muzzleloaders are prohibited in the Archery Only Zone The method of take of game in the General Hunt Zone is in accordance with state regulations	Refuge-issued permit is required in addition to the proper State permit The refuge prohibits organized deer drives Non-toxic ammunition is encouraged No hunting on Sundays
Turkey	Closed season			
Squirrel, Rabbit, Quail	Hunting is allowed during the <u>State season dates</u> that fall between September 1 - February 28	General Hunt Zone	The method of take of game in the General Hunt Zone is in accordance with state regulations	Refuge-issued permit is required in addition to the proper State permit Non-toxic ammunition is required No hunting on Sundays
Opossum, Raccoon, Fox, Coyote	Hunting is allowed during the <u>State season dates</u> that fall between September 1 - February 28	Archery Only Zone, General Hunt Zone	Firearms and/or muzzleloaders are prohibited in the Archery Only Zone The method of take of game in the General Hunt Zone is in accordance with state regulations	Refuge-issued permit is required in addition to the proper State permit Non-toxic ammunition is required No hunting on Sundays
Waterfowl (ducks, geese, brant, swan, mergansers), Rail, Snipe, Gallinule/ Moorhen, Coot, Dove, Woodcock, Crow	Hunting is allowed during the <u>State season dates</u> that fall between September 1 - February 28	Migratory Game Bird Only Zone, General Hunt Zone	The method of take of game in the General Hunt Zone and Migratory Game Bird Only Zone is in accordance with state regulations	Refuge-issued permit is required in addition to the proper State permit Non-toxic ammunition is required Sunday hunting is allowed for waterfowl, rails, gallinule, and moorhens only
Harvest: State regulations apply for bag limits.				

Prohibited Activities

- By law, recreational activities on national wildlife refuges are prohibited unless expressly permitted
- Possession of alcoholic beverages
- 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
- Marking or flagging any tree or other Refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance
- Permanent tree stands, nails, screw-in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree
- Night hunting
- Hunting within 100 feet (30.5 meters) of any building, road, or trail, whether improved or unimproved
- Deer Drives: We define a “deer drive” as an organized or planned effort to pursue, drive, chase, or otherwise frighten or cause deer to move in the direction of any person(s) who is part of the organized or planned hunt and known to be waiting for the deer
- Turkey hunting
- ATVs/UTVs and saddled animals
- Riding bicycles, including e-bikes, on roads and trails not designated for bike riding. See Trails Brochure
- Non-toxic ammunition is required for all hunting except for white-tailed deer





Kiptopeke
State Park

13

SR 600

Magothy Bay
Natural Area Preserve

Bulls Dr.

Seaside Rd

Wise Point

SR 600

Fitchetts Rd

Skidmore
Island

Eastern Shore
of Virginia NWR

*Smith
Island
Inlet*

Fisherman Island NWR

13

0

1.5 Kilometers

0

1 Miles

- Archery Only Zone
- Closed Areas
- Migratory Game Bird Only Zone
- General Hunt Zone
- Principal Refuge Road
- Connector Refuge Road
- Trails
- Hunt Parking
- Hunt Parking with Kiosk