

St. Marks

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting Regulations 2024-2025



This brochure must be signed to be valid for the small game non-quota hunt and all hunts on the Newport Hunt area. It must be carried by the hunter while hunting. Gates not open for pre-hunt scouting by vehicles.

Name _____

(Please print)

I have read and understand the refuge hunting regulations.

Signature *(Permits are not transferable)*

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 68
St. Marks, FL 32355
850-925-6121
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/st-marks>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1-800-344-WILD
<http://southeast.fws.gov>

April 2024



Newport Hunt Area

This hunt area is east of the St. Marks River (see map). Driving access is limited to Grade 6, Grade 8 and Grade 10 only.

License requirements for Newport Hunt Area – Signed refuge hunting brochure, Florida hunting license, appropriate state stamp for weapon being used and game being hunted.

Archery Season Sept. 14 - Oct. 13, 2024

Legal to hunt: Antlered deer must have at least two points, one inch or greater in length on one antler to be harvested. State daily harvest and annual bag limits apply. Hogs unlimited. Archery hunters may also take antlerless deer during the archery season, (which includes does, and bucks with less than five inches in length, but not spotted fawn), and turkey of either sex.

Weapons: State legal archery equipment (including crossbows)

Muzzleloading Gun Season Oct. 19 - Nov. 1, 2024

Legal to hunt: Antlered deer must have at least two points, one inch or greater in length on one antler to be harvested. State daily harvest and annual bag limits apply. Hogs unlimited. **Weapons:** Muzzleloading gun, bow and crossbow only.

General Gun Season Nov. 2, 2024- Jan. 19, 2025

Legal to hunt: Antlered deer must have at least two points, one inch or greater in length on one antler to be harvested. State daily harvest and annual bag limits apply. Hogs unlimited. **Weapons:** State regulations for species being hunted.

Small Game Season Nov. 9, 2024 - March 2, 2025

Species: gray squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, and hogs.

Area: Newport Area **Weapons:** All State legal weapons allowed, including buckshot and slugs (Permits: available on website and refuge office)

Spring Turkey Season

Hunting allowed 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.

Youth Turkey: March 8-9, 2025

Spring Turkey: March 15 - April 20, 2025

Legal to Hunt: gobbler or bearded turkeys only, State harvest limits apply. Hogs unlimited. **Weapons:** Only bows, crossbows, and shotguns using #2 or smaller shot may to used for hunting turkey. For hogs, all state legal weapons allowed. Turkey annual state bag limit is in effect for all refuge hunts, and state harvest reporting requirements apply

Mobility-impaired Person Gun Hunt

30 permits Dec. 14-16, 2024 Saturday - Monday

Species: white-tailed deer; hogs. Bag limit: See Deer/Hog Quota hunt bag limit section. **Area:** section of Panacea Unit west of Highway 372 (Buckhorn Creek area) and east of US 98 to Spring Creek. See map. **Weapons:** State regulations for taking deer.

Spring Turkey

75 permits - April 8-12, 2025, hunting hours 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.

Species: turkeys and hogs. Bag limit: one gobbler or bearded turkey and unlimited hogs per hunt. **Area:** Panacea and Wakulla Units only. **Weapons:** Only bows, crossbows, and shotguns using #2 or smaller shot may to used for hunting turkey. For hogs, all state legal weapons allowed. Turkey annual state bag limit is in effect and State harvest reporting requirements apply.

Non-quota Hunt Permits

Small Game and Hogs

Dec. 26, 2024 - Jan. 12, 2025

Species: gray squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, and hogs.

Area: both Panacea and Wakulla Units and Aucilla River Area.

Weapons: All State legal weapons allowed, including buckshot and slugs (Permits: available on website and refuge office).

Piney Island Waterfowl Hunt

State Season

Species: ducks and coots.

Area: Piney Island only. Hunting from blinds left in area for more than one day prohibited. Remove blinds, trash and spent shells daily. Use of island plants for blinds prohibited.

Weapons: non-toxic shot only.

Permits: No specific refuge permit required. Must follow all State and federal waterfowl hunting regulations.

Port Leon Youth Hunting Area

Applications available online with the Youth Hunting Program of Florida at https://outreach.myfwc.com/events/event_list.asp?show=&group=&start=12/21/2012&end=&view=&cid=4484

Youth Deer Hunt: Dec. 6-8, 2024

Youth Spring Turkey Hunt: March 28-30, 2025

Quota Hunts Permits

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will be handling all hunt permits for St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Applications may be submitted at any license agent or tax collector or on-line at <https://myfwc.com/license/limited-entry/> beginning at 10 am (Eastern Time) May 15-June 15, 2024. Spring Turkey application period will begin Nov. 1-30, 2024.

Deer/Hog Quota Hunts Bag Limit

Deer: Two deer per hunt, either two antlerless deer or one antlerless deer and one antlered deer. Antlerless deer are defined per state regulations as deer with no antler or antlers less than 5". Antlered deer must have at least 2 points, 1 inch or greater in length on one antler to be harvested. During archery season, youth hunters 15 years and younger may harvest any deer except spotted fawn, bag limit applies. **White-tailed Deer annual state bag limit is in effect for all refuge hunts, and State harvest reporting requirements apply.**
Hogs: Unlimited per hunt.

Panacea Unit Fall Archery

200 permits Nov. 5-Nov. 9, 2024 Tuesday - Saturday

Species: white-tailed deer; hogs. Bag limit: See Deer/Hog Quota hunt bag limit section. **Area:** Panacea Unit only.

Weapons: State regulations for archery equipment, (including crossbows).

Wakulla Unit Fall Archery

200 permits - Nov. 12-16, 2024 Tuesday - Saturday

Species: white-tailed deer; hogs. Bag limit: See Deer/Hog Quota hunt bag limit section. **Area:** Wakulla Unit only.

Weapons: State regulations for archery equipment, (including crossbows).

Wakulla Unit General Gun Hunt

150 permits - Dec. 14-16, 2024 Saturday - Monday

Species: white-tailed deer; hogs. Bag limit: See Deer/Hog Quota hunt bag limit section. **Area:** Wakulla Unit only.

Weapons: State regulations for taking deer.

Panacea Unit General Gun Hunt

80 permits - Dec. 20-22, 2024, Friday - Sunday

Species: white-tailed deer; hogs. Bag limit: See Deer/Hog Quota hunt bag limit section **Area:** Panacea Unit only.

Weapons: State regulations for taking deer.

General Provisions

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 571 national wildlife refuges. The primary objective of the refuge is to provide habitat for conservation and protection of all species of wildlife. The harvest of surplus animals is one tool used to maintain wildlife populations at a level compatible with habitat.

The regulations listed below supplement the general regulations which govern hunting on wildlife refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. Hunting will be in accordance with applicable state regulations.

Prohibited Activities

- Target practice is prohibited.
- Driving game is prohibited.
- Wood gathering, camping, littering, and fires are prohibited.
- Leashed dogs may be used for trailing injured game. Other use of dogs prohibited except for Piney Island Waterfowl hunt.
- Unleashed dogs prohibited.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages in refuge hunting areas is prohibited.
- The placing of or hunting over bait is prohibited.
- It is unlawful to insert a nail, spike or other metal object into any tree or to hunt from any tree in which a nail, spike or other metal object has been inserted.
- Hunting from any paved or unpaved refuge road is prohibited.
- Vehicle access on numbered roads only.
- Use of flagging tape and reflective tacks prohibited. Painting or defacing plants or trees prohibited.
- ATVs are prohibited on refuge hunts, except during **scheduled** mobility impaired hunt
- Hunting or cleaning of game within 1000 feet of any residence, information stations or developed public recreation area is prohibited.
- Disposing of carcasses within 50 ft. of numbered or named roads is prohibited.
- The refuge is open to daylight use only, except for authorized hunting activities.
- Use of artificial light to locate or take wildlife is prohibited.

Specific Hunting Regulations

Public hunting is permitted on approximately 40,000 acres as shown on this map.

All hunters must possess identification, a Florida hunting license, and a valid refuge hunt permit or signed refuge hunting brochure as required for the specific hunt in which they are participating. State Management Area stamps are not required. A State archery stamp will be required for all archery hunts. A turkey stamp is required to hunt turkey. State and Federal waterfowl stamps are required to hunt waterfowl. State deer stamp required for all refuge deer hunters.

Foot/vehicle access into the refuge hunt area will be through designated access points (see map). No access along portions of public roads (see map). Vehicular access shown on map may vary according to weather and ground conditions. Vehicles are restricted to established roads. Boat access is permitted except to Piney Island for waterfowl hunting.

Pre-hunt scouting on foot is allowed anytime during daylight hours. The hunt area will be open to vehicles, weather permitting, two days before each quota hunt. Vehicle access in hunt area by permitted hunters only. Stands can not be placed prior to pre-huntscouting for the hunt drawn. Stands must be removed by the last day of the hunt. Portions of the hunt area may be temporarily closed due to wildlife management practices such as prescribed burns.

All hunters participating in refuge hunts (except turkey hunters) using firearms must wear a minimum of 500 square inches of fluorescent, orange colored material above the waistline. Archery hunters are encouraged to wear orange colored material.

Stand hours from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1 1/2 hours after sunrise are observed during big game hunts as a hunter courtesy.

Youth hunters (younger than 16 years) must possess a valid refuge permit and be supervised by a permitted adult 21 years of age or older and must remain within sight of normal voice contact of the adult. For big game hunts, the adult may supervise only one youth. For small game hunts, the adult may supervise no more than two youths.

