

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Cypress Creek

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations



Welcome

Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge is nestled between the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in southernmost Illinois. The refuge was established in 1990 to restore and manage bottomland hardwood forests and wetland habitat and provide opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation and education. This 17,000 acre area supports rich floodplain forests, wetlands, and Cypress-Tupelo swamps. These resources provide resting, nesting, and feeding habitat for a diversity of migratory birds as well as resident wildlife like deer, turkey, mink, bobcat and otters.

Safety

To ensure your safety and enjoyment while visiting the refuge, please take the time to become familiar with the regulations and property boundaries. Call the refuge with questions. Trails remain open during hunting seasons. Be aware of hikers and wear appropriate clothing.

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 carried in vehicles, boats or bicycles must be unloaded AND encased or dismantled. Loaded is defined as shells in gun or caps on muzzleloader. Target practice is prohibited on the refuge.

Ammunition

Hunters may only use or possess approved non-toxic shot shells while in the field, including shot shells used for hunting wild turkey. Exceptions include the following:

Small game and furbearers may be hunted with .22 and .17 caliber rim fire lead ammunition during open seasons.

During deer hunts, lead ammunition legal for taking deer may be used.

Vehicles

Licensed motor vehicles are permitted only on public use roads as shown on the map. ATVs and UTVs are prohibited. Parked vehicles must not block roadways or gates.

Boats

Boating is permitted on refuge waters (rivers and ponds). However, the Cache River and associated tributaries are not designated as "public water bodies". This means that boaters are welcome where the refuge or the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) own one or both banks of a river; otherwise, use of the river requires permission from the adjoining landowners. All boats have a 10-horsepower restriction, and boats may not be left overnight on the refuge.

Bicycling

Bicycles and Class 1,2 and 3 e-bikes with an electric motor of 750 watts (1 horsepower) or less are allowed on designated motorized roads and bicycle trails. Operators of e-bikes must follow state age requirements.

Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances

Entering or remaining on the refuge when under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, as defined by the federal drug schedule, is prohibited. Use or possession of any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.

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, Civil Rights Office, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/public-civil-rights>

Hunting and Fishing Regulations

Hunting and fishing 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 and fishing will be in accordance with applicable State of Illinois regulations subject to the conditions stated below. Brochures may be obtained by mail, at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, or from the website.

Specific Fishing Regulations

Sport fishing, frogging and taking of turtles for personal use are permitted in all refuge waters in accordance with state regulations. Refuge waters include ponds and portions of the Cache River and its tributaries that are within refuge boundaries.

The use of trotlines, jugs, yo-yos, nets or any other commercial fishing equipment is prohibited; however commercial fishing is allowed by legally licensed equipped anglers in the Cache River downstream of Highway 51.

Anglers may take fish with no more than two poles with no more than two hooks or lures per line.

For Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge contact:

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge
6987 Headquarters Rd
Marion, IL 62959

618-997-3344
TTY Federal Relay System: 1-800-877-8339

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1-800-344-WILD (9453)

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Commercial Use

Commercial use on a national wildlife refuge including commercial guiding, commercial fishing and filming are prohibited, except as may be authorized by a refuge Special Use Permit.

Access

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

Hunting and fishing will be in accordance with applicable State of Illinois regulations subject to the conditions stated below:

- Hunting is permitted only in designated areas shown on the map
- Pits/permanent blinds are not permitted on the refuge. Only portable blinds or structures constructed of artificial camouflage (use of vegetation is prohibited) are permitted for waterfowl hunting. Blinds must be removed or dismantled at the end of each day's hunt. Cutting any vegetation on the refuge is prohibited.
- The use of dogs for hunting is allowed on the refuge in accordance with state regulations, provided the dogs are always under the immediate control of the hunter

To Report Violations

- 1-844-FWS-TIPS (397-8477)
- Turn In a Poacher (TIP) Line: 1-877-236-7529

Prohibited Activities

By law, recreational activities on national wildlife refuges are prohibited unless expressly permitted. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- Target Practice.
- Dog training.
- Riding horses or mules (except on roads open to vehicle traffic).
- Use or Possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.
- Camping, overnight parking and open campfires.
- Night hunting activities (except racoon/opossum hunting).
- Spot-lighting wildlife.
- Use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices.
- Marking or flagging any tree or other Refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance.
- Leaving tree stands or blinds overnight.
- Nails, screw -in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree are prohibited.
- Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts.
- Hunting within 200 yards of any public use facility.

Activity	Season	Unit	Special Regulations
Archery Deer	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. All state approved archery equipment is allowed.
Muzzleloader Deer	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. Incidental feral hog harvest is permitted during open white-tailed deer season consistent with hunt regulations on designated units for legal methods of take.
Firearm Deer	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. Incidental feral hog harvest is permitted during open white-tailed deer season consistent with hunt regulations on designated units for legal methods of take.
Youth Firearm Deer	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply.
Fur Bearer Hunting	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. Hunters must possess and use only non-toxic shot shells. Night hunting activities prohibited (except raccoon, opossum, fox and bobcat hunting.)
Dove	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply.
Turkey (Fall and Spring)	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. Hunters must possess and use only non-toxic shot shells.
	Spring only	*Bellrose Unit	Open to hunters with a valid IDNR Pulaski County turkey hunting permit during the spring turkey season only. Turkey hunters may scout 24 hours prior to and during the season for which they possess a permit. State regulations and shooting hours apply.
Upland Game	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. Hunters must possess and use only non-toxic shot shells.
Waterfowl	State seasons apply	Open Area	State regulations apply. Hunters must possess and use only non-toxic shot shells.
Fishing and Bow Fishing	State seasons apply	Open Area	State Regulations apply. Nighttime fishing prohibited.
State regulations apply for bag limits. *Bellrose Unit is CLOSED to all access unless otherwise stated.			



