



Bald Knob National Wildlife Refuge
1439 Coal Chute Road
Bald Knob, AR 72010

501/724 2458
(Central Arkansas Refuges 501/203 7253)
<http://www.fws.gov/baldknob>

September 2026

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Bald Knob

National Wildlife Refuge Public Use Regulations 2026-2027

General Introduction

Bald Knob National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1993, is one of 571 national wildlife refuges administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The primary objective of the refuge is to provide habitat for migratory waterfowl. The refuge is located in White County, Arkansas.

Hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education, and interpretation are priority public uses of the National Wildlife Refuge System. These wildlife-dependent uses are carefully managed on Bald Knob National Wildlife Refuge to ensure they are compatible with refuge purposes and provide safe, high-quality, low-impact, recreational opportunities. Users of the refuge must obey all signs pertaining to visitation, access, and public use regulations. All public uses, including hunting and fishing, are conducted in accordance with state and federal regulations as supplemented by the following special refuge regulations.

Access and Vehicle Use

*** NOTE:** The entire refuge, including the Mingo Creek Unit, is CLOSED to all other entry and public use during the Quota Gun Deer Hunt Nov. 14 -15. Only Quota Gun Deer permit holders are allowed to enter or use the refuge during this hunt and only for the purpose of quota gun deer hunting and the incidental take of beaver, muskrat, nutria, coyote, striped skunk, fox, bobcat, river otter, mink and feral hogs. **Exception:** If Flood Prone Region B is closed to deer hunting due to flooding during the refuge's Quota Gun Deer Hunt, then the refuge will be open to other public entry and use.

NOTE: The Mingo Creek, Bison, and Waterfowl Sanctuary Units will be closed to all other entry and public use during the Youth Quota Turkey Hunt (see AGFC regulations for Youth Turkey Dates). Only Youth Turkey Hunt permit holders are allowed to enter or use these refuge units during this hunt and only for the purpose of youth turkey hunting.

NOTE: Waterfowl sanctuaries, indicated on the refuge map, are closed to ALL entry and public use, including hunting and fishing, from Nov. 15 through Feb. 28 annually.

Conventional vehicles may only be used on the Bison, Waterfowl Core, and Sanctuary Units and ONLY from Mar. 1 - Nov. 14. Conventional vehicles must meet all applicable federal and state requirements regulating the use of licensed motor vehicles. Vehicles equipped with oversize tractor lug type tires are prohibited. Use of conventional vehicles is prohibited on the Mingo Creek Unit year-round.

Speed limit for motor vehicles (including ATV/UTVs, ebikes, etc.) is 25 mph unless otherwise posted.

Recreational use of ATV/UTVs is not allowed. ATVs may ONLY be used Sep. 1 to Mar. 31 and ONLY to provide access for hunting. ATV/UTVs may be used after Mar. 31 ONLY for goose hunting during the State Conservation Order.

"All-terrain vehicle" or "ATV" means any motor vehicle, designed for off-highway use, and designed to travel on not less than three low-pressure tires, having a seat or saddle designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering control and intended by the manufacturer to be used by a single operator or by an operator and no more than one passenger.

"Utility terrain vehicle" means any motor vehicle with four or more low-pressure tires designed for off-highway use having bench or bucket seating for each occupant and a steering wheel for control. mini-trucks or other modified off-road vehicles are prohibited.

ATVs/UTVs exceeding the manufacturers dry weight of 1750 lbs are prohibited. ATVs/UTVs may not have tires with tread/lugs greater than 1 ¼".

Conventional vehicles, bicycles, ebikes, and ATV/UTVs are not allowed in fields and must stay on maintained roads, levee tops, or established parking areas at all times.



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

2026 - 2027 General Hunting and Fishing Permit—Bald Knob NWR

This permit must be signed to be valid.

It must be carried by the individual at

all times while on the refuge and in possession of hunting and fishing gear.

An electronic signed copy of the permit may also be produced on a person's own cellular phone or other type of portable electronic device that clearly displays and accurately reproduces all of the information.

This permit expires 07/31/2027.

NOTE:

Quota Permits also required for Quota Gun Deer and Quota Youth Turkey Hunts.

I have read and understand the refuge regulations and agree to obey them.

Signature (Permit not transferable)

Prohibited activities include:

- Open alcohol containers on refuge roads, ATV trails, parking areas, boat ramps, fishing piers, or observation decks.
- Swimming.
- Camping.
- Building fires.
- Cutting or defacing trees, shrubs, or other plants.
- Littering (including, but not limited to, shotgun shell hulls and cigarette butts).
- Searching for or removal of artifacts.
- Use of horses or mules.
- Possession or use of fireworks.
- Commercial hunting/fishing/guiding.
- Driving on the Little Red River Protection Levee.
- Houseboat mooring to the refuge bank on the Little Red River.
- Off road vehicling, or driving conventional vehicles on wet/ muddy ungraveled roads.
- Taking or possessing turtles or mollusks
- Use of artificial lights to locate wildlife except as authorized for fishing, frogging, and raccoon/ opossum hunting.
- Use of firearms and possession or use of archery equipment and crossbows except during refuge hunts that allow their use.
- Loaded hunting firearms or muzzleloaders in or on a vehicle, ATV, or boat under power. "Loaded" is defined as having shells in the firearm or an ignition device on/in the muzzleloader.
- Target practice or non-hunting discharge of firearms.
- Failure to remove all marking materials from the refuge following the hunt.
- Use of drones
- Tournament fishing

The Core Waterfowl Area and waterfowl draw units will be closed from Nov. 15 -Feb. 28 annually to ALL public entry and use **after** 1 pm to reduce waterfowl disturbance and improve hunt quality (see map). During this period, Coal Chute Road, Granary West Road parking area and Frackin Road will remain open to vehicular access. NOTE: This closure will NOT apply to all-day hunting for geese during the State Conservation Order.

Roads may be closed any time conditions or other administrative needs warrant. A locked gate or other barrier, road closed sign, or no vehicle sign means the road is closed to ALL vehicle travel, including bicycles and ebikes, but not to foot travel unless signed otherwise.

Bicycles and ebikes may only be operated on roads or trails designated for conventional vehicles and/or ATV/UTVs.

Parking of vehicles on roadsides that prevents the passage of extra-wide farm equipment is prohibited. Vehicles are subject to be towed at the owner's expense.

Personal watercraft (jet-ski, etc), hover craft, and airboats are prohibited.

Boats may not be left overnight on the refuge.

General Refuge Regulations

Public use of the refuge is permitted throughout the year. Permitted activities are hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation.

NOTE: The refuge is open for public entry and use, including hunting and fishing, from 5 am to one hour after legal sunset, except for those engaged in raccoon/opossum hunting at night and possessing the appropriate equipment and required hunting license. Hunters trailing or retrieving deer after hours should call the refuge office at 501/724 2458 and leave a message stating their name, phone number and the general area in which they are searching for or retrieving deer.

Sport Fishing Regulations

A signed refuge fishing permit from the front of this brochure is required for all fishing activities. Permits are non-transferable and must be signed by the individual and carried at all times while on the refuge in possession of fishing gear. An electronic signed copy of the permit may also be produced on a person's own cellular phone or other type of portable electronic device that clearly displays and accurately reproduces all of the information.

Sport fishing, frogging, and crawfishing, for personal use only, are permitted year-round in accordance with state seasons and state and refuge-specific regulations. The owner's Arkansas Game and Fish Commission license customer ID number must be permanently affixed to each crawfish trap.

Anglers (including those frogging, crawfishing, and bow fishing) may enter the refuge no earlier than 5:00 a.m. and must depart the refuge by 1 hour after legal sunset.

General Hunting Regulations

A limited number of Nighttime Frogging Permits will be available this year. Permits will be sold on a first come, first serve basis for the first two weekends of the frogging season. Sales will be open from May 15 - 30. Visit <https://baldknob.recaccess.com/> for details.

A signed refuge hunting permit from the front of this brochure is required for all hunting activities. Permits are non-transferable and must be signed by the hunter and carried at all times while on the refuge in possession of hunting gear. An electronic signed copy of the permit may also be produced on a person's own cellular phone or other type of portable electronic device that clearly displays and accurately reproduces all of the information. A permit is located on the front of this brochure or can be downloaded and printed from the refuge website at <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/bald-knob>.

Additional permits are required for the Quota Gun Deer, Quota Youth Turkey Hunts, nighttime frogging hunts, and waterfowl draw areas.

Hunter Orange or Chartreuse must be worn in accordance with Arkansas Game & Fish Commission regulations during Quota Gun and Muzzleloader Deer hunts.

Portable, pop-up blinds must have 144 square inches of blaze orange or chartreuse visible from all sides of the blind during firearm big-game seasons on the Refuge.

Bag limits for all species, except deer, are the same as state limits.

Dog training is allowed Sep. 1- Apr. 1.

Prohibited hunting activities include:

- The use of dogs for deer hunting.
- We prohibit leaving any tree stand, ground blind, or game camera on the refuge without the owner's Arkansas Game and Fish Commission license customer ID number clearly written in a conspicuous location.
- Driving or screwing any metal object into a tree or hunting from a tree in which a metal object has been driven or screwed to support a hunter.
- Building or hunting from permanent blinds or stands.
- Hunting from a vehicle or use of a vehicle as a deer stand.
- Possession or distribution of bait or hunting over bait, salt, grain, or other feed that could serve as a lure or attraction for wildlife.
- Hunting from mowed or maintained roads or levees, except for waterfowl hunting.
- Possession or use of lead shot (exception: Quota Youth Turkey Hunt) or buckshot while hunting.
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages while hunting.

Mobility-impaired hunters

Mobility-impaired hunters may apply for a refuge Special Use Permit allowing the specialized use of ATVs on existing roads and trails. For more information, please call the refuge at 501/724 2458

Hunter Education and Youth Hunter Supervision

All hunters age 11 and under who possess valid hunter education certification must remain within normal sight and voice contact with an adult age 18 or older who possesses a valid State hunting license. Hunters age 15 and under who have not completed hunter education must be under the direct supervision (within arm's reach) of an adult age 21 or older who possesses a valid State hunting license. One adult may supervise up to two youth hunters for migratory bird and upland game hunting, but may supervise only one youth during big game hunting.

Specific Hunting Regulations

***NOTE:** The entire refuge, including the Mingo Creek Unit, is CLOSED to all other entry and public use during the Quota Gun Deer Hunt Nov. 14-15. Only Quota Gun Deer holders are allowed to enter or use the refuge during this hunt and only for the purpose of deer hunting and the incidental take of beaver, muskrat, nutria, coyote, striped skunk, fox, bobcat, river otter, mink, and feral hogs according to any applicable state seasons and regulations. **Exception:** If Flood Prone Region B is closed to deer hunting due to flooding during the refuge's Quota Gun Deer Hunt, then the refuge will be open to other public entry and use.

NOTE: Portions of the Mingo Creek, Bison, and Waterfowl Sanctuary Units will be closed to all other entry and public use during the Quota Youth Turkey Hunt (see AGFC regulations for Youth Turkey dates). Closed areas will be indicated with a closed gate or barricade. Only Youth Turkey Hunt permit holders are allowed to enter or use these refuge units during this hunt and only for the purpose of youth turkey hunting.

Migratory Birds

Only non-toxic shot may be possessed or used for all migratory bird hunting.

Waterfowl (Duck, Coot, Merganser, and Geese)

State Seasons. State bag limit(s) apply. Dogs permitted.

Morning until 12 noon hunting only, throughout the entire season, including the State Youth Hunts, and Special Active Duty Military and Veterans hunts. (Exception: all day hunting permitted for geese during the State Conservation Order)

Shotgun shell possession limit - 25 daily, except for goose hunting under the State Conservation Order.

Specific areas have been designated as "waterfowl draw hunt areas" These areas are closed to all other entry during Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and all opening days during the regular waterfowl season. See map and website for details.

Unless specifically noted, waterfowl hunting areas are first come first serve. Waterfowl hunting groups or individuals may not join another group or individual unless it is agreed upon by the first hunting group or individual to arrive at a location. If not agreed upon by the first group, the second or subsequent group(s) or individual(s) to arrive should depart from the area immediately. All hunting parties must maintain a minimum distance of 100 yards apart.

Waterfowl hunters may not assemble, stage or line up for entry into the refuge prior to 12 am during any part of the early or regular waterfowl seasons.

Waterfowl hunters may enter the refuge no earlier than 5 am, except to park in the Huntsman/Granary West parking area accessed from Safely Road prior to 5 am. Waterfowl hunters are not allowed to travel past the gate from this parking area before 5 am.

Hunters must pick up and remove their spent shell casings and boxes from the refuge.

Decoys, blinds, boats, and all other equipment must be removed daily by 1 pm.

Cutting of holes or other manipulation of vegetation (cutting bushes, mowing, weed-eating, etc.) or hunting from manipulated areas is prohibited.

Dove: State seasons* Dogs permitted.

Snipe: State seasons* Dogs permitted.

Woodcock: State season.* Dogs permitted.

Crow: State Season.* Dogs permitted

Rail (Sora and Virginia): State seasons.* Dogs permitted.

Gallinule (Purple and Common): State seasons.* Dogs permitted.

Small Game

Only rifles and handguns chambered for rimfire cartridges, air rifles, archery tackle, or shotguns with non-toxic shot may be used for all small game hunting.

Squirrel: Sep. 1 - Feb. 28.* Dogs permitted.

Rabbit: State season.* Dogs permitted.

Quail: State season.* Dogs permitted.

Furbearer

Beaver, muskrat, nutria, coyote, striped skunk, fox, bobcat, river otter, and mink may be taken incidental to any refuge hunt by the use of the device appropriate for that hunt and according to any applicable state seasons and regulations.

Feral hogs

In cooperation with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Feral Hog Control program, feral hogs may be taken on the refuge only during the quota gun, youth gun, and muzzleloader deer hunts and by archery deer hunters. Feral hogs are destructive, non-native animals that are incompatible with refuge management. Live hogs may not be possessed, transported, or released on the refuge.

Raccoon: Sep. 1 - Mar. 31.* Dogs are required for night hunting of raccoons. Waterfowl sanctuary is closed to all hunting from Nov. 15 - Feb. 28.

Opossum: Sep. 1 – Feb. 28.* Dogs are required for night hunting of opossum. Waterfowl sanctuary is closed to all hunting from Nov. 15 - Feb. 28.

Big Game

For all deer and turkey harvested on the Refuge, "Bald Knob NWR" must be used instead of a zone number for tagging and checking your game. In addition, ALL deer and turkey harvested on the refuge ALSO must be checked according to state regulations.

Only portable stands may be used and the owner's Arkansas Game and Fish Commission license customer ID number must be permanently affixed to the stand. A portable hunting stand is any device or structure used for the purpose of hunting that can be carried in its entirety and erected by hand including but not limited to tripod stands, lean-to stands, lock-on stands, ladder stands and climbing stands. You may only erect one portable stand or blind 7 days prior to the refuge deer season and must remove it from the waterfowl sanctuary prior to November 15, except for stands used by quota gun deer hunters, which you must remove by the last day of the quota gun deer hunt. You must remove all stands on the remainder of the refuge within 7 days of the closure of archery season.

Game camera use is limited to one camera per individual. **NEW**

Deer Limits

Refuge annual deer limit is three deer, with no more than two antlered deer. No antler restrictions. Button bucks will still be tagged and checked as button bucks; however, they will count toward a hunter's antlerless deer bag limit. **NEW** Deer harvested on the refuge are NOT bonus deer.

Early Buck Archery Aug. 29-31, 2026

Deer (Archery/Crossbow) State season.* Either sex. Three deer limit. No more than two antlered deer

Deer (Muzzleloading) Oct 17-25. Two deer limit. One antlered and one antlerless deer. Limited to muzzleloaders shooting a single projectile. Straight-walled cartridges prohibited.

Deer (Youth Gun) Nov. 7-8 Refuge-wide. Two deer limit. One antlered and one antlerless deer or two antlerless deer. Legal centerfire rifles are permitted on the Mingo Unit only. The remainder of the refuge is restricted to shotguns with slugs, muzzleloaders shooting a single projectile, **non semi-automatic centerfire firearm which fires a straight-walled rifle cartridge .30 caliber or larger**, and legal handguns and air rifles as defined by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission may be used.

Deer (Quota Gun) Nov 14-15. **(Waterfowl sanctuary will remain open to permit holders)** Refuge-wide. Quota hunt permit required. Two deer limit. One antlered and one antlerless deer. Legal centerfire rifles are permitted on the Mingo Unit only. The remainder of the refuge is restricted to shotguns with slugs, muzzleloaders shooting a single projectile, **non semi-automatic centerfire firearm which fires a straight-walled rifle cartridge .30 caliber or larger**, and legal handguns and air rifles as defined by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission may be used. A Bald Knob NWR Quota Gun Deer Hunt permit does not entitle you to camp on State WMAs during the refuge Quota Gun Deer hunt.

To apply for a quota hunt permit

Hunt permits are \$12.50 and must be purchased from <https://baldknob.recaccess.com/>.

Quota permits issued beginning Aug. 1 on a first come, first served until the quota is reached, or until Oct. 31.

Permit requests will NOT be accepted in person.

NOTE: Permits are non-transferable and non-refundable, even in the event of refuge deer hunt closures due to flooding.

The refuge is located in AG&FC Flood Prone Region B.

The refuge will close to all deer hunting when the White River gauge at Augusta reaches 31 feet, as reported at <http://www.weather.gov/lmrfc/>. This restriction is lifted when the gauge at Augusta falls below 30 feet and the White River gauge at Georgetown falls to, or below, 19 feet.

Turkey (Youth Quota Gun) Quota hunt permit required. Mingo Creek, Bison, and Sanctuary Units Only. State Youth Turkey Season. Youth will be assigned an area to hunt. Hunt permits are free, but must be obtained from <https://baldknob.recaccess.com/> March 1 through March 15. Contact the refuge office at 501/724-2458 for additional details.

Hunting Seasons

The entire refuge, including the Mingo Creek Unit, is CLOSED to all other entry and public use during the Quota Gun Deer Hunt Nov. 14-15. Only Quota Gun Deer Hunt permit holders are allowed to enter or use the refuge during this hunt and only for the purpose of deer hunting and the incidental take of beaver, muskrat, nutria, coyote, striped skunk, fox, bobcat, river otter, mink, and feral hogs by the use of the device appropriate for that hunt and according to any applicable state seasons and regulations.

The Mingo Creek, Bison, and Waterfowl Sanctuary Hunt Units also will be closed to all other entry and public use during the Youth Quota Turkey Hunt (see AGFC regulations for Youth Turkey Dates). Only Quota Youth Turkey Hunt permit holders are allowed to enter or use these refuge units during this hunt and only for the purpose of turkey hunting.

Deer - Early Archery (buck-only) State Season Applies

Aug. 29-31, 2026

Deer - Archery/Crossbow: State Season applies

Deer - Muzzleloader: Oct 17-25 (Muzzleloader Only-No Permit Required)

Deer - Youth Modern Gun: Refuge-wide including the Mingo Creek Unit. Nov. 7-8

Deer - Quota Gun Deer: Refuge-wide including the Mingo Creek Unit. Nov 14-15. **(Waterfowl sanctuary will remain open to permit holders)**

Squirrel: Sep. 1 - Feb. 28 *

Rabbit: State Season *

Raccoon: Sep. 1 - Mar. 31 *

Opossum: Sep. 1 - Feb. 28 *

Quail: State Season*

Waterfowl: State Seasons* - until 12 noon

Waterfowl–Youth: State Seasons* - until 12 noon

Dove and Snipe: State Seasons*

Woodcock: State Season*

Crow: State Season*

Rail: State Season*

Gallinule: State Season*

Turkey: Youth Quota Gun Permit Only*. State Youth Turkey Season (see AGFC regulations for specific dates).

Signs Protect Visitors and Resources

Millions of people visit national wildlife refuges each year. The impact of public uses, if not regulated, can degrade these wildlands and negatively affect wildlife resources. Signs promote safety and/or help control recreational activities while protecting natural resources on the Refuge. Please respect and obey all refuge signs, and all regulations contained in this brochure:



Boundary of the refuge.



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.



No vehicles in this area.

