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**Arkansas Outdoors for November 5, 2008**

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**2008-09 modern gun deer season forecast appears favorable**

LITTLE ROCK – The statewide modern gun deer season forecast looks promising for the 2008-09 season. Arkansas' modern gun season opens this Saturday, Nov. 8.

According to Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Deer Program Coordinator Brad Miller, many areas of the state are seeing a substantial amount of deer food in the woods this year. "Across most of the state, acorn production appears good this year. Additionally, some areas have high production of grapes and persimmons," Miller said.

The use of food plots by deer will likely increase in the latter portion of the season due to the current abundance of natural foods, Miller said. "Hunters may need to find an area with good acorn production and evidence of deer use such as droppings or fresh tracks later in the season," Miller explained.

A short breakdown of the state's geographical regions follows:

Ozarks/Arkansas River Valley/Ouachitas: Field observations indicate moderate to good acorn production by both Red and White Oaks. Last Easter's freeze may still influence acorn production of red oaks this year, due to their two year cycle of flower to fruit. Soft mast production by wild grape and persimmon is moderate. The deer harvest in this region may not match the strong harvest of last year which was attributed to the poor mast production last fall.



Crowleys Ridge: Reports by regional staff are similar to those of the Ozarks, Arkansas River Valley and the Ouachitas.

Delta Region: Reports from southeastern Arkansas indicate a heavy pecan crop this year.

Gulf Coastal Plain: Last season, the top 10 counties in Arkansas for deer harvested per square mile were all in the GCP, and nothing indicates any change this year. Acorn production by white oaks in the northern GCP is good. Additionally, the persimmon crop appears good this season.

## Deer hunting safety tips for Saturday's season opener

LITTLE ROCK - Perhaps the most important aspects of deer hunting are safety and ethics. That's especially true for the opening of Arkansas's modern gun deer season this Saturday. If no one paid any attention to these, hunting of any kind would be too dangerous to continue. That's why it's so important to stress these factors about deer hunting.

### Hunting Safety Tips:

Safe hunting is the responsibility of all hunters. Follow the tips listed below, and you will help make the Arkansas outdoors safer for all.

- Don't rely on your gun's safety. Treat all firearms as if they're loaded and ready to fire.
- Never cross a fence, climb a tree or stand or jump a ditch with a loaded gun.
- Never hoist a loaded firearm into a stand.
- Never load or carry a loaded firearm until you are ready to use it. Always unload firearms before riding in any vehicle, including ATVs. Watch your muzzle so the other hunter doesn't have to.
- Wear hunter orange so you can be seen. A blaze orange hat and at least 400 square inches of hunter orange above the waistline must be worn during all gun deer seasons. It must be worn at all times, not taken off once in the stand.
- Keep guns and ammunition separately and in locked storage.
- Don't shoot unless absolutely sure of your target and what is beyond it.
- Know the range of your firearm. Remember, even a .22 rimfire can travel over 1-1/2 miles.
- Always be sure your gun barrel and action are clear of obstructions and only carry ammunition specifically intended for the firearm you're using.
- Always carry handguns with the hammer down on an empty chamber.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages before and during shooting.
- Tell someone where you're going and when you plan to return. If you move from one area to another advise someone.
- Dress for the weather. Take a GPS or compass to prevent getting lost.
- Carry a flashlight while walking through the hunting area before or after daylight.



Always follow these rules of ethics anytime you're hunting:

- Obey all the rules of safety and insist that those around you do the same.
- Obey all game laws and insist that those hunting with you do likewise.
- Do your best to acquire marksmanship and hunting skills that assure clean, sportsmanlike kills.
- Support conservation efforts that assure good hunting for future generations.
- Don't be a slob. Keep your campsite neat and don't offend others by openly displaying your kill on your vehicle.
- Pass along to other hunters, especially youngsters, the attitudes and skills essential to being a true outdoor sportsman.
- Make sure you have permission before hunting on private property.



Most importantly, don't forget to purchase your hunting license. Licenses may be purchased from dealers, and AGFC Regional Office, the Little Rock headquarters, online or over the phone. Online license purchasing is convenient, but make sure you don't wait until the last minute to purchase your license online. When purchasing online, a receipt with a confirmation number will be produced. That receipt does not allow for big game hunting such as deer, turkey, bear, elk or alligator. The actual license must be in the hunter's

possession before they are allowed to hunt. Please allow for sufficient mailing time before processing on the Internet or by phone. Licenses may be purchased at [www.agfc.com](http://www.agfc.com).

## White-fronted geese are special for some waterfowlers

LITTLE ROCK – Use the term “waterfowl:” in Arkansas, and the usual connection is with mallards, specifically the male mallard known as the greenhead.

There is another variety popular with many hunters, the white-fronted goose, also known as the specklebelly.

These are found in many areas the state, not in the large numbers of snow geese or even in today’s numbers of Canada geese. But white-fronted geese are around, they are huntable, and they are challenges for the hunter.

Goose hunting has grown in Arkansas in recent years. A shortage of ducks at times during hunting season has led some waterfowlers to go after geese. Another factor has been the large flocks of snow geese in the state for the past decade or two, partially attributed to the increase in winter wheat production in many areas of east Arkansas. Snow geese are too numerous in their far north breeding grounds, leading to an extended and liberalized season called a “conservation order” by federal authorities.



The season for 2008-09 for white-fronted geese is in three segments. These are Nov. 15-Dec. 1, Dec. 6-Dec. 24 and Dec. 26-Jan. 30. Daily bag limit is two, with a possession limit of four. As with other goose and duck hunting, both federal and state waterfowl hunting stamps must be signed across the face and carried by a hunter. Harvest Information Program (HIP) registration is also required.

White-fronted geese (scientifically, *Anser albifrons*) at a distance sometimes are mistaken for blue geese, the blue color phase of snow geese. “Blues” are a slate gray over much of their bodies. White-front--s are more of a brownish gray. “Blues” have white heads and upper neck; white-front--s have a white face but brownish-gray heads and necks. “Blues” have pinkish legs and bills; white-front--s have yellow-orange legs and yellowish

The “white front” of the birds’ name is a little misleading. It stems from the white face, not the breast, which is a lighter shade of the brownish-gray of the body. But the belly is splotched with darker, nearly black, feathers, leading to the term “specklebelly.”

In size, white-fronted geese in general are a little larger than snow geese but smaller than Canada geese, a good bit smaller than the resident giant Canada geese subspecies that is common along the Arkansas River Valley and around some large lakes in the state.

The white-fronted goose has a different call from snows or Canadas and these birds’ one-note or two-note calls. Many hunters term the white-fronted call a yodel. Special calls for white-front--s are sold and used in the field.

White-fronted geese often hang around snow geese or at least on the edge of snow geese flocks feeding in fields. Arkansas goose hunters use large numbers of decoys for snow geese, and these seem to work for white-front--s also.

Most goose hunters believe white-fronts are more wary – and thus more challenging – than either snow geese or Canada geese.

## National Trails Symposium rolls into Little Rock Nov. 15-18

LITTLE ROCK – The 2008 National Trails Symposium will be rolling into Little Rock later this month. The symposium provides an opportunity for the worldwide trails community to come together for an inspirational and educational conference.

The Symposium agenda addresses both non-motorized and motorized issues as well as vision for trails and greenways around the country. Dozens of speakers and keynote presenters will be covering the **top topics in the**



[trails community](#) with presentations from across America.

[Mobile workshops](#) will give participants the opportunity to walk, ride, hike or paddle some of the great local trails around Arkansas.

Besides the educational opportunities found at this biennial symposium, networking with a wide variety of knowledgeable people working on trails today, including advocates, agencies, land managers, designers, planners, technicians, vendors, builders, developers, and enthusiasts, is one of the best benefits of attending this conference. See the [Symposium schedule](#) for details.

The Symposium also provides [sponsors and exhibitors](#) from across America a place to showcase their products and services. Another highlight of the symposium is the [National Trails Awards](#), which recognizes the people, agencies and organizations that are creating trails for all Americans.

## **DU receives \$20,000 grant from UPS Foundation, money will be used on Bayou Meto WMA**

HUMPHREY – Ducks Unlimited has received a \$20,000 grant from The Mid-South District UPS Foundation, the charitable arm of UPS. The grant will be used for work on Bayou Meto Wildlife Management Area to further restoration efforts at Halowell Reservoir.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Wetlands Program Coordinator Richard Johnson said that the project is still on schedule and should be complete by the end of November. "If Mother Nature will play along, we should be finished with the project soon. Once complete, Halowell will be flooded," Johnson said. "To negate some of the effects of providing water later than normal, flooding of the Wrape Plantation began earlier this year to provide habitat for waterfowl," he explained.

Although construction on Halowell is expected to be complete by the end of November, the work may delay flooding of the rest area, Johnson said. "Even though flooding may be delayed, it should coincide with the peak migration resulting in more food available for birds," he said. Another rest area on Bayou Meto, the Wrape Plantation, is scheduled for renovation next year.



Bayou Meto is one of the most revered public waterfowl areas in the U.S., offering some of the best flooded timber hunting for mallards anywhere. In 2006, DU and partners developed restoration plans for Halowell, a 586-acre rest area on the north end of Bayou Meto. Plans are to sub-divide the reservoir into five impoundments managed as seasonally-flooded wetlands. This work will enable independent water control among wetland units with great habitat benefits to waterfowl and other marsh birds.

A tail-water recovery impoundment is planned that will promote more efficient use of critical water supplies in this important agricultural region as well.

According to Johnson, the current structure of Halowell Rest Area is expensive to manage and is flooded by backing water in from the flooded timber on Bayou Meto or using two groundwater wells. The improvement will subdivide the existing units of the rest area to produce four smaller units for moist-soil plants and a reservoir to store water needed to irrigate and manage them.

"The smaller units are more manageable," said Johnson. "That, coupled with water on-demand, should allow us to more efficiently and effectively manage for moist-soil plants.

"The renovation will let us flood the units with the stored water using gravity. We can then use two portable water pumps to move the water back to the reservoir."



"We depend on partners like UPS to help us fund important restoration projects," said DU Manager of Conservation Programs Craig Hilburn. "This grant has helped us restore one of Arkansas' most important waterfowl areas, and we hope this will be the first of many cooperative efforts with UPS."

## **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:

### **Deer:**

Archery – All zones: Oct. 1, 2008 to Feb. 28, 2009.

Modern Gun - Zones 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11: Nov. 8-30.

Zone 4: Nov. 8-9.

Zone 5: Nov. 8-9 and Nov. 15-16.

Zone 4A, 5A, 13, 14 and 15: Nov. 8-Dec. 7.

Zones 4B and 5B: Nov. 8-16.

Zones 9 and 12: Nov. 8-Dec. 14.

Zone 16, 16A and 17: Nov. 8-Dec. 25.

Muzzleloader- Zones 1, 2, 3, 4A, 5A, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15: Oct. 18-26 and Dec. 13-15.

Zones 9, 12, 16, 16A and 17: Oct. 18-26 and Dec. 29-31.

Zones 4, 4B, 5 and 5B: Closed.

The statewide Christmas holiday modern gun deer hunt will be Dec. 26 to 28 with the special youth modern gun deer hunt in all zones (excludes certain WMAs where a modern gun or muzzleloader permit is required to hunt) scheduled for Nov. 1 to 2.

### **Duck:**

Nov. 22-Dec. 1,

Dec. 6-Dec. 24

Dec. 26-Jan. 25.

The youth waterfowl hunt will be Jan. 31-Feb. 1.

### **Northwest Canada goose zone season:**

Sept. 27-Oct. 6 (bag limit two).

### **Statewide Canada goose season:**

Jan. 10-Feb. 1 (bag limit two).

### **White-fronted goose season:**

Nov. 15-Dec. 1, Dec. 6-Dec. 24 and Dec. 26-Jan. 30 with a bag limit of two.

### **Snow, blue and Ross' goose season:**

Nov. 8-Dec. 24 and Dec. 26-Jan. 30 with a bag limit of 20.

### **Snow goose Conservation Order:**

Feb. 2-April 25 with no bag limit.

### **Dove:**

Oct. 4-19

Dec. 13, 2008-Jan. 2, 2009

### **Virginia and Sora Rail:**

Sept. 13-Nov. 21

### **Spotted Skunk, Weasel Hunting:**

Closed

### **Fall Turkey:**

Archery: All Zones: Oct. 1, 2008-Feb. 28, 2009.

### **Bear:**

Archery: Zone 1: Oct. 1-Nov. 30

Zone 2: Sept. 15-Nov. 30  
Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed  
Muzzleloader: Zones 1 and 2: Oct 18-26  
Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed  
Modern Gun: Zones 1 and 2: Nov 3-30  
Zone 5: Dec 6-14  
Zone 5A: Nov 29-Dec 14  
Zones 3, 4, 6 and 7: closed  
Special Youth Modern Gun Bear Hunt: Zones 1 and 2 (does not include WMAs requiring a deer permit to harvest a bear): Nov. 1-2  
Zones 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7: Closed

**Furbearers:**

Trapping (other than coyote, beaver, muskrat, nutria): sunrise, Nov. 15-sunset, Feb. 22.  
Coyote trapping: sunrise, Aug. 1-sunset, March 31.  
Beaver, muskrat, nutria trapping: sunrise, Nov. 15-sunset, March 31.  
Gray fox, mink, opossum, red fox, striped skunk hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, Feb 28.  
Raccoon day or night hunting: sunrise, Sept 1-sunset, March 31.  
Raccoon night hunting: sunset, July 1-sunrise, Aug. 31.  
Bobcat hunting: sunrise, Oct. 1-sunset, Feb. 28 and from the first day of spring turkey season through June 8.  
Coyote hunting: sunrise, July 1-sunset, Feb. 28 and from the first day of spring turkey season through June 14.  
River otter hunting: sunrise, Nov. 15-sunset, Feb. 28.  
Muskrat, nutria, beaver hunting: sunrise, Sept. 1-sunset, March 31.  
Badger, spotted skunk and weasel hunting: Closed.

**Elk:**

Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B: Dec. 8-12.

**Quail:**

Statewide: Nov. 1-Feb. 8.

**Rabbit**

Statewide: Sept. 1-Feb. 28.

**Squirrel**

Statewide: Sept. 6, 2008-Feb. 28, 2009 and May 16-June 14, 2009.

**Crow**

Statewide: Sept. 6-Feb. 23.

Projected opening dates for the 2009-2010 deer hunting season.

**Archery:**

Oct. 1, 2009

**Muzzleloader:**

Oct. 17, 2009

**Modern Gun:**

Nov. 14, 2009

## **Coming up in the outdoors**

Nov. 6 - The Twin City Chapter of Delta Waterfowl will hold their annual banquet on at the Clear Channel Metroplex. Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by banquet 6 p.m. and the auction at 7 p.m. Please contact David Frazier at (501) 772-4907 for tickets or additional information.

Nov. 6 – Texarkana Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Four State Fairground Building. For more information contact Robert Graves at (903) 748-5352 or [robert.graves@domtar.com](mailto:robert.graves@domtar.com).

Nov. 8 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Wild Game Cooking."

Nov. 13 – Independence County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Batesville Country Club. For more information contact Shannon Huff at (870) 612-3757 or [black\\_mallard@hotmail.com](mailto:black_mallard@hotmail.com).

Nov. 14 – Clay County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Corning Airport. For more information contact Shane Mansker at (870) 219-2056 or [ag\\_pilot1@hotmail.com](mailto:ag_pilot1@hotmail.com).

Nov. 15 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Ducks, Ducks and More Ducks."

Nov. 15 – Hurricane Lake Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Carmichael Center in Searcy. For more information contact Larry Winningham at (501) 268-5085 or [shelma@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shelma@sbcglobal.net) or Roger McClain at (501) 412-2621 or [deerhunter72568@yahoo.com](mailto:deerhunter72568@yahoo.com).

Nov. 15 – Delta Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, McGehee Country Club. For more information contact Troy Meaux at (870) 818-5658 or [temeaux@yahoo.com](mailto:temeaux@yahoo.com).

Nov. 20 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include: special fishing regulations approval.

Nov. 20 – Paragould Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, National Guard Armory. For more information contact Jarrod Kersey at (870) 476-2549 or [dexum@grnco.net](mailto:dexum@grnco.net).

Nov. 20 – Pine Bluff Razorback Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Harbor Oaks Country Club. For more information contact Bryan Hornsby at (870) 267-3885.

Nov. 22 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Wings Over the Prairie Festival."

Nov. 29 – Brookings Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Brookings Landing. For more information contact Eric or Carolann Wilmes at (870) 236-4225 or [ufoundcarolann@hotmail.com](mailto:ufoundcarolann@hotmail.com).

Nov. 29 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "How 'Bout Them Hogs?"

Dec. 6 – Poinsett County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Trumann Recreational Complex. For more information contact Chris Gairhan at (870) 530-2899 or [cgairhan@yahoo.com](mailto:cgairhan@yahoo.com).

Dec. 6 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Christmas Gift Ideas." The Grand Prize will also be awarded to some lucky viewer.

Dec. 6 – Cypress Bayou Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Beebe National Guard Armory. For more information contact Barry Wolfe at (501) 681-4286 or [wolfe.barry@gmail.com](mailto:wolfe.barry@gmail.com).

Dec. 12 – Hughes Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Hughes Fire Station. For more information contact Bobby Cupples at (901) 489-7263.

Dec. 13 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "The Art of Carving."

Dec. 13 – East Arkansas Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Southland Greyhound Park. For more information contact Jason Rodgers at (870) 225-6642 or [agoinc4450@aol.com](mailto:agoinc4450@aol.com).

Dec. 18 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

Dec. 20 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "The Trout Magnet."

Dec. 27 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Holiday Squirrel Hunt."

Dec. 31 – Razorduck Chapter of Ducks Unlimited membership banquet, Foothills Indoor Arena in Clarksville. For more information contact Cheryl Feikema at (479) 754-3924 or [cherdene@suddenlink.net](mailto:cherdene@suddenlink.net).

Jan. 6, 2009 – AGFC hunting regulations meetings, 7 p.m.

Jan. 10, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Bald Eagle."

Jan. 9-11, 2009 – Marine Expo at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock.

Jan. 17, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Watchable Wildlife and Outdoor Photography."

Jan. 22, 2009 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

Jan. 24, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Ladies Only Duck Hunt."

Jan. 31, 2009 – Outdoor Sportsmen Banquet, Greenwood High School basketball arena, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Jan. 31, 2009 - 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 Duck Hunt."

Feb. 7, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "The Art of Knife Making."

Feb. 14, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Run, Rabbit, Run."

Feb. 19, 2009 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include the 2009-2010 general hunting regulation proposals.

Feb. 21, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Bringing Back the Bobwhite Quail."

Feb. 28, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Zig-Jigging for Trout."

March 7, 2009 - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Raccoon Hunting."

March 19, 2009 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m. Topics include the 2009-2010 general hunting regulations approval.

April 16, 2009 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

May 21, 2009 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting at the AGFC Little Rock central office, 2 Natural Resources Dr., beginning at 9 a.m.

June 18, 2009 – AGFC Commission monthly meeting in Lake Village. Topics include the early migratory bird season proposals.

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

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