



# Wheeler

## National Wildlife Refuge Hunting Regulations & Permit 2023-2024

**Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge**  
**2700 Refuge Headquarters Road**  
**Decatur, AL 35603**  
**256/350 6639**  
**<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/wheeler>**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
**1 800/344 WILD**

**July 2023**

**For additional closure maps:**  
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/wheeler/library>

**General Provisions**  
Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 560 national wildlife refuges. The primary objective of a national wildlife refuge is to provide habitat for the conservation and protection of all species of wildlife. The harvest of surplus animals is one tool used to manage wildlife populations. Carefully managed hunts maintain wildlife populations at a level compatible with the environment, provide wholesome recreational opportunities and permit the use of a valuable renewable resource.

The regulations listed below supplement the general regulations which govern hunting on wildlife refuge areas as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations.

**State bag limits, arms and ammunition and other applicable State regulations apply.**

**General Hunt Regulations**  
Public hunting on Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge is permitted on approximately 18,000 acres.

Squirrel, raccoon, opossum, quail and rabbit hunting is prohibited west of Flint Creek (see map).

No hunting or discharge of firearms is allowed in the Triana Recreation Area or within 50 yards of any walking trail or boardwalk. Hunting from any roadway is prohibited.

No overnight camping is allowed.

Mules and horses are prohibited on all refuge hunts.

Hunting is allowed Monday-Saturday. No Sunday hunting.

Dogs may be used to hunt rabbit, raccoon, quail, squirrel and opossum and must be controlled by the owner/handler at all times.

Hunters may not hunt from a tree in which a metal object has been inserted that is capable of supporting a hunter. **Tree stands, blinds, game cameras or other personal property must be removed after each day's hunt. No game cameras may be left on the refuge.**

Hunters must use a body safety harness at all times while hunting from a tree.

Overnight mooring of boats is prohibited.

Marking of trees, cutting vegetation, the use of flagging tape, and reflective tacks are prohibited.

**An area around the Visitor Center is closed to all public entry.**

This area is posted with "Area Closed" signs (see map).

Hunters under age 16 must be supervised by a properly licensed and permitted adult 21 years of age or older. On small game hunts, the adult may supervise no more than two youths, and on big game hunts no more than one youth.

Some refuge gates will be closed.

**Do not block gates or limit access by farming machinery. Your vehicle will be towed.**

Archery and flintlock deer hunters must wear a minimum of 144 square inches of hunter orange as defined by the State when the State gun deer season is open in Limestone, Madison and Morgan counties.

Hunting by aid of or distributing any feed, salt or other minerals is prohibited.

Only licensed vehicles and authorized bicycles permitted. Operation of motorized vehicles, except authorized e-bikes, beyond locked gates is prohibited.

**Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge  
Hunt Permit 2023-2024**  
This portion of the permit must be signed by you and in your possession while hunting and indicates you have read, fully understand and consent to all conditions listed in the Wheeler NWR hunting regulations.  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
This permit valid only when signed by hunter.



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

All harvested deer must be reported through the State "Game Check" system within 48 hours as required by State law. Hunters must select public land under the county where harvested and select Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge.

By signing the attached permit, hunter concedes right of inspection of game bag, hunting coat, etc., as provided for by State law, to Federal Wildlife Officers and State Conservation Officers.

### **The following hunting methods and equipment apply:**

Deer and feral hog: Hunters may only hunt with archery equipment that complies with state regulations and flintlocks .40 caliber or larger.

Small game: Hunters may use arms and ammunition that comply with current Alabama state hunting regulations pertaining to small game, except when using shotguns hunters must use only non-toxic shot.

Possession of lead shotgun shells for hunting is prohibited.

Participating in organized drives for deer and feral hogs is prohibited.

Field dressing of game is not allowed within 50 feet of any roadway, trail or public area.

### **Specific Hunt Seasons**

#### **Only the following wildlife species may be hunted on Wheeler NWR:**

*Squirrel, Raccoon, Opossum, and Rabbit*

Season: September 9 - October 14

February 1 - March 2

\*Gates scheduled to open October 1 will close October 15

#### *Quail*

Season: February 1 - 29

#### *Deer and Feral Hog*

Archery: Either Sex

October 14 - February 10

Flintlock: antlered bucks only

January 1 - January 13

### **NOTE:**

Crabtree Slough, White Springs and Dinsmore Slough are closed to boats, canoes, and all other watercraft November 15 - February 29 (reopens March 1).

For gate schedule, closure maps, and additional hunt permits visit:  
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/wheeler/library>

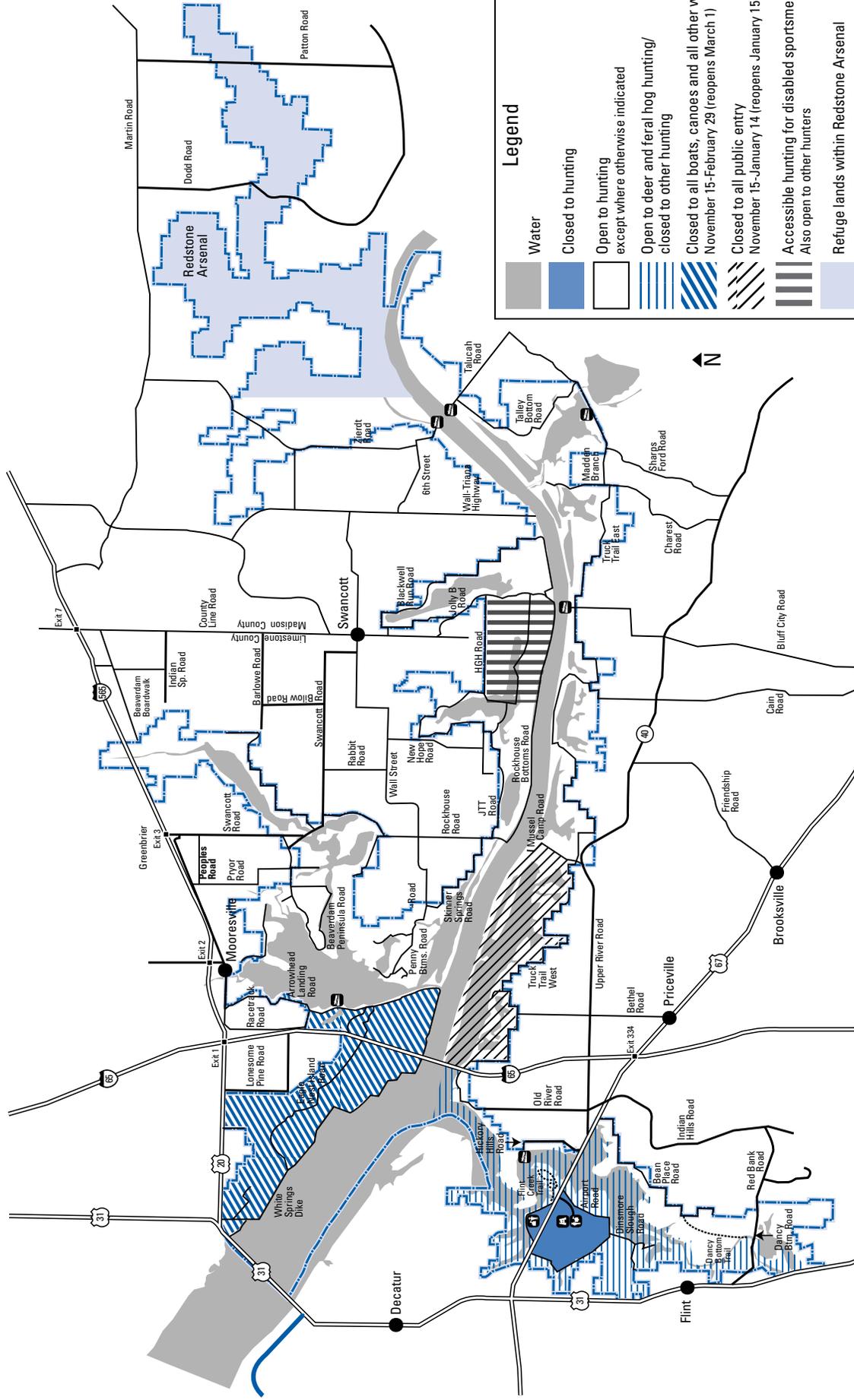


### **CAUTION:**

**Flint Creek island area is used heavily by migrating cranes, including the endangered whooping crane. Avoid approaching cranes on foot within 600 feet. Avoid flushing or causing birds to alter their normal behavior.**

**Whooping cranes are protected under the Federal Endangered Species and Migratory Bird Treaty Acts.**

**Caution: Other members of the public may be in the area and without hunter orange.**



### Legend

- Water
- Closed to hunting
- Open to hunting except where otherwise indicated
- Open to deer and feral hog hunting/ closed to other hunting
- Closed to all boats, canoes and all other watercraft November 15-February 28 (reopens March 1)
- Closed to all public entry November 15-January 14 (reopens January 15)
- Accessible hunting for disabled sportsmen Also open to other hunters
- Refuge lands within Redstone Arsenal
- Hiking trails
- Major roads
- County roads
- Refuge roads
- Refuge boundary
- Boat ramp
- Visitor Center
- Refuge Office
- Wildlife Observation Building

# Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge