Delaware turkey hunting season will open this month with self-serve turkey harvest registration at check stations

Turkey hunt day for youth and non-ambulatory disabled hunters April 4, regular turkey season opens April 11

DOVER, Del. – Delaware's statewide one-day turkey hunt for youth ages 10-15 and for non-ambulatory disabled hunters requiring a wheelchair for mobility will be held Saturday, April 4, followed by the four-week-long spring turkey hunting season from Saturday, April 11 through Saturday, May 9. Hunting hours are a half-hour before sunrise until 1 p.m. Monday through Saturday, with no Sunday hunting.

Youth hunters on the one-day turkey hunt must be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older who has completed a Delaware-approved turkey hunter safety course and who has a Delaware hunting license or is license-exempt. The accompanying adult may not hunt on the special one-day turkey youth hunt.

Only bearded turkeys may be harvested, and the bag limit is one bearded turkey per hunter each year, regardless of where and when a bird is harvested.

All harvested turkeys must be registered at an authorized turkey check station by 2:30 p.m. on the day the bird was harvested. A list of available check stations is available at 2020 Turkey Check Stations and on page 27 of the Delaware Hunting and Trapping Guide. (**Note:** Blue Hen Outdoors in Kent County is not available for checking in turkeys). Harvest data collected by the Division of Fish & Wildlife is used to manage Delaware's wild turkey population.

Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) considerations, self-registration of harvested turkeys has been enabled by DNREC this year at check stations to accommodate required social distancing. Easily identifiable, residential-style mailboxes are located at each check station, with self-registration cards placed inside each mailbox. To complete registration of a harvested turkey, hunters are required to fill out the card as completely as possible, remembering to sign and date the card. After having done so, remove the small bottom portion of the card and retain it as a receipt, placing the top portion of the card in the slot in the back of the mailbox. DNREC advises if multiple hunters are using or waiting to use a self-check station, hunters should remain the required six feet (or further) apart from one another – or fill out the registration card at your vehicle using your own pen. Check stations will not be weighing wild turkeys harvested by hunters this season.

Hunters who want to have their bird scored and entered into the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) records are reminded to have their turkey's weight recorded on a certified scale. Please contact your local NWTF representative to have the turkey weighed.

Since all Delaware spring turkey season plans are subject to change based on health and safety considerations during the coronavirus period, any changes will be announced by DNREC and also posted on its website.

Hunting on state wildlife areas and state forests during the spring turkey hunting season requires carrying the public land permit that was issued through a preseason lottery. The permit will specify the public land and season segment/dates that can be hunted. Hunters participating in the special turkey hunt for youth and non-ambulatory disabled hunters on April 4 may hunt without a public land permit on those state wildlife areas and state forests that are open to turkey hunting during the regular turkey hunting season.

Turkey hunters are reminded of the following:

- A Delaware hunting license or License Exempt Number (LEN) is required to hunt. More information on hunting license requirements is available at Delaware Licenses, where hunting licenses can also be purchased. To register for a LEN, hunters can go to Delaware Hunter and Trapper Registration or call toll free 1-855-335-4868.
- To purchase a hunting license, hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1967, must present a basic hunter education safety course card/number.
- All turkey hunters 13 years of age and older must have completed a Delaware-approved turkey hunter safety course. Turkey hunters under the age of 13 must be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older who has completed a Delaware-approved turkey hunter safety course and who has a Delaware hunting license or is license exempt.
- The Hunter Education/Turkey Education card certifying successful completion of the mandatory turkey course must be carried when turkey hunting.
- Registered motor vehicles used to access designated wildlife areas owned or managed by the Division of Fish & Wildlife are required to display a Conservation Access Pass (CAP), with a CAP temporarily not required through April 30, 2020.

Due to cancelation of recent in-person turkey hunter safety courses during the current coronavirus (COVID-19) period, the Division of Fish & Wildlife's Hunter Education Program has developed a free online turkey course to be offered until May 17, 2020. Follow these two steps to complete the course:

- **Step 1** – Go to the Online Turkey Course to view and take the course online
- **Step 2** – Go to the DNREC Fish & Wildlife website and complete the 20 question test

Students must earn a score of 80% or higher on the test to successfully pass the course. Your test will be reviewed within 24 hours of completion. Students who successfully complete the course will receive an email with instructions on how to print their updated hunter safety card.

For more information on turkey hunting, click 2019-2020 Delaware Hunting & Trapping Guide and Wildlife Area Hunting Maps. More information on turkey hunting is also available by calling the Wildlife Section office at 302-739-9912.

About DNREC

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control protects and manages the state's natural resources, protects public health, provides outdoor recreational opportunities and educates Delawareans about the environment. For more information, visit the website and connect with DNREC on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.

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