



>> Everyone can give archery a try at fun shoots and at most of our camps. | PHOTO BY HOLLY A. HEYSER

CAMPS & CLINICS

PEOPLE WANT TO HUNT – HELP THEM!

by **BY HOLLY A. HEYSER**, EDITOR

For the first time in years, the number of hunters nationwide is growing. And while California hasn't yet shifted from decline to growth, there's no denying a strong resurgence in interest here – especially among people who want to eat local, free-range, organic meat.

But learning how to shoot and hunt can be a daunting task, especially for kids who don't have hunters in their families, or adults who didn't grow up around hunting.

That's where California Waterfowl comes in. We invest heavily in programs that help train new hunters, and keep existing hunters in the field. Summer is the season when these events reach their peak, though they continue through the end of the year.

While CWA's camps and clinics vary in length, activities and the age and gender of participants, some common themes prevail:

SAFETY: Most of our events include shooting of some kind – archery, shotgun, rifle, pellet gun – and the safety of participants is paramount. Firearm use and archery are closely monitored, and we stress multiple layers of caution: safety on when not shooting, muzzle (or arrow) pointed in a safe direction, action open when not shooting, safe zone of fire in a live hunting situation. Our programs are run by safety experts.

EQUIPMENT: We know many people don't want – or can't afford – to spring for a firearm or waders before they've even had a chance to try hunting, so at many events, we make key equipment available to participants.

FAMILY: While we do have some women- and children-only events, we have others where parents can participate right alongside kids, and spouses can participate together. We know being outdoors with loved ones is a great way to spend quality time together, away from distractions.

NOVICES WELCOME: We warmly welcome participants with no hunting or shooting knowledge. If you walk through our doors with nothing more than a keen interest, you're in great shape.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES: Not every participant becomes an avid hunter after going through one of our camps or clinics, but all walk away with more knowledge about the outdoors and shooting sports, as well as a greater level of familiarity with firearms, because we replace fear with facts.

NETWORKING: Participants come away with new connections – fellow participants they can shoot and hunt with in the future, as well as mentors who can answer their questions down the road as they navigate when, where and how to go hunting. People who meet at our camps and clinics support each other and often stay in touch for years to come.

Come join us! 

>> HOW YOU CAN HELP

1) If you know someone who's interested in learning to shoot or hunt, share this article with him or her (of if the person is a child, with the parents). If you don't have a scanner or photocopier, email Editor Holly Heyser at hheyser@calwaterfowl.org – she'll send you a PDF that you can share via email.

2) Volunteer at one of our camps or clinics. Having volunteers who are as passionate about hunting and waterfowl as we are makes all of our programs better. To volunteer, contact Heritage Program Supervisor George Oberstadt at goberstadt@calwaterfowl.org.

3) CWA's new summer camps program at Grizzly Ranch Education Center requires considerable investment for these new hunters. We need equipment, materials, ammunition, targets, food and hunting supplies for them. Help CWA's Hunting Heritage programs by making a donation at www.calwaterfowl.org/donate-to-grizzly-ranch.



EVENTS IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

We have several types of events for novices and more experienced hunters and shooters alike:

CAMPS: Our camps run for two, three and five days and include safety instruction, food, ammo, guns and overnight accommodations. Many are held at our Grizzly Ranch Conservation and Education Center in the Suisun Marsh, just 15 minutes from Fairfield. Regional camps are hosted from Riverside to Sonoma to Butte counties. All camps include shooting, and most include hunter education, a prerequisite to getting a hunting license. Fall events culminate in actual hunts.

Our Level 1 five-day camp includes hunter education while our Level 2 five-day camp is for youth who've already completed hunter education and would like to continue developing shooting and hunting skills. All camps are held at California hunting clubs, providing a variety of facilities and habitats for hands-on learning that is fun and meaningful.

NEW THIS YEAR: 5-DAY CAMPS, FAMILY CAMP

FUN SHOOTS: We'll have fun shoots at Grizzly Ranch the second Saturday of the month through September. Novices can get a taste of archery and shooting under the guidance of experienced instructors, and experienced shooters can take part in our challenging sporting clays course and Top Shot competition. This is a great opportunity for experienced shooters and hunters to bring friends who'd like to try shooting in a closely supervised environment.

NEW THIS YEAR: TOP SHOT COMPETITION

WILDLANDS CAMP: This one is for youth who want to learn about the outdoors but aren't yet interested in hunting. It's filled with hands-on activities in the marsh, duck calling, archery and pellet gun shooting.

NEW THIS YEAR


JUST FOR ADULTS: New this year is an adult camp that includes hunter education certification, hunting skills training, fishing, game processing and cooking. It's 21 and over, so participants are welcome to bring a bottle of wine to share at the end of the day. We also continue the popular Women's Pheasant Hunt Weekend in September, where women complete hunter education, get shooting instruction, then go on their first hunt the next day.

NEW THIS YEAR: ADULT CAMP

ADVANCED HUNTER EDUCATION: On Aug. 16, CWA will partner with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Hunter Education program to host a waterfowl hunter clinic at Grizzly Ranch. This course has been extremely popular with new hunters who have some experience, but want to continue developing their waterfowl hunting skills with on-the-ground and in-the-field experiences with experienced waterfowlers.

MENTORED HUNTS: During the waterfowl hunting season, CWA will again be hosting waterfowl hunts at Grizzly Ranch. A limited number of spots each week will include an experienced waterfowl hunting volunteer to guide new hunters – children and adults – through the experience. These hunts will be available by early September through CWA's Hunt Program (www.calwaterfowl.org/hunt-program).

Take a look at the chart on the next page to see what events might suit your needs and your schedule.

Subscribe to CWA's Facebook page (facebook.com/californiawaterfowl) and check out our calendar (www.calwaterfowl.org/calendar) for more details and to register. 

CAMPS, CLINICS AND SHOOTS FOR KIDS AND ADULTS OF ALL SKILL LEVELS

Between now and the end of the year, California Waterfowl is offering 20 camps, clinics and shoots for children and adults who want to learn how to shoot and hunt, or for people who already hunt but want to improve their skills, or just have fun. For details about these events, or to register, go to www.calwaterfowl.org/calendar.

EVENT	DATE	DAYS	LOCATION	AGES	COST	OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS	LOANER EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE	ARCHERY	SHOOTING	DECAY CARVING	DUCK BANDING	OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	HUNTER ED CERTIFICATION	HUNTING SKILLS	HUNTING	FISHING	GAME PROCESSING	COOKING
Fun Shoot	June 14	1	Grizzly Ranch	All	\$15 for instruction; \$15-\$30 for 50-100 clay targets		X	X	X									
Wild Lands Camp	June 20-22	3	Denverton	10-14	\$75	X	X	X	X			X						
Youth Waterfowl Banding	June 25	1	Grizzly Island	8 and up with adult chaperone	Free for CWA members, \$15 for non-members ages 8-17, \$35 for non-members 18 and older		X				X							
Family Camp	June 27-29	2.5	Grizzly Ranch	10 & up	\$225	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		
Youth Waterfowl Banding	July 7	1	Grizzly Island	8 and up with adult chaperone	Free for CWA members, \$15 for non-members ages 8-17, \$35 for non-members 18 and older		X				X							
Fun Shoot	July 12	1	Grizzly Ranch	All	\$15 for instruction; \$15-\$30 for 50-100 clay targets		X											
Summer Camp, Level 1	July 13-17	5	Grizzly Ranch	10-15	\$450	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Summer Camp, Level 1	July 20-24	5	Grizzly Ranch	10-15	\$450	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Summer Camp, Level 2	July 27-31	5	Grizzly Ranch	11-17	\$450	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	
Youth Waterfowl Banding	Aug. 4	1	Grizzly Island	8 and up with adult chaperone	Free for CWA members, \$15 for non-members ages 8-17, \$35 for non-members 18 and older		X				X							
Fun Shoot	Aug. 9	1	Grizzly Ranch	All	\$15 for instruction; \$15-\$30 for 50-100 clay targets		X	X	X									
Ladies Fun Day	Aug. 10	1	Grizzly Ranch	10 & up	\$75		X	X	X	X							X	X
DFW Waterfowl Hunting Clinic	Aug. 16	1	Grizzly Ranch	All ages	\$45		X		X					X			X	
Adult Camp	Aug. 22-24	2.5	Grizzly Ranch	21 & up	\$250	X	X	X	X				X	X		X	X	X
Youth Camp	Sept. 6-7	2	Black Point	10-17	\$150	X	X	X	X				X	X				
Fun Shoot	Sept. 13	1	Grizzly Ranch	All	\$15 for instruction; \$15-\$30 for 50-100 clay targets		X											
Youth Hunter Camp	Sept. 20-21	2	Grizzly Ranch	10-17	\$150	X	X	X	X				X	X				
Women's Pheasant Hunt Weekend	Sept. 20-21	2	Birds Landing	18 & up	\$225		X		X				X	X	X			
Youth Hunter Camp	Nov. 14-16	2.5	Bird Haven	11-17	\$275	X	X	X	X				X	X	X			
Duck Camp	Dec. 5-7	2.5	Grizzly Ranch	10 & up	\$350	X	X							X	X		X	X