



Ask the **FWC**

Illustration by Lizabeth West

How do I find out about hunting opportunities on public lands?

Florida has more than 5.5 million acres of public hunting lands, making it one of the largest wildlife management area systems in the nation. To find out about hunting opportunities on public lands visit MyFWC.com/hunting. Under "Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) - Public Hunting Lands" you will find a link to WMA brochures (containing maps) and a statewide map that shows all the WMAs.

Where can I find out about canoeing, kayaking, camping or hiking opportunities in Florida?

Explore some of Florida's wildest recreational opportunities by visiting:

- **Wildlife Management Areas** – MyFWC.com/recreation/index.html
- **Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail** – MyFWC.com/recreation/big_bend/paddling_trail.asp
- **Greenways and Trails** – www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/index.htm
- **Florida State Parks** – www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/
- **National Parks and Seashores** – www.nps.gov/applications/parksearch/state.cfm
- **Aquatic Preserves** – www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/activities/recreation.htm
- **State Forests** – www.fl-dof.com/forest_recreation/index.html
- **National Forests** – www.fs.fed.us/r8/florida/recreation/
- **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Refuges** – www.fws.gov/southeast/maps/fl.html

If I accompany someone who is hunting, but I don't have a gun, do I need a license?

A hunting license is required to "take" game or furbearing animals. The definition of take includes "taking, attempting to take, pursuing, hunting, molesting, capturing or killing any wildlife or freshwater fish... by any means whether or not such actions result in obtaining possession of such wildlife..."

Generally, any non-exempt person who is participating in the act of take,

as defined above, is required to have proper licenses and permits for the species they are taking. This definition has a well-established interpretation throughout the state and has been accepted in court. The definition has been applied to many activities that generally do not lead to the individual involved in the activity taking possession of fish or wildlife. For example, a person who uses dogs to chase fox is required to have a hunting license even though there is no expectation of possessing the fox. The act of casting or catching dogs is participating in the take, whether it is for deer, furbearers or other legal species. A person who sits in a turkey blind, without a gun, and calls turkey for a person with a gun, needs to have a license and turkey stamp since he is participating in the take. A person without a gun, who sets decoys or calls ducks for a person with a gun, needs to have a hunting license and proper waterfowl permits since he is participating in the take. A person who is just sitting in the blind, observing without actively participating, is not required to have licenses or permits. A person videotaping the hunt would not need a license or permit.

Is it legal to kill or relocate nuisance raccoons?

After eliminating food sources that may attract raccoons (pet food, unsecured trash cans and bird feeders), property owners may live-trap or humanely destroy raccoons causing damage to their property or relocate them on the same

property without a permit. A Nuisance Wildlife Trapper Permit issued by the FWC is required to transport nuisance raccoons. These raccoons can not be released on state or public lands, or without the permission of a private-land owner who will allow the release of the raccoons on his property.

Because relocated raccoons may spread disease among raccoon populations, and because they frequently cause other problems, some counties prohibit relocation. It is recommended that live-trapped raccoons be humanely euthanized.

For more information about other laws relating to destructive wildlife, visit: MyFWC.com/critters/policy.htm.

To learn about other ways to avoid and safely handle raccoon problems, visit MyFWC.com/critters/Raccoon.asp or MyFWC.com/critters/policy.htm.

I moved to Florida from another state where I had taken a hunter safety course. Do I need to take the course in Florida, or will my out-of-state card be accepted?

A hunter safety card or certificate issued for a course completed in another state is accepted in Florida.



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