



# Southwest Region

## Fish and Aquatic Conservation

### Arizona Youth Turkey Shoot

The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Youth Outdoors Unlimited, Inc., and the National Wild Turkey Federation hosted the 2015 Junior Turkey Hunter Camp in eastern Arizona. Sponsors included the White Mountain Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Arizona Elk Society, and the Southern Arizona Chapter of National Wild Turkey Federation. Ninety-six junior hunters and approximately 30 youth (non-hunters) attended the free event. Thanks to the efforts of many, 24 junior hunters harvested a turkey and all junior hunters heard gobbling while hunting. Junior hunters and others visiting the camp learned about turkey hunting, hunting ethics, archery, trap shooting, trout fishing, and other outdoor interests.

Wildlife Managers with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and volunteers spend time mentoring junior hunters while in the field. Junior hunters have a hands-on opportunity to learn and discuss hunting strategies, wildlife habitat, and wildlife management. Hunt mentors are where the tire meets the road. They strive to inspire junior hunters and invoke a lifelong hunting and outdoor passion. It's obviously working as many junior hunters and their families return year after year to the camp.



Left to right - Dominic Barrett (Mentor from USFWS), (junior hunters) - Michael Emson, Samantha Groeger, and Charlie Ames. Photo Credit: Phil Ames.

Dominic Barrett (far left), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, mentored the three junior hunters pictured. During one morning, all three junior hunters harvested a turkey. That's a triple! To start the morning off, Samantha Groeger made an excellent shot on a lone tom that came in strutting and gobbling. After another close encounter and some hiking, both young men (Michael Emson left-center, Charlie Ames far right) harvested a tom. The two toms came running to the call during a late morning setup. The group hiked approximately two miles

during the entire hunt and setup several times.

The junior hunters showed expert woodsmanship, patience, and safety. "It was a great morning in the turkey woods and it will be one of my best memories," commented Dominic. "Arizona Game and Fish Department law enforcement officers should be commended for their efforts to recruit and retain hunters," Dominic later added. ♦ *As appeared in the Spring 2015 issue of International Game Warden Magazine by Dominic Barret*