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Arkansas offers an abundance of outdoor adventures for wildlife enthusiasts. The state's diverse landscape and extensive public lands provide opportunities for seasoned hunters and newcomers alike to pursue big game, waterfowl, and small game. This comprehensive guide covers essential information for planning a successful hunting trip in Arkansas, including season dates, licensing details, and wildlife management zones. The 2024-2025 hunting seasons in Arkansas offer a range of opportunities for different species, including deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit, and duck. The state's deer population is managed by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to ensure sustainable harvests while providing quality experiences. Deer hunters can choose from three archery seasons: Early Buck Archery (September 7-9), Regular Archery (September 28 - February 28), and Modern Gun season, which varies by zone. The regular archery season offers nearly five months of hunting opportunities, allowing enthusiasts to observe deer patterns and behaviors through changing seasons. Turkey hunters can also choose from multiple zones and dates, including Youth Hunt (April 12-13) and Christmas Holiday Hunt (December 26-28). Bag limits vary by zone, but generally range from three to five deer with a maximum of two bucks per hunter. In addition to these hunting opportunities, Arkansas offers a range of public lands and wildlife management areas for hunters to explore. With its diverse landscape and extensive public lands, Arkansas provides an ideal destination for outdoor enthusiasts looking to experience the thrill of hunting in "The Natural State". Given article text here Arkansas Offers Multiple Hunting Seasons with Varying Regulations for Different Game Species The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) provides various hunting seasons throughout the year, each offering unique opportunities for different types of game. The seasons are divided into multiple zones, allowing hunters to target specific species while adhering to local regulations. Wild Turkey Season: For 2025, the wild turkey season is divided into two zones with distinct dates. Zone 1 operates from April 21-29, while Zone 2 spans from April 21-May 11. Hunters under 6 years old or those who have not completed hunter education are not allowed to participate. Youth hunters may harvest one jake as part of their two-bird limit, but this is subject to change depending on the zone. Bag limits vary between zones, with a statewide maximum of two legal turkeys per hunter. Squirrel Season: Small game hunting offers accessible and exciting opportunities for beginners and seasoned hunters alike. The squirrel season typically runs from May 15, 2024-Feb. 28, 2025, allowing for a lengthy period to introduce new hunters to the sport. Daily limits range from eight to twelve, depending on the location, while possession limits are set at 48 or 16, respectively. Waterfowl Season: Arkansas is renowned for its world-class waterfowl hunting. The season typically runs from November 23-Dec. 2, with additional segments throughout December and January. Youth hunters can participate in a special event on February 8-9, while active-duty military and veterans may hunt on February 9. Season dates also include Sept. 15-30 for light geese and Sept. 1-Oct. 15 for Canada Geese. Canada Goose and Light Goose Conservation Order: The season for Canada Geese spans from September 1 to October 15, while the Light Goose Conservation Order (Snow, Blue, and Ross's Goose) runs from February 1-7 to April 25. Hunting on wildlife management areas (WMAs) is restricted, with a cutoff time of noon from November 23, 2024, to January 30, 2025. Resident Sportsman's License: \$25.00 (includes six deer tags and two turkey tags) Combination Sportsman's License: \$35.50 (includes hunting and fishing privileges) Resident Wildlife Conservation License: \$10.50 (small game, furbearers, and one deer) Non-Resident Annual All Game Hunting License: \$410.00 Non-Resident 5-Day Deer Hunting License: \$225.00 Non-Resident 3-Day Deer Hunting License: \$175.00 Non-Resident Annual Small Game Hunting License: \$110.00 Non-Resident 5-Day Small Game Hunting License: \$80.00 Arkansas Waterfowl Stamp (Resident): \$7.00 Non-Resident Arkansas Waterfowl Stamp: \$50.00 65-Plus Lifetime Hunting License: \$25.00 65-Plus Lifetime Combination License: \$35.50 Natural State Lifetime Combination License: \$500.00 (for residents 10 and younger) All hunters, including youth under 16, must possess a valid hunting license to hunt game animals in Arkansas. A Customer Identification Number is also required for free for these young hunters. Even on private property, a hunting license is necessary to hunt wildlife. Hunters must wear fluorescent orange or hunter safety green clothing with at least 400 square inches of daylight fluorescent color above the waistline and a hat during certain seasons. Baiting deer on private land outside the CWD Management Zone year-round is allowed, but not on wildlife management areas. Additionally, waterfowl hunters need to obtain an Arkansas State Waterfowl Stamp, Federal Duck Stamp (for those 16 and older), Harvest Information Program registration, and non-resident permits for WMAs. It's unlawful to hunt wildlife at night except during specified times for certain species. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) offers deer hunting seasons in various zones, with different dates and bag limits for each zone. The season is divided into archery, muzzleloader, modern gun, and youth hunts, with some zones having regional variations. For example, dogs are allowed for deer hunting in certain periods, and there are rules governing the minimum number of antler points for authorized bucks. The AGFC provides detailed information on licenses, permits, and related fees, as well as rules and bag limitations for each game species. The organization also offers resources to help hunters plan their hunts. Some key details include: * Zones 1-9 have a bag limit of five deer, with a maximum of two bucks allowed. * Zone 10 has a different set of rules, allowing the harvest of antlered or antlerless deer, with a maximum bag limit of three and a maximum of one buck permitted. * Youth hunts are available, with a bag limit of two deer, allowing up to one buck, and no limitations on antlers. Additionally, there is an elk hunting season outside the Core Elk Management Zone during the deer season, with applications for elk permits accepted from May 1 to June 1. **Hunting Seasons and Regulations** In Arkansas, hunters must follow specific regulations and seasons for various game species. These include public firearm and archery hunts, as well as private land permits. **General Information** * Hunters must call 833-345-0398 to report their harvest the evening before a hunt. * A Harvest Information Program (HIP) registration is required for hunters aged 16 and above who wish to acquire a game pass from the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. This program aims to ensure sustainable hunting practices. **Specific Seasons** * Quail: November 1 - February 1 * Rabbit: September 1 - February 28 * Squirrel: May 15 - February 28 * Furbearer Hunting: * Badger, Spotted Skunk, Weasel, Closed (except Beaver and Nutria) + Bobcat: September 1, 2025 - February 28, 2026, April 21 - May 11, 2026 + Coyote: January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025 * Other furbearers have specific dates and restrictions. **Bird Species** * Waterfowl: * Special Early Teal Season: September 15-30 + Duck, Coot, and Merganser: November 23 - January 31 + Youth Waterfowl Hunt: February 8-9, 2025 + Canada Goose: September 1 - October 15, November 23 - December 2, etc. * Other bird species have specific dates and restrictions. **Restrictions** * Visitors are not permitted in designated regions of bird roosting places between November 1 and February 15. * Ducks are restricted to six per day. * Some Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) have specific departure times for duck shooting. Hunting regulations require a minimum of three times the daily weight limit, which is 15 pounds, to be stored in custody at any given time for coots. Mergansers can be kept captive for up to thrice their lifespan, provided they are fed five times a day. Laws have been implemented for some species to ensure ethical hunting methods and long-term population protection. These regulations specify that only individuals 15 years of age or younger, veterans, and current military personnel are permitted to hunt ducks, geese, coots, and mergansers. According to the laws, a guide aged 21 or above must accompany anyone under 18 who has yet to complete hunting education training. The supervisor cannot remove the called-in animals, including ducks, geese, coots, and mergansers. These animals have the same firing opportunities and weight restrictions as during the regular season, with permitted shooting on WMAs from 30 minutes before dawn until sundown. The cost of a hunting license varies by residence and type, with residents paying \$25 and non-residents paying \$300. A \$1,000 lifetime sportsman's license and \$500 new lifetime license are available for non-residents. License types include the Combination Sportsman's (CS), Resident Non-Resident (RS), Wildlife Conservation (HNT), General WMA Hunter Use Permit (WMP), Trapper's Permit (TP), Guide (GLH), Special Guide (GLS), Deferred Hunter Education (DHE), Annual All Game (NBG), and Waterfowl Stamp. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) has introduced several improvements to its system, aiming to enhance user experience and provide better functionality. Starting from the end of this year, both English and Spanish will be offered as options for the user interface. ### Relaunching Mobile App A new version of the AGFC mobile app will soon be available, optimized for modern devices and offering improved performance. This update is crucial for hunters to access essential information such as deer and turkey locations without relying on a stable cellular connection. To utilize the updated app, users must uninstall the previous version and download the new one from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store. ### Tag Activation and Checking The AGFC has implemented measures to streamline tag usage during hunting seasons. Hunters can now connect with their accounts on the app before heading out, ensuring they have the correct number of tags allowed for each hunt. Even without cellular coverage, users can use the app's GPS data to locate animals such as deer, bears, or turkeys. ### Convenience and Paper Tags Although paper tags are still an option when mobile phone signal is weak, the AGFC app makes it easier to check deer and retrieve their permits efficiently. Users can quickly scan their deer using the app and transport them home with minimal hassle. Deer Season Regulations by Zone Hunters in each zone can take five deer per season, with two males. Muzzleloaders, contemporary guns, and bowhunting are permitted. The quantity of antlerless deer taken depends on the weapon. Archery hunters can take five antlerless deer, while modern weapons and muzzleloaders can take three. Deer seasons vary by zone and date: - Zone 1: Archery - Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024; Muzzleloader - Oct. 21-29 and Dec. 9-11, 2023; Modern Gun - Nov. 11-Dec. 3, 2023 - Zone 2: Same as Zone 1 - Zone 3: Archery - Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024; Muzzleloader - Oct. 21-29 and Dec. 9-11, 2023 Bag limits apply: - Five deer in total - No more than two bucks, which can include: - Two antlered bucks with archery or muzzleloader/modern gun - Five antlerless with archery - Three antlerless with muzzleloader and modern gun combined Rules and restrictions also apply, including: - No dogs allowed for deer hunting - Button bucks count as antlerless deer but must be checked separately - CWD regulations apply - Ongoing research: collared or ear-tagged deer may be present; tag and check research deer as required Bucks do NOT count toward a hunter's buck limit in this zone. In Baxter, Boone, Independence, Marion and Randolph counties, CWD regulations apply. Deer Zone 4 Season Details 2023-24 Deer Season Dates Archery: Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024 Muzzleloader: Closed Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 Modern Gun: Nov. 11-19 and Dec. 26-28, 2023 Zone Bag Limit Limit - Four deer, no more than two bucks with archery, muzzleloader or modern gun. Three deer, no more than two bucks, which may include: Two bucks with archery or modern gun, One doe with modern gun, Limit - For portions inside the CWD Management Zone (Jackson and Randolph County): Three deer, no more than two antlered bucks, which may include: Two antlered bucks with archery or modern gun, Three antlerless with archery, One antlerless with modern gun. Zone Notes No dogs allowed for deer hunting. Outside the CWD Management Zone, legal bucks must be button bucks or have at least three points on one side of their rack. Inside the CWD Management Zone there are no antler restrictions. Zone 6: * Deer hunting allowed with archery, muzzleloader, and modern gun * No dogs allowed except for Nov. 11-Dec. 3 * Legal bucks must be button bucks or have at least three points on one side of their rack * Button bucks count as antlerless deer but must be checked separately * Zone bag limit: five deer, no more than two bucks * Season dates: + Archery: Sept. 23, 2023-Feb. 29, 2024 + Muzzleloader: Oct. 21-29 and Dec. 9-11, 2023 + Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 + Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 + Modern Gun: Nov. 11-Dec. 3 and Dec. 26-28, 2023 Zone Notes: * CWD regulations apply in Crawford, Franklin, Independence, Johnson, Madison, Newton, Pope, Searcy, Stone, Van Buren, and Washington counties * Research deer are legal for harvest; tag and check within 12 hours of harvest and call 833-289-2469 Deer Hunting Regulations by Zone - 2023-24 Season ### Zone 8 Three deer per hunter allowed. No antler point restrictions in CWD counties. **Independence and Surrounding Counties** CWD regulations apply. Dogs allowed for hunting from Nov. 11 to Dec. 3, 2023. Archery: Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024 Muzzleloader: Oct. 21-29, 2023 (and Dec. 9-11, 2023) Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 Modern Gun: Nov. 11-Dec. 17 (and Dec. 26-28, 2023) Zone Bag Limit - Four deer, no more than two bucks with archery, muzzleloader or modern gun. - Two does with archery - Two does with muzzleloader and modern gun combined. ### Zone 9 Four deer per hunter allowed outside CWD Management Zone. **Jackson County** CWD regulations apply. Dogs allowed for hunting from Nov. 11 to Dec. 3, 2023. Archery: Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024 Muzzleloader: Oct. 21-29 (and Dec. 9-11, 2023) Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 Modern Gun: Nov. 11-Dec. 17 (and Dec. 26-28, 2023) Zone Bag Limit: - Five deer, no more than two bucks with archery, muzzleloader or modern gun. - Four antlerless with archery - Three antlerless with muzzleloader and modern gun combined. ### Zone 10 Four deer per hunter allowed outside CWD Management Zone. **Jackson County** CWD regulations apply. Dogs allowed for hunting from Nov. 11 to Dec. 3, 2023. Archery: Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024 Muzzleloader: Oct. 21-29 (and Dec. 9-11, 2023) Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 Modern Gun: Nov. 11-Dec. 3 (and Dec. 26-28, 2023) Zone Bag Limit: - Five deer, no more than two bucks with archery, muzzleloader or modern gun. - Four antlerless with archery - Three antlerless with muzzleloader and modern gun combined. ### Zone 11 Four deer per hunter allowed outside CWD Management Zone. **Jackson County** CWD regulations apply. Dogs allowed for hunting from Nov. 11 to Dec. 3, 2023. Archery: Sept. 23, 2023 - Feb. 29, 2024 Muzzleloader: Oct. 21-29 (and Dec. 9-11, 2023) Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 Modern Gun: Nov. 11-Dec. 3 (and Dec. 26-28, 2023) Zone Bag Limit: - Five deer, no more than two bucks with archery, muzzleloader or modern gun. - Four antlerless with archery - Three antlerless with muzzleloader and modern gun combined. With Archery, Muzzleloader, and Modern Gun Combined for Deer Hunting Zone Notes Allow Dogs for Deer Hunting from Nov. 11 to Dec. 3, 2023 No Antler Point Restrictions in CWD Counties All Other Counties Require Button Bucks or at Least Three Points on One Side of the Rack Button Bucks Count as Antlerless Deer but Must be Checked as a Button Buck In Logan, Scott, Sebastian, and Yell Counties, CWD Regulations Apply Deer Zone 12 Season Details for 2023-24 Archery: Sept. 23, 2023 to Feb. 29, 2024 Muzzleloader: Oct. 21-29, 2023 Private Land Antlerless-only Modern Gun Hunt: Dec. 29-31, 2023 Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: Nov. 4-5, 2023 and Jan. 6-7, 2024 Modern Gun: Nov. 11-Dec. 17 and Dec. 26-28, 2023 Deer hunting regulations for Zones 15 to 17 are detailed below. In Zone 15, archery season runs from September 23, 2023, to February 29, 2024. Muzzleloader and modern gun seasons are October 21-29, December 16-18, and November 11-Dec. 10, with a private land antlerless-only hunt on December 29-31 and special youth hunts on November 4-5 and January 6-7. Modern gun hunting is also allowed from November 11 to December 28. The zone bag limit for Zones 15 to 17 is four deer, with no more than two bucks that can include: Two bucks with archery, muzzleloader, or modern gun; Four does with archery; Two does with muzzleloader and modern gun combined. Button bucks count toward a hunter's buck limit in these zones. In Zone 16, dogs are not allowed for deer hunting. Legal bucks must have at least three points on one side of their rack or be button bucks. Button bucks count toward a hunter's buck limit. Zone 16A has similar regulations to Zone 15 but with some differences. Inside the CWD Management Zone in Ashley County, there are no antler restrictions for legal bucks. Outside this zone, legal bucks must have at least three points on one side of their rack or be button bucks. Deer hunting is also regulated in Zone 17 with similar dates and limits as Zones 15 to 16A but the regulations regarding CWD (Chronic Wasting Disease) management are different. Arkansas Hunting Dates: * Private Land Antlerless Only Modern Gun Deer Hunt: December 29-31, 2023 * Special Youth Modern Gun Hunt: November 4-5, 2023 and January 6-7, 2024 * Modern Gun Season: November 11 - December 28, 2023 Bag Limit: * Total deer limit: 5 * Bucks: + Button bucks or antlers with at least 15-inch inside spread or 18-inch main beam * Does: 5 (archery), 5 (muzzleloader and modern gun combined) Additional Notes: * Dogs are allowed for deer hunting from November 11 to December 28, 2023. * Button bucks count towards a hunter's buck limit in this zone. Contact: Arkansas Game and Fish Commission 2 Natural Resources Drive Little Rock, Arkansas 72205 Phone: 833-345-0325