



Outdoor recreation provides a \$1.8 billion economic benefit in Arkansas



Media Contacts: Keith Stephens, AGFC, 850-488-4676, kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us
Tom MacKenzie, USFWS, 404-679-7291, tom_mackenzie@fws.gov

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansans take The Natural State nickname to heart, and they should.

In advance of National Hunting and Fishing Day on September 28, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is proud to join with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) in highlighting results from the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

Outdoors-related recreation generates more than \$4.9 million a day in Arkansas. According to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation compiled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Census Bureau, hunters, anglers and wildlife watchers spent more than \$1.8 billion on wildlife recreation in Arkansas in 2011.

The Arkansas state report measures public participation in hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and other wildlife dependent recreation, as well as how much money is spent pursuing these activities. It is now available on line at <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/arkansas/economicimpact-ar.html>.

The survey, done every five years by the USFWS and the U.S. Census Bureau, has become one of the most important sources of information on fish and wildlife recreation in the United States. Federal, state and private organizations use the rigorously-compiled and detailed information to manage wildlife and wildlife-related recreation programs, and forecast trends in participation and economic impacts.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Director Mike Knoedl said that outdoor recreation is way of life in the state. “Getting outdoors is good for Arkansas’s economy. Outdoor recreation creates job opportunities, which can lead to economic development,” Knoedl said.

“This is a must read for anyone who hunts, fishes or watches wildlife, as well as news reporters, economists and elected officials,” said Cindy Dohner, the Service’s Southeast Regional Director. “It is filled with valuable facts that show the economic impact of hunting and fishing and wildlife viewing.”

2011 Arkansas Quick Facts

- \$1.8 billion total spent on wildlife-related recreation in Arkansas
- \$496 million spent in Arkansas from fishing-related activities
- \$1.0 billion spent in Arkansas on hunting-related activities
- \$216 million spent in Arkansas on wildlife-watching activities

Fishing in Arkansas: \$496 Million

Who fishes in Arkansas, and how much do they spend?

- 555,000 state residents and nonresidents 16 years old and older fished in Arkansas. Of this total, 458 thousand anglers (83 percent) were state residents and 97 thousand anglers (17 percent) were nonresidents. Anglers fished a total of 15.7 million days in Arkansas—an average of 28 days per angler. State residents fished 15.1 million days—96 percent of all fishing days in Arkansas.
 - 83 percent of anglers were state residents (458,000 people)
 - 17 percent of anglers were from out-of-state (97,000 people)
- In total, residents and nonresidents combined spent an estimated total of \$496 million on fishing in the state in 2011.
 - Trip-related expenditures (food, lodging, transportation): \$340 million
 - Equipment: \$142 million
 - Other items (magazines, membership dues, licenses, etc.): \$14 million

Hunting in Arkansas: \$1.0 Billion

Who hunts in Arkansas, and how much do they spend?

- 363,000 people 16 years and older spent a combined total of 10.7 million days hunting in the state of Arkansas in 2011.
 - 316,000 state residents hunters
 - 8 percent of hunters were out-of-state (47,000 people)
- In total, residents and nonresidents combined spent an estimated total of \$1.0 billion on hunting in the state in 2011.
 - Trip-related expenditures (food, lodging, transportation): \$317 million
 - Equipment: \$467 million
 - Other items (magazines, membership dues, licenses, etc.): \$235 million - 23 percent of all hunting expenditures.
- Small game hunters on average spent \$12 per day, with big game hunters spending an average of \$22 per day. Migratory bird hunters spent almost twice as much as big game hunters at \$43 per day.
- The average total trip expenditure per migratory bird hunter was higher at \$887 vs. big game \$658 and small game \$181 per trip.

Wildlife-Watching in Arkansas: \$216 Million

Who watches wildlife in Arkansas, and how much do they spend?

- 852,000 people 16 years and older watched wildlife in Arkansas in 2011.
 - 96 percent of all wildlife watchers did so close to their home (820 thousand people)
 - 16 percent of all wildlife watchers traveled at least one mile from home to observe wildlife (137,000 people)
 - 25,000 of the wildlife watchers were from out-of-
- In total, residents and nonresidents combined spent an estimated total of \$216 million on wildlife-watching in the state.
 - Trip-related expenditures (food, lodging, transportation): \$35 million

- Equipment: \$157 million
- Other items (magazines, membership dues, plantings, etc.): \$26 million - 17 percent of all equipment costs
- The most popular around-the-home wildlife-watching activity is feeding wildlife (712,000 people).
- Arkansas spent nearly 1.1 million days engaged in away-from-home wildlife-watching activities in their state.
- More people photographed wildlife while near their homes than while away from their homes (249,000 people at home, 82,000 away from home).

Nationally, here are some highlights:

- More than 90 million U.S. residents 16 years old and older participated in some form of wildlife-related recreation in 2011, up 3 percent from five years earlier. The increase was primarily among those who fished and hunted.
- Wildlife recreationists spent \$144.7 billion in 2011 on their activities, which equated to one percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Of the total amount spent, \$49.5 billion was trip-related, \$70.4 billion was spent on equipment, and \$25.1 billion was spent on other items such as licenses and land leasing and ownership.
- The number of people who hunted or fished or both rose from 33.9 million in 2006 to 37.4 million in 2011.
- 71.8 million U.S. residents observed, fed, and/or photographed wildlife in 2011. Almost 68.6 million people wildlife watched around their homes, and 22.5 million people took trips of at least one mile from home primarily to watch wildlife.
- Of the 46.7 million people who observed wild birds, 88 percent did so around their homes and 38 percent on trips a mile or more from home.
- People spent \$54.9 billion on their wildlife-watching trips, equipment, and other items in 2011. This amounted to \$981 on average per spender for the year.

Complete survey results are available at:

<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/NationalSurvey/NatSurveyIndex.htm>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov/southeast. Connect with us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwssoutheast, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws>, and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwssoutheast>.