



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Cape May National Wildlife Refuge
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Cape May Court House, New Jersey 08210
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www.fws.gov/refuge/cape-may

Cape May National Wildlife Refuge 2025/2026 Hunting Regulations

Cape May NWR is open for deer hunting, migratory game bird, upland game and turkey hunting only. Trapping is **NOT** permitted. Hunting is prohibited on the Two Mile Beach Unit (former Coast Guard Electronic Engineering Center). **See the Delaware Bay Division Hunt Map and the Great Cedar Swamp Division Hunt Map for the areas legally open for hunting.**

New for 2025-2026 Season

Lead-free Incentive Program

Refuge deer hunters may receive a reimbursement for up to 2 boxes of lead-free muzzleloader or shotgun ammunition. For more information, please visit www.fws.gov/initiative/lead-free

General Hunting Regulations

- In addition to Refuge specific regulations, hunters must comply with all hunting regulations established by the State of New Jersey.
- Hunting is permitted on Refuge land 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.
- The distribution of bait and/or hunting over bait is prohibited.
- Motorized and non-motorized vehicles are prohibited on Refuge land. This includes but is not limited to: cars and trucks, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, motorcycles, and bicycles.
- Sunday hunting is prohibited.
- All public entry is prohibited in areas marked with "Area Closed" signs as well as on Refuge roads marked with "Inholder Only" signs.
- Hunting, or the possession of a loaded firearm or knocked arrow is prohibited within areas marked with "No Hunting Zone" signs. However, the public may still enter these areas for other purposes or to access other land open for hunting.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.
- The use of spotlights, automotive headlights, or other artificial light for the purpose of spotting, locating, or taking any animal is prohibited. This rule applies even if there are not weapons in the vehicle.
- The use of wire, nails, screws, or bolts to attach a stand to a tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven to support a hunter is prohibited. This also includes screw-in tree steps.
- Permanent stands, blinds, or pit blinds are prohibited. The Service takes no responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage of stands/blinds left in the field.
- Marking (including but is not limited to the use of flagging, bright eyes, tacks, paint), cutting, and/or the removal of trees or vegetation is prohibited.
- Falconry is prohibited.

- Federally approved, non-toxic shot must be used for all migratory game bird, upland game birds, small game, and turkey hunting.

Deer Hunting

The Refuge is open for all six State Deer Management Zone 34 seasons: fall bow, permit bow, winter bow, six-day firearm, permit shotgun, and permit muzzleloader, as well as youth deer hunt days.

- Tree stands may be set up no earlier than 1 month prior to the opening of the Zone 34 fall bow season and must be removed no later than 14 days following the close of the Zone 34 winter bow season.
- All tree stands left in the field must be marked with the owner's Conservation Identification Number. The identification marking must be conspicuous and easily readable from the ground.

Migratory Game Bird Hunting

- Hunters may pursue light goose, dark goose, duck, sea duck, gallinule, coot, rail, snipe, crow, and woodcock.
- Migratory game bird hunting is permitted only on Refuge lands west of Highway 47 in Middle Township, and north of Highway 550 in Upper and Dennis Townships.
- The common snipe season on Refuge lands begins with the start of the State south zone early woodcock season and continues through the end of the state common snipe season.
- Crow season on Refuge lands begins with the start of the State south zone early woodcock season and continues through the end of the state crow season.
- All hunting blinds, boats, decoys, and other hunting materials must be removed from the Refuge at the end of each hunting day.
- Hunters may use retrieving and/or pointing dogs for migratory game birds in alignment with State regulations.
- Only federally approved non-toxic shot is permitted for migratory game bird hunting.

Upland Game Birds and Small Game Hunting

- Hunters may pursue coyote, fox, woodchuck, rabbit, squirrel, and pheasant.
- These species may be hunted on any area on the Refuge open for public hunting.
- Hunting for upland game birds and small game species will begin with the start of the State south zone early woodcock season and continue for the duration of the State season for each species.
- Woodchuck season will close at the end of the State woodchuck bow or shotgun season.
- Night hunting is prohibited.
- Only federally approved non-toxic shot is permitted for upland game bird and small game hunting.

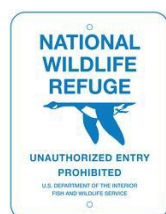
Turkey Hunting

- Closed for Spring Turkey Season.
- State-wide closure for Fall Turkey Season

See Delaware Bay Division and Great Cedar Swamp Division maps for areas open for hunting.



Closed Area Sign, all entry prohibited.



Refuge Boundary Sign, entry permitted in accordance with refuge regulations.



No Hunting Zone Sign, no hunting or possession of a loaded firearm or knocked arrow. Hunters may pass through these areas to access areas open for hunting.