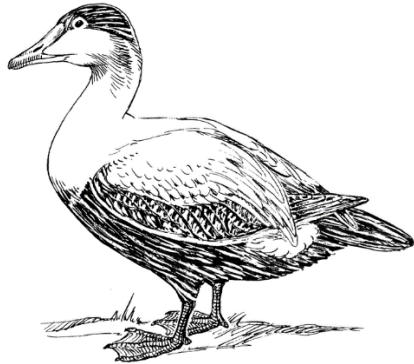


# Waterfowl Hunting Brochure 2022-2023



## Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is part of the Chesapeake Marshlands NWR Complex. It is one of over 565 NWRs in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The primary objective of the System is to provide habitat for the conservation and protection of wildlife.

The regulations listed below supplement the general regulations which govern hunting on NWRs set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. Failure to abide by any laws or regulations may result in the revocation of the permit and hunting privileges.

### Refuge Regulations

1. We only allow hunters to access hunt sites by boat; the use of air boats, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) or amphibious vehicles of any type (including Argos), is prohibited.
2. Dogs must be controlled while on refuge property when not actively retrieving.
3. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.
4. The removal or cutting of any vegetation on the refuge is prohibited.
5. Use of natural vegetation in any manner is strictly prohibited.
6. All hunt blind materials and decoys must be removed at the end of each hunting day.
7. We require all hunters in a hunt party to only hunt within their assigned hunt unit.
8. Hunters may only use temporary blinds and blind materials.
9. The refuge is closed to all hunter access from 9:00pm to 4:00am.
10. Commercial guiding is prohibited.

### PERMIT LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Each hunter must have the following in his/her possession and display them upon request of any FWS employee or MD Natural Resources Police officer:

1. Valid Maryland State waterfowl hunting license, Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp), and State Waterfowl Stamp.
2. Valid government issued photo identification.
3. Signed hard copy of the hunt permit.

**Legal hunting hours are one half hour before sunrise to 2:00 pm (EST).**

### PERMIT GUIDELINES

- Reservations are made through the **Recreation.gov** website.
- The maximum hunt party size is four.
- The individual whose name is on the permit must be present in the hunt party on the day of the hunt.
- An individual may only purchase one permit per reservation, but can reserve up to two units per week if available.
- Each hunter must print, read, and sign the permit.
- The signed permit will only be valid for that specific unit and day.
- All waterfowl hunt related information must be obtained from the Blackwater NWR website:  
**[www.fws.gov/refuge/Blackwater](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Blackwater)**

## **Hunting Days:**

Wednesdays and Saturdays only.

### **1st Split**

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Split**

November 12<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Split**

December 17<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>

January 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>

## **Hunt Unit Reservation:**

Reservations for hunt units open at 10 am EST, the Monday prior to the week of the hunt (see below).

The system will close at 3 pm EST on the last hunt day of that week.

If offered and available, you may select up to two units per week. Each unit selected will be a separate reservation fee of \$6.

## **Reservation opens through**

### **Recreation.gov:**

Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> for Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>.

Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> for Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> for Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>.

Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> for Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> for Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> for Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> for Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> for Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> for Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> for Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> for Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.

Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> for Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **Available hunt units**

Blackwater River East  
Blackwater River Central  
Blackwater River West  
Beaverdam Creek East  
Beaverdam Creek West  
Goose Dam Creek North  
Goose Dam Creek South

Spring Island East  
Spring Island West  
Bishop's Head East  
Bishop's Head West

Nanticoke 1  
Nanticoke 2  
Nanticoke 3  
Nanticoke 4  
Nanticoke 5  
Marshyhope 1  
Marshyhope 2

Scout dates are the following Sundays:

Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>

You must meet the **Permit License**

**Requirements** while scouting, except Oct.

2<sup>nd</sup> for the permit (Permits cannot be obtained until Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. Other documents still required).

Report illegal activity or related information to: USFWS Law Enforcement 410-221-8814.

## **ACCESS**

Hunt units are only permitted to be accessed by boat. See the website for approved access points for early season hunt units. Hunters are strongly encouraged to scout hunt units prior to their hunt day. Scouting may only be done from a boat. Individuals scouting the Goose Dam Creek hunt units will be allowed on land at the Parsons Creek dam only for the purpose of portaging their boat.

In the event that ice, low water, or any other natural events prohibit access to hunt areas, no alternate hunt unit or hunt day will be made available.

## **ACCESS POINTS**

The Blackwater River hunt units are accessed from the refuge car top boat launch on Route 335.

The Beaverdam Creek hunt units are accessed from the east side of Smithville Road near the Smithville Public Boat Launch.

The Goose Dam Creek hunt units are accessed from the southwest side of the Route 16 Bridge at Parsons Creek (please note that boats must be portaged over a small dam to reach the blind locations). Canoes/kayaks are recommended due to shallow water and tree stumps in the creek.

The Nanticoke and Marshyhope units can be accessed with a trailered boat from the Cherry Beach Park boat launch in Sharptown, MD or the public boat launch in Vienna, MD. The Barren Island, Spring Island and Bishop's Head hunt units are Chesapeake Bay island sites and can be accessed with a larger boat from a launch of your choice.