

Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge

The 50,180 acre Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1934 primarily to preserve wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl. The refuge’s predominant feature is the 40,000 acre Lake Mattamuskeet, the largest natural lake in North Carolina.

The regulated harvest of surplus animals is one tool used to manage wildlife populations.

General Hunting Regulations

Mattamuskeet Refuge is open to hunting of tundra swan, Canada and snow geese, ducks, coots, and white-tailed deer in accordance with applicable State and Federal regulations. The regulations below supplement the general regulations found in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, which govern activities, including hunting, on national wildlife refuges.

Hunters under the age of 16 must have successfully passed a State-approved hunter education course and provide proof of certification (card or certificate) upon request, and must be directly supervised by an adult 21 years of age or older.

Hunters using the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, hunting equipment, bag limits, vehicles, and their contents by Refuge or state law enforcement officers.

The taking or possession of any wildlife, including reptiles and/or amphibians, or any part thereof, except when permitted during a Refuge hunt or transporting same along a State Road, is prohibited.

How to Apply for Permits

Permits are required to hunt on Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge. Prospective hunters must apply for permits through the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission’s Permit Hunting Opportunities Program. Hunters can apply at a North Carolina Wildlife Service Agent, by telephone at 1/888/248 6834 or online at www.ncwildlife.org/permithunt

Give the Agent the Item Number of the hunt being applied for. Item Numbers for the Mattamuskeet NWR hunts are: September Canada goose hunt - Item Number 7047; Youth waterfowl hunt - Item Number 7046; Waterfowl hunt - Item Number 7045; Disabled waterfowl hunt - Item Number 7048; Deer hunt - Item Number 7050.

An application fee of \$5.00 will be charged by the State for each hunt application.

Hunters selected in the State drawing will be notified with instructions on how to submit the user fee to receive their refuge hunt permit. The user fee must be received before the permits are issued.

Deer Hunt

Deer hunting will be authorized on Mattamuskeet Refuge during two-day paired hunts on October 10-11 and October 24-25.

Permits

Apply through the North Carolina Permit Hunting Opportunities Program. Hunt Item Number is 7050. Application period is from July 1 - August 10. Applications can be made individually or by groups of up to five hunters. Successfully drawn applicants will be required to pay a \$15.00 user fee per person to the Refuge prior to being issued a permit. Hunters must carry on their person the signed refuge permit.

Bag Limits

With the appropriate North Carolina big game license, each hunter may take one antlered and one antlerless or two antlerless deer per day on Mattamuskeet Refuge.

Manner of Take

Deer may only be taken with shotgun, muzzleloading rifle/shotgun, bow and arrow, or crossbow.

Access

Permitted deer hunters will be authorized access from one hour before legal shooting time until one hour after legal shooting time. Vehicles are restricted to designated roads only. Access to open hunting areas behind road gates will be by foot, bicycle, and/or boat only.

Disabled sportsmen with valid proof of disability should contact the refuge office prior to arrival if special arrangements are needed.

Hunters are reminded that the land adjacent to the refuge is privately owned and entering or hunting on this land is at the discretion of the landowner.

Check Stations

All deer taken on Mattamuskeet Refuge must be checked at the Deer Check Station at Refuge Headquarters. Field dressing harvested deer is allowed and encouraged. No facilities are available for dressing deer at the check station.

Do not field dress deer close to roads or areas where piles are visible. Depositing or leaving deer carcasses on refuge lands is prohibited.

Other Special Regulations

All persons participating in the deer hunt must wear a minimum of 500 square inches of fluorescent orange-colored material above the waistline that is visible from any direction. All ground blinds must display a minimum of 144 square inches of fluorescent orange-colored material visible from all directions.

Hunters may not shoot on, from, or across any road accessible surface to include the following: Farm Field Road and East Main Road. See Refuge Map for road locations.

The construction and/or use of permanent blinds, platforms, and/or ladders is prohibited. Permit hunters may put up one portable blind or stand the day before the start of their hunt and must remove it at the end of the second day of that 2-day hunt. Any stands or blinds left overnight on the refuge must have a tag with the hunter’s name, address, and telephone number.

The use of nails, wire, screws (including lag-screw type steps) or bolts to attach a stand to a tree or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven to support a hunter is prohibited.

Only biodegradable flagging tape can be used to mark trails. All flagging tape must be removed on the last day of hunting.

As an ethical hunter, if you harvest or wound an animal, make every reasonable effort to locate the deer and salvage the animal.

The use of dogs to hunt deer is prohibited.

An adult can supervise only one youth hunter. The youth must remain in sight and normal voice contact with the adult.

Waterfowl Hunt

Waterfowl hunting will be authorized on approximately 4,000 acres of open water and marsh on the south side of Lake Mattamuskeet. The waterfowl hunt dates will be scheduled as two-day paired hunts on Tuesday - Wednesdays and Friday - Saturdays. Specific dates will be announced in September via a news release and on the Mattamuskeet Refuge web site (<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/mattamuskeet/>).

The Youth Waterfowl Hunt will be held on November 24-25. Youth must be less than 18 years of age on the day of the hunt.

Hunters age 16-17 must possess a valid license, duck stamp and HIP certification. Hunters under the age of 16 must have successfully passed a state-approved hunter education course and provide proof of certification.

Permits

Apply through the North Carolina Permit Hunt Opportunities Program. The youth waterfowl hunt Item Number is 7046, the general waterfowl hunt Item Hunt is 7045. Disabled hunters can apply for the disabled accessible hunt blind, Item Number 7048. The application period for waterfowl hunts is July 1 - October 1.

Individuals selected for the waterfowl hunt will be reserved two consecutive hunt dates and may bring two guests to participate in the hunt. A user fee of \$15.00 per person will be collected prior to hunting each day of the waterfowl hunt. Unclaimed reservations as of 5 am of each hunt date will be allotted to standbys via a lottery system.

In addition to the proper North Carolina hunting licenses and signed Federal duck stamp, waterfowl hunters must have the HIP certification.

Only licensed hunters who have paid the user fee may be in the blind. No observers.

Bag Limits

Same as prescribed by the State.

Manner of Take

Waterfowl may only be taken with shotguns using approved non-toxic shot.

Access

Access to hunt area is by vehicle on East Canal Drive and then via foot or non-motorized boat.

Check Stations

All waterfowl taken must be checked at a check station at Refuge Headquarters prior to leaving the refuge. Biological and public use data will be collected for management purposes.

Other Special Regulations

Shooting hours are 1/2 hour before sunrise until 12 noon, except for the first day of the youth hunt. The shooting hours for this day are 1 pm until sunset.

Decoys may only be put out on the MORNING of the hunt and MUST be removed daily.

Hunting is restricted to the assigned blind. Only crippled birds may be shot from outside the blind.

Hunting is restricted to the use and possession of non-toxic shot shells only. There is a 30 shell limit per hunter per day.

The use of retrieving dogs is permitted, but dogs must be under voice command at all times.

Motorized boats are not permitted.

September Canada Goose Hunt

Canada goose hunting will be authorized on 49,400 acres of Mattamuskeet Refuge. Hunts days are Monday through Saturday during the state September Canada goose season.

Apply through the North Carolina Permit Hunting Opportunities Program. The Canada Goose Hunt Item Number is 7047. The application period is July 1 - August 1. Successfully drawn applicants will be required to pay \$15.00 to the Refuge prior to being issued a permit.

Bag limits are the same as prescribed by the State. Portable blinds are permitted, but must be removed daily.

Prohibited Activities

■ **Disturbing and hunting over, or by the aid of any type of bait (food, salt, other minerals or other substance that lures or attracts animals) is prohibited on the refuge**

■ Blocking roads, trails or fire lanes

■ Camping

■ Littering

■ Open fires

■ Overnight parking

■ Taking wildlife or plants without authorization

■ Trapping

■ Using artificial lights (including vehicle headlights) to locate, observe, or take wildlife

■ Using or possessing alcoholic beverages while hunting

■ ATV’s, UTV’s, Off Road Motorcycles

Other

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.)



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Mattamuskeet

*National Wildlife
Refuge Hunting
Regulations 2017-2018*



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