

BOW HUNTING: Some smaller sites ideal for archers

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hunt,” Cook recommended. “Deer will find those acorns and get on them. There’s not much anyone can put in front of a deer that they will eat before an acorn! Bow hunters can hunt at that tree or travel routes between the tree and where the deer like to bed.”

Some U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lands along the Alabama and Tombigbee rivers also offer archery hunting as well as some national wildlife refuges. Several small Forever Wild properties not part of the WMA system can also provide good archery hunting for deer and limited gun hunting for deer and other game.

Red Hills

The Red Hills Complex, a Forever Wild property, spreads across 4,426 acres of northern Monroe County near Franklin. The property consists of hilly country with abundant hardwood trees in places.

“The Red Hills Complex is not a WMA, but we are in the process of making some additions to it,” explained Jeremy Doss with the Alabama State Land Division. The area offers plenty opportunities to hunt big game. Some big deer come off that property every year as well as feral hogs, especially in some of the lower elevation parts. The vegetation can be pretty thick.”

Sportsmen might also hunt two Forever Wild properties in Baldwin County. The Splinter Hill Bog Complex covers 1,358 acres just north of Interstate 65 near the town of



Photo by John N. Felsher

Joella Bates aims at a deer passing near her tree stand. Archers can often hunt in more cramped properties than would be feasible for a rifle hunter, and the archer can hunt deer for longer seasons.

Perdido. Most of it consists of upland sand hills, drainages and pitcher plant bogs. Land managers are replanting the area in longleaf pines. The Lillian Swamp Complex spreads

across 3,147 acres along the Perdido River near the town of Lillian.

“The Lillian Swamp Complex does have some deer on it, but not many feral hogs,” Doss detailed.

“It’s mostly pines, but some parts of it do reach the water. Also, there are some old ponds on that place. It also has some small game hunting opportunities, especially for rabbits. It even has some waterfowl hunting.”

Old Cahawba

Doss also recommended the Old Cahawba Prairie Tract in Dallas County. It covers 4,564 acres near Selma. The property includes two sections, one that only allows archery equipment for deer.

“The Old Cahawba Prairie Tract is a deer hunting gem in the Black Belt Region along the Alabama River,” he said. “I’ve seen some really nice deer come off that place. There’s also good turkey hunting there as well as feral pigs and squirrels along the banks of the Cahaba River. It’s pretty popular with rabbit hunters.”

Archery season in Zone B, which includes most of southern Alabama, opens Oct. 15. Until Oct. 24, archers can only arrow bucks. From Oct. 25 through Feb. 10, 2021, bow hunters can take either bucks or does. Season dates and regulations on public lands might differ so always check the regulations before hunting anywhere.

For more information on public hunting lands, see www.outdooralabama.com/hunting/where-hunt-alabama. For specific season dates, other regulations and to download free permits for Forever Wild properties, see www.alabamaforeverwild.com/hunting-regs-permit-maps.