



## Arkansas Outdoors for December 12, 2007

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## Application period for WMA turkey hunt begins Dec. 17

LITTLE ROCK – Beginning Monday, Dec. 17, Arkansas turkey hunters may apply for limited permits on several Arkansas Game and Fish Commission wildlife management areas for the 2008 spring turkey season.

Applications may be submitted at [www.agfc.com](http://www.agfc.com) and will be available from license dealers and AGFC offices throughout the state. The application period is open through Jan. 17, 2008.

Online applications must be submitted and paper applications must be postmarked on or before Jan. 17, 2008, to be eligible for the computer drawings. Selected applicants must pay a \$10 processing fee. Applicants under 16 must have a hunter education card. Draw results will be available at [www.agfc.com](http://www.agfc.com) after the first drawing in January. Applicants can go to the Web site and type in their applicant ID number (either driver's license, Social Security or hunter education number) and date of birth to view the information.

Quota permit hunts are planned on Beryl Anthony Lower Ouachita, Camp Robinson Bell Slough, Cut-Off Creek, Dr. Lester Sitzes III Bois d'Arc, Gulf Mountain, Harold E. Alexander Spring River, Hobbs State Park Conservation Area, Holland Bottoms, Lafayette County, Moro Big Pine, Rex Hancock Black Swamp/Cache River NWR, Shirey Bay Rainey Brake and Sulphur River wildlife management areas. A quota hunt is also scheduled for Felsenthal NWR on April 10-12 and April 17-19, Holla Bend NWR on April 12-13 as well as on Pond Creek NWR on April 19-20.

Several WMAs in Arkansas will hold youth turkey hunts, and they include Bayou Meto, Beryl Anthony Lower Ouachita, Big Lake, Choctaw Island, Cut-Off Creek, Gulf Mountain, Harold E. Alexander Spring River, Hobbs State Park Conservation Area, Holland Bottoms, Lafayette County, Madison County, Moro Big Pine, Rex Hancock Black Swamp/Cache River NWR, Rick Evans Grandview Prairie/Hope Upland, Sulphur River, Trusten Holder, U of A Pine Tree WDA, W.E. Brewer Scatter Creek, Felsenthal NWR, Holla Bend NWR and Pond Creek NWR.

Youth and quota permit hunts for Beryl Anthony Lower Ouachita WMA are separate from the permit hunts on Felsenthal NWR. To apply for a Felsenthal NWR or Pond Creek NWR spring turkey permit, contact the Felsenthal NWR at (870) 364-3167 or [www.fws.gov/felsenthal](http://www.fws.gov/felsenthal). To apply for a Holla Bend NWR spring turkey permit, contact Holla Bend NWR at (479) 229-4300 or [www.fws.gov/southeast/hollabend](http://www.fws.gov/southeast/hollabend).

The spring 2008 turkey season will begin with the youth hunt on March 29 to 30 for zone 17 and April 5 to 6 for the rest of the state. A hunter education card is not required for the general youth hunt, only the permit youth hunt. Youths without a hunter education card during the general youth hunt must be under direct supervision of a holder of a valid hunting license at least 21



years of age.

The rest of the season will be April 12 to May 2 in zones 1, 2, 3, 4B, 5, 5B, 6, 7, 7A, 8, 9 and 10; April 12 to 25 in zones 1A, 4, 4A, 5A and 9A and April 5 to 27 in zone 17.

The bag limit for the spring season will be two legal turkeys in all zones. Hunters will not be able to harvest more than one legal turkey per day and no more than one jake. Hunters will also be limited to two turkeys per season. There is a one legal turkey limit for both the youth and quota permit hunts. Turkeys taken during a youth or quota permit hunt count as part of the season bag limit.

## Math teacher has busy year hunting in Arkansas

COMPTON – What does a classroom math teacher do with free time? Amanda Lewis has some recent life-changing activities, and that's something of an understatement.

She is a Cabot resident. In May she applied for an elk permit, one of several thousand Arkansans seeking a coveted chance to go after the big animals along the Buffalo River. Only 26 permits were issued this year, an increase from the previous 20 a year.

Amanda married in June, then her name was drawn at the Buffalo River Elk Festival in Jasper for an elk hunting permit.

In November, her new husband went duck hunting on opening day, and Amanda chose to hunt deer near Jacksonville. She killed an 8-pointer, called her husband Blake by cell phone and was instructed "to stay right there. I'll be there as soon as I can." So Amanda waited, another 8-point buck walked up, and she killed it also.

She had to make a trip to Arkansas Game and Fish Commission headquarters before the elk hunt for a bit of paper work. Her permit was for Amanda Adair, her maiden name, since she applied before her marriage.

The hunt arrived and with helper Dave Corley of Jacksonville, she spent a hard day looking for elk and found them late in the day. The group of six or seven cow elk was within range, but she wanted a steady rest, so Corley raised a knee. Amanda rested the .300 Weatherby rifle equipped with a muzzle brake and squeezed off a shot. She had her cow elk.

Lewis, 27, teaches math to gifted and talented third and fourth graders at College Station Elementary School at Little Rock.



## Youngest elk hunters learn lessons of persistence

COMPTON -- If hunting is a teacher of life skills, Joey Shirley and Walker Davis are a couple of youngsters who have gained some lasting knowledge this fall in the field.

Joey, 11, and Walker, 12, are the two youngest persons who have hunted elk in Arkansas since the limited permit seasons opened 10 years ago. They had 2007 permits. Another youngster was 12 but close to his 13th birthday a few years ago when he hunted.

All three of these were successful, and all three brought down bull elk.

Walker Davis of Crossett is the latest. He took a 5X5 bull elk, meaning five points on each side of its antlers, on the third day of the December hunt along the Buffalo River. Joey Shirley of Dover made his score on the fourth day of



the September 2007 hunt. The Arkansas hunts run five days.

One lesson both boys learned, or earned, is that if you don't succeed at first, try again. It's an axiom as old as these north Arkansas hills, but it's also one ignored or forgotten by many adults, including hunters.

Walker won a youth permit in the drawing in June at Jasper's Buffalo River Elk Festival. The permit specified that he could kill either a bull or a cow elk, an either sex permit.

Like youths who have preceded him. Walker went for a bull elk. He had as his helpers his dad Chad and his younger brother Houston. The permit called for them to hunt in Elk Zone 3, which is primarily Gene Rush Wildlife Management Area of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Gene Rush WMA has turned into the elk hot spot of Arkansas. Intensive management of the rugged area for wildlife – elk, deer, turkey and bear – has been in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, which early in Arkansas's elk program joined in the work to make better habitat for the big animals.

An extensive system of food plots is a feature of Gene Rush, along with periodic burning to keep down excessive brush and to open up wooded tracts to sunlight. Most of the larger bull elk taken in Arkansas have come from Gene Rush WMA.



The Davis' camped at Cave Creek on Gene Rush WMA. They didn't have the comforts of electricity, running water or heat, but they didn't have to waste traveling time either.

Walker, his dad and his brother had seen elk here and there in their advance scouting. When the hunt opened, they saw elk again but not in settings for a successful shot, and most of the elk were cows, females. Walker wanted a bull.

They covered much territory that first day and gained a better knowledge of the terrain and the movements of elk. The second day, it was more of the same – bone-wearying tramps up and down hills, checking open fields, scanning the edges of woods. Again, elk seen but not shootable and not the type Walker wanted.

The third day, they found a group of cow elk, and a bull was with them. They weren't within range, and were wary.

"We got down on the ground and crawled," Walker said. "We crawled about 60 yards." They waited then. The elk moved a little, and the bull that had been in the midst of the cows was in the open.

Walker fired with his 7mm Remington Magnum rifle. He fired again and again and again. The bull then went down. Walker had put all four shots into the bull's front shoulder, the bullets covered a space less than the diameter of a dinner plate.

Walker missed school to go on the elk hunt, and he grinned about having a story to take back to his classmates.

Joey Shirley had the same type of hunt as Walker in September but in a different area. Joey's youth permit was for Zone 4, the Tyler Bend area of the Buffalo River.

Joey missed a shot at a bull early in the hunt then struggled to get another chance. That came the morning of the fourth day, and it, like Walker's, was a 5X5 bull.

## Acorns start to dwindle and the phones start to jingle

LITTLE ROCK - Phones at Arkansas Game and Fish Commission regional offices around the state are ringing right on schedule - just as biologists predicted they would several months ago. Landowners and wildlife enthusiasts, particularly those from northern Arkansas, are asking why deer and wild turkeys are beginning to spend the entire day in pastures, open fields and food plots.

The short answer is that the meager acorn crop in parts of the state is about gone and many species of wildlife are leaving forested areas as they look for alternate foods. Acorns from the white oak group are very scarce in the north half of Arkansas because of the extremely cold



weather that occurred the first week in April this spring. Some red oak acorns, which take two years to develop, are present but not abundant in most areas.

Wildlife lovers need not panic, but they need to be aware of the situation and how to help wildlife through this bottleneck. Will animals starve? Probably not, unless some catastrophic weather event such as a prolonged ice storm occurs. Even under these conditions, severe wildlife losses seldom occur.

"Deer love acorns, but they are primarily browsers. They'll do just fine browsing woody and herbaceous vegetation or grazing domestic grasses for food," AGFC Deer Program Coordinator Cory Gray says. "We have some areas, such as along the Mississippi River where oaks are rare, and deer do just fine on other foods."

Mike Widner, AGFC turkey program coordinator, says that wild turkeys are also quite adaptable, and it's almost unheard of for them to starve in this part of the country. "In the absence of acorns, they'll feed on soft mast, clovers and grasses, grass seeds, insects, leftover grain from cattle feeding and whatever else they can find. Most of those foods tend to be found in open areas," Widner explained.



One of the downsides to a poor acorn crop is that most wildlife are in poorer physical and reproductive condition at the end of the winter - deer, turkey, quail, squirrels, deer mice, you name it.

Randall Bullington, AGFC regional wildlife supervisor in western Arkansas points out that food plots in heavily forested areas such as White Rock Wildlife Management Area are particularly valuable in times of acorn scarcity. "Clovers and grass mixes planted in food plots on WMAs throughout the state will receive heavy use this winter," according to Bullington. "Our private lands biologists have also worked with landowners to promote grain and clover mix food plots and other habitat work on private lands for times like these," he said.

Concerned landowners and sportsmen will undoubtedly attempt to assist wildlife through the winter by providing supplemental food. Biologists prefer food plots and other

habitat work over supplemental feeding, but done correctly, this could benefit wildlife in a time of food scarcity.

Wildlife enforcement officers and biologists have at least two special concerns with the potential increase in supplemental feeding, however. The first is location. "Supplemental feeding needs to be done at a site where poachers don't have easy access to wildlife," according to Col. Chris Carpenter, chief of enforcement. "The purpose of feeding is to provide food for hungry wildlife, not bait deer or turkeys in for poachers."

Feeding should not be done near remote rural roads, but in places where landowners can keep a close watch on herds or flocks. Landowners should know their local Wildlife Officer and keep his phone number handy in case they have problems.

The second major concern is aflatoxins. Most supplemental feeding involves corn, which could contain aflatoxins, a poison produced by fungal growth. Birds, including wild turkeys and quail, are particularly sensitive to aflatoxins. High concentrations can kill birds outright, and lower concentrations can cause liver damage and reduce overall health of the birds.

Widner has some recommendations on feeding corn. "I advise landowners and sportsmen to purchase corn at the local coop rather than the corner market. Buy corn that is sold as domestic livestock feed, as this grain has been tested for aflatoxins. Corn sold and labeled as "deer corn" may be corn that has failed this test and may, in fact, be poisonous to wildlife." Widner explained.



Further advice includes keeping supplemental feed dry at feeder sites and putting out only enough for a few days at a time to reduce the possibility of aflatoxins developing in wet, molding grain. You may also want to consider alternate foods, such as alfalfa pellets, if deer are the primary animals coming to feed sites.

Times may be tough for wildlife, but deer, turkeys and other species are remarkably resilient creatures.

## Public meetings set for input on 2008-09 hunting regulations

LITTLE ROCK - Hunters may voice their opinions about hunting regulations and seasons at one of 11 public meetings across the state Tuesday, Jan. 8.

The meetings are part of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's annual hunting regulations process. They are held to give hunters and other interested parties the opportunity to make comments and proposals for the 2008-09 hunting seasons.

Comments may be verbal or written. Written comments may be submitted at one of the meetings or mailed to the AGFC, Hunting Regulations Proposals, 2 Natural Resources Drive, Little Rock, AR72205. Comments can also be made on the AGFC Web site at <http://www.agfc.com/hunting/public-meeting.aspx>. The deadline for comments is Jan. 31.

The 11 meetings will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. AGFC personnel will make an initial presentation and accommodate those wishing to speak. Visitors may arrive and leave at any time during the meeting. Meeting sites and AGFC office telephone numbers are:

**Jonesboro**

Forrest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center  
600 East Lawson Road  
(877) 972-5438

**Brinkley**

AGFC Regional Office  
1201 North Highway 49  
(877) 734-4581

**Monticello**

AGFC Regional Office 771 Jordan Drive  
(877) 367-3559

**Camden**

Camden Fairview High School Auditorium  
1750 Cash Road  
(877) 836-4612

**Hope**

FairPark Community Center  
Fair Park Drive  
(877) 777-5580

**Hot Springs**

National Park Community College Auditorium  
101 College Drive  
(877) 525-8606

**Fort Smith**

Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center  
8300 Wells Lake Road  
(877) 478-1043

**Russellville**

AGFC Regional Office  
1266 Lock and Dam Road  
(877) 967-7577

**Fayetteville**

University of Arkansas  
Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Arena  
1335 West Knapp  
(877) 967-7577

**Mountain View**

Ozark Folk Center Auditorium  
Hwy 382  
(877) 297-4331



## New on [www.agfc.com](http://www.agfc.com) this week:

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is in the process of redesigning its Web site. Each week in this space, we will be highlighting new information posted to the website.

- Updated the Bull Shoals and Norfolk Tailwaters Management Plan page with new information concerning the draft management plan and attached a printable copy of the draft management plan at [http://www.agfc.com/fishing/resources-fishing/trout-in-arkansas/trout\\_plans/tailwaters\\_meetings.aspx](http://www.agfc.com/fishing/resources-fishing/trout-in-arkansas/trout_plans/tailwaters_meetings.aspx)
- Posted the following reports to the Turkey section of the Reports and Surveys page at <http://www.agfc.com/data-facts-maps/reports.aspx#turkey>
  - 2006-07 Wild Turkey Restoration Summary
  - 2007 Arkansas Wild Turkey Brood Survey Summary
  - Wild Turkey Harvest Report - Spring 2007
  - Posted the December 2007 Aerial Waterfowl Survey at <http://www.agfc.com/data-facts-maps/reports.aspx#waterfowl>
- Posted the document relating to Policies on Land Use around Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Lakes at <http://www.agfc.com/fishing/rules-regulations-fishing/landuse.aspx>
- Posted the Hybrid Bass Stocking Report for the Family and Community Fishing Program at [http://www.agfc.com/fishing/fish-management/hybrid\\_stocking.aspx](http://www.agfc.com/fishing/fish-management/hybrid_stocking.aspx)
- Updated the 2007 Family and Community Fishing Program Trout Stockings information at <http://www.agfc.com/fishing/fish-management/trout-stocking/trout-stock-fcf.aspx>
- Updated the information concerning the 2008 Spring Turkey permit application process at <http://www.agfc.com/hunting/turkey/spring-turkey-permit.aspx>
- Published the 2008 Fishing Guidebook as a downloadable/printable file at <http://www.agfc.com/data-facts-maps/publications/guidebooks.aspx#fish>
- Posted the new Arkansas Furbuyers List at <http://www.agfc.com/hunting/furbearer/furbuyers.aspx>



## 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.

Dove:  
Dec. 15-Jan. 4

Duck:  
Nov. 17-Dec. 18, Dec. 26-Jan. 6, 2008 and Jan. 12, 2008-Jan. 27, 2008

Youth Waterfowl Hunt:  
Dec. 22-23

White-Fronted Goose:  
Nov. 17-Dec. 18 and Dec. 26-Feb. 3

Snow, Blue, and Ross' Goose:  
Nov. 8-Dec. 21 and Dec. 26-Feb. 3

Snow Goose Conservation Order:  
Feb. 4-April 27

Statewide Canada Goose:  
Dec. 26 – Feb. 3

Statewide Falconry:  
Dec. 19-21, Jan. 7-11 and Jan. 28-Feb. 17

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

Woodcock:  
Nov. 10 to Dec. 24

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

Deer Modern Gun:  
Nov. 10-Dec. 16 for zones 9 and 12.  
Nov. 10-Dec. 25 for zones 16, 16A and 17.  
Christmas holiday modern gun deer hunt is Dec. 26-28 statewide

Deer Muzzleloader:  
Dec. 15-17 for zones 1, 2, 3, 4A, 5A, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15  
Dec. 29-31 for zones 9, 12, 16, 16A and 17  
Zones 4, 4B, 5 and 5B are closed

Bear Modern Gun:  
Dec. 8-16 for zone 5 but may close earlier if quota is reached.  
Dec. 1-16 for zone 5A but may close earlier if quota is reached.  
All other zones closed.

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

Elk:  
Dec. 3-7 for zones 1, 2, 3, 4 and A and the youth elk hunt for zone 3.  
Dec. 3-5 for zone B.

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

**Dec. 15** - 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 for the Outdoor Enthusiasts."

**Dec. 20** – AGFC Commission monthly meeting, 2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, 9 a.m.

**Dec. 22** - 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."

**Dec. 29** - Talkin' Outdoors at the Corner Café with Steve "Wildman" Wilson, 9 a.m. on KARK Channel 4. Topic of the show will be "Winter Bird Feeding."

**Jan. 8** – 2008-09 AGFC Hunting Regulations Public Meetings, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**Jonesboro**

Forrest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center  
600 East Lawson Road  
(877) 972-5438

**Brinkley**

AGFC Regional Office  
1201 North Highway 49  
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**Monticello**

AGFC Regional Office 771 Jordan Drive  
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**Camden**

Camden Fairview High School Auditorium  
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National Park Community College Auditorium  
101 College Drive  
(877) 525-8606

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Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center  
8300 Wells Lake Road  
(877) 478-1043

**Russellville**

AGFC Regional Office  
1266 Lock and Dam Road  
(877) 967-7577

**Fayetteville**

University of Arkansas  
Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Arena  
1335 West Knapp  
(877) 967-7577

**Mountain View**

Ozark Folk Center Auditorium  
Hwy 382  
(877) 297-4331

**Little Rock**

AGFC Central Office  
2 Natural Resources Drive  
(800) 364-4263

**Jan. 18-20** - Arkansas Marine Expo, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock. For more information, contact: Denton and Griffey Attractions, Ken Griffey, (501) 225-6177 or (501) 765-1423.

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

**Feb. 1-2** - Quail and Songbird Habitat Workshop, PetitJean Mountain. Registration for the workshop is available online at [www.uawri.org](http://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](mailto:sdavies@uawri.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. 21** - AGFC Commission monthly meeting, Dumas.

**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.

**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](http://www.agfc.com) or call the Wildlife Information Hotline, (800)440-1477.

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