

Utah Wildlife News
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In this issue:

Don't wait!
Turkey permits
See thousands of snow geese

Don't Wait Until the Last Day to Apply

Big game applications due by March 1

If you're going to apply for a permit to hunt big game in Utah this fall, a wildlife official has some advice: Apply before the last day of the application period.

Applications will be accepted at www.wildlife.utah.gov until 11 p.m. on March 1.

"When you apply depends a lot on how much patience you have," says Judi Tutorow, wildlife licensing coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Resources. "If you apply before March 1, you should be able to get your application in fast.

"If you wait until March 1, it could take longer," she says. "Thousands of hunters wait until the last day to apply. Receiving that much traffic in a short period of time really slows our Web site down."

Tutorow says if you do wait until March 1 to apply, make sure you start applying before 11 p.m.

"Even if you haven't finished your application by 11 p.m., the system will let you complete your application as long as you don't log out before you've completed it," she says.

"If you log out after 11 p.m., and then you try and get back into the system, you'll be out of luck. Starting at 11:01, the only thing you can apply for is a bonus point or a preference point."

For more information, call the Utah Wildlife Administrative Services office at 1-800-221-0659, the nearest Division of Wildlife Resources office or the DWR's Salt Lake City office at (801) 538-4700.

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Get a Turkey Hunting Permit

General season permits on sale starting Feb. 16

If you didn't obtain a limited entry permit to hunt wild turkeys in Utah this spring, don't put your shotgun away. Permits for Utah's first general statewide turkey hunt go on sale starting Feb. 16.

"We're excited," says Judi Tutorow, wildlife licensing coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Resources. "For the first time, every hunter who wants to hunt wild turkeys in Utah can hunt."

Because the general hunt is brand new, Tutorow says the DWR has received lots of questions from hunters. She provides the following information:

- You don't have to get a permit on Feb. 16. General turkey permits are not limited in number, so they won't run out. Permits will be available until the season ends on May 31.
- You can buy a general turkey permit and still keep all of your limited entry turkey bonus points. You won't lose any of your bonus points if you buy a general turkey permit.
- If you buy a general turkey permit, you can hunt anywhere in Utah that's open to turkey hunting.
- If you obtained a limited entry turkey permit, you can't obtain a general turkey permit. (You can have only one turkey permit each year.)
- You can buy a permit at www.wildlife.utah.gov starting Feb. 16. Permits will also be available at DWR offices and from more than 300 hunting license agents across Utah.
- Two general hunts will be held:
 - * The first hunt is a special youth hunt. This hunt is for hunters who are 15 years of age or younger. It runs April 30 – May 2.
 - To participate, young hunters must buy a general statewide hunting permit. Young hunters who drew a limited entry permit can't participate in the youth hunt.
 - Youngsters who buy a permit for the youth hunt can also use the permit to hunt during Utah's general statewide hunt. That hunt opens May 3.
 - * The second hunt is open to anyone who buys a statewide general turkey permit. The hunt runs May 3 – 31.

For more information, call the nearest Division of Wildlife Resources office or the DWR's Salt Lake City office at (801) 538-4700.

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Watch the Sky Turn White

See as many as 20,000 snow geese

Delta -- It's a sight you have to see to believe: thousands of pure white snow and Ross' geese lifting off Gunnison Bend Reservoir amid honks and the beating of wings.

You can see this spectacle yourself on Feb. 19, 20 and 21 at the annual Utah Snow Goose Festival. The festival will be held at and near Gunnison Bend Reservoir, just west of Delta. Admission is free.

As many as 20,000 snow geese have been at the reservoir during past festivals. Except for the black tips on their wings, snow geese are pure white.

"We'll provide spotting scopes so you can get a close look at the geese," says Bob Walters, Watchable Wildlife coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Resources. "We'll also be available to answer any questions you have."

In addition to seeing the geese, you can learn more about wildlife at free seminars offered by the DWR. The seminars will be held on Saturday, Feb. 20.

The best times to see the geese

The areas where you'll see the geese vary according to the time of the day.

"If you arrive early in the morning, you can watch the geese feeding in fields that surround the reservoir. Then, at about 10:30 a.m., the geese take off and fly back to the reservoir. That's an exciting time to see and hear the geese," Walters says.

After landing on the reservoir, the geese usually spend the next few hours there. "Then, anywhere from 4 to 6 p.m., they take off again and fly back to the fields," he says. "It's thrilling to be there when the geese do this."

DWR biologists will watch which fields the geese fly to. If you arrive after the geese have left the reservoir, the biologists will direct you to the fields where the geese are feeding.

Viewing tips

- Use binoculars or a spotting scope to view the geese. If you get too close to the geese, you could scare them away.
- If you pull off the road to view the geese, pull as far off the road as you can. And watch for cars.
- The weather could be cold and wet. Bring the proper clothes so you can stay warm and dry.

For more information about the 2010 Snow Goose Festival, call the Delta Area Chamber of Commerce at (435) 864-4316.

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