39 Field Card: Turkey, Small Game and Predators

What's legal and where to aim for each animal in this part, plus the ground rules for a morning with a kid.

The animals in this part don't share a calendar. Most states hunt turkeys in spring, and many add a fall season. Squirrel and rabbit seasons often run for months, while some states keep coyotes open all year. Copy each animal's dates and gear rules from its own page in your regulations (Chapter 3).

01 / MY TURKEY HUNT

CHAPTER 34

Season: ☐ spring ☐ fall Dates: _____

Tag and birds allowed: _____

Legal bird: ☐ bearded only ☐ either sex

Daily cutoff for spring hunting, if my state sets one: _____

Shell I patterned (Ch. 10): _____

Longest shot: gun _____ yd bow _____ yd

- Gun: never the body. I hold where the bare red neck meets the feathers, once he breaks strut and stretches his neck up.
- My back to a trunk wider than my shoulders and taller than my head. I call him in and never walk toward a gobble.
- Blaze orange on whenever I'm on my feet, and a band of it on my tree once I sit. Nothing red, white or blue (Chapter 4).
- Hen decoy, carried in a bag, set 20–25 yd out where I can see about 100 yd.
- Someone walking in on me: I stay still and shout "Stop," with no waving and no calling.
- Legal bird, head up, nothing beyond him: then the trigger.

02 / SQUIRRELS AND RABBITS

CHAPTERS 35 AND 36

Game	Season	Daily limit
Squirrel	_____	_____
Rabbit or hare	_____	_____

Shot and choke (Ch. 10 table): squirrel _____ · rabbit _____

Rifle legal for small game: ☐ yes ☐ no · My .22 limit on a squirrel-head target: _____ yd

Orange rule for small game: _____

- Protected look-alikes here: _____ · Not sure which one it is: no shot.
- .22, sitters only: the head, with a trunk or hillside behind, never sky. Shotgun on a running rabbit: swing past the white tail to the head and shoulders.
- Gloves on to clean. Pinhead white spots on the liver: that rabbit goes in the trash. Every rabbit I keep is cooked to at least 165°F.

39 Field Card: Turkey, Small Game and Predators

CONTINUED

03 / COYOTES AND FOXES

CHAPTER 37

Coyote license, and orange during big-game seasons: _____ · Fox season: _____

- Spotlights and night or thermal optics, as my rules word them: _____
- A device my rules don't name: I call the agency before I use it.

I set up downwind of: _____

- Cover behind me, caller out front, rifle on sticks.

Stay seated after the last call: _____ min Rifle limit: _____ yd

- I shoot only when it stands still, broadside or quartering away, and aim as on a deer (Chapter 24).
- Too big, collared or tame: maybe a wolf or a dog, so no shot.

04 / A KID ALONG

CHAPTER 38

- Foam plugs rolled thin and slid well in, muffs on top, for every shot fired near them.

Hours on stand: _____ · We leave while they'd still like to stay.

- ☐ Binoculars and a spotting job
- ☐ One more layer than mine
- ☐ Breakfast and quiet snacks
- ☐ Hand warmers

Youth days and age cutoff: _____

- Before they shoot: the paperwork my state asks for (Chapter 2) and range sessions with the gun they'll hunt with.
- One gun between us. I sit where I can see its muzzle and reach the gun; if it drifts toward anyone, I take control first.
- If they're the shooter, they decide when, and a pass is a good call.
- Nobody walks to an animal until I say it's safe.

05 / TODAY'S PLAN

CHAPTERS 34–38

Species and spot: _____

Legal shooting hours today: _____ to _____

Seated by: _____ Home by: _____

- Turkeys: seated before legal shooting hours begin. Squirrels: the first and last two or three hours of daylight. Coyotes: early or late.