

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
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<http://www.fws.gov/okefenokee>

News Release



For Immediate Release

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Supervisory Refuge Ranger

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Announces Hunt Dates for 2014/2015 Season

Folkston, GA....Okefenokee is one of many national wildlife refuges in the United States that offer hunting opportunities to the visiting public. 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 at a level compatible with the environment, provide recreational opportunities, and permit the use of a valuable resource. Public hunting on the Okefenokee NWR is permitted in three areas, the Suwannee Canal Recreation Area, the Pocket, and the Cowhouse Unit at certain times of the year.

More information is available on the refuge website at www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee, at the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center, located off Hwy. 121/23 near Folkston, GA by calling (912) 496-7836 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tuesday – Saturday or daily after September 1.

Suwannee Canal Hunt

A total of 40 permits will be awarded for this hunt, 10 of which will be reserved for disabled hunters in wheelchairs. Hunts are scheduled for two half-days: **Friday, October 24 and Saturday, October 25, 2014**, from 5:30 a.m. until noon. The hunt is for deer (either sex, limit 2 per day) and feral hogs (either sex, no limit). Hunters are required to use shotgun with slugs or muzzleloaders only. Use of buckshot is prohibited. Deer taken do not count against the state limit, and a special refuge tag will be provided upon check-out for each deer taken. All hunters must possess a valid Georgia hunting license.

Permits will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. Check-in at the Okefenokee Shop Area commences at 5 a.m. each day of the hunt. Follow signs from entrance road to sign-in area. Hunters may line up for check-in no earlier than 4 a.m. and vehicles may not be left unattended. Stand-by hunters may be selected on the second day of the hunt when first-day selected hunters do not return and/or check-in by 5:30 a.m. Hunters must be prepared to pay \$15.00 for a hunt permit. Checks, money-orders, or cash will be accepted.

The Pocket Hunt

This free hunt for **archery only** will take place at the Pocket Unit near Fargo September 13–October 10, 2014 in accordance with State regulations. All hunters must **sign in and out** at the west entrance kiosk, and possess a valid Georgia hunting license and refuge entrance pass (see website or call about entrance pass info). All stands must be removed daily. Park private vehicles on the shoulder of the road and do not block access roads or ditches. Walk into the hunt area; ATV's are prohibited. Contact Stephen C. Foster State Park at (912) 637-5274 for early exit to hunt area if you are staying in the park overnight.

Cowhouse Unit

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is managing deer, feral hog, small game, and turkey hunts on Cowhouse Island in conjunction with their Dixon Memorial Forest hunts. Hunt dates are as follows:

Deer and Feral Hog

Archery (Either Sex)

Sept. 13-29, Oct. 5-7, Oct. 12-16, Sign-In.

Primitive weapons (Either sex)

Oct. 1-4, Check-In. Oct 9-11, Sign-In.

Firearms (Buck only)

Oct. 18-19, Oct. 25-28, Sign-In.

Firearms (Either Sex)

Nov. 6-8, Check-In. Nov. 26-30, Sign-In. Dec. 6-9, Check-In.

Small Game

Firearms (See State Regulations)

(Quail, Rabbit, & Squirrel Only): Aug. 15- Sept. 29, Oct. 5- Nov. 4, Nov. 9- Feb. 28. Pointing dogs allowed for quail hunting only. No furbearer season. Feral hogs may be taken during small game dates after Oct. 31. Sign-In at Dixon Memorial WMA and at refuge Cowhouse kiosk if on refuge property.

Turkey

Firearms (Shotgun)

Mar. 21- May 15, 2015. In accordance with Dixon Memorial WMA regulations. Sign-In at Dixon Memorial WMA and at refuge Cowhouse kiosk if on refuge property.

Hunters on this portion of the refuge are limited to foot and bicycle traffic only. Hunters must sign-in and sign-out and must possess a valid Georgia hunting license. Regulations and information may be obtained by calling (229) 426-5267 or at <http://www.gohuntgeorgia.com> and <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee>.

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The Suwannee Canal Recreation Area (East Entrance) to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is the primary entrance managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is located 11 miles southwest of Folkson, GA off Hwy 121/23. The refuge is open daily and offers a variety of opportunities for the visiting public. Call 912-496-7836 or visit the refuge website at www.fws.gov/okefenokee for hours of operation, upcoming events, and entrance fee information.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to our events for all participants. Persons needing reasonable accommodations in order to attend and participate in our events should contact Susan Heisey at (912) 496-7366 ext. 233 or Susan_Heisey@fws.gov. In order to allow sufficient time to process requests, please contact us for assistance at least five business days before the event.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and 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. Connect with our Facebook pages at www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge or 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>.