



Cache River National Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
26320 Highway 33 South
Augusta, AR 72006
501/203 7253
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/cache-river>
<http://www.fws.gov/southeast>
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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Cache River

National Wildlife Refuge

Public Use Regulations 2026-2027

Introduction

Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1986, is one of 573 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 and protect the remaining tracts of bottomland hardwoods in the Cache River Basin. The refuge is comprised of numerous tracts of land along the Cache and White Rivers and Bayou DeView in the Arkansas counties of Cross, Jackson, Woodruff, Prairie, and Monroe.

General Regulations

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 Cache River National Wildlife Refuge to ensure they are compatible with refuge purposes and provide safe, high-quality, low-impact, recreational opportunities.

Public use of the Refuge is permitted throughout the year.

The refuge is open for public entry and use from 4 a.m. to one hour after legal sunset, except for those engaged in fishing, frogging, or raccoon/opossum hunting at night and possessing the appropriate equipment and required licenses.

The refuge is CLOSED to all other public use during the Quota Gun Deer Hunt. Exception: if a Flood Prone Region is closed to deer hunting due to flooding during the refuge's Quota Deer Hunt, then the refuge, in that Flood Prone Region only, will be open to other public entry and use.

Permits

Users of the refuge must obey all signs pertaining to visitation, access, and public use regulations. All public uses, including hunting and fishing, must be conducted in accordance with state and federal regulations as supplemented by the following special refuge regulations contained herein.

How to obtain Quota Gun Deer Permit

Hunt permits are \$12.50 and must be purchased at <https://cache.recaccess.com/>. Check the Refuge website for permit availability.

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

Permits are non-transferable and nonrefundable.

Vehicle and Boat Use

Cache River National Wildlife Refuge is in the acquisition phase and the attached map shows the current ownership at the time of printing this brochure. Isolated land tracts that have been purchased are scattered throughout the acquisition zone and have been posted with refuge boundary signs or marked with yellow boundary paint. Access to many of these refuge lands is currently through private lands and all refuge visitors must obtain permission from adjacent landowners prior to crossing private land to reach refuge lands.

Roads may be closed at any time due to conditions or administrative needs. 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.



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 – Cache River NWR

This permit must be signed to be valid. Individuals hunting or fishing must carry it 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 Permit is also required for Quota Gun Deer Hunt. 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.
- Camping, including mooring houseboats to refuge property.
- Littering (including, but not limited to, shotgun shell hulls and cigarette butts).
- Building fires and possession or use of fireworks.
- Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads, pottery or other artifacts.
- Use of horses or mules.
- Taking or possessing turtles or mollusks.
- Use of artificial light to locate wildlife, except as authorized for fishing, frogging, and raccoon/opossum hunting.
- Target practice or non-hunting discharge of firearms.
- Use of audio devices, electronic callers, recordings or similar artificial devices for simulating the call of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker or any other bird (except for goose hunting under State Conservation Order and crow).
- Use of drones
- Tournament fishing
- 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.
- The use of dogs for deer hunting.
- 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.
- 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 (except for waterfowl hunting while roads are flooded).
- Use of natural scents or lures that contain natural deer and elk urine or other biofluids.

All conventional vehicles must stay on maintained roads or established parking areas. Vehicles equipped with oversize tractor lug type tires are prohibited.

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 ONLY be used on roads, trails, and established parking areas designated (marked) for ATV use. 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".

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

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

Outboard motors with modified exhaust are prohibited.

Boats with a valid registration may be left on the refuge from Mar. 1 through Oct. 31.

All boating traffic on the refuge must maintain a minimum distance of 100 feet (approximately 6 boat lengths) between boats proceeding in the same direction of travel.

All boats are prohibited on the Refuge from 12 am - 4 am during regular waterfowl season.

Commercial Activities Hunting, taking, possessing, or attempting to take wildlife using a guide, guide service, outfitter, club, or organization providing assistance, service, or equipment is prohibited.

A Refuge Special Use Permit is required for commercial activities on the Refuge including but not limited to fishing, filming, seed collection, firewood cutting, trapping, etc. Permits may be obtained by contacting our Refuge Headquarters with a formal request. All Special Use Permit applications will be subject to a two week turn-around time and applicable fees.

Ammunition

Possession or use of lead shot or buck shot while hunting is prohibited. Exception: Spring Turkey hunt. Only non-toxic shot may be possessed or used for all migratory bird hunting.

Waterfowl Sanctuary

Waterfowl sanctuaries, indicated on the refuge map, are closed to ALL public entry from Nov. 15 through Feb. 28 annually.

Sport Fishing Regulations

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.

General Hunting Regulations

Hunter Orange or Chartreuse must be worn in accordance with Arkansas Game and 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 firearms big-game seasons on the Refuge.

Dog training allowed Sep. 1- Apr. 1.

Cutting/defacing trees, shrubs, or other plants, creating holes, or other manipulation of vegetation (cutting bushes, mowing, weed-eating, etc.); Hunting from manipulated areas is prohibited.

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.

Mobility-impaired Hunters: Mobility-impaired hunters may apply for a refuge Special Use Permit allowing the specialized use of ATVs. For more information, please call the refuge office at 501/203 7253.





Hunter Education and Youth Hunter Supervision

All hunters age 11 and younger 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 younger 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.

Waterfowl (Duck, Coot, Merganser, and Geese): State Seasons (except closed Nov. 14-22 during the Quota Gun Deer Hunt). State bag limit(s) apply. Dogs are 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 Afternoon scouting.

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.

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

Afternoon scouting for waterfowl is prohibited.

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.

Only non-motorized boats allowed on the Howell and Dixie Farm Unit. Motorized boats may be launched at the Howell high water accesses to Rex Hancock Black Swamp WMA.

Users may enter the Refuge no earlier than 4 A.M.

Waterfowl (Special Youth Quota Permit Hunt): Bayou DeView and Roundpond Youth Waterfowl Units. Available only to youth age 15 and under. Applications will be received Oct. 1 - 30. Visit the website for complete details.

Dove: State seasons* Dogs are permitted.

Snipe: State seasons* Dogs are permitted.

Woodcock: State season.* Dogs are permitted.

Crow: State season.* Dogs are permitted.

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

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

Squirrel: Sep. 1 - Feb. 28. *Dogs are permitted. Note: No road hunting allowed.

Rabbit: State season.* Dogs are permitted.

Quail: State season.* Dogs are 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.

Trapping: Dec.1 - Jan. 31. REFUGE SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUIRED. Trapping permitted according to State regulations.

Feral Hog: In cooperation with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Feral Hog Control Program, feral hogs may only be taken on the refuge during the quota gun, youth gun, and muzzleloader deer hunts and by archery deer hunters. Feral hogs are destructive and 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 hunting raccoons at night.

Opossum: Sep.1 - Mar 31.* Dogs are required for hunting opossum at night.

Big Game

For all deer and turkey harvested on the refuge, "Cache River 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. Arkansas Game and Fish Commission CWD regulations apply to deer harvested on the refuge in Jackson County.

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. Stands may be erected 7 days prior to the refuge deer season and must be removed from the waterfowl sanctuaries prior to Nov. 15 and from the rest of the Refuge within 7 days of the closing of archery season. Limit is one deer stand and/or camera per person. **NEW**

Hunters trailing or retrieving deer after hours should call the refuge office at 501/203 7253 and leave a message stating their name, phone number and the general area in which they are searching for or retrieving deer.

Refuge Deer Limit: 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. Deer harvested on the refuge are NOT bonus deer. **NEW**





Deer (Early Buck Archery Hunt): State seasons*. One antlered deer only. **NEW**

Deer (Archery/Crossbow): State season.* Either sex. Refuge limit applies. **NEW**

Deer (Muzzleloading) Alternative Firearm Season: Oct. 17-25 and Dec. 26-28. Either sex. One deer only may be taken during each hunt. Straight-walled cartridges prohibited.

Deer (Youth Gun): Nov. 7-8. One antlered and one antlerless, or two antlerless.

Deer (Quota Gun): Quota hunt permit required. Nov.14-22.* One antlered and one antlerless, or two antlerless.

Only shotguns with slugs, muzzleloaders shooting a single projectile, non-semiautomatic 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 on the Dixie, Dixie Waterfowl Sanctuary, and Plunkett Farm Waterfowl Sanctuary Units during the Youth and quota gun deer hunts

The Cache River NWR Quota Gun Deer Hunt permit does NOT entitle you to camp on State WMAs during the refuge Quota Gun Deer Hunt.

Refuge lands located in Flood Prone Region B 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.

Refuge lands located in Flood Prone Region C will close to all deer hunting when the Cache River gauge at Patterson exceeds 10 feet, as reported at <http://www.weather.gov/lmrfc/> and will reopen when the same gauge reading falls below 8.5 feet.

Refuge lands located in Flood Prone Region D will close to all deer and turkey hunting when the White River gauge at Clarendon reaches 28 feet as reported at <http://www.weather.gov/lmrfc/> and will reopen when the same gauge reading falls to or below 27 feet.

Turkey-Spring Gun: State seasons on all refuge lands located south of Interstate 40. Remainder of the refuge is closed with the exception of those refuge lands included in the combined Black Swamp WMA/Cache River NWR hunts administered by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Signs Protect Visitors and Resources

Millions of people visit national wildlife refuges each year. The impact of human activity, if not regulated, can degrade these wildlands. Signs control recreational activities while protecting natural resources on the Refuge. Please respect the refuge signs identified in this brochure.



Refuge boundary sign.
Public use permitted in accordance with refuge regulations.



Area beyond this sign closed. All public entry prohibited. Area closed to all public use. Some areas such as waterfowl sanctuaries are only

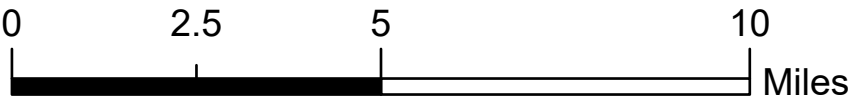
seasonally closed. Seasonally closed areas have the specific closure dates printed on the face of the sign.



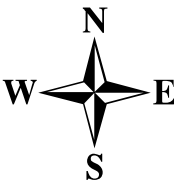
Cache River National Wildlife Refuge

North
Area

- Refuge Lands
- Waterfowl Sanctuary
(Closed Nov. 15 - Feb. 28)
- Youth Waterfowl Hunt Area
(Special Regulations in effect Nov. 15 - Feb. 28)
- Darby's Warrior Support Hunting Area
(Special Regulations in effect Dec. 1 - Jan. 31)
- Waterfowl Draw Hunt Area (WDA)
(Special Regulations in effect Nov. 15 - Jan. 31)



- Farm Units
- Wildlife Observation Tower
- Improved Boat Ramp
- Primitive Boat Ramp
- ATV Trails



1 inch equals 2.6 miles

South
Area

