

# Outdoor Oklahoma

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2024 — ONLY \$10 A YEAR



## INSIDE

**Bear Hunter Goes  
All-out Primitive**

**How Do Fowl Fight  
the Frigid Temps?**

## CONTROLLED HUNTS NEW OPTION:

**Add One Point in  
Pronghorn, Elk Drawings**

A PUBLICATION OF THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



# PANORAMAS



A dictionary states that if something is “relevant,” it is significant or important to a current audience. One issue that keeps growing in relevance is the conservation of our natural resources. But if the American public doesn’t view state conservation agencies as relevant, the future of our natural resources falls into jeopardy.

Conservation relevance is an effort to “expand the relevancy of conservation to more diverse constituencies. ... Relevance means that (people see) conservation is essential or connected to important aspects of (their) lives.”

Building relevance is a nationwide effort of state and provincial fish and wildlife departments that are members of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. This group’s “Relevancy Roadmap” has given state agencies the tools to successfully build the perception of relevance by the public, but enables each state to determine how to get there.

Many state fish and wildlife agencies have created conservation relevancy plans, and ODWC created its plan in 2022.

To continue providing hunting, fishing, and wildlife-watching opportunities, ODWC must consider how to provide those opportunities to more diverse constituencies, thus gaining more supporters and possibly more revenue streams, which in turn will help conservation of resources in the future.

ODWC’s mission statement says, “We manage and protect fish and wildlife, along with their habitats, while also growing our community of hunters and anglers, partnering with those who love the outdoors, and fostering stewardship with

those who care for the land”. ODWC operates on the public trust doctrine, which states that wildlife and wild places belong to the public, and ODWC is charged with managing these resources for present and future benefit. Both dogmas reveal that ODWC is charged with managing Oklahoma’s resources for a broad public.

Relevance also involves building name recognition for ODWC with people the agency hasn’t interacted with before. Connecting with new audiences and creating support for what we do will build wider support for various ODWC goals.

In developing a plan, ODWC engaged experts to help us determine how relevancy could best be adopted in our state. We began by focusing on three populations with which ODWC historically hasn’t had significant relationships: Hispanic Oklahomans, urban Oklahomans, and wildlife-enthusiast Oklahomans (who don’t hunt or fish). These groups were selected through social science research by way of interviews and statewide surveys, and the data we gathered will help us understand how to best connect with these new-to-us groups.

The process will produce gains but also create hiccups. But we look forward to connecting and displaying ODWC’s commitment to offer hunting, fishing, wildlife watching and other outdoor opportunities to a diverse population across Oklahoma. ♡

A handwritten signature in dark green ink that reads "Betsey York". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Betsey York,**  
ODWC Human Dimensions Specialist

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## ON THE COVER:

This painting of a pair of gadwalls in flight by Guy Crittenden of Richmond, Va., will appear on the 2024-25 Oklahoma Waterfowl Stamp. Registration for the next state duck stamp design contest will open May 1, 2024. All

artwork must be submitted to ODWC by Aug. 31, 2024. This year's subject is the lesser scaup.

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OKLAHOMA



# OFF THE BEATEN PATH

NOTES ON WILDLIFE • OUTDOOR TIPS • READERS' LETTERS • ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS  
COMPILED BY DON P. BROWN

## WADE FREE STEPS INTO ROLE AS ODWC INTERIM DIRECTOR



PHOTO PROVIDED

On Dec. 11, 2023, Wade Free became the Interim Director of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. An avid hunter, Free has devoted 40 years working for the wildlife, sportsmen and sportswomen of Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission announced the promotion of Wade Free to the role of Interim Director of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Free, who served as ODWC's Assistant Director of Operations for 12 years, began his career as a fish hatchery assistant in 1983 after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife ecology with management option from Oklahoma State University. In 1986, he became a Wildlife Area Biologist in the Game Division (now called Wildlife Division).

In 1993, Free was promoted to Assistant Chief of the Wildlife Division. In 1996, he chose to return to the field as Northwest Region Wildlife Supervisor, where he was able to help share the perspective from the field with administrators while also being able to raise his children in the rural environment that his family wanted to experience.

In 2011, Free was promoted to Assistant Director of Operations and returned to work at ODWC headquarters. HE also served as a reserve Game Warden for 20 years.

Free becomes Interim Director after the Dec. 6 resignation of J.D. Strong, who served as ODWC's Director since 2016. ♡

## FORMER DIRECTOR GREG DUFFY REMEMBERED



Greg Duffy

A celebration of the life of former Wildlife Department Director Gregory Dean Duffy was held Dec. 15, 2023. Duffy, 72, died Dec. 8, 2023. He was remembered as a conservationist, hunter, fisherman, farmer, leader, Christian, family man, and a true outdoorsman. One of his favorite sayings was, "Nothing beats a day outdoors."

Duffy was born in Kingfisher County on April 9, 1951. He grew up hunting, trapping, and fishing with his dad, brother, future brothers-in-law, cousins, and friends. He graduated from Lomega High School in 1969.

In 1973, he earned a bachelor's degree in wildlife management from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant.

Duffy's career in the Wildlife Department spanned

38 years. He held various positions including fish hatchery technician, waterfowl biologist, wildlife and lands biologist, Assistant Chief and Chief of the Wildlife Division, before becoming the agency's director in 1993. The Tulsa World once wrote, "Greg Duffy is to Oklahoma's fish and wildlife as Barry Switzer is to OU football — only in a quieter way."

He retired from his "dream job" in 2009 as one of the longest-tenured Wildlife Directors in the country. In 2021, SEOSU gave him a Distinguished Alumni Award for his lifetime of service to Oklahoma's citizens, and fish and wildlife resources.

Duffy had a strong faith, taught Sunday School, and served on his church board. He was elected to the Piedmont School Board in 2018, serving until his death. ♡

# WELCOME TO THE TAILGATE!

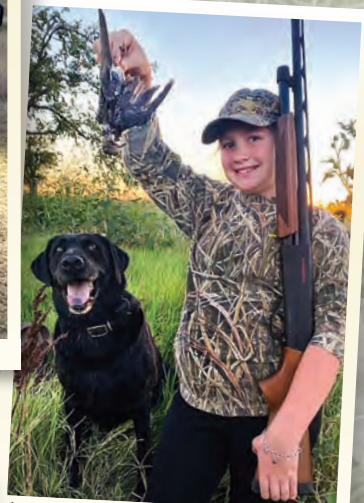
Is the hunting good? You bet! Step up to The Tailgate and check out some great harvests made recently by hunters in Oklahoma. Here's a few we thought you would enjoy! To submit your photo of a successful hunting trip, or to see what others have harvested, go to [wildlifedepartment.com/hunting/tailgate](http://wildlifedepartment.com/hunting/tailgate) or scan the code:



Mike Pearson, wild turkey, Okmulgee County.



Kirt B., dove, Woodward County.



Amanda Thomas, dove, Noble County.



Keleigh Kight, waterfowl, Kaw WMA.



Wade Free, dove, Cimarron County.



Trigger Johnson, deer, Coal County.

# GADWALLS IN FLIGHT TO GRACE 2024-25 WATERFOWL STAMP

Artwork depicting gadwalls in flight created by Guy Crittenden of Richmond, Va., was voted the winner of the 2024-'25 Oklahoma Waterfowl Stamp Design Competition. The design will be featured on Oklahoma's waterfowl stamp for the 2024-25 hunting seasons. Crittenden's creation appears on this magazine's cover. His win earned him a \$1,200 award.

Crittenden's artwork was among 20 entries submitted this year by hopeful artists from across the nation.

Artists who received honorable mention are by Dennis Arp of Edison, Neb.; Diane Ford of Bethesda, Md.; and Gunner Hilliard of Williamstown, N.J.




Winner: Guy Crittenden of Richmond, Va. (see front cover).

The Wildlife Department has held the Oklahoma waterfowl stamp art contest annually for 43 years. The program was designed to fund activities to ensure quality habitat for the hundreds of thousands of ducks and geese that migrate through the state each year. Oklahoma's design contest features portraits of the diverse waterfowl species that migrate through the state by some of the best wildlife artists from Oklahoma and across the nation.

The program generates funding for waterfowl conservation projects through the sale of waterfowl licenses, required of most waterfowl hunters, and the sale of stamps, many of which are purchased by collectors. The state duck stamp formerly served as Oklahoma's waterfowl hunting license.

The program has helped the Wildlife Department acquire almost 12,000 wetland acres and to enhance, create, restore and maintain critical waterfowl habitat. Wetland development units such as Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area in southwestern Oklahoma and the Red Slough Wildlife Management Area in McCurtain County have benefited from state duck stamp funding.

To support waterfowl habitat conservation in Oklahoma, buy an Oklahoma duck stamp in the online Outdoor Store at <https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Shop/Inventory>.

This year's art contest features the lesser scaup. Contest registration is now open, and artworks will be due Aug. 31, 2024. For complete rules, scan the code. 



Honorable mention: Dennis Arp of Edison, Neb.



Honorable mention: Diane Ford of Bethesda, Md.



Honorable mention: Gunner Hilliard of Williamstown, N.J.

# WELCOME TO THE DOCK!

Are the fish biting? You bet! Step onto **The Dock** and take a gander at some great catches made recently by Oklahoma anglers. Here's a few we thought you would enjoy! To see more or submit a photo of your catch, go to [www.wildlifedepartment.com/fishing/the\\_dock](http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/fishing/the_dock) or scan the code:



Easton Wall, catfish, 11/08/2023,  
Fort Cobb Reservoir.



Hailey Schaefer, striped bass hybrid, 10/13/2023,  
Oologah Lake.



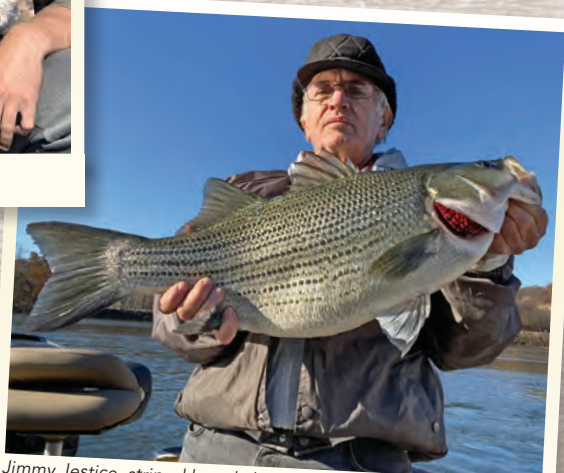
Darrell Ethridge, smallmouth bass, 11/06/2023,  
Lake Lawtonka.



Kostner Ingraham, black bass, 11/04/2023,  
Lake Stanley Draper.



Don Martin, saugeye, 11/24/2023, Lake Ellsworth.



Jimmy Jestice, striped bass hybrid, 11/28/2023, Fort Gibson.

# WILD ABOUT COOKING

## MOROCCAN STYLE DUCK HAND PIES

This is a spin on a Moroccan dish known as a pastilla. There is a tradition of combining meat with dried fruits, nuts, and warm spices to create comforting dishes that are equal parts sweet and savory.

—Jonathan Wilkins



### INGREDIENTS

Heart, liver, gizzards, and breast meat from 2 medium size ducks (like mallards), ground

1 medium red onion, chopped

¼ cup chopped dried apricots, chopped

¼ cup dates, chopped

½ cup raisins

½ cup roasted almonds, chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

¼ tsp. ground allspice

¼ tsp. ground ginger

¼ tsp. ground cinnamon

¼ tsp. freshly ground whole nutmeg

¼ tsp. ground turmeric

2 cloves garlic

1 Tbsp. apricot preserves

2½ cups duck or chicken stock

Juice and zest of 1 orange

2 packages defrosted pre-made or homemade pie dough (about 14 oz)

1 egg

Flour for surface prep

### DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. If not already prepared, run duck hearts, livers, gizzards, and breast meat through grinder.
- In a large pan, sauté chopped onion over medium-high heat for 3-5 minutes. Add ground duck and season with salt, pepper, and other spices. Cook until thoroughly browned.
- Add dried fruit and nuts, stirring to incorporate.
- Add stock and stir. Simmer on low for 5 minutes to allow fruit to absorb liquid.
- When the mixture becomes the consistency of loose Sloppy Joe filling, add apricot preserves, orange juice, and zest. Mix well and turn off heat. The mixture will thicken as it cools.
- Roll out pie dough on a lightly floured surface. Cut dough into 4- to 5-inch wide circles and fill the center of circles with about 1/3 cup cooled filling. Fold circles in half and seal the edges by running a finger dipped in water along inside edge and crimping with fork.
- Lay out pies on a parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. Make a quick egg wash by thoroughly mixing a large egg and 1 or 2 Tbsp. of water. Brush pies with egg wash. Cut a vent or two in the top of each pie with kitchen shears or small knife.
- Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve and enjoy.

### MEET THE CHEF

Wilkins is a writer, hunter, cook, educator, and owner of Black Duck Revival. He examines American sustenance and its themes of human migration, practical agrarianism, and craft. His writing, essays and recipes have been featured in *Outdoor Life*, *Garden & Gun*, *Bear Hunting Magazine*, *Backcountry Journal*, *SITKA* gear, *Nature Swagger*, and *Colorado Wild*.

*(This publication was funded by the Multistate Conservation Grant Program, a program supported with funds from the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and jointly managed by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.)*

# GAME WARDEN'S JOURNAL

ACCOUNTS FROM THE FIELD BY THE PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO ENFORCE THE FISH AND WILDLIFE LAWS OF OKLAHOMA



On Dec. 9, 2023, District 8 Capt. **Ben Bickerstaff** and Game Warden **Blake Cottrill**, based in Garfield County, investigated a hunting incident involving crane hunters west of Cherokee.

The crane hunters reported that a pickup stopped abruptly on the nearby road, lowered a window and began shooting into their decoy spread with a high-powered rifle. The driver drove away when the "cranes" did not disperse. The hunters immediately reported the incident.

Game Wardens were able to locate the men in the pickup, and they were issued citations, and their firearms were seized as evidence.

The men said they were just trying to "scare those cranes off the wheat." But it wasn't their crop of wheat to worry about.

It is particularly dangerous to shoot from a roadway into a decoy spread or even live birds. In this case, eight hunters were within 20-30 yards of a

decoy that was shot using a Savage .204 rifle. Luckily, the hunters were not harmed, but this story could have had a very different outcome.

Many methods exist to scare waterfowl off of a crop: nuisance wildlife control operators are listed on the Wildlife Department's website; local conservation districts/Farm Service agencies often rent out propane cannons; even USDA Wildlife Services can provide options for farmers and landowners to deal with wildlife depredation.



The Oklahoma Wildlife Management Association (OWMA) and Wildlife Department Game Wardens collaborated to host a youth deer hunt Dec. 8, providing young hunters a great opportunity to engage in an educational weekend filled with outdoor adventures.

In an effort to recruit the next generation of hunters and encourage responsible hunting practices, ODWC includes youth hunts in its controlled hunts drawings. Eligibility for this

particular youth deer hunt was restricted to those who hadn't previously harvested more than one deer. Out of the hopeful applicants, 24 youth hunters were drawn for the antlerless deer hunt.

The weekend's events were hosted on private lands in south central Oklahoma, where youth hunters were guided by Oklahoma Game Wardens, volunteers from the OWMA, and landowners. Only two of the youth hunters had harvested a deer before, highlighting the opportunity this event provided for many to experience the thrill of the hunt for the first time.

On Friday, each hunter had to prove their ability to shoot accurately by taking turns at a 100-yard range. Saturday's morning hunt was followed by pizza and a presentation of valuable tips and techniques for deer processing. Several other Game Wardens brought skeet shooting equipment.

The young hunters returned home a bit tired with newfound knowledge, experiences, and some fresh deer meat. The cooperation between OWMA and ODWC is a testament to our commitment to wildlife conservation and to the recruiting of responsible hunters in Oklahoma.

The image of two white-tailed deer with locked-up antlers and tangled in a wire fence was captured in Garfield County on Game Warden Capt. **Ben Bickerstaff's** body-worn video camera. Bickerstaff skillfully fired his shotgun to remove one of the antlers, freeing the surviving buck from its expired foe.



(Reports from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation-Game Wardens Facebook page.)

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Please help make a difference! When violators break the law, they steal fish and wildlife from you! Report violations anonymously by calling Operation Game Thief at (800) 522-8039. You could earn a cash reward.

# GAME BAG

## A COLLECTION OF LETTERS TO THE WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

We'd like to hear from you! Send your letters to Outdoor Oklahoma Letters, P.O. Box 53465, Oklahoma City, OK 73152, or send e-mail to [donald.brown@odwc.ok.gov](mailto:donald.brown@odwc.ok.gov).

Dear Wildlife Department,

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how well one of your employees performed. Game Warden **Riley Willman** was called to confront a poacher on my property in Delaware County. Due to the poacher's persistence, Willman was called several times. Each time, he showed up in a timely and professional manner. He was firm and clear with the trespasser. I do not believe we would have been able to resolve this issue without Willman's assistance. He should be commended as a positive representative of the great state of Oklahoma. Thank you for employing quality people.



Riley Willman

Kimberly Parks

Dear Wildlife Department,

I wanted to express how thankful I am for all that the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation does. Every experience and interaction I have had with the Department and its people has been positive. I wanted to especially thank **Colin Berg** and everyone in the Education section.



Colin Berg



Lance Meek

I first met Berg about 30 years ago at a camp with a bunch of physical education teachers. Years later, we would cross paths when NASP (National Archery in the Schools Program) was brought to Oklahoma. Because of Berg, I was able to start an Outdoor Education class at the Owasso 8th-Grade Center. It started with a single class of 28 students the first year. The second year we expanded to two classes and then three the third year. I now have five sections of 28-30 students per class, and we have to turn some away because there is no more room. Because of the success of the class, our high school has also started an Outdoor Education program. All of this was a result of Berg's hard work and dedication to bringing ODWC programs to students.

I also want to acknowledge **Lance Meek** and his helpfulness and patience when dealing with my incessant questions and material needs. Thanks to him and Berg, we have successfully certified over 1,200 students in Hunter Education courses through my classes.

**Sean Gee, Daniel Griffith, Kelly Boyer, and Damon Springer** have all been invaluable, providing us with resources, material, and answering questions.

I would be remiss if I did not also include our local Game Wardens, **Travis Garrett, Brandon Fulton** and **Rylee Rolling**, who have given valuable time to visit our classes or drop off material for our students.



Shawn Gee



Travis Garrett



Brandon Fulton



Rylee Rolling

Because of the work of these people and others at ODWC, we have helped to influence a new generation of outdoorsmen and women. Thank you.

**Frank Blair, outdoor education teacher,  
Owasso 8th-grade Center**

Dear Editor,

Just wanted to let you know that I really enjoyed **Tell Judkins'** article in the November/December 2023 issue of Outdoor Oklahoma. Great perspective!

Brenda D. Smith



Tell Judkins

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In his article "Northern Bobwhite in Oklahoma: How Did We Get Here?", Judkins, ODWC's upland game biologist, detailed some of the reasons likely responsible for the decade's long decline in bobwhite populations in Oklahoma and across the nation.

Dear Wildlife Department,

We wanted to extend a thank you to **Lauren Johnson** and **Josh Richardson** for their efforts and assistance with the restoration of our land. They are knowledgeable and friendly, and are great ambassadors for ODWC. We look forward to working with ODWC again.



Lauren Johnson



Josh Richardson

**Stephen and Emma Clayman**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The Claymans reached out to ODWC's Landowner Assistance Section to help improve wildlife conservation on their property. Other landowners interested in assistance can call one of five private lands biologists; find their phone numbers by searching "landowner programs" at [wildlifedepartment.com](http://wildlifedepartment.com).

# GOT OUTDOOR PHOTOS? ENTER OUR CONTEST!

Do you have an awesome photo or three you've taken that features the magnificent sights of Outdoor Oklahoma? Here's your chance to have your work published and admired by thousands of people. If your photo is selected as one of the "best of the best" in Outdoor Oklahoma magazine's annual Readers' Photography Showcase competition, it will appear in the most popular issue of every year!



SETH SCHUBERT/READERS' PHOTO SHOWCASE 2021

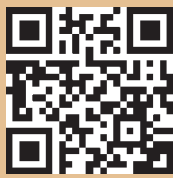
The photo entry period is open now through April 15, 2024.

Outdoor Oklahoma's July/August issue showcases photos of wildlife, landscapes, scenics and other outdoor imagery captured by outdoor and wildlife enthusiasts from across the state.

Each participant may submit up to three original digital images. Photos must be in sharp focus and of high quality and high resolution for magazine printing.

The winning images will create a stunning visual journey for Outdoor Oklahoma's readers. So why not give it a shot — or your best three shots? We hope to see your entry, and good luck! 🍀

To enter your images, scan the code and follow the instructions:



## IT'S THE LAW: BOBCAT OR RIVER OTTER TAGS

An export tag is required to be attached to all bobcat or river otter pelts within 10 working days after furbearer season closes. This is the responsibility of the possessor of the pelts. These pelts may not be bought, sold or bartered within Oklahoma, or taken out of Oklahoma, without an export tag in place.

The tag must be attached by an authorized Wildlife Department employee or designated private tag agent. Any bobcat or river otter harvested in another state must be tagged before entering Oklahoma. Tags are available from any Game Warden, wildlife biologist, state fish hatchery, Department field office, or designated private tagging stations (where a fee of 75 cents per tag may be charged). 🍀

# OUTDOOR CALENDAR

FOR THE LATEST UPDATES, GO ONLINE TO LICENSE.  
GOOUTDOORSOKLAHOMA.COM/EVENT/EVENTS.ASPX

**NOTICE:** Events were scheduled at press time; they are subject to change.


## JANUARY 2024

- 1** Entry period opens for Outdoor Oklahoma magazine's Readers' Photo Showcase competition: [tinyurl.com/EnterRPS](https://tinyurl.com/EnterRPS).  
New Year's Day; state offices closed.
- 6** Oklahoma City Free Fishing Day, no city permit required.
- 7** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- 8** Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission meeting, 9 a.m., Oklahoma City. Livestream: [YouTube.com/OutdoorOklahoma](https://www.youtube.com/OutdoorOklahoma).
- 14** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- 15** Martin Luther King Jr. Day; state offices closed.
- 20–21** Trapping workshop, Hulah WMA. Register: <https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/EventsHome.aspx>.
- 21** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- 28** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- **Ducks Unlimited** events set in Chandler, Jan. 6; Enid, Jan. 18; Ponca City, Jan. 20; Weatherford, Jan. 27. Info: [www.ducks.org/events](https://www.ducks.org/events).
- **National Wild Turkey Federation** events set in Shawnee, Jan. 20; Hulbert, Jan. 26; Frederick, Jan. 31. Info: <https://your.nwtf.org/members/events/>.

## FEBRUARY 2024

- 3** Oklahoma City Free Fishing Day, no city permit required.
- 3–4** Trapping workshop, James Collins WMA. Register: <https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/EventsHome.aspx>.
- 4** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- 5** Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission meeting, 9 a.m., Oklahoma City. Livestream: [YouTube.com/OutdoorOklahoma](https://www.youtube.com/OutdoorOklahoma).
- 10–11** Trapping workshop, Packsaddle WMA. Register: <https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/EventsHome.aspx>.
- 11** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- 17** Lexington WMA Open House. Register: <https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Event/EventsHome.aspx>.
- 18** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- 19** Presidents' Day; state offices closed.
- 25** "Outdoor Oklahoma" TV, 8 a.m., OETA.
- **Ducks Unlimited** events set in Collinsville, Feb. 2; Kingfisher, Feb. 3; Stillwater, Feb. 8; Medicine Park, Feb. 9; Edmond, Feb. 10. Info: [www.ducks.org/events](https://www.ducks.org/events).
- **National Wild Turkey Federation** event set in Chouteau, Feb. 17. Info: <https://your.nwtf.org/members/events/>.
- **Quail Forever** event set in Bristow, Feb. 17. Info: [www.oklahomacquailforever.org/pfqfeventsink](https://www.oklahomacquailforever.org/pfqfeventsink).
- **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation** event set in Tulsa, Feb. 24. Info: [www.rmef.org/events](https://www.rmef.org/events).

\*\* FOR HUNTING SEASON DATES, GO TO  
[www.wildlifedepartment.com/hunting/seasons](https://www.wildlifedepartment.com/hunting/seasons) \*\*



# CONTROLLED HUNT Learn What You

## INCREASE YOUR SELECTION CHANCES

After some new options proved popular last year among controlled hunt applicants, hopeful hunters should be happy to learn that even more new and exciting options will be offered this year when they apply for the Wildlife Department's controlled hunt drawings!

Applicants in the once-in-a-lifetime elk and pronghorn categories will now be able to **add another preference point** to their total for an additional \$10 for residents or \$50 for nonresidents. These "extra" preference points work just like the traditional points earned every time your application isn't drawn – they carry forward for future

drawings and increase your odds of being selected even more!

Another option is the ability to add more hunt choices above the standard number allowed in each category. These add-on choices will cost \$3 each, and there will be no limit to the number of hunt choices added.

### CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

This article is designed to give controlled hunt applicants some insights into how the program works, insights that might give you an edge to having your name drawn for perhaps the hunt of a lifetime.

# HUNTS: You Can Control

## BY STUDYING AND PLAYING THE ODDS

Take some time and look into last year's statistics on controlled hunts, and you could increase the likelihood that your name will be drawn this year for a controlled hunt permit. The numbers do reveal some application trends that you could use to your advantage.

In the 2023-24 controlled hunts drawing, about one out of every 23 applicants had his or her name drawn. Hopeful hunters turned in 123,691 applications for one of the 5,251

individual controlled hunt permits available last year. Many of those applicants will apply again this year when the 2024-25 controlled

hunts application submission period opens online.

The No. 1 most important thing a hopeful hunter can do is to apply each year.

The controlled hunts application period will open April 1, 2024, at [GoOutdoorsOklahoma.com](https://GoOutdoorsOklahoma.com).

(<https://license.gooutdoorsoklahoma.com/Licensing/CustomerLookup.aspx>). The

**2023-24 OVERALL  
ODDS OF  
BEING DRAWN:  
1 IN 23.6**

*Elk in the mist in southwestern Oklahoma.*



application period will close in late May 2024.

The online application process is straightforward, and the system is designed so that only the applications that are completed correctly will be accepted. This assures every applicant that his entry was successful and that the applicant's name will definitely be in the drawings.

Winners of controlled hunts are randomly selected through a computerized process that draws applications from the entire pool of those submitted.

Hunters will be able to apply for a specified number of hunts within each category,

which increases one's chances of being selected for a hunt. Hunters will also be able to add extra hunt choices above the specified number allowed, at a cost of \$3 for each additional choice added.

Those not drawn in a hunt category will gain a preference point for the drawings held in that category in future years, as long as the application is made in the same

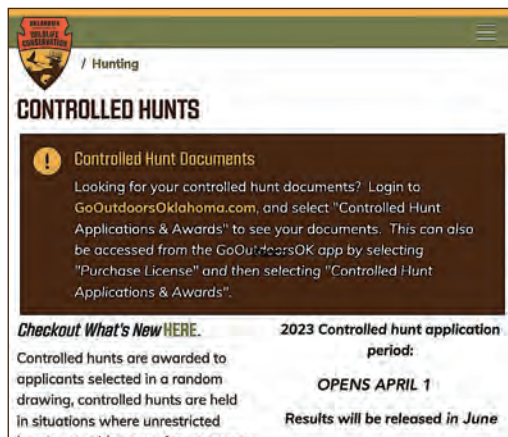
hunt category. Not only that, but some hunt categories allow applications for an entire group of hunters, which boosts chances of being drawn.

## WHAT'S THE COST?

A \$10 **application fee** allows multiple applications in controlled hunt categories (elk, pronghorn, deer, spring turkey) and includes the option to select **Preference Point Only**. **PointGuard** insurance is available for an additional \$10 for residents or \$50 for nonresidents. Applicants may also **add extra** hunt choices beyond the standard limit for \$3 each. New for 2024 is the chance to get one additional preference point in the elk and pronghorn hunt categories at a cost of \$10 for residents and \$50 for nonresidents.

## CONTROLLED HUNTS WEBSITE

To learn more about the controlled hunts process online, scan the code:



The Controlled Hunts webpage gives applicants complete information about how to apply and what happens if selected. Check it out under the "Hunting" tab at [wildlifedepartment.com](http://wildlifedepartment.com).

Don't miss your chance to win one of these special hunts that often create lifelong memories.

## ABOUT CONTROLLED HUNTS

Controlled hunts are held in areas where unrestricted public hunting would pose safety concerns or where overharvest might occur. So, these hunts take place on Wildlife Department-owned or -managed areas where hunting for the target species is normally not permitted.

Controlled hunts are offered for deer, elk, pronghorn, and turkey.

Hunters wishing to go on a controlled hunt must submit an application, which goes into the running with all other applications for that hunt. Hunters are selected through random drawings in each category.

Getting drawn for a controlled hunt is a matter of odds. Many controlled hunt choices are highly sought-after, and the number of applications for these marquee hunts greatly exceeds the number of available permits. But if you keep applying year after year, it's likely you'll get a chance sooner or later to enjoy a controlled hunt.

**How do I participate?** Simply submit an easy-to-complete application online through your GoOutdoorsOklahoma account. Applications are accepted online only.

You cannot submit more than one application per category. Since applications

2023-24 DEER HUNTS								
Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Atoka WMA - either sex	Gun	11/17/2023	11/19/2023	3001	1,549	40	38.73	57
Beaver River WMA McFarland Unit - either sex	Muzzleloader	10/28/2023	10/29/2023	3006	680	10	68	67
Beaver River WMA McFarland Unit - either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	11/19/2023	3007	490	5	98	73
Beaver River WMA - either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	11/19/2023	3008	1,110	15	74	69
Candy Creek WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	10/28/2023	11/5/2023	3020	274	12	22.83	43
Candy Creek WMA - either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	12/3/2023	3021	497	12	41.42	61
Canton WMA - either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	11/19/2023	3030	1,059	75	14.12	30
Cherokee GMA - either sex	Gun	11/11/2023	11/11/2023	3044	1,480	60	24.67	44
Cherokee GMA - either sex	Gun	11/12/2023	11/12/2023	3046	1,042	60	17.37	36
Cookson WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	11/4/2023	11/5/2023	3060	1,068	12	89	71
Cookson WMA - antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/4/2023	11/4/2023	3061	76	23	3.3	9
Cookson WMA - antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/5/2023	11/5/2023	3062	62	23	2.7	5
Cookson WMA - either sex	Gun	11/11/2023	11/12/2023	3063	1,787	12	148.92	76
Cookson WMA - antlerless only	Gun	11/11/2023	11/11/2023	3064	102	18	5.67	14
Cookson WMA - antlerless only	Gun	11/12/2023	11/12/2023	3065	64	18	3.56	10
Deep Fork NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Muzzleloader	10/9/2023	10/15/2023	3080	804	50	16.08	32
Deep Fork NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/30/2023	11/26/2023	3081	728	300	2.43	3
Four Canyon Preserve - antlerless only	Muzzleloader	10/20/2023	10/21/2023	3090	18	4	4.5	12
Four Canyon Preserve - (2) either sex	Muzzleloader	10/20/2023	10/21/2023	3091	193	2	96.5	72
Four Canyon Preserve - antlerless only	Gun	11/10/2023	11/11/2023	3092	28	4	7	17
Four Canyon Preserve - (2) either sex	Gun	11/10/2023	11/11/2023	3093	460	2	230	78
Fort Gibson WRP - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/17/2023	10/17/2023	3110	489	50	9.78	24
Fort Gibson WRP - antlerless only	Muzzleloader	10/18/2023	10/18/2023	3111	160	50	3.2	8
Fort Gibson WRP - antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/14/2023	11/14/2023	3112	154	50	3.08	6
Fort Gibson WRP - either sex	Muzzleloader	11/15/2023	11/15/2023	3113	1,012	25	40.48	59
Fort Gibson WRP - antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/15/2023	11/15/2023	3114	103	25	4.12	11
Grady County WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	10/28/2023	11/5/2023	3120	208	10	20.8	41
Grady County WMA - either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	11/26/2023	3121	436	10	43.6	62
Hugo WMA (Lyndol Fry WRP)	Gun	12/8/2023	12/10/2023	3131	360	10	36	54
Lexington WMA - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/11/2023	11/11/2023	3150	714	135	5.29	13
Lexington WMA - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/12/2023	11/12/2023	3151	420	135	3.11	7
Lexington WMA - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/15/2023	11/15/2023	3152	345	135	2.56	4
Lexington WMA - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/16/2023	11/16/2023	3153	273	135	2.02	1
Little River NWR - either sex	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	3160	988	30	32.93	50
Little River NWR - either sex	Gun	11/10/2023	11/12/2023	3161	877	30	29.23	48
McAlester AAP physically challenged - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/6/2023	10/8/2023	3170	154	70	2.2	2
McAlester AAP - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/13/2023	10/15/2023	3171	1,954	275	7.11	18
McAlester AAP - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/20/2023	10/22/2023	3172	2,353	275	8.56	21
McAlester AAP - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/27/2023	10/29/2023	3173	3,593	275	13.07	27
McAlester AAP - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	3174	4,642	275	16.88	34
McAlester AAP - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	11/10/2023	11/12/2023	3175	4,697	275	17.08	35
McCurtain Co. WA - either sex	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	3190	844	16	52.75	64
McGee Creek WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	10/27/2023	10/29/2023	3200	873	50	17.46	37
McGee Creek WMA - either sex	Gun	11/17/2023	11/19/2023	3201	1,428	50	28.56	47
Neosho WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	11/11/2023	11/12/2023	3203	158	6	26.33	45
Oka'Yanahli Preserve - (2) antlerless only	Gun	12/9/2023	12/9/2023	3206	71	7	10.14	25
Oka'Yanahli Preserve - (2) antlerless only	Gun	12/10/2023	12/10/2023	3207	48	7	6.86	16
Okmulgee GMA - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	11/11/2023	11/12/2023	3210	1,174	30	39.13	58
Osage-Western Wall WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	11/9/2023	11/12/2023	3220	1,108	10	110.8	75
Pontotoc Ridge Preserve - (2) antlerless only	Gun	10/7/2023	10/15/2023	3223	76	6	12.67	26
Pontotoc Ridge Preserve - (2) antlerless only	Gun	1/6/2024	1/6/2024	3224	69	5	13.8	29
Pontotoc Ridge Preserve - (2) antlerless only	Gun	1/7/2024	1/7/2024	3225	46	5	9.2	22
Pushmataha WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	12/1/2023	12/3/2023	3230	1,327	50	26.54	46
Salt Plains NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	12/4/2023	12/7/2023	3240	343	25	13.72	28

2023-24 DEER HUNTS (CONTINUED)								
Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Salt Plains NWR Wilderness Area - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	12/4/2023	12/7/2023	3241	351	10	35.1	52
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Muzzleloader	11/6/2023	11/8/2023	3242	882	25	35.28	53
Salt Plains NWR Wilderness Area - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Muzzleloader	11/6/2023	11/8/2023	3243	705	10	70.5	68
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/13/2023	11/15/2023	3244	2,153	25	86.12	70
Salt Plains NWR Wilderness Area - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/13/2023	11/15/2023	3245	1,763	10	176.3	77
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/27/2023	11/29/2023	3246	1,183	25	47.32	63
Salt Plains NWR Wilderness Area - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/27/2023	11/29/2023	3247	986	10	98.6	74
Sans Bois WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	11/10/2023	11/12/2023	3275	302	15	20.13	40
Sans Bois WMA - either sex	Gun	10/27/2023	10/29/2023	3276	565	15	37.67	56
Sequoyah NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	11/6/2023	11/10/2023	3280	1,042	30	34.73	51
Sequoyah NWR - (2) antlerless only	Muzzleloader	10/25/2023	10/27/2023	3281	290	30	9.67	23
Sequoyah NWR - (2) antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/15/2023	11/17/2023	3282	244	30	8.13	20
Sequoyah NWR - (2) antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/29/2023	12/1/2023	3283	216	30	7.2	19
Sequoyah NWR (Refuge Islands) - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	11/6/2023	11/10/2023	3284	65	4	16.25	33
Sequoyah Resort Park - (2) 1 either sex, 1 antlerless	Archery	12/2/2023	12/3/2023	3286	962	16	60.13	65
Spavinaw GMA - either sex	Gun	10/21/2023	10/22/2023	3290	1,352	20	67.6	66
Spavinaw GMA - antlerless only	Gun	10/21/2023	10/22/2023	3291	191	30	6.37	15
Tishomingo NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	12/7/2023	12/8/2023	3300	750	20	37.5	55
Washita NWR - antlerless only	Gun	11/7/2023	11/8/2023	3320	111	5	22.2	42
Wichita Mountains WR - antlered only	Gun	11/13/2023	11/16/2023	3340	7,353	20	367.65	79
Wichita Mountains WR - antlerless only	Gun	11/13/2023	11/16/2023	3341	590	40	14.75	31
Salt Plains State Park - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	10/16/2023	10/19/2023	3350	406	10	40.6	60
Salt Plains State Park - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	12/11/2023	12/14/2023	3351	311	10	31.1	49
Texoma COE Burns Run - doe only	Gun	12/29/2023	12/31/2023	3360	112	6	18.67	38
Tishomingo NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	11/8/2023	11/10/2023	3370	562	30	18.73	39

2023 YOUTH DEER HUNTS								
Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Arbuckle Springs WMA - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	11/19/2023	5004	73	15	4.87	26
Beaver River WMA McFarland Unit - either sex	Gun	10/20/2023	10/22/2023	5006	139	15	9.27	31
Camp Gruber Cantonment - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Muzzleloader	11/24/2023	11/26/2023	5009	96	40	2.4	10
Cherokee GMA - either sex	Gun	11/4/2023	11/5/2023	5010	148	50	2.96	12
Canton WRP	Gun	11/9/2023	11/17/2023	5014	75	2	37.5	44
Canton WRP	Gun	12/9/2023	12/17/2023	5015	32	2	16	39
Cookson WMA - either sex	Gun	10/28/2023	10/29/2023	5020	153	30	5.1	28
Cross Timbers WMA - antlerless only	Gun	11/18/2023	11/26/2023	5025	19	30	0.63	1
Deep Fork NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Muzzleloader	10/16/2023	10/22/2023	5030	45	25	1.8	8
Eufaula Lake COE	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	5035	68	5	13.6	37
Fort Cobb WMA and SP - antlerless only	Muzzleloader / Shotgun	10/14/2023	10/15/2023	5040	31	40	0.78	3
Fort Gibson WRP - (2) only 1 antlered	Muzzleloader	11/11/2023	11/11/2023	5050	67	20	3.35	15
Heyburn COE - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	12/15/2023	12/17/2023	5053	57	2	28.5	43
Kaw Lake COE - (2) 1 either sex 1 Doe	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	5055	111	6	18.5	40
Hugo WMA - either sex	Gun	10/6/2023	10/8/2023	5060	67	30	2.23	9
Hugo Lake COE Kiamichi Park - (2) only 1 antlered.	Gun	10/6/2023	10/8/2023	5061	115	10	11.5	34
Hugo Lake COE Kiamichi Park - either sex	Gun	12/8/2023	12/10/2023	5062	84	10	8.4	30
James Collins WMA - either sex	Gun	10/20/2023	10/22/2023	5070	172	40	4.3	23
James Collins WMA - either sex	Gun	10/27/2023	10/29/2023	5071	193	40	4.83	25

are completed and submitted online, you will receive confirmation that your application was completed correctly. This system helps to minimize mistakes, so make sure you receive confirmation of your application. If you do have any issues, call the toll-free help line listed at the bottom of the webpage, (833) 457-7285, or send email to HelpDesk@gooutdoorsoklahoma.com.

## DO THE HOMEWORK

You can increase your chances by first doing some research. This article provides data from the most recent controlled hunts drawing cycle. Anyone who plans to apply this coming year is urged to study the numbers presented here to help guide you as to which hunts you should apply for if you want higher odds of being selected.

For example, you might see that a total of two controlled hunts will be held in the wildlife management area that you are hoping to hunt. You notice the selection odds were greater last year for one of the hunts, so you might decide to apply for that hunt in anticipation that this year's numbers remain about the same as last year's.

Every time you apply and do not get selected, you earn a preference point in that category for all future drawings. So, when you apply next year, it's like getting your name put into the drawing an extra time for each preference point. Your odds of being drawn improve if you apply again year after year. This strategy now will be able to have a greater impact with a new option in 2024 to buy an additional preference in the pronghorn and elk hunt categories. Applicants who spend \$10 (for residents) or \$50 (for nonresidents) will carry forward two preference points in next year's elk and pronghorn drawings in the event they are not drawn this year.

Additionally, some hunt categories allow you to apply with a group of other hunters, so that if one of the group is drawn, the entire group gets to hunt.

If you are selected, you will receive your hunt instructions at the email address attached to your online GoOutdoorsOklahoma account.

## HELPFUL TIPS

Applicants have the chance to buy **extra hunt choices** at \$3 apiece, which will be in addition to the basic application fee. This increases your overall odds of being drawn simply by putting your name into more of the drawings.

You might consider adding **PointGuard** to your application as a safety net just in case something unexpected comes up and you won't be able to attend your hunt. This "insurance" option is designed to protect your preference points in the event you are drawn but for some reason you won't be able to go on your hunt. PointGuard costs an additional \$10 over the basic application fee for residents, and an additional \$50 over the basic application fee for nonresidents.

Each preference point you earn acts like an extra application for the next year. But if you know you cannot hunt this year and still want to earn a preference point, you can now choose to mark your application as **Preference Point Only**. This allows you to earn a point this year that carries over to next year, but will keep your name out of the hunt drawings for this year. The PPO option is available as part of the applicant's \$10 initial application fee.

Your chances of selection only get better each year you apply. If you've applied for the controlled hunt of your dreams for five years straight without having been selected, then you will have five "tickets in the hopper" compared to a first-time applicant, who will have one.

Although preference points increase your odds of selection, they do not guarantee that applicants with the most points will get drawn. What is guaranteed is that their odds of selection improve. First-time applicants with no preference points can and do get drawn for popular hunts, while hunters who have many preference points can miss out being selected. The pool size related to the number of hunt permits also affects one's chances of being selected.

Continuing this year, applicants who hold **20 or more preference points** in the once-in-a-lifetime elk and pronghorn hunt categories will have a higher likelihood of winning a permit, as the drawing procedure has been enhanced for those categories. An initial drawing for half of the elk hunt

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Who can apply?

Any resident or nonresident who possesses a valid hunting license or who is otherwise exempt may apply for controlled hunts. A list of which hunting licenses are valid is available at [wildlifedepartment.com](http://wildlifedepartment.com). Applicants must by a license prior to applying for controlled hunts. Applicants who are eligible for, and possess, apprentice-designated hunting licenses may also apply (although some hunts require hunter education certification by the date of the hunt.) Check the website for more information.

2023 YOUTH DEER HUNTS (CONTINUED)								
Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Keystone COE - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	12/8/2023	12/10/2023	5080	122	8	15.25	38
Little River NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	10/27/2023	10/29/2023	5085	18	15	1.2	5
McAlester AAP - Doe	Shotgun	11/24/2023	11/26/2023	5090	39	25	1.56	6
Neosho WMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	10/21/2023	10/22/2023	5095	6	6	1	4
Neosho WMA - either sex	Gun	11/4/2023	11/5/2023	5096	16	6	2.67	11
Okmulgee GMA - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	10/28/2023	10/29/2023	5110	64	20	3.2	14
Okmulgee GMA - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	11/4/2023	11/5/2023	5111	70	20	3.5	18
Pine Creek WMA - either sex	Gun	11/10/2023	11/12/2023	5130	94	25	3.76	20
Pushmataha WMA - either sex	Gun	10/20/2023	10/22/2023	5140	108	35	3.09	13
Pushmataha WMA - either sex	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	5141	145	35	4.14	22
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	5150	166	25	6.64	29
Sequoyah NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Muzzleloader	10/13/2023	10/15/2023	5160	120	30	4	21
Sequoyah Resort Park - (2) 1 either sex 1 antlerless	Muzzleloader	12/9/2023	12/10/2023	5170	156	12	13	35
Skiatook COE - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	12/1/2023	12/3/2023	5175	82	4	20.5	42
Spavinaw GMA - either sex	Muzzleloader	10/28/2023	10/29/2023	5180	30	40	0.75	2
Spavinaw GMA - either sex	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	5181	137	40	3.43	17
Tenkiller COE - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	11/3/2023	11/5/2023	5190	105	10	10.5	33
Texoma COE Burns Run - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	11/10/2023	11/12/2023	5200	116	6	19.33	41
Texoma COE Lakeside - (2) only 1 antlered	Gun	10/20/2023	10/22/2023	5201	81	6	13.5	36
Tishomingo NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	10/19/2023	10/20/2023	5210	100	20	5	27
USDA Grazinglands R.L. - (2) antlerless only	Gun	11/10/2023	11/11/2023	5220	34	20	1.7	7
USDA Grazinglands R.L. - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	12/8/2023	12/9/2023	5221	93	10	9.3	32
Washita NWR - antlerless only	Gun	10/6/2023	10/7/2023	5240	43	10	4.3	24
Washita NWR - antlerless only	Gun	11/3/2023	11/4/2023	5260	37	10	3.7	19
Waurika Lake COE - antlerless only	Gun	11/11/2023	11/12/2023	5270	17	5	3.4	16

2023 DEER HUNTS (NONAMBULATORY, VEHICLE)								
Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Cherokee GMA - either sex	Gun	10/28/2023	10/29/2023	4001	44	40	1.1	1
Cookson WMA - either sex	Gun	11/18/2023	11/19/2023	4010	42	12	3.5	8
Copan COE Parks - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	12/1/2023	12/3/2023	4015	32	5	6.4	11
Deep Fork NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Muzzleloader	10/23/2023	10/29/2023	4020	7	5	1.4	2
Fort Gibson WRP - (2) only 1 antlered	Muzzleloader	12/2/2023	12/3/2023	4025	27	10	2.7	6
Oologah Lake COE - (2) 1 Doe 1 Buck	Gun	11/10/2023	11/12/2023	4040	68	8	8.5	12
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Muzzleloader	11/6/2023	11/8/2023	4050	11	2	5.5	9
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/13/2023	11/15/2023	4051	21	2	10.5	13
Salt Plains NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/27/2023	11/29/2023	4052	11	2	5.5	10
Sequoyah NWR - (2) only 1 antlered	Archery	11/6/2023	11/10/2023	4060	5	2	2.5	5
Sequoyah NWR - (2) antlerless only	Muzzleloader	11/15/2023	11/17/2023	4061	3	2	1.5	3
Sequoyah Resort Park - (2) 1 either sex 1 antlerless	Muzzleloader	12/16/2023	12/17/2023	4070	25	12	2.08	4
Tishomingo NWR - (2) 1st antlerless, 2nd either sex	Gun	11/9/2023	11/10/2023	4080	31	10	3.1	7

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### If I can't attend my controlled hunt, do I get my preference points back?

You will retain your preference points if you chose to buy the PointGuard insurance policy during the application period. You can claim your PointGuard insurance anytime before the day of your hunt. If you didn't buy PointGuard, your preference points for that hunt category will be lost whether you attend the hunt or not.

permits and half of the antelope hunt permits will be conducted from a pool of only those applicants having 20 or more preference points in the category. The winners for the remaining half of hunt permits in each category will be drawn from the pool of all applicants (excluding those who were drawn out for hunts in the initial drawing).

In some categories, hunters may **apply in groups** of up to four people. An average of the total preference points of all hunters is used for each hunter in the group. If not drawn in that category, each applicant in the group will earn a single preference point that carries forward with the rest of their points to future drawings.

Once you are drawn for a hunt, all preference points that you have built up in that hunt category are cleared. You can begin building preference points again with your application next year in the deer and turkey categories. (Elk and pronghorn controlled hunts are once-in-a-lifetime draws; previous winners are not allowed to apply again.)

Here are some **other tips** for increasing your chances of winning a controlled hunt:

- Consider the **ratio** of permits to applicants to help you decide which hunts might give you the best chance of selection. A selection ratio of 1-in-25 is better odds than a ratio of 1-in-80.
- For those locations that offer multiple hunts in the same category, the second or third hunts (the **later hunts**) are often easier to get selected for than the earliest hunts.
- You can increase your odds of being drawn when you apply for hunts that happen on **key dates** of the regular statewide seasons, such as the opening weekend of muzzleloader or gun season. Many hunters may skip those dates because of already-planned hunts.
- By designating **additional hunt choices**, you increase your overall odds of being selected for at least one of the choices, so make as many selections as a category allows (five in the deer category, for example), rather than just three, two or one. Then consider adding even more hunt choices at \$3 each, no limit.
- Hunts that are considered by some to be **less desirable**, such as antlerless deer hunts, may be just the right choice for a meat hunter looking to raise his chances of getting to hunt at a premier location. 🍖

(Compiled by Outdoor Oklahoma Staff)

## 2023-24 DEER HUNTS

- Total applicants (includes first, second, third, fourth, and fifth choice preferences): 68,515.
- Total permits available: 3,775.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 18.2.
- **NOTE:** Steer clear of the most popular hunts in order to have better chances of getting drawn. Controlled hunts such as those at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, the Wichita Mountains buck gun hunt, the Sandy Sanders buck gun hunt, and Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge either-sex hunts will not offer the better odds of selection.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**If I apply for controlled hunts long enough, is it guaranteed my name will be drawn?**

No; drawings are random from the entire pool of applicants. But your odds get better every year you submit an application because you earn preference points in future drawings.

## 2023 DEER HUNTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Total applicants (includes first, second, and third choice preferences): 327.
- Total permits available: 112.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 2.9.
- **NOTE:** Northeastern Oklahoma areas generally attract the most applications. Examples are Cherokee, Cookson Hills, Gruber, and Spavinaw WMAs. Consider hunts in other parts of the state.

## 2023 YOUTH DEER HUNTS

- Total applicants (includes first, second, and third choice preferences): 3,744.
- Total permits available: 855.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 4.4.
- **NOTE:** Select hunt dates that are within the regular statewide season dates, especially those that fall on opening weekends, since many hunters already have other hunting plans in place at those times. Controlled hunts that take place outside the regular muzzleloader and gun seasons typically draw more applications and therefore lower the odds of getting selected.



## 2023-24 ELK HUNTS

- Total applicants (includes first, second, and third choice preferences): 35,279.
- Total permits available: 321.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 109.9.
- **NOTE:** Enhanced drawings are now upping the odds for applicants with 20 or more preference points in the category. New this year is the option to buy one additional preference point to increase your odds for next year's drawing.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### Can I keep accumulating points indefinitely?

Yes, in each category, up until your name is drawn, or whenever you do not submit any application for five consecutive years.

#### 2023 ELK HUNTS

Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Cookson WMA - either sex	Gun	9/27/2023	9/28/2023	1001	3,995	1	3995	9
Wichita Mountains WR - bull	Gun	12/18/2023	12/21/2023	1020	8,496	40	212.4	5
Wichita Mountains WR - cow	Gun	12/18/2023	12/21/2023	1021	1,126	70	16.09	4
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - either sex	Gun	11/20/2023	11/24/2023	1030	6,766	10	676.6	7
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - cow	Gun	11/20/2023	11/24/2023	1031	513	60	8.55	3
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - either sex	Gun	11/27/2023	12/1/2023	1040	6,957	10	695.7	8
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - cow	Gun	11/27/2023	12/1/2023	1041	414	60	6.9	1
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - either sex	Gun	12/11/2023	12/15/2023	1050	6,553	10	655.3	6
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - cow	Gun	12/11/2023	12/15/2023	1051	459	60	7.65	2



The pronghorn controlled hunts are once-in-a-lifetime draws. This year, a new option allows applicants to buy one additional preference point for elk and pronghorn hunts, which will carry forward to future drawings.

## 2023 PRONGHORN HUNTS

- Total applicants (includes first and second choice preferences): 2,047.
- Total permits available: 50.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 40.9.
- **NOTE:** New this year is the option to buy one additional preference point to increase your odds for next year's drawing. Pronghorn controlled hunts are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.

#### 2023 PRONGHORN HUNTS

Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Cimarron County - either sex	Gun	9/4/2023	9/13/2023	2002	1,320	35	37.71	1
Texas County - either sex	Gun	9/4/2023	9/13/2023	2011	727	15	48.47	2



## 2024 SPRING TURKEY HUNTS

- Total applicants (includes first, second, and third choice preferences): 12,715.
- Total permits available: 113.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 112.5.
- **NOTE:** Skip the hunt choices that attract the most applications, such as the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant hunts.

## 2024 YOUTH TURKEY HUNTS

- Total applicants (includes first, second, and third choice preferences): 1,064.
- Total permits available: 25.
- Overall odds of getting drawn for any one permit: 1 in 42.6.
- **NOTE:** Choosing hunts that take place later in spring come with better odds of being selected.

2024 SPRING TURKEY

Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Cross Timbers WMA - tom	Shotgun	4/16/2024	4/20/2024	6000	1,892	10	189.2	7
Cross Timbers WMA - tom	Shotgun	5/12/2024	5/16/2024	6001	998	10	99.8	5
Deep Fork NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/22/2024	5/16/2024	6010	1,508	10	150.8	6
Four Canyon Preserve - tom	Shotgun	4/6/2024	4/7/2024	6020	1,467	2	733.5	10
Four Canyon Preserve - tom	Shotgun	4/13/2024	4/14/2024	6021	944	2	472	9
Little River NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/26/2024	4/28/2024	6040	895	20	44.75	1
McAlester AAP - tom	Shotgun	4/12/2024	4/14/2024	6050	1,336	20	66.8	3
McAlester AAP - tom	Shotgun	4/19/2024	4/21/2024	6051	1,114	20	55.7	2
McCurtain Co. WA - tom	Shotgun	4/5/2024	4/7/2024	6060	1,374	16	85.88	4
Tishomingo NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/25/2024	4/26/2024	6080	1,187	3	395.67	8

2024 YOUTH SPRING TURKEY

Hunt Location-Permit Type	Hunt Type	Begin Date	End Date	Hunt Number	Applicants	Permits Allowed	Draw Ratio 1 in ( )	Rank
Hugo COE (Kiamichi Park) - tom	Shotgun	4/6/2024	4/7/2024	7000	209	4	52.25	3
Washita NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/12/2024	4/14/2024	7010	245	2	122.5	6
Deep Fork NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/13/2024	5/16/2024	7020	180	10	18	1
Little River NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/19/2024	4/21/2024	7040	144	5	28.8	2
Salt Plains NWR - tom	Shotgun	4/12/2024	4/21/2024	7075	117	2	58.5	4
Wichita Mountains WR (walk-in only) - tom	Shotgun	4/8/2024	4/10/2024	7096	169	2	84.5	5

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How do I pay my application fees?

You may pay the one-time application fee (\$10 for residents or \$50 for nonresidents) plus any additional add-on selections using a Visa or MasterCard credit or debit card online at GoOutdoorsOklahoma.com. If your name is drawn, additional license and user fees may be required for some specific hunts.

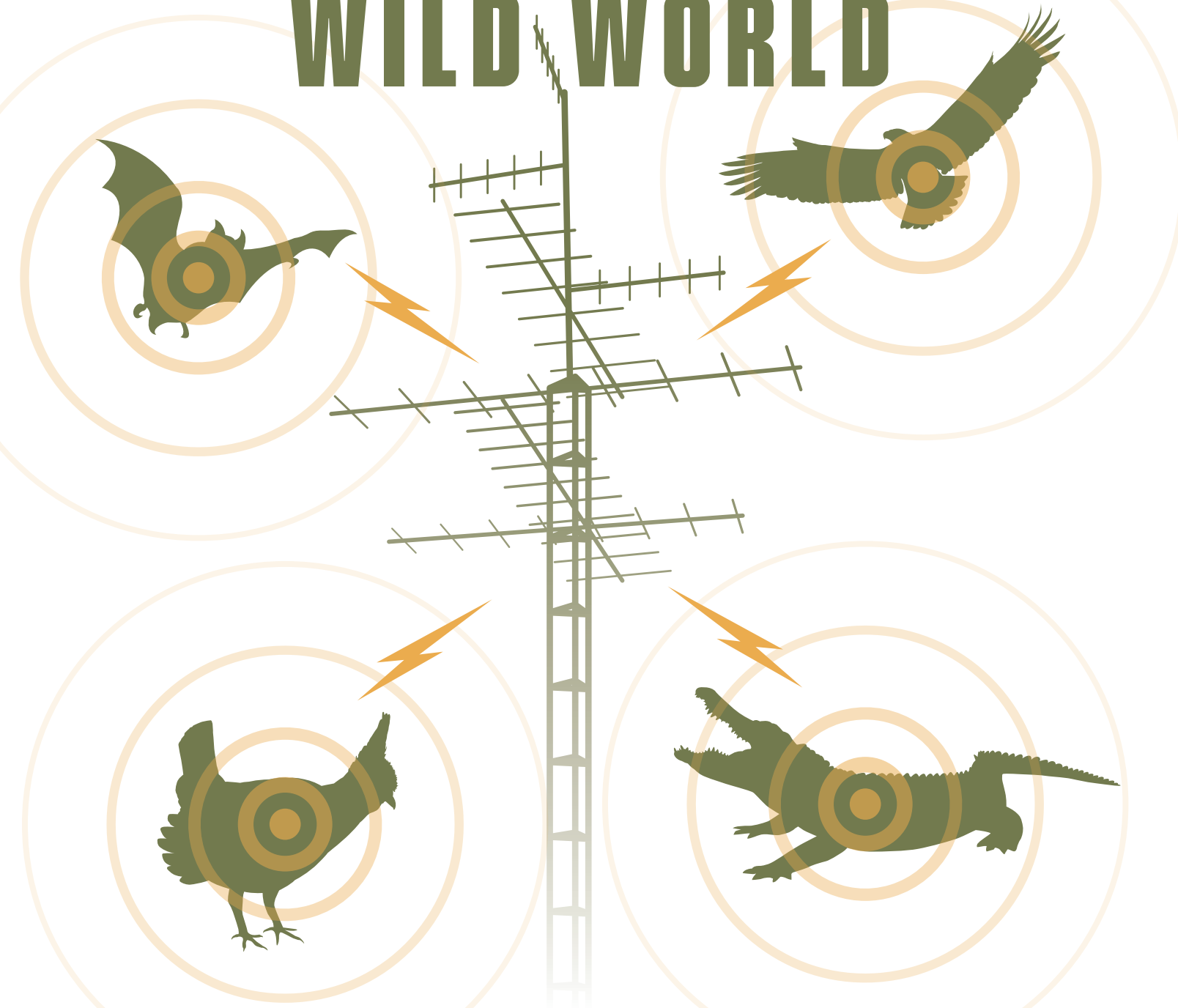
### What if I have an address change after I apply?

Notify the Wildlife Department's License Section by calling (405) 521-3852.



Submitting an application for controlled hunt drawings is completed at the Wildlife Department's licensing website GoOutdoorsOklahoma.com. When you log in, you simply click on the "Controlled Hunts" tile to get started.

# LATEST DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN THE WILD WORLD



BY JENA DONNELL, COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Studies documenting when and where animals move can significantly contribute to understanding of fish and wildlife on local, national, and even international levels. Today's ability to map and animate an animal's movements through time is visually hard to beat. But the data behind the map wouldn't exist without a series of questions and technological advances that began more than 200 years ago.

Since one of the first documented migration experiments in North America in the early 1800s, this field of study has moved from threads being tied to the legs of eastern phoebes to packages of location data being digitally transmitted from tagged animals and displayed on real-time, interactive maps.

In Oklahoma, wildlife studies have used multiple forms of telemetry technology. Classic examples include research teams hiking up sand dunes to track northern bobwhites in western Oklahoma or sloggng through wetland units to locate tagged juvenile American alligators. More advanced projects on greater prairie-chickens and bald eagles have used satellite telemetry, in which satellites, not people, detect the location of the tagged animals. Unsurprisingly, these tech-heavy projects come with higher overhead costs but often require less time in the field and yield more precise data.

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is among the latest products to emerge in this wildlife tracking revolution. It was launched in 2013 and builds on the decades-long concept of radio telemetry, in which a small transmitter is attached to an animal, and the transmitter's signal is detected by way of a receiver with an antenna.

But where traditional radio telemetry relies on a person going into the field to physically track the tagged animal, Motus is much more automated. Its network of receiving stations automatically logs the signal of any Motus-tagged animal that passes within a station's physical detection zone. Those detections are then displayed on an online dashboard.

Researchers from anywhere in the world can use the automated telemetry of the Motus system to track tagged animals that travel near an active station. While Motus projects are limited to the size of the network — location data isn't available in areas without active stations — they can have lower costs and can shed light on species that spend a lot of time in Oklahoma, like Mexican free-tailed bats, or those that only pass high above the state during migration, like the red knot.

"The Motus system can tell us where a bird, or any other tagged animal, was detected in migration," said Jeremy Ross, assistant professor at the University



TIM PATTON/SE OKLAHOMA STATE UNIV.

Research teams from Southeastern Oklahoma State University have used traditional radio telemetry to locate tagged American alligators at Red Slough Wildlife Management Area.



BETSEY YORK/ODWC

Motus tags like these are attached to animals and detected by the receiver network, allowing biologists to track animal movement.



Researchers unpack the Motus antenna and tower after arriving at the new Selman Living Laboratory site.



Researchers assemble the Motus tower at the Selman Living Laboratory.



The Selman Living Laboratory recently joined the international network of 1,700-plus receiver stations that detect animals tagged with the Motus Wildlife Tracking System. More than 40,000 animals representing 327 species have been tagged to date.

of Oklahoma with the Oklahoma Biological Survey. "We can receive a huge amount of data for the tagged individuals, and that data is all freely available to the public."

Ross has installed multiple Motus receiver stations in Oklahoma, with the latest installation at the University of Central Oklahoma's Selman Living Laboratory, in northwestern Oklahoma's Woodward County. While the primary hope of this station will be to track the seasonal arrival and departure of tagged Mexican free-tailed bats to a nearby cave, the station will log any tagged animal that passes within a 12.5-mile radius.

"My colleagues in Montana have deployed Motus transmitters on 99 Sprague's pipits, and it's possible some of those birds could be picked up at this station," Ross said. "And while there's not a lot of shoreline in the immediate area, tagged shorebirds like willets could still be racing through during migration."

The station at the Selman Living Laboratory may be new to the Motus network, but the tower's hardware and four of its eight antennas — operating on the "legacy" frequency of 166.38 MHz — have a history with the tracking system.

"This particular setup was first used on the coast of Texas. It had served its purpose there, so when the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center decommissioned the tower, they donated it to the Oklahoma Biological Survey at the University of Oklahoma."

Four smaller antennas are also included in the Selman array and will operate on the "digital" frequency of 434.0 MHz. Funding for those antennas was provided by the University of Oklahoma.

"This dual mode operation is a bit like comparing AM and FM. The two systems are using different technologies, but both have the end goal of tracking animals."

Other Motus receiver sites in Oklahoma are at Optima, Hackberry Flat, and Sandy Sanders wildlife management areas, Great Salt Plains and Tishomingo national wildlife refuges, Tulsa Zoo, Tahlequah, Norman, and Altus Air Force Base.

Explore the Motus Data Dashboard, view receiver locations, or check out interactive tracks of tagged animals at [motus.org/explore/](https://motus.org/explore/).

In mid-September, OU researchers captured bats at Selman Bat Cave WMA, and 40 Motus tags were deployed to hopefully show those bats' migration paths. As of late October, at least two of the bats tagged in mid-September were still being detected by the Selman Living Laboratory's receiver.

Soon, two other bats that had been tagged at the Selman site were detected at Sandy Sanders WMA and Great Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge.

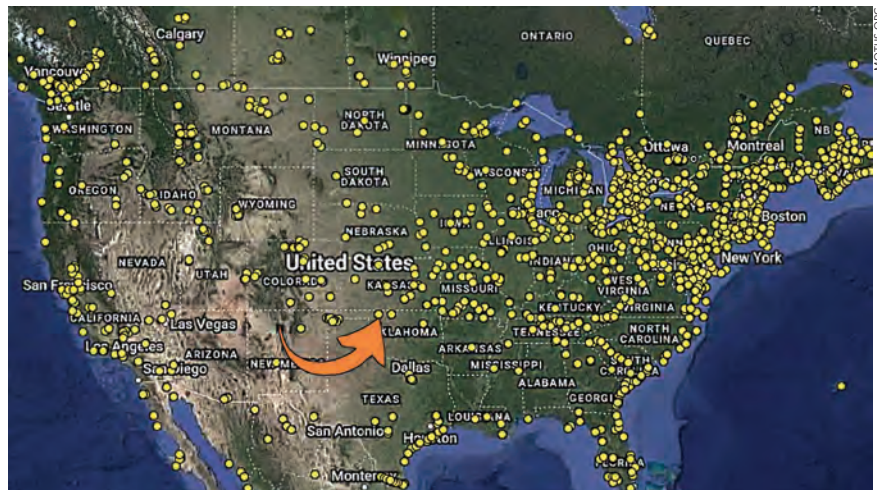
The Selman station has also contributed to three other research projects. A Sprague's pipit tagged in Montana by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in late July had migrated through the Great Plains and was tracked to northwestern Oklahoma on Oct. 9; a second Sprague's pipit tagged in South Dakota by Environment and Climate Change Canada in early October was detected in northwestern Oklahoma on Oct. 13; and a third Sprague's pipit tagged in Montana by the University of Oklahoma was detected near the station Oct. 16.

With the passing of time and the passing of other birds and animals that carry Motus tags, researchers hopefully will be able to move forward in understanding animals that seem to be in constant motion. 🦋



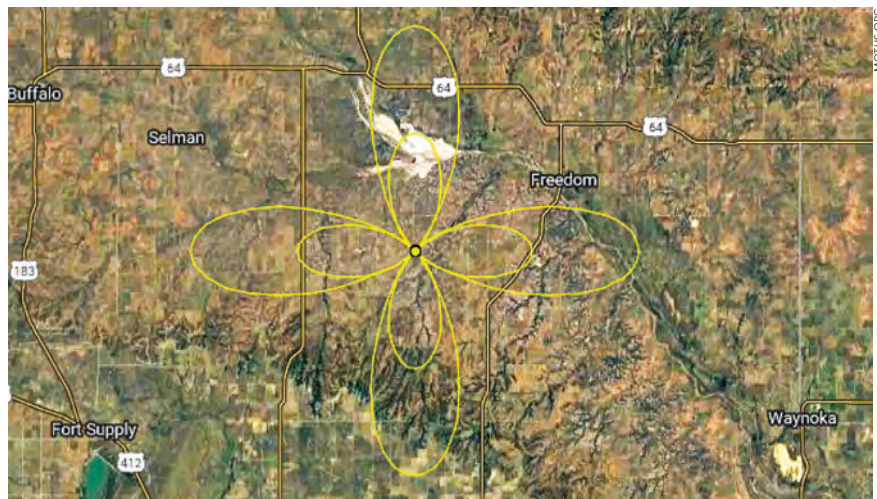
JENA DONNELLODWC

This Mexican free-tailed bat has been equipped with a Motus tag that could help researchers better understand the migration path from Oklahoma to Texas or into Mexico and back.



MOTUS.ORG

This map shows Motus receiver sites in North America. The arrow points to the new location at the Selman Living Laboratory in Woodward County.



MOTUS.ORG

This map shows the detection zones of the new Motus antenna array at the Selman Living Laboratory.

# Conservation

## Fun Outdoors!

Our feathered friends can have a tough time finding enough food during winter, especially when snow covers everything. Why not help them out by providing a homemade bird feeder? Using wild bird seed, lard or vegetable shortening, string and paper cups, it's an easy project. Hang by a window and keep a list of the bird species that visit. To learn about this project, go to <https://growingfamily.co.uk/craft/homemade-bird-feeders>.

## Hunting Tip

There is still plenty of hunting action available in Oklahoma through February 2024. Archery seasons remain open until Jan. 15 for deer, elk, and turkey. Duck season is open through Jan. 3 in the Panhandle and through Jan. 28 in the rest of the state. Pheasant season is open through Jan. 31. Quail season is open through Feb. 15. Squirrel season is open through Feb. 28. Furbearer season is open through Feb. 29. Rabbit season is open through March 15.

## Fishing Tip

The average water temperature in Oklahoma's lakes during January and February is from 40 to 55 degrees. Those chilly conditions cause many of our game fish to slow down and curtail feeding activities. But there are some fish species that still offer some good fish-catching opportunities throughout the winter. Surprisingly these fish include crappie and channel catfish!

# for Kids!

## Word Search: Animals That Are Trapped

M	N	U	T	R	I	A	B	E	A	V	E	R	B	R	A
S	U	T	X	O	F	R	E	G	D	A	B	M	M	N	T
W	B	S	K	O	E	I	I	H	G	K	F	X	F	U	L
R	O	U	K	O	F	S	A	V	I	M	A	M	F	K	W
R	B	T	I	R	C	D	A	X	E	N	P	S	W	N	Z
U	C	D	A	C	A	W	E	S	F	R	U	P	E	U	L
I	A	E	W	H	F	T	K	R	H	U	O	Y	R	K	M
V	T	Y	F	O	B	N	R	Y	R	B	J	T	V	S	A
H	L	A	X	E	I	H	E	O	M	X	M	B	T	D	U
W	J	L	A	M	U	S	S	O	P	O	Z	C	T	E	N
J	Q	Y	N	I	Z	S	R	M	I	F	O	A	Y	P	R
W	C	P	R	N	F	T	E	D	F	Y	K	M	R	I	E
T	Z	Z	H	P	B	W	G	Z	O	A	U	M	Y	R	J
S	M	R	T	U	W	Y	O	T	G	R	W	V	R	T	Q
Q	X	A	X	K	S	D	E	W	M	G	S	C	O	S	J
C	D	Z	F	Z	R	G	N	Y	X	R	K	O	V	E	J

Find and circle these animals that are pursued by trappers in Oklahoma.

Beaver  
River Otter  
Nutria  
Badger

Muskrat  
Coyote  
Red Fox  
Mink

Bobcat  
Striped Skunk  
Gray Fox  
Opossum

## COOL FACTS About the Raccoon:

- Some raccoons live up to six years in the wild, but most live about two years.
- Adults weigh from 8 to 35 pounds and are usually about 2.5 feet long.
- They are highly adaptable to many habitats and can be seen in urban areas.
- Raccoons are nocturnal and solitary for most of the year.
- They have dense fur with a characteristic dark “mask” running across their eyes.
- They will eat hundreds of species of plants and animals, including fruits, crayfish and insects.
- Females give birth to an average of four blind and nearly hairless cubs in spring.
- The coonskin cap, as worn by Daniel Boone, was all the rage for American kids in the 1950s and '60s.
- Because populations have grown dramatically in the past decade, the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission created a year-round raccoon hunting season with no daily, season, or possession limits.



## Color a Critter: Raccoon



# FEATHERED FRIENDS FIND WAYS OF WARMING UP TO WINTER

BIRDS QUASH THE COLD USING VARIED TECHNIQUES



By Tina Shaw

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Ever wonder how birds can stay warm in the cold winter months?

Common redpolls are a great example. These energetic foragers weigh less than 15 grams but still can survive temperatures that plunge nearly 100 degrees below the freezing point! How do they do it?

Birds of all shapes and sizes have special adaptations for living in cold climates. Here are just a few examples of tough birds and their techniques for staying warm.



A house finch is doing its best to ruffle its feathers against the chill.

SARAH RICHTER/FLICKR CC-BY-NC-ND2

## SHIVERING

Just like people, birds will shiver to stay warm. Birds have much higher metabolic rates and burn more energy to stay warm than people do.

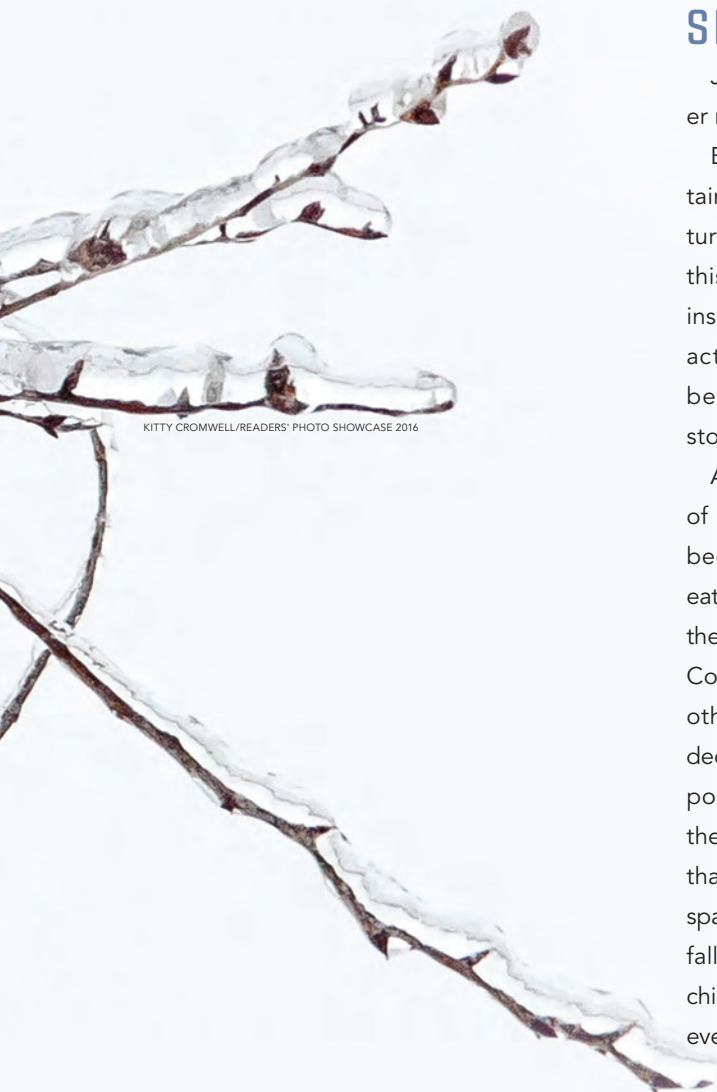
Black-capped chickadees weigh less than a half-ounce and can maintain a body temperature of 100 degrees F even when the air temperature is zero! They do this by having great insulation, being very active, and remembering where they store their food.

A steady supply of food is essential, because chickadees eat more than 35% of their weight every day! Compared to many other birds, chickadees have a large hippocampus, which is the part of the brain that's responsible for spatial memory. In the fall, that part of the chickadee's brain gets even bigger!



Male and female northern cardinals shiver in the middle of an ice storm.

HERSHELL HILLER/READERS' PHOTO SHOWCASE 2015



KITTY CROMWELL/READERS' PHOTO SHOWCASE 2016



KELLY ADAMS/ODWC

A chipping sparrow creates a fluffy feather ball around itself to stay warm.



LARRY SMITH/READERS' PHOTO SHOWCASE 2014

A heavy ice storm seems to have little effect on this field sparrow.



Canada geese have a substantial layer of down to protect against frigid temperatures.

## FLUFFING FEATHERS

Whether fat, fur or feathers, insulation matters for most cold-weather animals.

All cold-climate birds pack on body weight in late summer and fall in anticipation of the long, cold winter. But feathers also play an important role.

All birds stay warm by trapping pockets of air around their bodies. The secret to maintaining these layers of air lies in having clean, dry and flexible feathers.

The cleaning process, generally known as preening, depends on the species of bird. While all birds produce a special oil from a gland near the base of their tails, some cold-tolerant birds use this oil to weatherproof their feathers.

Some birds, including egrets, herons and mourning doves, grow special feathers that disintegrate into a powder that they use to waterproof their feathers. Regardless of what weatherproofing method they use, preening helps birds keep a water-resistant top layer and a toasty warm inner layer.



PIXABAY/CCO

Most birds, such as this American robin, will ruffle their feathers to act as insulation against the cold.



LAURE THOMPSON/READER'S PHOTO SHOWCASE 2018

A covey of northern bobwhites forms a circle on the ground with their heads facing outward, serving a dual purpose of promoting warmth and watching for danger.

BRENT KIMBROUGH/READER'S PHOTO SHOWCASE 2018



Northern bobwhites seek out seeds and fluff up their feathers during cold spells.



USEFWS/KEITH WILLIAMS CC-BY/ND/NC/4

Tree swallows squeeze together on a branch to stay warm during a snowstorm.



CLAUDIA DAVIDS/READERS' PHOTO SHOWCASE 2016

## ROOSTING AND CUDDLING

Similar to people who may cuddle for warmth, small birds such as tree swallows crowd together in shrubs, vines and evergreen trees to share body heat. They can also slow their metabolic rate to conserve energy.

Cavity nesters, including nuthatches, titmice, and downy woodpeckers, use tree cavities and nest boxes to stay warm. Cavities and boxes provide protection from the weather and help birds hide from predators.

Larger birds including American crows and ring-billed gulls are also known to flock together for warmth.

*As the snow falls, a female red-bellied woodpecker taps a well-used source for nourishment.*



USFWS/TEO CC-BY-SA4

*Canada geese conserve heat by tucking legs and feet, and by tucking bills under feathers.*

## TUCKING FEET AND BILLS

Have you ever wondered how birds keep their legs warm? Waterfowl species circulate blood through a countercurrent heat exchange, isolating the blood that flows in their legs rather than circulating it throughout their entire bodies. This helps to keep their body temperatures higher.

Birds also have specialized scales on their feet and legs that help minimize heat loss.

Many ducks, geese, pelicans, gulls, and swans further conserve body heat by standing on one leg or even sitting down. Canada geese tuck their bills under their back feathers, keeping their bills warm while also increasing breathing efficiency by taking in warmer air.



ANDRE ALBUQUERQUE/FICKR CC BY-NC 2

*Waterfowl, such as this male wood duck, often bury their bills under their wings to minimize heat loss.*



Having plenty of food helps birds keep their body temperature up.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Want to help birds make it through winter? Consider providing high-energy foods such as suet, peanuts, and black oil sunflower seeds. Water is essential year-round, so adding a heated bird bath can help keep birds hydrated. Just remember to keep the water clean!

You can provide shelter for many species by installing roosting boxes or leaving dead trees that may be suitable for birds that depend on tree cavities. Planting native fruit-bearing trees and shrubs can help attract species like cedar waxwings. If fruit-bearing trees aren't for you, consider planting an evergreen in your yard! ♡



A male northern cardinal's undercoat of downy feathers helps insulate it from the snowy conditions.

# A HUNT

FOR THE AGES

OLD WAYS BEAR UP IN MODERN TIMES

BY DON P. BROWN, COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Oct. 1, opening day of Oklahoma's 2023 black bear archery season, found 26-year-old Caleb Flies in a tree stand an hour before first light. He wanted to be set in his spot well before shooting time, to let the woods settle.

He'd had a bad case of the nerves since the previous day, and he awoke at 4 that morning to begin his quest. Months of preparation had led him to this point.

For Flies (a name of German origin, pronounced "Fleece"), fishing and hunting had played big roles in his upbringing. He became interested in archery as a youngster, watching movies such as "Lord of the Rings" and "Robin Hood." And it was traditional archery that especially piqued his interest.

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**"When it all comes together, it's the most rewarding experience I could ever imagine in hunting."**

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"After I got my first deer with a longbow, I sold the compound and I never really even took the rifle out after that, either."

On this autumn day, he was pursuing a longtime bear-hunting goal: "I was going for strictly primitive, no modern materials."

In his tree stand with him was his handmade longbow of Osage orange wood and twisted flax fiber string, with beaver tail leather grip, and Douglas fir arrows fletched with turkey feathers and tipped with an obsidian point that Flies knapped himself.

"It's not easy to go out and take a black bear," he said. "Putting in the work every year is the biggest part of

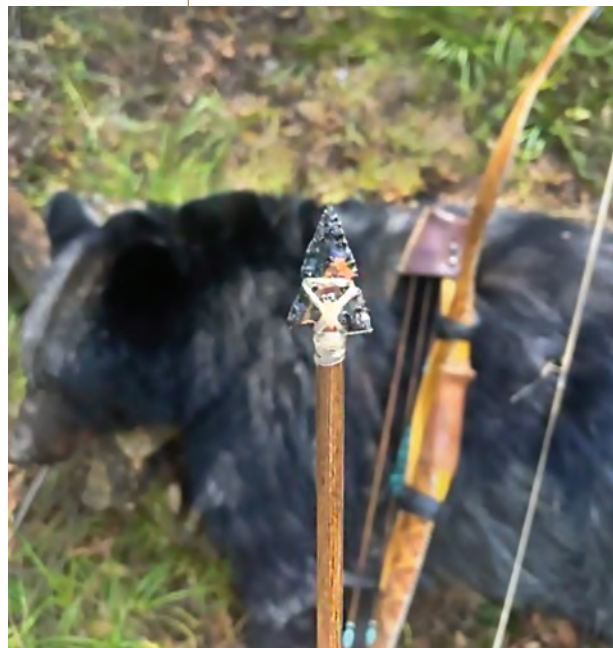


CALEB FLIES/FACEBOOK

it." For him, that meant much more work than the run-of-the-mill modern-day hunter. It meant spending countless hours and thousands of miles over the previous couple of bear seasons, making sure his feeders were full and his archery gear was just right.

He began handcrafting his selfbow earlier in the spring. His selfbow is a single piece of bois d'arc that he cut, with no enhancements. A decorative wrap of copperhead skin, and a carved silhouette of a bear paw inlaid with turquoise dust lend to its personality. "Lots of work goes into it, from A to Z."

*"Still trying to process the fact that this actually just happened today. Oklahoma black bear with full primitive bow, string, arrow, and stone point. A great hunt, came in uphill next to me about 7 yards away. I thankfully made a great shot ... I used only natural materials to make this setup. ... Could be the first primitive bear kill here in over a hundred years."*



Closeup of a Douglas fir arrow and obsidian arrowhead that Flies knapped, with his Arkansas black bear he took Sept. 18, 2023.

CALEB FLIES/FACEBOOK



Caleb Flies displays some of the primitive archery equipment he hand-makes at his home near Newalla, including the Ravenclaw 59-inch, 55@26 Osage selfbow with copperhead skins and flax fiber linen string, along with flint and obsidian for knapping arrowheads.

The bow-building process has taken him years to learn. It started when he attended his first OJAM event in 2017, a selfbow jamboree held annually by the Oklahoma Selfbow Society. Over the years, he has learned how to condition, shape and string the staves, create arrows, and knap the stone points. OJAM keeps the art form alive, he said.

On this hunt, Flies is using hand-crafted arrows with stone points of

black obsidian, which is volcanic glass. Like many other materials, he sources the obsidian by trading or buying the natural materials from suppliers. He said flintknapping isn't his strong suit, so he chose obsidian because it's a bit easier to work with. To practice creating points, he uses regular glass from the hardware store.

Once arrows are balanced and nocks are carved into the shaft end, he mounts a practice point and test-fires each arrow just once into a foam block. If the arrow flies true,

it earns its place in the handmade hunting quiver.

Flies' bow has no sight, so he devotes a lot of time learning to shoot accurately. Proficiency requires patience, skill, and dedication.

"I think we owe it to the animal to be as ethical as we can be.

"Also, when you have built this equipment, you're invested. It means more than something you've just gone to buy at the store."

When September rolled around, Flies had an unexpected chance to go bear hunting in Arkansas. On Sept. 18, he finally took a black bear

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**"When you have built this equipment, you're invested. It means more than something you've just gone to buy at the store."**

---

sow with the primitive equipment he had made. "The weapon is so limiting, and you have to get close.

"When it all comes together, it's the most rewarding experience I could ever imagine in hunting."

Then it was on to Oklahoma and Oct. 1. His hunting spot is on land that belongs to his mother's family, near Rich Mountain in southeastern Oklahoma's McCurtain County. Sitting in his tree stand, Flies can see the place where his grandfather had lived.

"It holds a special place in my heart, that area. And I think Grandpa would be proud and excited to see me hunting in a place where he grew up."

The morning was mild, and it would soon warm into the 80s. Shortly after sunrise, a black bear sow with two cubs approached his stand. Flies wasn't going to take a sow with cubs.

"They were just awesome to watch.

"Unless you've seen a bear in the wild, it's just a completely different feeling. I think some of that is a little bit of fear knowing that that thing could be up your tree ripping you apart if it wanted to.

"It wasn't until noon that I saw the bear that I ended up taking. She was an older sow. She didn't have any cubs." His nerves went off the chart.

"She was so close to me, the biggest bear I've seen in the wild.

"It's similar to buck fever. You get so excited seeing this huge animal you really want to take. It's just a mix of emotions, and there's really nothing like it.

"I wanted to make a good shot." Finally the sow came closer, stopped to Flies' left, and gave me a 5-yard shot. Everything worked out perfect!"

It was a great shot, and the bear expired just 20 yards from the stand.

And Caleb Flies has just made modern-day hunting history in Oklahoma. His harvest is believed to be the first black bear taken entirely with primitive, handmade archery equipment since American Indians did so more than a century ago.

Flies took to Facebook later that day: "Wow, can't believe this just happened. Primitive archery Oklahoma black bear. Could be the first in over a hundred years. What a dream come true, and a huge bear is just the icing on the cake."

To those who don't condone hunting, Flies has a response. On Facebook, he wrote, "I had a tag, which is one of the major fees that fund their research and conservation. I understand bears are portrayed as cute fluffballs, but they're part of the circle of life, which humans are also part of and have been for thousands



CALEB FLIES/FACEBOOK

**"I'm in love with just seeing bears in the wild, and going hunting is just an excuse to go do that."**

of years. Bears kill deer fawn, and even other baby bears. It's good to harvest some bears and keep their population in healthy numbers. I do like hunting but also want them to thrive as a whole population."

*The Ravenclaw selfbow that Flies used to take his Oklahoma black bear. Clearly seen are the carved nocks in the arrow shaft, the flax fiber string, and the inlaid turquoise bear paw under the beaver skin grip.*

And for him, harvesting isn't the end game.

"I'm in love with just seeing bears in the wild, and going hunting is just an excuse to go do that." 🐾

*(Communication and Education Specialists Blake Podhajsky and Darrin Hill contributed to this feature.)*

# SHOOTING OL' SMOKEPOLES SPARKS PASSION FOR PAST

DON P. BROWN/DWVC



BY DON P. BROWN,  
Communication and  
Education Specialist



Centuries-old outdoor traditions and pioneering American history remain alive in modern times thanks to groups such as the Cross Timbers Primitive Society.

The group's members, currently about 15 or 20, share a love and fascination with primitive firearms, especially the flintlock rifle. Usually once a month, they will gather their "necessaries" and meet up at group-built private shooting range near Lexington for a friendly muzzleloader shooting competition.

Such was the case last fall as the Society put on a fairly elaborate contest featuring plenty of interesting targets.

Former Society officer Neil Keyes helped organize the day's event.

"For me, the best part, the main purpose, this was a traditional-style muzzleloader shoot, which means everybody was shooting a type of rifle that 200 years ago was all that was available to our ancestors."

These primitive firearms fans will say that there's a special enjoyment and satisfaction that comes with ramming gunpowder and a metal sphere into a long barrel, cocking a piece of flint into position, taking aim, and then unleash-



Neil Keyes and Clayton Grubbs line up the targets, in this case plums.

**"For me, the best part, the main purpose, this was a traditional-style muzzleloader shoot, which means everybody was shooting a type of rifle that 200 years ago was all that was available to our ancestors."**



The Cross Timbers Primitive Society, with a few guests, gather for a group photo at a muzzleloader tournament in September. From left are Neil Keyes, Dee Kelly, Cholee Talley, Bennett Talley, Clayton Grubbs, Jordan Grubbs, Steve Shoreland, Cliff Sikes, Wayne East, Rick Cox, and Roger Miller.



DON P. BROWN/ODWC



DON P. BROWN/ODWC

Round balls of various calibers are a common ammunition fired from muzzleloading rifles.



DON P. BROWN/ODWC

This view clearly shows the flint in the flintlock.



DON P. BROWN/ODWC

*Applesauce!*

ing an explosive cloud of fire and smoke to hurl a chunk of lead at a distant target.

"Today, there was a good mix of competitors, some with years of experience, and some just getting started. I heard lots of laughter."

Like any group of competitive shooters, a lot of the appeal can be the camaraderie that comes with the shared interest and the gatherings. Many of the Society's members are also hunters; some enjoy participating in rendezvous and re-enactments; and several in the group actually create and assemble their own firearms.

"These rifles today are modern replicas of flintlock and percussion black-powder guns," Keyes said. "A few were store-bought. Some were fashioned from kits, and several were actually built from scratch by their owners."

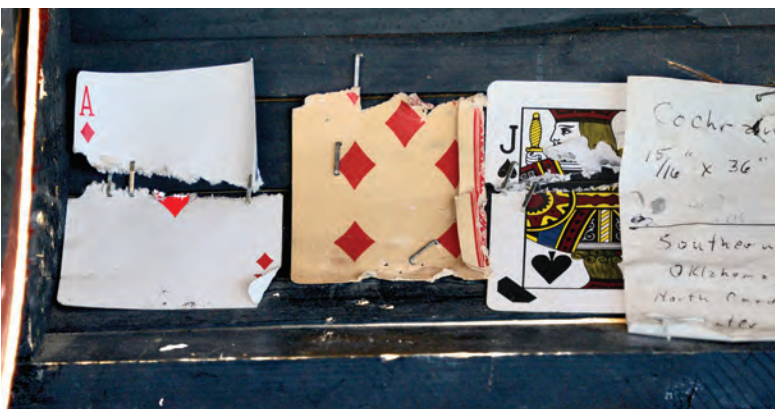
In addition to the traditional paper bull's-eyes at 25 yards, the various targets included flour-filled balloons at 50 yards, metal gongs, golf balls at 10 yards, stretched rubber bands, apples, plums, limes, split the ball on an ax head, and split the playing

**"These rifles today are modern replicas of flintlock and percussion black-powder guns. A few were store-bought. Some were fashioned from kits, and several were actually built from scratch by their owners."**



DON P. BROWN/ODWC

*Rick Cox turns in his target sheet to the official tournament scorekeeper, Jordan Grubbs.*



One of the toughest shots in a muzzleloader contest is called "split the card." The shooter's goal is to put his ball through a playing card placed edge-on to the shooter. Cross Timbers group member Cochran proudly displays three split cards inside the top cover of his wooden supplies box.



Everyone in the tournament congratulated the skillful shooting of Bennett Talley after he managed to split a card.

**"It is fun to think of our old folks from long ago, whose very lives depended on these old guns. I'd like to think that they would be proud to see how well we use them today."**

card (widely considered the toughest feat among shooters).

One of the shooters did manage to split the card that day!

"A lot of black powder was shot today, and many round lead balls were sent downrange to intended targets. Some were hit and some were missed."

The Cross Timbers Primitive Society was formed around 1980. Members contribute annual dues, and each monthly shoot costs \$5 to cover the cost of targets. The Society was a charter group of the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association, which can be found online.

Oklahoma has numerous groups devoted to muzzleloader and primitive firearms; a simple online search will turn up many. Most of the groups welcome inquiries from potential members.

Keyes said the day's event turned into another great shoot and everyone seemed to have a good, safe time.

"It is fun to think of our old folks from long ago, whose very lives depended on these old guns. I'd like to think that they would be proud to see how well we use them today." ♥

## NMLRA CHARTER CLUBS IN OKLAHOMA

### LONGRIFLES OF THE CANADIAN

Shoots monthly; call for dates, Ron Doggett, Oklahoma City, (405) 404-5764, [www.military.okcgunclub.org/m/muzz.html](http://www.military.okcgunclub.org/m/muzz.html).

### OKLAHOMA MUZZLE LOADING RIFLE ASSOCIATION

Shoots at Coweta, Lonnie Vermillion, (918) 408-0465, [possumridge@yahoo.com](mailto:possumridge@yahoo.com), Facebook: Oklahoma Muzzle Loading Rifle Association.

### OSAGE TERRITORY MUZZLELOADERS

Shoots on various dates, Ruth Kilgore, Meeker, (405) 301-7427.

### THE CROSS TIMBERS PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

Shoots last Sunday monthly, Neil Keyes, Blanchard, (405) 485-4672, (405) 414-5387, [neilpat51ok@gmail.com](mailto:neilpat51ok@gmail.com).



The gear of the primitive firearms aficionado: an engraved powder horn, patch material, and buckskin necessary bag.

DON P. BROWN/ODWC



Members of the Cross Timbers Primitive Society take the opportunity to catch up on the latest when they gather for a shoot.

DON P. BROWN/ODWC



Dee Kelly loads his rifle using a ramrod.

DON P. BROWN/ODWC



The Cross Timbers Primitive Society gathers regularly to hold muzzleloader competitive shooting events.

DARRIN HILL/ODWC

# Patriot Airboat Joins ODWC Fleet Thanks to Generous Donation

At their Nov. 6, 2023, regular meeting, the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission accepted the generous donation of a Patriot Airboat from the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Foundation (OWCF).


The airboat addition was made possible thanks to a generous donation from John and Deborah Hale and their Red Rock Ranch (Redrockranchok.com), according to OWCF Executive Director Rick Grundman.

The 700-hp airboat will be an invaluable tool for the Law Enforcement Division of the Wildlife Department, Grundman said. It will operate primarily in the Arkansas River system in northeastern Oklahoma but also statewide when needed. The airboat brings to three the number of airboats now in use by ODWC.

"OWCF was able to purchase a law enforcement airboat for Game Wardens to protect game and people in Oklahoma's

shallow-water areas.

"Today's airboat donation provides much-needed equipment to support Oklahoma's Game Wardens who protect our wildlife and the peace across our great state. The airboat joins other Foundation donations for Oklahoma Game Wardens like self-inflating personal flotation devices and duty ammunition.

"If you support conservation, fishing, and hunting in Oklahoma, please consider making a donation to the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Foundation, so we can continue to help Oklahoma's wildlife and wild spaces." 



DON P. BROWN/ODWC



DON P. BROWN/ODWC

Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commissioners gather to inspect a Patriot airboat donated to ODWC's Law Enforcement Division by the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Foundation. Front row, from left, are Commissioner Mark Mabrey, Commissioner Tim Diehl, ODWC Interim Director Wade Free, Commissioner D. Chad Dillingham, Commissioner John P. Zelbst, Commissioner Leigh Gaddis, Commissioner Jess Kane, Commissioner Rick Holder, and Commissioner James V. Barwick. In the airboat, from left, are Game Warden Stephen Paul, Law Enforcement Assistant Chief Lt. Col. Wade Farrar, ODWC former Director J.D. Strong, OWCF Executive Director Rick Grundman, and Law Enforcement Chief Col. Nathan Erdman.

# Foundation Support Puts ODWC Efforts On A Faster Track


The OWCF is engaged in a five-year program to raise \$5.2 million to further the strategic mission of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. The goal is to look for opportunities in which the Foundation can partner with ODWC to leverage resources, doing more together than could ever be done alone.

Since the Wildlife Department has operated on a limited budget for more than 100 years and doesn't receive appropriated state tax dollars, funds raised by the Foundation are among the best methods to more rapidly advance the Department's strategic plan. Because many ODWC projects qualify for a 3-to-1 or 9-to-1 federal dollar match, donations to OWCF can be multiplied and bring

more and better projects to Oklahoma more quickly.

Funds raised by OWCF support wildlife research and management, multi-year conservation projects, community outreach programs, and outdoor recreation projects.

**OWCF's mission cannot be achieved without the support of community partners, philanthropic foundations, and donations from individuals who want to make a difference for future generations.**


All donations are tax-deductible. To learn more about OWCF and how to help, go to [www.OKwildlifefoundation.org](http://www.OKwildlifefoundation.org), [www.facebook.com/OKWildlifeFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/OKWildlifeFoundation), or email Grundman at [rgrundman@okwildlifefoundation.org](mailto:rgrundman@okwildlifefoundation.org), or call (918) 323-5566. 

## Number Of OWCF-Supported Projects Keeps Growing

The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Foundation has steadily increased public awareness and community involvement since it began in 2018. The OWCF's cornerstone project is to help fund renovation of unusable pipeline to supply water seasonally to Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area. Other projects OWCF is contributing to include:

- Stream rehabilitation.
- Public land acquisition.
- Wetland development.
- Big game herd health studies

- Shooting range development and renovations.
- Upland game bird habitat restoration.
- Fish hatchery renovations.
- Outdoor education programs.
- Wildlife law enforcement equipment.

The Foundation also has sponsored several activities with the state Department of Human Services to introduce foster families to fishing. OWCF board member Blake Shelton also jumped in to host several foster children for a day of fishing on his ranch in southern Oklahoma. 



**THE OKLAHOMA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION (OWCF)** is engaged in a five-year program to raise \$5.2 million to further the strategic mission of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Since the Wildlife Department has operated on a limited budget for more than 100 years and doesn't receive appropriated state tax dollars, funds raised by the Foundation are among the best methods to more rapidly advance the Department's strategic plan. Because many ODWC projects qualify for a 3-to-1 or 9-to-1 federal dollar match, donations to OWCF can be multiplied and bring more and better projects to Oklahoma more quickly.

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All donations are tax-deductible. To learn more about OWCF and how to help, go to [www.OKwildlifefoundation.org](http://www.OKwildlifefoundation.org), [www.facebook.com/OKWildlifeFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/OKWildlifeFoundation), or email Grundman at [rgrundman@okwildlifefoundation.org](mailto:rgrundman@okwildlifefoundation.org), or call (918) 323-5566.



# OUTDOOR STORE

license.GoOutdoorsOklahoma.com

Sign in or shop online as a guest. Some items also available in person at ODWC headquarters, 1801 N. Lincoln Blvd. in Oklahoma City.

*\*\*Prices listed on these pages do not include \$3 online ordering convenience fee.*



## NEW ODWC LOGO DRINKWARE

Double-wall high-grade stainless steel 16-oz coffee mugs and 20-oz tumblers made by Yukon with DuraGrip powder coat finish featuring the new ODWC arrowhead logo. Tumblers come in navy, white, and bottomland camo; mugs come in olive drab and navy. They are vacuum-insulated and BPA-free. (Online sales only.) — \$20

## Outdoor Gear



## YUKON FLOATING GUN CASE

Welded waterproof construction, thick foam padding for protection, 500d tarpaulin exterior shell, carry strap and handle, universal fit for shotgun or scoped rifle. (Online sales only.) — \$70

## YUKON ODWC BACKPACK COOLER

Double Duty — Works as Cooler or Padded Gear Bag, Keeps Ice For Days, Air Tight Zipper, Rugged Welded Construction, 20 can with Ice capacity. (Ships separate from other Outdoor Store items) — \$140.00



## NEW OUTDOOR OKLAHOMA CAPS

These sleek fabric caps sport the latest Outdoor Oklahoma logo design! They are the Richardson 112 model, mid-pro shape, pro-curved visor, adjustable snap-back, 60% cotton/40% polyester. Various colors and styles will be available (subject to availability). (Online sales only.) — \$20

## DURABLE COLLECTOR'S CARDS

Every hunting and fishing license holder can upgrade to a customized hard plastic card that won't be damaged by water, sun, dirt, or regular wear and tear like paper documents. Cards hold customer and license information on one side; the other side features artwork from Oklahoma artists that changes periodically. Several designs available. (Account sign-in required.) — \$6



## OKLAHOMA HABITAT DONOR WINDOW DECALS

Show your support of the Wildlife Department's Land Acquisition Fund with these striking window decals. All proceeds are earmarked to help provide hunting and fishing access to the public. — \$10 each





## WILDLIFE LICENSE PLATES

Dress up your vehicle while showing your support of our great state's wildlife resources by getting a wildlife license plate. Nine Wildlife Conservation Plates are available to serve as your regular, rear-bumper license plate. The plates cost just \$40 (original or replacement) or \$36.55 (renewals) above your regular annual registration fee with proceeds going to Oklahoma's Wildlife Diversity Program. The forms are available at local tag agencies, or online at [tinyurl.com/WildTags](http://tinyurl.com/WildTags).

## OKLAHOMA WATERFOWL HUNTING STAMP

Oklahoma "duck stamps" are always popular with collectors and hunters. While each year's stamp features a different handsome design sure to add appeal to any stamp collection, funds from stamp sales are used for many kinds of waterfowl management projects. Specify year when ordering. — \$10

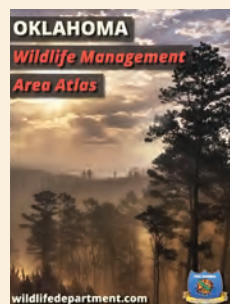


## DURABLE FIELD TAGS

A three-pack of plastic field tags with name and customer ID printed on one side, and places to write your harvest date/time and the E-Check confirmation number on the other. Reusable. (Account sign-in required.) — \$6

## HABITAT DONOR CAP

Top-quality, American-made cap displays the Bass Habitat Donor Patch, which designates you as a contributor to the Department's Land Acquisition Fund. Wearing this hat means you care about future generations and the great hunting and fishing tradition. — \$20



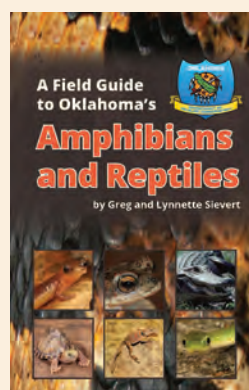
## OKLAHOMA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA ATLAS

The Wildlife Management Area Atlas presents maps of Oklahoma's WMAs and ODWC-owned fishing lakes. At 109 pages, the atlas features lands purchased before 2018. Each map shows special features such as parking sites, camping areas, and food plots. Your atlas purchase comes with a bonus one-year subscription to the award-winning *Outdoor Oklahoma* magazine. — \$25

## LATEST

## A FIELD GUIDE TO OKLAHOMA'S AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

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# THE BOBCAT

BY LILY TUMALA, COMMUNICATION INTERN

Bobcats tend to be elusive and aren't often seen even though they are the most abundant of the wild cats in the United States.

The animal's scientific name is *Lynx rufus*. Other wild cats in the Lynx genus are the Canadian lynx, Eurasian lynx, and Iberian lynx. The bobcat is considered to be the smallest species in the Lynx genus. They can grow to a length of 26 to 41 inches and can weigh from 11 to 30 pounds.

Observers can often distinguish the Lynx genus apart from the Felidae family based on physical features. The cats in the Lynx genus more often have short tails and tufted ears that easily

set them apart from other feline families.

This wild cat has a black-tipped tail that is stubby, or "bobbed," the trait for which it was named.

The bobcat's fur is often tan or brown with black or brown spots. They usually have black bars on their forelegs. The fur around the cat's underbelly is lighter in color. The bobcat's thick coat allows it to inhabit colder climates.

A bobcat's life span can be as long as 12 years in the wild and more than twice that long in captivity.

Bobcats are known to be fiercely independent and solitary animals. But from December to April, which includes mating season, they will share territories and mingle.

Bobcats are mainly territorial and will often mark their territories to avoid confrontations with one another.

Bobcats typically live in isolation, but they will often have more than one mate within their lifetime. Breeding occurs in February and March. The female will typically give birth to about three kittens about 65 days after mating.

The female and kittens mostly reside in dens in heavily wooded areas, mountain regions and even deserts. Bobcats are adaptable creatures, which is why they can be found throughout North America.

Bobcats are very good hunters. They target small- to medium-size rodents such as squirrels and mice, opossums, rabbits, birds, and sometimes domestic animals such as small dogs and cats.

Bobcats are excellent swimmers, and they can run up to 30 mph. The best place to see a bobcat is around clear-cut areas where hunting and good cover are available.

One way to attract a bobcat is by imitating the sound of a rabbit in distress. Many hunters use this method to lure a bobcat into range.

Bobcats are considered furbearers in Oklahoma, and hunters are required to have a furbearer license to harvest them. A trapping license also applies if that is the method of take. Bobcats may be harvested during December, January and February. There is no daily limit for bobcats, but there is a season limit of 20 per furbearer license. There are also special tagging regulations that apply to bobcats. ♡

*This wild cat has a black-tipped tail that is stubby, or "bobbed," the trait for which it was named.*





The chilly weather of winter is welcomed by trout anglers in Oklahoma. It's a great time to take advantage of the state's fishing opportunities, just as this fly fisherman is doing on the Lower Mountain Fork River in McCurtain County. Grab a coat and a rod, and find some relaxation in Outdoor Oklahoma.

# Outdoor Oklahoma

