

# Turkey hunting opportunities expanded

By **Jim Anderson**  
Correspondent

The so-called “wild turkeys” that cause traffic jams and are underfoot in many places of Sisters Country are not native to Oregon. They arrived here via Douglas County and Texas. But they’re still good to eat.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is offering 10 youth hunters (ages 17 and under) the chance to win a guided turkey hunt on a private ranch in Jackson County during the spring 2016 turkey season.

Ten hunts will be raffled on March 31, 2016. Winners will receive one day of turkey hunting on the C2 Ranch in Jackson County, accompanied by a guide who will help locate (so-called) wild turkeys. A parent or other family member may also accompany the youth on the hunt.

“The ranch has a lot of oak savannah and brushy areas, which makes for good wild turkey habitat,” says ODFW wildlife biologist Vince Oredson.

Spring turkey season runs from April 15-May 31, statewide, and youth hunters also get their own two-day season, April 9-10. Hunt applications are available at the ODFW Central Point office, 1495 East Gregory Rd., or online under A and H Hunting Opportunities.

Applications for the special hunt must be received

at the Central Point ODFW office by 5 p.m., March 31, and may be submitted by mail, in person, or email. There is no cost to enter the raffle, though winners are still responsible for purchasing a hunting license and turkey tag before hunting. Winners will be notified on April 1.

For more information, contact wildlife biologist Vince Oredson at 541-826-8774, or email Vince.J.Oredson@state.or.us.

“With the mild winter, more turkeys survived the season, particularly in areas of eastern Oregon,” says David Budeau, ODFW upland bird coordinator.

Mikal Moore, Pacific Northwest regional biologist with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), agrees.

“Expanding turkey populations coupled with favorable over-wintering conditions should make for a very exciting wild turkey season this spring,” she said.

ODFW says all you need for the spring turkey hunt is camo, a call, and a shotgun, but a hen or jake decoy can also improve your odds. You can hunt for six weeks (April 15-May 31) anywhere in the state, and buy up to three turkey tags in some areas. There is no deadline to purchase a tag, just get one before you go hunting.

Turkey hunting opportunities have drastically expanded in the last 20 years around



PHOTO BY JIM ANDERSON

Our so-called, “wild” turkey, originally from Douglas County via Texas.

Sisters Country, thanks to the nuisance birds that are trapped over in the Willamette Valley and dumped over here on the dry side of the Cascades.

But remember it is NOT legal to shoot a turkey in your neighbor’s backyard!

ODFW is working to increase accessible turkeys throughout Oregon. Last year, they transplanted 45 Douglas County nuisance turkeys to public lands within the county. Another 80 birds went to public lands in eastern Oregon.

Spring turkey hunting is general season, meaning anyone can purchase a tag any time before going hunting. Turkey tags are \$22.50 for residents, \$10.50 for youth hunters (age 17 and under). Hunting licenses are \$29.50 for residents or \$14.50 for hunters age 9-17.

The daily bag limit is one male turkey or a turkey with a visible beard (hens

with beards may be lawfully taken). The season limit is two legal turkeys, and hunters must purchase a tag for each turkey.

Finally, don’t forget to report results for each tag you purchased no later than Jan. 31, 2016. Report online, or by phone (1-866-947-6339), even if you didn’t take a turkey or didn’t go hunting. Hunters need to know their hunter/angler ID number, hunting location, and days spent hunting to complete the report.

## VOLUNTEERS: Spring break work is a college tradition

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The Emporia students were at the construction site four of the five days in Sisters. They raised walls at the future home of Selah Broderick, taped windows at the future home of Alexandra Lantaler and learned to work many power tools. On their day off they hiked in Camp Sherman by the Metolius River.

“It was gorgeous and the water was so clear,” Mandell said.

During the week, the students built camaraderie with the regular construction volunteers. On their last day they enjoyed a barbecue lunch with the volunteers and celebrated collegiate challenge volunteer Amy McMillin’s birthday. As they left, lots of hugs and thank-yous were shared, and the college kids talked about coming back in the summer or for spring break next year.



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