



Arkansas Outdoors for January 23, 2008

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Snow goose conservation season opens Feb. 4

LITTLE ROCK - Waterfowl hunting is traditionally a winter sport, but goose hunters in Arkansas will have an extra three months to hunt "light geese" (snow geese, blue geese and Ross's geese). A special snow goose conservation season will open on Feb. 4, and extend through April 27.

"This isn't a special hunting season but a Conservation Order instead," said Luke Naylor, waterfowl biologist for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. "Whatever you want to call it, the regulations are relaxed because it's important that hunters be allowed to harvest as many snow geese as they can. There's no daily bag or possession limit on light geese during the Conservation Order, guns do not have to be plugged, electronic calls can be used and shooting hours have been extended to ½ hour before and after sunset," he explained.



The requirements for hunting are a valid hunting license, either from Arkansas or from the hunter's state of residence and a special snow goose registration number. The hunting licenses can be either resident or non-resident. Hunters may get registration numbers, which are free, by calling the AGFC at (800) 364-4263 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Naylor said the special snow goose conservation season was initiated several years ago and continues this year in an effort to reduce the snow goose population from present levels.

"Snow geese overwinter survival rates have increased in response to more favorable feeding conditions on the southern wintering grounds," explained Naylor. "They've increased to the point that they're damaging their nesting habitat in the sub-Arctic and Arctic tundra salt marshes, posing a serious threat to the long-term health of the Arctic ecosystem and its associated wildlife communities. The Conservation Order with its relaxed harvest regulations is an attempt to reduce the population to a more healthy level by allowing hunters the opportunity to harvest more geese," he added.

"This is a unique situation for modern-day waterfowl hunters," says Naylor. "For most waterfowl species we try to limit the harvest to protect the species. With snow geese, the objective is to maximize the harvest, and for exactly the same reason - to protect the species and other species associated with Arctic tundra habitat," he said.

AGFC to hold meeting on Greers Ferry tailwater management plan

HEBER SPRINGS – The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will be holding a public meeting to discuss trout management on the Little Red River below Greers Ferry Lake. The meeting will be held at the William Carl Garner Visitor Center in Heber Springs on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

Beginning at 7 p.m., AGFC trout program and district fisheries personnel be on hand to answer questions about Little Red River trout management. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss what strategies of the trout plan have been implemented, planned projects for 2008 and results of the 2007 fish population sampling. The meeting will conclude with an open forum to discuss the plan.

A few of the topics to be presented at the meeting include:

- Results of the 2007 Greer's Ferry populations sample
- Brown trout population estimates
- Sculpin distribution and density estimates
- Brown trout diet study (utilization of sculpin)
- Results of the 2004-2006 creel survey
- Discussion of issues and solutions associated with the stocking reduction
- Discussion of future stocking distribution
- Projects on the horizon
- Rainbow trout fingerling stocking and evaluation
- Temperature evaluation downstream of the Highway 305 bridge



Trumpeters herald return to Arkansas

Swans from Iowa to be released at Holla Bend and Boxley Valley

HOLLA BEND NWR – Huge, snowy white and graceful trumpeter swans were common migrants in Arkansas 100 years ago. Today they're extremely rare winter visitors.

An alliance of public and private groups hopes an experiment will help bring them back.

Trumpeter swans will be released this week at Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge along the Arkansas River, a few miles downstream from Dardanelle and in the Boxley Valley area of the Buffalo River in northcentral Arkansas. The hope is these young swans will return to both areas next winter and, within a few years, bring their families.

Biologists from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will be on hand when the big birds from Iowa are released. Trumpeters may weigh up to 35 pounds and have 8-foot wingspans.



The process behind the release is called "reverse migration imprinting." The idea is to bring south young birds that never have migrated and let them use their instincts to return to Iowa.

"These young-of-the-year birds will be brought south and we'll see if they can get back," said Karen Rowe, AGFC nongame migratory bird program coordinator. "We need a place that's not hunted, yet waterfowl-friendly."

Sightings of trumpeter swans may be reported on the AGFC's website at: http://www.agfc.com/wildlife-conservation/birds/trumpeter_survey.aspx.

Searchers take to the air in hunt for ivory-billed woodpecker

BRINKLEY – It has been almost three years since the announcement that the ivory-billed woodpecker had been rediscovered on the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge in Monroe County. Searchers have seen the ivory-billed woodpecker and were able to film a short, grainy video of the woodpecker, but they have not been able to produce a high quality image of the elusive bird. Searchers hope to change all that this winter during a 10-day helicopter photo survey of the area.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing a helicopter that will carry biologists over several areas surrounding the Cache and White rivers where sightings have been reported. The aerial search will begin on Jan. 28, the day after Arkansas's waterfowl season is complete. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will be involved in the search as a part of a coordinated effort involving the FWS, The Nature Conservancy, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the U.S. Forest Service and others.



Over the years, searchers have invested thousands of hours of intensive exploration using a variety of techniques to look for the endangered bird. Using boats, walking, blinds, cameras and sound recording units, searchers were able to cover about 13 percent of the forested habitat in the Arkansas Big Woods and produced several additional possible sightings. Intriguing sound recordings also have been documented, but additional photographic evidence is needed and aerial surveys may also provide additional information on high priority ground search areas.

The helicopter searches will take place mostly over forested public lands on the Rex Hancock Black Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, Dagmar Wildlife Management Area, Wattensaw Wildlife Management Area and White River National Wildlife Refuge. The searches also will extend onto one private tract at the request of the landowner.

For more information on the helicopter search, please contact Matt Conner at (870) 282-8249.

Boating education class schedule

Click here for boating education information: <http://www.agfc.com/education-class/boating-education.aspx>

Hunter education class schedule

Click here for hunter education information: <http://www.agfc.com/education-class/hunter-education.aspx>

What's open for hunting

Current and approaching seasons in Arkansas:

Squirrel:

Statewide – Sept. 8-Feb. 29.

Rabbit:

Statewide – Sept. 1-Feb. 29.

Spotted Skunk, Weasel Hunting:

Closed.

Duck:

Jan. 12-Jan. 27

White-Fronted Goose:

Dec. 26-Feb. 3

Snow, Blue, and Ross' Goose:
Dec. 26-Feb. 3

Snow Goose Conservation Order:
Feb. 4-April 27

Statewide Canada Goose:
Dec. 26 – Feb. 3

Statewide Falconry:
Jan. 7-11 and Jan. 28-Feb. 17

Common Snipe:
Nov. 1, 2007 to Feb. 15, 2008

Deer Archery:
Oct. 1-Feb. 29 statewide.

Turkey Archery:
Oct. 1-Feb. 29 statewide.

Quail:
Nov. 1-Feb. 10 statewide.

Crow:
Sept. 1-Feb. 17 Thursdays thru Mondays only statewide.

Furbearers:
Furbearer trapping Nov. 17-Feb. 17 excluding coyote, beaver, muskrat and nutria.
Coyote trapping Aug. 1-March 31.
Beaver, muskrat, nutria trapping Nov. 17-March 31.
Gray fox, mink, opossum, red fox, striped skunk hunting Sept. 1-Feb. 29.
Raccoon day or night hunting Sept. 1-March 31.
Raccoon night hunting July 1-Aug. 31.
Bobcat and coyote hunting Oct. 1-Feb. 29.
River otter hunting Nov. 17-Feb. 29.
Muskrat, nutria and beaver hunting Sept. 1-March 31.
Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting is closed.

Coming up in the outdoors

Jan. 24 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting, 2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, 9 a.m.

Jan. 25 - Bottomland Boss Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Brinkley Convention Center. For more information contact: Robbie Horton at (870) 946-5527 or by email at bubbagbi@hotmail.com.

Jan. 26 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Canada Goose Hunting."

Jan. 26 - Lower Arkansas Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Charles O Ross Center in Camden. For more information contact: Danny Young at (870) 231-5927.

Jan. 26 - Springlake Strutters Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, East End Elementary School in Little Rock. For more information contact: Michael Garner at (501) 888-7513.

Feb. 1-2 - Quail and Songbird Habitat Workshop, Petit Jean Mountain. Registration for the workshop is available online at www.uawri.org or by calling (866) 972-7778. Overnight accommodations are available. The registration deadline is Jan. 28. For more information about the workshop, contact Sandy Davies by phone at (501) 215-7990 or by e-mail at sdavies@uawri.org.

Feb. 2 - Delta Wings Chapter of Delta Waterfowl, Southland Park Gaming and Racing, West Memphis. For information, contact Gary Harlow at (870) 636-0551 or e-mail at gjharlow@aol.com.

Feb. 2 – Regional turkey calling championship, Arkansas State University Convocation Center in Jonesboro, 11:30 a.m. For more information go to www.arsportshow.com or contact Marvin Day at marvinday@cameronconstructionco.com or call (870) 932-1306.

Feb. 2 - Crowley's Ridge Strutters Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Forrest City Civic Center. For more information contact: Randy Baldwin at (870) 270-0050 or by email at randyrb@arkansas.net.

Feb. 2 - Saline River Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Sheridan Community Center. For more information contact: David Hooks at (870) 942-4642.

Feb. 2 - Sebastian Co. Boss Gobblers Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Fort Smith Knights of Columbus Hall. For more information contact: Bob Gleason at (479) 996-6800 or by email at naildriver2355@yahoo.com.

Feb. 2 - Chicot County Young Hens and Old Gobblers Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Lake Village Country Club. For more information contact: Bobby Fisher at (870) 737-3088 or by email at fisherchannelcat@aol.com.

Feb. 2 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Winter Trout Fishing."

Feb. 2 – Perry County Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Perryville National Guard Armory. For more information contact: Tim Cates at (501) 727-5767 or by email at cates@hotmail.com.

Feb. 2 – KZHE/Steve's Outdoor Sports Inc. Annual Crow Shoot. For more information contact KZHE at (870) 234-7790 or Steve's Outdoor Sports at (870) 234-2277.

Feb. 8 - Laigle Creek Longbeards Grand Prairie Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Hermitage Community Center. For more information contact: Grady Story at (870) 628-3142 or by email at jastory@seark.net.

Feb. 8-9 – Ozark Conference Center's Duck Calling Operations Seminar in Solgohachia. For more information call (501) 354-3959 or email: bobbie@ozarkconference.org.

Feb. 8-10 - Arkansas RV Show, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock. For more information, contact: Denton and Griffey Attractions, Ken Griffey, (501) 225-6177 or (501) 765-1423.

Feb. 9 - Cane Creek Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Star City Civic Center. For more information contact: Bruce Morgan at (870) 628-1616.

Feb. 9 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Outdoor Photography."

Feb. 9 - Miller County Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Texarkana V. F. W. For more information contact: Jesse Whitehead at (870) 773-6720.

Feb. 15 – South Central Arkansas Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Sahara Center in Pine Bluff. For more information contact: Sam McBryde at (870) 535-7920.

Feb. 15-17 - Arkansas State Boat Show, Little Rock's Statehouse Convention Center. The show times are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday; and 12 noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

Feb. 16 – Cleveland County Cutters and Strutters Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Rison school cafeteria. For more information contact: Terry Thompson at (870) 357-8346 or by email at tcat01@tds.net.

Feb. 16 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Snow Goose Hunting."

Feb. 16 – Crawford County Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Alma high school cafeteria. For more information contact: Roger Atwell at (479) 369-2055 or by email at ratwell@thermatru.com.

Feb. 16 – Northwest Arkansas Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Springdale Rodeo Grounds. For more information contact: Gary Cobb at (479) 659-3018 or by email at qt_cobb@msn.com.

Feb. 16 – Southeast Arkansas Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Lakewood Inn in Crossett. For more information contact: Mickey Pennington at (870) 364-9061 or by email at mpennington@alltel.net.

Feb. 16 – Sugarloaf Wild Turkey Hunters Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Cleburne County Fairgrounds in Heber Springs. For more information contact: Don Melton at (501) 362-5555.

Feb. 21 - AGFC Commission monthly meeting, Dumas.

Feb. 23 – Four Rivers Limbhangers Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Arkadelphia National Guard Armory. For more information contact: Teena Bebee at (870) 245-6594 or by email at tbebee@summitinsurancedirect.com.

Feb. 23 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Late Season Squirrel Hunting."

Feb. 23 – Lafayette County Strutters Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Lewisville Middle School. For more information contact: Tony Wheelington at (870) 533-1349 or by email at wheel02@earthlink.net.

Feb. 23 – Lawrence County Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Hoxie Community Center.

For more information contact: Bobby Tedder at (870) 892-3007.

Feb. 23 – Lower White River Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Arkansas County Fairgrounds in DeWitt. For more information contact: Walter Jones at (870) 282-8009 or by email at wjones011@centurytel.net.

Feb. 23 – Palarm Creek Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Sherwood Forest in Sherwood. For more information contact: Keith Brown at (501) 835-9546 or by email at brownkk@sbcglobal.net.

Feb. 24 – Tightlines Flyfishers outing, Beaver Tailwaters, 12 noon. For more information contact Ken Richards at (479) 531-5741.

Feb. 26 – Billy Mitchell Sr. Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Knights of Columbus Hall in Wynne. For more information contact: Robert Bassham at (870) 238-7570.

Feb. 26 – Spa City Spurs Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Elk's Lodge in Hot Springs. For more information contact: Darrel Sulton at (501) 844-7705.

Feb. 28 – East Arkansas Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Phillips Community College in West Helena. For more information contact: Terry Grubbs at (870) 995-2985 or by email at tgrubbs@cox-internet.com.

Feb. 29-Mar. 2 - Hot Springs Boat Tackle and RV Show, Hot Springs Convention Center, Hot Springs. For more information, contact: Denton and Griffey Attractions, Ken Griffey, (501) 225-6177 or (501) 765-1423.

Feb. 29 – Buffalo Island Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Cowboy Grill in Caraway. For more information contact: Billy Vanderbilt at (870) 273-8056 or by email at weatherlyburk@hotmail.com.

Feb. 29 – Tri-County Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation meeting, Fordyce Armory Building. For more information contact: Burk Weatherly at (870) 687-3118 or by email at tcat01@tds.net.

Mar. 7 – Annual Spring Conservation Banquet and Fundraiser, Fayetteville Town Center, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. For more information contact Keri Russell at (479) 640-8319.

Mar. 20 - AGFC Commission monthly meeting, 2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, 9 a.m.

April 17 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting, 2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, 9 a.m.

May 22 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting, 2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, 9 a.m.

June 19 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting.

For the latest in Arkansas Game and Fish Commission information go to www.agfc.com or call the Wildlife Information Hotline, (800)440-1477.

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