



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Alligator River

National Wildlife Refuge

Hunting Regulations & Permit 2025-2026



This is a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System,
a network of lands and waters managed for the benefit
of wildlife and people.

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

P.O. Box 1969

100 Conservation Way

Manteo, NC 27954

252/473 1131

email: alligatorriver@fws.gov

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator-river>

To report wildlife violations, call

1/800 FWS Tips (379 8477)

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<https://www.fws.gov>

August 2025

Refuge Hunting Permit Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

Name _____
(please print)

I have read and understand the refuge
hunting regulations contained in this
leaflet.

Signed: _____
Date: _____

This permit must be signed, dated and
carried on your person and is only valid
from September 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026.

General Information

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR/Refuge) contains approximately 160,000 acres, most of which are open to hunting. There are more than 150 miles of old logging roads that provide hunting access, some for vehicles and some on foot. Visitors should use caution, especially when venturing into the more remote areas of the refuge with only a two-wheel drive vehicle. In the center of the refuge is the Dare County Range, a 46,000-acre military practice area owned by the U.S. Air Force and used by both the Air Force and the U.S. Navy. The Range is a part of the North Carolina Game Lands Program and governed by Gamelands rules and regulations (<http://www.ncwildlife.org>). Especially in the areas on or adjacent to the Dare Range, road conditions may be unpredictable.

For newcomers to the Refuge, the impenetrable vegetation and remoteness often catch them unaware. First time users should consult with a Refuge staff member or another hunter before venturing off the beaten path.

Hunting white-tailed deer is permitted. About half the Refuge is open to hunting deer with chase dogs. Hunting small game and waterfowl is also permitted; however, the majority of waterfowl hunting occurs on the sounds and rivers surrounding the Refuge.

Regulations

All general Refuge regulations apply, unless specifically addressed in this leaflet. Restrictions and designations on the map in this leaflet also apply. Public hunting is permitted in accordance with all State laws, county codes, Title 50 - Code of Federal Regulations, and the following Refuge regulations:

Permits are required for all hunts. Your permit is on the front of this brochure. You may sign electronically or print and sign. Paper copies are available at the Refuge headquarters at 100 Conservation Way, Manteo, NC 27954.

The Refuge is open daylight hours only. Hunter access is allowed from one hour before until one hour after legal hunting hours. Legal hunting hours for raccoons and opossums are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset, unless authorized by Refuge Special Use Permit.

Possession of firearms is permitted in accordance with State law.

When taking any game animal or bird with a shotgun, federally approved, non-toxic shot must be used except buckshot or slugs for white-tailed deer. Possessing lead shot in the field is prohibited, except when engaged in deer hunting.

The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.

The taking or possession of bear, turkey, bobcat, any furbearer, or any part thereof, is prohibited, except when transporting same along an NC State road or US highway. Game legally taken on the Dare Range must be transported to U.S. Highway 264 or 64 by the most direct route possible.

Hyde County portions of the Refuge are closed to white-tailed deer hunting during open seasons on black bear on adjacent lands.

Disturbing, molesting or interfering with any person engaged in the pursuit of an authorized activity on the Refuge is prohibited.



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Vehicular access is restricted to licensed vehicles on designated roads (see map). The use of horses for any hunting activity is prohibited.

Baiting or feeding wildlife; hunting with the aid of bait; and use of electronic calls to attract wildlife are prohibited.

The use of trail cameras and drones is prohibited.

Construction or use of permanent blinds, platforms, and/or ladders is prohibited. Hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been inserted is prohibited.

Camping, fires, littering, target practice, and commercial guiding are prohibited.

Hunters should be aware that some areas may be temporarily closed to hunting or all public entry. These areas will be clearly marked with appropriate signs.

Farming Area

Farming areas are closed to waterfowl and coot hunting. The farming areas are open to hunting deer, small game, snipe, dove and woodcock, in accordance with State, general Refuge, and these unit-specific regulations. Check with the refuge for access updates.

Laurel Bay Unit

Hunting in impoundments and vehicular access to the farming area west of Buffalo City Road are allowed only during September, October, and February. During November-January, hunting is permitted in woodblocks and non-impounded (undiked) fields.

Please respect the following signs:



This sign denotes the boundary of the Refuge.

During November-January, hunting is permitted in woodblocks and non-impounded (undiked) fields.

Twiford Unit

The farming areas east of Buffalo City Road and west of Milltail Road are open to hunting and vehicles only during September and October and closed to all entry from November 1 to February 28.

Upper Creef Unit

The farming areas north of Sprigtail Road, east of Milltail Road, and south of Highway 64 are currently open to walk-in access only. The farming areas south of Sprigtail Rd, east of Milltail Road, and north of Link Road are currently closed to all entry. Check with refuge for updates. If reopened, the farming areas east of Milltail Road and north of Link Road would be open to hunting and vehicles only during September and October. The area is closed to all entry from November 1 to February 28.

Lower Creef Unit

The farming area between Link and Grouse Roads is open to hunting during September and October. Starting in November the area is open only to small game, dove, snipe, and woodcock hunting.

Stopping or parking on roads surrounding the Lower Creef Unit may be prohibited. To access the Lower Creef Unit, look for designated Hunter Parking spots at the intersection of Long Curve and Link Roads and the intersection of Bear and Grouse Roads.

Use of Dogs

The use of dogs is restricted to designated areas (see map). All dogs must be confined or

leashed and under owner control when not engaged in hunting. Hunters may walk on closed roads in the farming area or on the roads in the "no dog hunting" area to retrieve their stray hunting dogs only until 11 pm.

Farming units are open to small game and bird hunting with retrieving dogs in accordance with State and Refuge regulations.

The training of chase dogs is permitted only during modern gun deer season where use of chase dogs is allowed.

Wildlife Drive

Hunters are reminded that the Refuge Wildlife Drive (see map) is adjacent to several hunting areas and is a popular attraction to many. Please be aware of the Wildlife Drive and be cautious and courteous when hunting in areas shared with other Refuge visitors.

Youth Hunting

Refuge youth hunting regulations align with the State. Remember both State and Federal regulations apply to all refuge hunts. Be sure to check State Regulations at <http://www.ncwildlife.org>

Game Animals

Only the following species may be hunted: ducks, geese, tundra swan, coot, quail, mourning dove, snipe, woodcock, rabbits, squirrel, opossum, raccoon, and white-tailed deer in accordance to Federal, State, and local regulations.

If you have questions as to the advisability or legality of any activity, consult the Refuge Manager before participating in that activity.



Area closed and area seasonally closed signs. These signs mean the area behind the sign is closed to all entry either year-round or seasonally. Do not enter the area behind this sign for any reason.



This sign marks areas closed to hunting. Entry for other authorized activities generally is permitted.

