

Bond Swamp

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Regulations 2024-2025



Bond Swamp Refuge is part of a system of more than 560 National Wildlife Refuges, which provide for the conservation and management of habitats to benefit fish and wildlife. The Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge was established on October 16, 1989 to protect wetlands and adjacent upland habitats on the Ocmulgee River floodplain. The refuge strives to provide quality hunting and fishing opportunities when compatible with the refuge management objectives.

The refuge is open to the public year round for visitation and pre-hunt scouting during day light hours, **except during firearm deer hunts.** The refuge is primarily river swamp with creeks and sloughs traversing the entire area. When the Ocmulgee River overflows its banks, the floodplain may remain flooded for weeks. Access by vehicle and foot may be difficult. Portions of the refuge may be closed during periods of high water.

Brown's Mount

All hunting and fishing are prohibited at Brown's Mount. Brown's Mount is open to the public for visitation year round during daylight hours.

General Hunt Regulations

Public hunting is permitted on approximately 8,600 acres of Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge with a refuge hunting permit. Areas closed to hunting are marked with signs and orange paint. The refuge boundary is marked with signs and yellow paint.

In addition to Federal regulations, State Game and Fish laws and regulations are adopted and in effect, unless they have been further restricted by Federal law or regulations. Licenses, permits, all hunting and fishing equipment and effects, and vehicles or other conveyances are subject to inspection by Federal and State officers.

Refuge hunt permits and quota hunt permits are required for all hunters and anyone who accompanies them.

All game killed counts toward state daily and season limits.

Some access roads may be closed due to high water,

bad weather, or other management considerations.

Hunter access is permitted from two hours before legal sunrise to two hours after legal sunset during open seasons.

Disposal of carcasses or entrails - Permitted refuge hunters and fisherman may dispose of carcasses and entrails of game and fish legally taken from the refuge on the refuge. Carcasses and entrails may be placed in the woods, but may not be placed within 25 yards of any road, trail, gate, boat ramp, parking area or private property.

Hunter Education / Children

Hunters age 16-25 must possess the hunter education certificate while hunting. Children age 15 and under must remain within sight and normal voice contact of an adult age 21 or older possessing a valid hunting or fishing license to hunt or fish on the refuge.

One adult may supervise no more than one youth hunter during refuge quota deer and turkey hunts. Youth hunters, age 15 and under, may hunt on the deer and turkey quota hunts with a permitted adult by obtaining a free refuge youth permit. Youth hunters cannot apply individually for any quota hunt. During waterfowl quota hunts, youth hunters count toward party size of three.

Big Game Hunting

No hunter sign-in is required. All big game and feral hogs must be checked on the day killed at a refuge check station as designated before leaving the refuge. Check stations are located on the east side of the refuge at the Stone Creek Parking Lot and on the west side at the Barnes Ferry Road Parking Lot.

During deer archery and deer firearm quota hunts, deer must be recorded on the hunter's state harvest record at the site of kill. During quota hunts there is a two deer limit per hunter.

During refuge quota turkey hunts, harvest counts toward a hunter's season limit of two gobblers. Refuge limit is one gobbler per hunter.

All deer and turkeys harvested on the refuge

Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge Hunting and Fishing Permit 2024-2025

When signed and in your possession, this brochure serves as your permit for fishing, small game, youth deer hunt, and deer archery hunts. Your signature acknowledges your understanding of the regulations contained herein. Quota hunts require an additional Refuge specific special use permit.

You must have this brochure in your possession for ALL hunting and fishing, in addition to state license requirements.

Signature

must be checked at the refuge check station on the day of kill AND with the Georgia DNR Game Check System including the state harvest record.

Hunter orange is required to be worn during all deer firearm hunts and during deer archery hunt when the State deer primitive weapon and gun season are open. At least 500 square inches of hunter orange must be worn as an outer garment above the waist.

Feral hogs may be taken incidental during refuge hunt dates **except during refuge quota turkey hunts** by permitted hunters utilizing legal weapons designated by state law for the specific game species for which the refuge is open. Feral hogs must be checked on the day killed, at a refuge check station.

WARNING: Feral hogs can carry infectious diseases that are transmissible to people. To avoid possible exposure, wear plastic gloves when field-dressing feral hogs; wash hands with soap and hot water immediately afterwards; avoid direct contact with blood and reproductive organs; cook thoroughly; and properly dispose of all waste.

Use of dogs for hunting deer or feral hogs is prohibited.

Youth Deer Hunt

The youth deer hunt is November 16-17, 2024. Youth must be accompanied by a non-hunting adult age 21 or older in possession of a valid hunting and big game

Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge
718 Round Oak - Juliette Road
Round Oak, GA 31038
478/986 5441
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/bond-swamp/>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/bond-swamp/visit-us>
June 2024



license. Only youth between the ages of 10 and 15 on the days of the hunt may participate and apply for the youth deer hunt. Adults may not hunt during the youth deer hunt.

Tree Stands / Hunting Blinds

Tree stands and hunting blinds may be placed one day prior to each hunt and must be removed by 11am the day after the hunt closes.

Small Game

During the Refuge small game season only squirrel, rabbit, and quail may be taken. Weapons are limited to firearms and archery equipment listed in the state game laws for small game.

Only federally approved nontoxic shot (i.e. steel, bismuth, tungsten, etc.) for shotguns is allowed for hunting small game including squirrel, rabbit, and quail.

Hunting dogs may be used to hunt squirrel, rabbit, and quail. Hunters using dogs may not hunt from their vehicle by driving while dogs are out hunting along roads. Hunters must be out of their vehicle and off roads open to vehicle traffic. Dogs are not allowed for hunting feral hogs.

Feral hogs may be taken incidental during refuge hunt dates by permitted hunters utilizing legal weapons designated by state law for the specific game species for which the refuge is open. Feral hogs must be checked on the day killed, at a refuge check station.

Hunter orange is required to be worn during all small game hunts. At least 500 square inches of hunter orange must be worn as an outer garment above the waist.

Waterfowl

Waterfowl hunting is only permitted by quota hunt drawing. Quota hunt dates are during the state waterfowl season on specified dates.

Hunting dogs are allowed for waterfowl hunting.

Hunting is only allowed on designated dates from 30 minutes before sunrise to 12 noon.

Only federally approved nontoxic shot (i.e. steel,

bismuth, tungsten, etc.) is allowed for hunting waterfowl.

Only waterfowl quota permit holders may bring up to two (2) additional persons who are allowed to hunt, but they all must hunt and remain together as a group.

Disabled Hunters

Hunters that are confined to a wheelchair for mobility, having special needs, should contact the Piedmont Refuge Office for information.

Sport Fishing Regulations

Fishing is open March 1-October 31, from sunrise to sunset.

Fishing is permitted in all areas not designated as closed.

Fishing is not permitted at Brown's Mount.

Species and limits: same as State regulations.

Fishermen may use only rod and reel or pole and line to fish. Two poles per person allowed.

Fishermen may not possess, place, or throw feeds to attract fish.

Fisherman may not use or possess alcoholic beverages while fishing on the refuge

Fish Consumption Advisory – The State of Georgia EPD 2018 report recommends only eating one meal per week of largemouth bass taken from the Ocmulgee River (below Macon in Bibb and Twiggs Counties).

Boats

Boat launching is permitted at Stone Creek Boat Launch. Non-motorized boats or boats with electric motors are permitted. During periods of high water, boats may also be launched from refuge roads normally open to vehicle traffic.

After launching boats at the Stone Creek Boat Launch, vehicles and trailers must be parked in the Stone Creek Parking Lot.

Gasoline motors are only allowed during periods of high water. High water is defined by a reading

of 18.0 feet or higher at the Macon Gauge on the Ocmulgee River (http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ga/nwis/uv?site_no=02213000)

State boating laws and equipment requirements are in effect.

Commercial and Special Use Activities

No person, including but not limited to a guide, guide service, outfitter, club, or other organization shall provide assistance, services, or equipment on the refuge to any other person for compensation. For the purpose of this regulation, any fee paid or services rendered to a person for lodging, meals, club membership or similar services will be considered compensation. Violations of this regulation subjects each hunter, fisherman, or member in the party to a fine if convicted of this violation.

A refuge Special Use Permit is required for all commercial activities on the refuge including but not limited to commercial filming and photography; collecting plants or parts of plants; collecting wildlife, mussels, mushrooms, or other resources.

How to Get Refuge Permits

Refuge permits are required for all hunters and fishermen and anyone who accompanies them. In addition to refuge permits, all state license requirements must be met. **Refuge permits are NOT transferable. When signed, this brochure serves as your permit for fishing, small game, youth deer hunt and deer archery hunts.**

Additional permits may be obtained at the Stone Creek, Longleaf Pine, Barnes Ferry, and Griffin Road parking lots, the Piedmont Refuge Visitor Center, on the web at www.fws.gov/refuge/bond-swamp, or by mail.

Deer, waterfowl, and turkey quota hunt applications must be obtained from the Piedmont Refuge office. A quota hunt permit is required for all hunters and anyone who accompanies them, participating in designated quota hunts. The Refuge will mail requests made by phone, mail, or email, to a postal address. Electronic copies are not available. Application forms for the deer gun and waterfowl hunts will be available

in July and must be returned to the Piedmont Refuge office by **12 noon on Sep. 18, 2024**. A public drawing will be held at **1 pm Sep. 18, 2024**. Applications for the spring turkey hunts will be available in January and must be returned to the Piedmont Refuge office by **12 noon on Feb. 19, 2025**. A public drawing will be held at **1 pm Feb. 19, 2025**.

Contact the Piedmont/Bond Swamp Refuge office for more information or to report any violations of refuge regulations 478/986 5441.

General Prohibited Activities

- Taking, collecting or disturbing any artifact, property, plant, wildlife, or part thereof; other than that specifically permitted by refuge regulation
- Taking or possessing frogs, turtles, snakes, or other amphibians or reptiles
- Feeding of wildlife
- Entering refuge during deer firearms hunts without a refuge quota hunt permit
- Entering refuge hunt areas during refuge turkey hunts without a refuge quota hunt permit
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages. Possession of alcoholic beverages by persons under age 21.
- Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuges must comply with all provisions of state and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).
- Hunting or shooting from or within 50 yards of a road open to vehicle travel or 200 yards of a building
- Possess or hunt with buckshot
- Possess or hunt with lead shotgun ammunition during small game and quota waterfowl hunts
- Target shooting or non-hunting discharge of firearms
- Possess or use of any suppressor on any firearm
- Possess, place, and/or hunt over any feed or attractants (baiting)
- Use of trail or game cameras or leaving any other electronic device on the refuge
- Man-drives for deer or feral hogs defined as an organized hunting technique involving 3 or more

hunters using a coordinated effort to drive deer or feral swine from cover to another hunter for the purpose of shooting.













- Removing live hogs from refuge
- Hunting deer or hogs with or by aid of dogs
- Hunting at night or possess or use of any night vision or thermal imaging equipment
- Possess or use of any electronic calls
- Training dogs or release of birds
- Falconry
- Driving metal objects into trees or hunting from a tree in which metal objects have been driven
- Marking trails with flagging, blazing, painting, paper, trash or other devices
- Off road vehicle travel. Vehicle travel is limited to roads designated as open to vehicles
- Use of ATVs, UTVs, golf carts or other off road vehicles
- Leaving vehicles, boats, or trailers on refuge overnight
- Overnight camping and/or parking
- Blocking refuge road, boat ramp, or gate with vehicles or vehicle travel around a closed gate
- Bicycles on foot travel roads or off road. Bicycles are restricted to roads designated open to vehicles
- Disturbing, annoying, or interfering with other persons
- Use audio equipment, noise making devices, or generators
- Possess or use of drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)
- Littering or open fires
- Horses or mules, unleashed pets
- Walking on or along railroad track or railroad right-of-way
- Placing or leaving carcasses or entrails within 25 yards of any road, trail, gate, boat ramp, stream, parking area or private property.
- Trapping



Hunting Seasons 2024-2025

Hunt Type	Required Permits	Season Dates	Bag Limits
Deer Either Sex - Archery	General Refuge Permit	Sep. 14 - Nov. 3, 2024	State Limit
Deer Either Sex - Youth	General Refuge Permit	Nov. 16-17, 2024	2 deer
Deer Either Sex - Firearms	Quota 200	Nov. 22-23, 2024 Dec. 6-7, 2024	2 deer
Squirrel	General Refuge Permit	Aug. 15 - Sep. 13, 2024 Dec. 8, 2024 - Jan. 31, 2025	12 gray squirrel 1 fox squirrel
Rabbit, Quail	General Refuge Permit	Dec. 8, 2024 - Jan. 31, 2025	State Limit
Waterfowl	Quota 20	Dec. 14-15, 2024 Dec. 27-28, 2024 Jan. 10-11, 2025 Jan. 24-25, 2025	State Limit
Spring Turkey	Quota 40	Apr. 5-6, 2025 Apr. 18-19, 2025	1 turkey

Legend

-  Paved Road
-  Dirt Road
-  Railroad
-  Powerline
-  Foot Travel Only
-  Refuge Boundary
-  Private Property/No Hunting
-  Boat Launch
-  Parking
-  Check Station
-  Area closed to entry
-  Brown's Mount
No Hunting/Fishing Zone

