

Utah Wildlife News
January 28, 2010

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Learn 2009 Big Game Drawing Odds

The odds of drawing a Utah big game hunting permit in 2009 are now available in a Division of Wildlife Resources report.

“The drawing odds usually don’t change much from year to year,” says Judi Tutorow, wildlife licensing coordinator for the DWR. “If you’re going to apply for a 2010 permit, you’ll probably be interested in knowing what the odds were that you’d draw that permit in 2009.

“And the best part is, you can view the report for free.”

If you have access to the Internet, you can view and download the *2009 Bucks, Bulls & Once-in-a-Lifetime Bonus Point and Drawing Statistics* report for free.

To find the report, visit the big game information page at www.wildlife.utah.gov/hunting/biggame. Once you’re there, scroll down to the big game statistics & drawing odds portion of the page. Then click on 2009 bucks, bulls & once-in-a-lifetime bonus point and drawing statistics.

The report is also available at DWR offices. You can read the report for free or buy a copy for \$28.

Must apply by March 1

Feb. 1 is the first day you can apply for a 2010 Utah big game permit. Your application must be received through www.wildlife.utah.gov no later than 11 p.m. on March 1 to be included in the draw for permits.

You can also apply over the phone at (801) 538-4700. Phone-in applications will be must be received no later than 6 p.m. on March 1.

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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Contact: Mark Hadley, DWR Relations with the Public Specialist (801) 538-4737

See Bald Eagles

Bald Eagle Day is Feb. 6 and Feb. 13

If you've ever seen a bald eagle in the wild, you know it's an experience that can take your breath away.

In February, you'll have two chances to not only see bald eagles, but to learn more about them.

The Division of Wildlife Resources is holding its annual Utah Bald Eagle Day.

The event will be held on two different Saturdays. On Feb. 6, eagle viewing will take place at sites in central and southwestern Utah. On the following Saturday, Feb. 13, Utah Bald Eagle Day will be celebrated at three sites—two in northern Utah and one in northeastern Utah.

There is no cost to attend Bald Eagle Day. Viewing times are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. except at the Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area site, where viewing will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

On Feb. 6, you can view eagles at the following locations:

Feb. 6

Fountain Green State Fish Hatchery, located east of Nephi. If coming from the north, take I-15 and exit the freeway at the second Nephi exit (Exit 225). After exiting the freeway, turn east on SR-132 and travel about 10 miles. About 1 mile before the city of Fountain Green, a Bald Eagle Day sign will point you to an access road that leads to the hatchery.

Once you reach the hatchery, you'll be given a driving map of the Sanpete Valley that highlights the best areas in the valley to view eagles. Literature, displays and bathroom facilities will also be available at the hatchery. If eagles are near the hatchery, Division of Wildlife Resources staff will set up spotting scopes so you can view them. Spotting scopes will also be set-up at a viewing location about one mile from the hatchery.

Rush Lake Ranch, located on the Minersville highway (SR-130) about 12 miles north of Cedar City.

On Feb. 13, viewing will take place at the following locations:

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Feb. 13

Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area (Compton's Knoll), located about 10 miles northwest of Corinne. To reach the WMA, take Exit 365 off of I-15 and travel west on SR-83 through Corinne. Stay on SR-83 until you get to 6800 W. (Iowa String). Travel north to 6800 N. Travel west on 6800 N. until you reach the Salt Creek WMA/Compton's Knoll Watchable Wildlife site.

Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area, located on the west side of Farmington at 1325 W. Glover Lane (925 South).

In addition to seeing eagles at the WMA, you can also participate in activities that will be held at the Great Salt Lake Nature Center at the north end of the WMA. The activities include a bake sale and fun, hands-on activities for children. The activities—each centered around a bald eagle theme—will begin at 9 a.m. and run through most of the day. You can also see live birds of prey and watch a slideshow presented by HawkWatch International.

In addition to participating in the activities, you can learn more about becoming a volunteer at the WMA. Volunteers lead birding tours and help with other projects.

If you're traveling north on I-15, coming from Salt Lake City and other areas south of Farmington:

To reach the WMA, travel north on I-15, and exit the freeway at Exit 325. Turn left on Park Lane and travel west. The road will angle to the south, and you'll come to Clark Lane at the first traffic light. Turn right. Travel west to the first stop sign, which is at 1525 West, and turn left. Travel south to Glover Lane, and turn right. Travel west on Glover Lane for about two blocks until you come to 1700 W. Turn left on 1700 W. and travel south to the Great Salt Lake Nature Center. You can park in the parking lot.

If you're traveling south on I-15, coming from Ogden and other areas north of Farmington:

To reach the WMA, travel south on I-15 and exit the freeway at Exit 325. Go to the stoplight and turn right on Park Lane. Travel south to the next light, which is at Clark Lane, and turn right. Travel west to the first stop sign, which is at 1525 West, and turn left. Travel south to Glover Lane, and turn right. Travel west on Glover Lane for about two blocks until you come to 1700 W. Turn left on 1700 W. and travel south to the Great Salt Lake Nature Center. You can park in the parking lot.

Split Mountain/Green River, located north of Jensen and below the Dinosaur Quarry in Dinosaur National Monument (DNM). To reach the site, drive north from Highway 40 in Jensen on the road (SR-149) to the Dinosaur Quarry.

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Your first stop should be at the staging area located just inside the DNM boundary. Displays and spotting scopes will be available at the staging area, and you might be able to see bald eagles and other raptors in the distance.

You can also see live birds close up! At least one live bird of prey—and maybe even as many as three—will be on display at the staging area.

From the staging area, biologists will direct you to other sites where you may have better views of eagles and other wildlife of interest. In past years, visitors have seen bald and golden eagles hunting and feeding, as well as prairie falcons, hawks, mule deer, river otters, pheasants, turkeys, sandhill cranes, porcupines, mergansers, Canada geese and other wildlife.

During your trip, you may also want to stop and visit the Dinosaur National Monument. The monument's dinosaur quarry is closed, but you can see a few dinosaur bones at a temporary visitor center near the quarry. The visitor center also includes a small bookstore.

Get a close look

"We'll set spotting scopes up at each viewing site so you can get a good look at the eagles," says Bob Walters, Watchable Wildlife coordinator for the DWR. "Biologists and volunteers will also be on hand to help you spot the eagles and to answer any questions you have."

Information about bald eagles, and wildlife watching and birding opportunities in Utah, will be available at each location. The materials will be available for free, or for a small cost.

The best time to attend

The best time to see eagles on Feb. 6 and Feb. 13 depends on two things.

If you want to attend during the warmest time of the day, attend late in the morning or early in the afternoon. "The warmer temperatures are especially important if you bring young children with you," Walters says.

Late morning and early afternoon also provide the clearest times of the day to see the eagles.

If you want to see the greatest number of eagles, attend between 2 and 4 p.m. "In mid-afternoon, the eagles start flying to trees to roost for the night," Walters says. "If you want to see the greatest number of eagles, mid to late afternoon is usually the best time to attend."

Items to bring

If you attend Bald Eagle Day, dress in warm clothes and bring waterproof boots. Also, if you want to get pictures of the eagles, bring a telephoto lens.

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“The eagles will be some distance from the viewing areas,” Walters says. “In the past, we’ve had photographers try and get close to the eagles. They ended up scaring the eagles away.”

Utah’s most popular viewing event

Walters started Bald Eagle Day in 1990 as a way to introduce people to Utah’s wildlife. “Bald Eagle Day was started to arouse people’s interest, whet their appetite and make them aware of the wildlife around them,” Walters says.

Since it began, Bald Eagle Day has become Utah’s most well attended, and one of its most enjoyed, wildlife-viewing events.

For more information about Bald Eagle Day, call Walters at (801) 538- 4771, or Division of Wildlife Resources offices in Ogden, Springville, Vernal or Cedar City.

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Contact: Mark Hadley, DWR Relations with the Public Specialist (801) 538-4737

Apply for a Bear Hunting or Pursuit Permit

Feb. 2 is the first day to apply

If you enjoy pursuing bears with dogs, a big change awaits you this year: if you want to pursue on the Book Cliffs, San Juan or La Sal units this summer, you’ll have to obtain a permit through a drawing.

The number of pursuit permits available for the three eastern Utah units this summer is limited. And the summer season has been split into an early season and a late season.

You can apply for a pursuit permit for the units starting Feb. 2 at www.wildlife.utah.gov. Starting Feb. 2, you can also apply for a black bear hunting permit for any bear unit in the state.

To be included in the draw for permits, your application must be received through the Web site no later than 11 p.m. on Feb. 25.

Results of the 2009 Utah Black Bear Draw will be available by March 11.

Applying for a bonus point

If you’re not going to hunt bears in 2009, you can still apply for a bonus point. Bonus points increase the chance that you’ll draw a bear permit in the future.

Applications for bonus points will also be accepted at www.wildlife.utah.gov from Feb. 2 until 11 p.m. on Feb. 25.

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2010 Black Bear Guidebook

Before you apply, you'll need a copy of the 2010 Utah Black Bear Guidebook. The guidebook should be available at www.wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks by late January.

Reason for pursuit change

The Book Cliffs, San Juan and La Sal units are three of the most popular places in Utah to pursue bears with trained hounds. Unfortunately, that popularity has caused some problems.

"Last summer, we received more than 150 complaints from campers, hikers and others who were recreating in the area," says Justin Dolling, game mammals coordinator for the Division of Wildlife Resources.

"Some of the houndsmen were using as many as 20 hounds to pursue a single bear," Dolling says. "When these hounds get on a bear's track, they bark a lot, and they're extremely noisy. The noise and the commotion they and the houndsmen caused bothered some of the people who were camping and hiking in the area."

In addition to a limited number of permits, the number of hounds houndsmen can use to pursue bears on ANY unit in the state during the summer pursuit season will also be limited.

Houndsmen may not use more than eight hounds to pursue a single bear in the summer.

This change applies to the summer pursuit season only. The number of dogs houndsmen can use during the spring and fall pursuit and hunting seasons is not limited.

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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