

DUETTE PRESERVE

2649 Rawls Road
Duette, Florida 34219
(941) 737-2661

https://www.mymanatee.org/departments/natural_resources



Manatee County
Board of County Commissioners

NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Charlie Hunsicker, Director

This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting at Duette Preserve. For the exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations of Florida, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Florida Wildlife Code on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure and the quota hunt application form will provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities.

Manatee County Natural Resources



2025-2026 QUALITY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Manatee County
Commission

District 1
Carol Ann
Felts

District 2
Amanda
Ballard
District 3
Tal Siddique

District 4
Mike
Rahn

District 5
Bob
McCann

At-Large
Jason
Bearden
At-Large
George
Kruse

GENERAL REGULATIONS:

In addition to the regulations which follow, all laws and regulations of the State of Florida relating to wildlife shall apply. Duette Preserve is not a state wildlife management area. It is managed by Manatee County Government. Duette Preserve regulations are more restrictive than the state regulations. Hunting or the taking of wildlife shall be allowed only during the state open seasons and Preserve scheduled hunt weekends, and only in the manner set forth herein.

EACH HUNTER IS PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF AND ADHERING TO ALL LAWS AND RULES PERTAINING TO THIS HUNT PROGRAM AND DUETTE PRESERVE.

1. Each new participant must provide a copy of his/her Hunter Safety Certificate at the time of registration. No exceptions.
2. Any person entering Duette Preserve during the prescribed hunts, other than archery hunts, shall wear at least 500 square inches of Dayglo fluorescent orange material above the waistline as an outer garment. A head covering of the same color is also required. *The Dayglo fluorescent orange material must be visible at all times, including while in ground blinds.*
3. During hunt weekends, access to Duette Preserve is restricted to hunters with a valid hunt permit for the designated hunt and two immediate family members (see Children and Family). Entry and exit is permitted through the Check Station only.
4. The use of feeders, baiting, or the possession of baiting materials of any kind is prohibited. Trapping of any kind is prohibited.
5. There are quiet times during the Big Game season. Walking around or driving during this time is prohibited. A Quiet Time Schedule is distributed at Orientation and is posted at the Check Station on the board with the buck quota.
6. **Male deer (buck) must have a minimum of three (3) points on one side.** *(A point is defined as antler growth off the main beam that is 1" in length.)*
7. A buck harvest quota is established for each Big Game weekend. Unfilled buck quotas are not carried over to future hunts. If the buck quota is filled on the first day of the hunt weekend, only feral hogs may be taken the second day. The buck quota is posted at the Check Station. Only one deer may be harvested per permitted hunter per Big Game Weekend, regardless of quota.
8. All deer must be dressed at the Check Station so the health of the harvested deer can be evaluated. All deer harvested are required to have one jawbone extracted for aging. All hogs shall be dressed at the check station, unless justification is accepted and prior verbal authorization is given by a ranger on duty.
9. Transport of deer or parts of the deer off of the property requires a copy of the harvest sheet signed by staff. It is the hunter's responsibility to acquire a copy of the harvest sheet from staff. See Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission Hunting Handbook for state rules on dismemberment.
10. Hunting is prohibited in areas posted "No Hunting."
11. STATE REGULATIONS REGARDING BUFFER ZONE DISTANCES APPLY.
12. The waste of wildlife is prohibited.
13. No plants, or their parts, or any animals shall be introduced, liberated, planted, or placed in any part of Duette Preserve by visitors.
14. Littering and the possession of alcohol is prohibited everywhere within Duette Preserve.
15. In accordance with Manatee County Code of Ordinances staff may order any person to **leave** the park and may also request law enforcement to deliver such an order if they exhibit disruptive or unsafe behavior.



TURKEY HUNT

Spring Gobbler Only

Drawing for hunts will be held on Wednesday, March 3rd 2026

- Shotgun or bow only
- One turkey per permit
- **Hunter may be accompanied by two (2) assistants during Turkey Hunt.**
- 10 hunters will be randomly drawn
- 6 days of hunting:
 - March 21st and 22nd 2026
 - March 28th and 29th 2026
 - April 11th and 12th 2026
- Spring Youth Turkey Hunt
 - March 14th and 15th 2026
 - Four (4) randomly drawn participants
- Hunting begins at 5:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 p.m.
- One entry per person
- Draw Entry Fee \$15.00 + tax
- Turkey Permit – Resident \$175.00 + tax
- Turkey Permit – Non-Resident \$250.00 + tax

Know Before You Go

1. Initial Hunt Applications will **NOW** be processed via a **RANDOM DRAW LOTTERY** . . See SALES Section
2. Check Station phone number is **941-737-2661**
3. Access Gates into Duette Preserve will be **CLOSED** the Friday before every hunt weekend.
4. No Refunds of purchased hunts.
5. Please See **BICYCLE** section regarding use of E-bikes

NEW APPLICANTS: PLEASE SEND HUNTERS EDUCATION
CERTIFICATES WITH REGISTRATION

PLEASE RESPECT OTHERS' RIGHTS AND PROPERTY.

IF THERE IS A PROBLEM, PLEASE CALL THE
CHECK STATION AT 941-737-2661

2025-2026 SEASON

- **Application and Permit payments must be either exact cash or checks made out to Manatee County.**
- Initial hunt applications will be processed through a Random Draw Lottery after which all sales will be first come first served until sold out.
- Stands may be placed on the property beginning on Saturday, August 16th 2025 at SUNRISE. Tree stands must be removed by June 1st 2026.

ORIENTATION (Mandatory) **Saturday: 9:00 a.m.**

Big Game: August 9th 2025 or August 23rd 2025
Small Game and United Way: January 24th 2026

Missing mandatory orientation will result in NOT being able to hunt during the 2025-2026 Duette Preserve Hunt Season.

BIG GAME SEASON

Archery and Crossbow

A B and C hunts only: Legal to take only one male deer or one antlerless deer, except spotted fawn, until the quota is reached, and unlimited hogs.

- A. September 13th and 14th 2025
- B. September 20th and 21st 2025
- C. October 4th and 5th 2025

Muzzleloading Gun

Legal to take only one male deer until the quota is reached, and unlimited hogs.

- D. October 18th and 19th 2025
- E. November 1st and 2nd 2025

General Gun

Legal to take only one male deer until the quota is reached, and unlimited hogs.

- F. December 6th and 7th 2025
- G. January 10th and 11th 2026

YOUTH HUNT

Fees, availability, and application procedure may be obtained from staff.

- Y. November 22nd and 23rd 2025 ... Maximum fifty (50) participants

SMALL GAME AND HOG **5 AM – 9 PM**

Legal to take hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, snipe, and coyote.

- H. January 31st and Feb 1st 2026
- I. February 7th and 8th 2026
- J. February 21st and 22nd 2026
- K. Feb 28th and March 1st 2026

UNITED WAY FUNDRAISER HOG HUNTS **5 AM – 9 PM**

- L. April 25th 2026
- M. April 26th 2026

CHILDREN AND FAMILY

- **Only two (2) immediate family members (defined as a spouse or child 17 years or younger) may accompany a permitted hunter. Family members must show proof of having completed a Hunter Safety Course.**
- Children under the age of 18 cannot possess a permit and are required to accompany a permitted adult. (Only two children per permitted adult.)
- Children participating in the Youth Hunt **must have** completed a Hunters Education Course and be in the presence and under the supervision of an adult. F.S. 790.22 and 784.05.

HUNTING SAFETY

- During Muzzle-loader season firearms may be discharged at the Check Station area. **Please notify staff first.**
- Please follow ethics and safety practices learned as provided by State Hunters Safety Education Course.

DOGS

- Only leashed dogs suitable for trailing wounded game will be permitted during the Big Game season.
- During Small Game hunts, only bird dogs (pointers and retrievers) will be allowed.
- All dogs must wear collars bearing the name and address of the owners and have proof of current rabies vaccination.
- In all cases owners are responsible for their dogs and their dogs' actions.

STANDS and TRAIL CAMERAS

- All stands and trail cameras must have the name and phone number of the hunter clearly marked within 5 feet of the ground. If this information is not on the stand, Department staff will remove the stand from Duette Preserve.
- Only two stands per hunter allowed. Stands include climbers, ground blinds, chairs, etc.
- Climbing stands and ground blinds may be placed or moved before or after the Quiet Time during Big Game hunts. No other hunting stands may be moved during Big Game hunts.
- No permanent stands or stands that will damage vegetation will be permitted.
- Driving a metal object into any tree or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven is prohibited.
- Prescribed fire is applied year-round. Staff are not responsible for personal property left on site.
- No hunting is allowed within 100 feet of mapped trails, which includes sitting in vehicles or blinds. Trails are not to be used as shooting lanes.

VEHICLES

- Any vehicle entering Duette Preserve must have a current registration, meet federal and state safety requirements, and be operated by a licensed driver with appropriate insurance.
- Vehicles shall not be parked in such a manner as to obstruct roads, gates, or fire lanes.
- Vehicles may be operated only on vehicle trails.** Trails can be closed at any time.
- With prior authorization of staff, hunters may drive on fire breaks for game removal only.
- The presence of a 'CLOSED' sign restricts access to foot traffic only.
- Vehicles must be operated in a safe manner for the condition of the vehicle trails.
- Maximum speed limit is 20 mph.

BICYCLES

- All bicycles of any type (Traditional, Class 1/2/3 e-bikes) will be restricted to use on designated trails only. The same as vehicles. Access to hunt stands will be on foot only.
- Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes which allow the user to exceed 20 mph and or do not require the user to pedal to engage the motor (throttle only) are NOT allowed in Duette Preserve

CAMPING

- Trailers, tents, and equipment must be removed by Sunday at 9:00 p.m. on each hunt weekend.
- Fires are permitted in grills and fire rings only.

CHECK STATION

- Hunters must check in and out at the Check Station. Violators may lose hunt privileges.
- Hunters may enter the preserve through the check station at 5:00 a.m. for all hunts.
- All game must be checked in by staff at the Check Station. If a deer is shot on Saturday and not recovered, the hunter must report the event to staff on Saturday before leaving the property. If not, the penalty for violation of closed buck quota will be assessed.
- During hunts, the preserve closes at 9:00 p.m. Anyone exiting after 9:00 p.m. may lose hunt privileges.

SALES

- Initial hunt applications will be received May 17th-June 1st only, in person or by mail
- Applications will be subject to a random draw/lottery to determine the order in which they are processed and the order in which hunt permits are sold
- ONLY one individual hunt application per envelope!!!!
- No combined submissions (or risk forfeiting your hunts)
- Completed Application MUST be physically at the check station by June 1st (not postmarked) to be eligible for the lottery
- No Checks or Money will be sent in with application!!
- Hunts will be processed after a Random Lottery drawing on June 2nd 2025
- Hunters will then be called and informed about their grand totals and hunts they received
- After the initial random draw application period ends hunt sales will be processed on a first come first serve basis until sold out
- Permits are non-transferable from person to person or to a different date.
- Fees are non-refundable and do not include the mandatory 7.0% sales tax. Please calculate the 7.0% tax and include it with your payment.

PERMITTING & LICENSE INFORMATION

APPROPRIATE LICENSES AND PERMITS REQUIRED.

- All hunters are required to attend a scheduled orientation before receiving hunt permits.
- All hunters are required to provide proof of completed Hunter Safety Course before receiving permits. Hunters Safety Course Certificates from other states will be honored.
- If you do not fulfill these requirements, you will not be permitted to hunt and any fees processed may not be refunded.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & ACCESS

- Equal Opportunity and Access requests must come through the Duette Preserve Office, 941-737-2661. Requests must be made no later than 30 days prior to hunt for which access is being requested.

HUNTING LICENSE

A State of Florida hunting license may be purchased from the County Tax Collector's Office or from their sub-agents. Information on the categories and costs of hunting licenses is available in the Florida Hunting Handbook.

QUOTA HUNT PERMIT

- There will be **100** quota hunt permits issued for each of the scheduled hunts.
- Applications will be available on-line and at the Duette Preserve Office. Phone number and website on back page.

APPLICATION FEE/ANNUAL PASS

Fee is paid once annually and is valid until the following year's hunt registration.

Residents of Manatee County	\$25.00 + tax
Non-residents of Manatee County.....	\$35.00 + tax

PERMIT FEES

Permit fees are paid per hunt.

A-G Hunts

Residents of Manatee County	\$60.00 + tax
Non-residents of Manatee County	\$95.00 + tax

H-K Hunts - Small Game

Residents of Manatee County	\$25.00 + tax
Non-residents of Manatee County	\$40.00 + tax

United Way Fundraiser Hog Hunts

Residents and Non-Residents.....	\$10.00
Exact Cash or Check.....	To be paid the morning of the hunt

BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: Eligible species for harvest listed below

Deer.....	One per quota hunt permit
Feral Hog.....	No Limit
Gray Squirrel, Quail, Rabbit, Raccoon, Armadillo.....	See State Handbook
Snipe	See State Hunting Handbook 2025-2026
Coyote (Small Game Hunts Only).....	See State Hunting Handbook 2025-2026