

Utah Wildlife News
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Mark Hadley, Editor
(801) 538-4737

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Don't Wait Until the Last Day to Apply

Big game applications due by March 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Big Game Hunters: You Can Still Apply for a Bonus Point or a Preference Point

Applications accepted until March 8

Even if you're not going to hunt big game in Utah this fall, you can increase the chance you'll be chasing big game in the future by applying for a bonus point or a preference point.

You can apply for a point at www.wildlife.utah.gov until 11 p.m. on March 8.

Two reminders

- If you're eligible, you can apply for up to three points—one preference point, one limited-entry bonus point and one once-in-a-lifetime bonus point.
- You must have a valid Utah hunting or combination license before you can apply for a point.

Hunting and combination licenses are available at www.wildlife.utah.gov. You can also obtain one from Division of Wildlife Resources offices and more than 300 hunting license agents across Utah.

Keep building those points!

Every time you obtain a bonus point, the chance you'll receive a low random draw number in the limited entry, once-in-a-lifetime and Cooperative Wildlife Management Unit drawing increases. (The lower your number, the better chance you have of drawing a permit.)

And every preference point you obtain increases the chance you'll draw a general-season buck deer permit.

"Even if you won't be hunting big game in Utah this fall, keep building your points up," says Judi Tutorow, wildlife licensing coordinator for the DWR.

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

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Teach Kids How to Fish

Volunteer training starts in March

Want to help a group of kids have one of the best experiences they'll have this spring?

Then volunteer to help a youth fishing club!

The Division of Wildlife Resources is looking for volunteers to teach 6- to 13-year-olds about fish, the places fish live and how to catch them.

Volunteers are needed in communities stretching from Brigham City to Washington City. To learn more about the clubs, and to volunteer to help, visit www.wildlife.utah.gov/cf/clubs.php.

(You can also listen to a radio interview about the clubs at www.wildlife.utah.gov/radio.)

Anyone can help

The number of kids who can participate in the clubs is tied directly to the number of adults who volunteer to help. If more adults volunteer to help, more children can participate.

"If you want to help, but you don't know much about fishing, that's OK," says Chris Penne, community fisheries biologist for the DWR. "If you're a positive person, you're patient and you have good communication skills, you have everything we're looking for.

"We'll teach you all of the other skills you'll need to have a great experience with these kids."

Training

Most of the youth fishing clubs start in March and April. But a few begin as late as June.

Most of the clubs meet once a week for six weeks. Each club session lasts about two hours.

The children spend the first 30 minutes of each outing learning a new lesson or skill. After teaching the kids, adult volunteers take them down to the water and help the children use their skills to catch fish!

"The kids look up to their fishing mentors. You're their leader," Penne says. "If you'd like to volunteer, it's best if you can commit to being with your club every time it meets."

Two to three weeks before a club's first meeting, DWR personnel will provide a volunteer training seminar in the community where the fishing club meets. The training takes less than two hours to complete.

Also, all volunteers must consent to and pass a criminal background check. "The DWR and the various communities are committed to keeping the children in the clubs safe," Penne says.

(more)

Rewards

Penne says a number of rewards await those who volunteer. "One of the biggest thrills you'll have is watching a young boy or girl reel in their first fish. Seeing that is priceless," he says.

"It's also rewarding to teach someone a skill they'll be able to use and enjoy the rest of their life. And knowing you're helping get these kids outside, so they can experience the natural world around them, is also very rewarding."

If you have questions, please e-mail Penne at chrispenne@utah.gov.

A popular program

"We had a great turnout in 2009," Penne says. "About 1,500 kids and 300 volunteers participated. Many of the volunteers were folks who volunteered the year before. They had a great experience, and they wanted to help again."

Penne says many of the city recreation departments in Utah have added fishing to the list of sports they offer to kids. That's one of greatest reasons for the program's success. "For the first time, fishing has found its way into mainstream sports, right along with soccer, baseball and football," Penne says.

The number of children and communities involved in the program is growing. "We need volunteers more than ever before," Penne says.

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Want to Gather Shed Antlers in Utah? You Must Complete an Online Course First

If you enjoy gathering antlers that deer, elk and moose shed in the winter, one of your favorite times of the year is almost here.

But before you head outdoors to gather antlers, you need to head to this Web page first—wildlife.utah.gov/shedantler.

At the page, you'll find a free shed antler gathering course. You must complete the course—and print a course completion certificate—before you gather shed antlers in Utah.

"Make sure you carry your certificate with you," says Mike Fowlks, Law Enforcement Section chief for the Division of Wildlife Resources.

"By law, you must have your certificate with you while you're gathering shed antlers."

If you have young children, and you've completed the course, your children don't need to complete it. As long as you've completed the course, your certificate will cover your kids too.

You can gather antlers across Utah

Fowlks says if you complete the course, you can gather antlers across Utah. "Please remember, though, that many of the state's wildlife management areas are closed in the spring and the winter to protect wildlife," he says.

You must complete the course if you want to gather shed antlers before April 15. If you wait until April 15 or later to gather antlers, you don't need to complete the course.

Helping deer, elk and moose

The antlers of deer, elk and moose drop off their heads each winter. During the summer, the animals grow a new set of antlers.

"Gathering shed antlers is an activity that's grown in popularity across the country, including here in Utah," Fowlks says.

The challenge with shed-antler gathering is that it happens during the worst time of the year for the animals and the places the animals live in the winter.

"Two things are happening at the end of the winter," Fowlks says. "The animals are stressed, and the habitat they rely on in the winter is wet.

"Fortunately, you can have fun gathering shed antlers without stressing the animals and damaging their habitat. This online course will show you how."

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

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