

Hunting in Zapata County

Zapata County is a world class hunting destination and is home to one of the best wildlife resources in Texas as touted in numerous articles in national magazines such as Field and Stream and Outdoor life. In plentiful supply are trophy deer, quail, morning dove, white wing dove, turkey and javelins and feral hogs.

Some of the most sought after migratory game birds make Zapata County a destination not to miss where the cinnamon teal, canvas back, and pin tail ducks can be hunted. Seasons are from mid-November to late January in most of the state. There is a special early teal season in early to mid September.

Doves are typically hunted in September and October. A special white-winged dove season occurs in early September. A late dove season occurs in late December and early January. Quail are hunted from late October through February. Set your sights on the biggest and best bob white and blue quail hunting around the state.

White tail deer are plentiful in Zapata County and fair day hunting can land you an 8 -12 point buck with spreads ranging from 17 -24 inches. South Texas has the latest rutting dates in the state. Breeding dates normally ranges from early November to the first of February. An advantage to hunting in South Texas is our mild winter weather; expect cool mornings but highs average in the upper 60.s during December and January.

While Zapata County is limited to public hunting lands, many private landowners offer hunting leases and guided hunting packages. In the area, seasonal hunting leases may be obtained from the landowners. In addition, several ranches permit hunting for a nominal daily fee.

Zapata County has several full services hunting ranches and hunting guides. For additional information please contact the Zapata county Chamber of Commerce at 1-956-765-4871 or 800-292-LAKE (5253)

For more information on hunting seasons contact Texas Parks and Wildlife Department www.tpwd.stat.tx.us or call toll free at 800.792.1112.



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The Zapata County area abounds with hunting opportunities year-round. During the winter months, deer season attracts hunters from all over the country. Some local ranches stock exotic game animals and many are managed to ensure a steady supply of trophy quality deer. Most deer hunting is done from elevated blinds overlooking stationary feeders however some ranches, specializing in bow hunting, utilize ground blinds or prepare temporary blinds behind the thick cover which is common in many locations. Ranches that cater to archery have a longer hunting season, generally beginning two weeks earlier. The vegetation in Zapata is rich in the nutrition needed for deer to grow large antlers without supplemental feeding although many ranches do provide supplemental protean and minerals. Some locations even provide “watering holes”. Most hunting leases include on site lodging facilities.

Hunting opportunities in Zapata are not limited to deer and exotics only. Dove and quail are plentiful and many hunters enjoy the camaraderie of group hunts. Hunting of several migratory bird species and turkey is also permitted. Although the bird hunting season and deer season over-lap, there are many large ranches that can accommodate both types of hunting and even the smaller ones can provide these opportunities by properly managing the hunts.

Great hunting in Zapata is not limited to the deer and bird seasons. Javelina and feral hogs can be hunted all year and hogs can be hunted at night. This is especially welcome during the hot summer months. There is no limit on feral hogs but the javelina harvest is limited to two per license year. Many hunters believe that no trophy wall is complete without a fierce looking javelina or hog head.

A hunting license is required of any person, regardless of age, who hunts any animal, bird, frog or turtle in Texas. A hunting license is not required to hunt coyotes or feral hogs. Some restrictions apply so visit the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife website for more details. Every hunter must complete the Hunter Education Training Course to purchase a hunting license. Hunting licenses issued by the State of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department cost \$23.00 for residents, \$6.00 for youth and seniors, and \$300.00 for non-residents and can be readily purchased from most local gas stations, sporting goods stores or food stores. There’s a great time waiting to be had in Zapata so what are you waiting for?



ARCHERY ONLY HUNTING ~ LIGHTED PRACTICE RANGE ~ HUNTING LODGE ~ SEMI-GUIDED HUNTS

BIRDING ~ NATURE TOURS