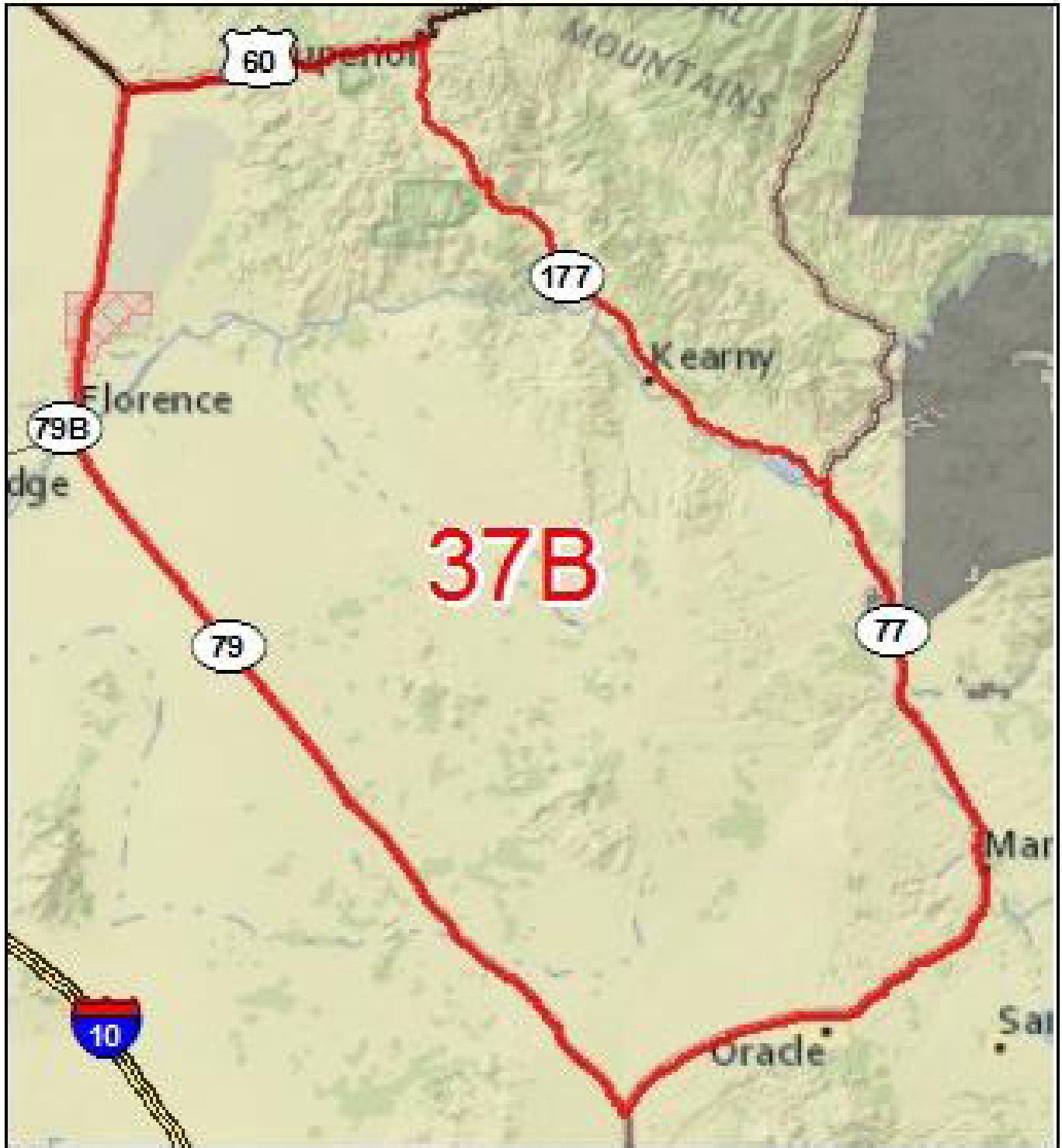


# Game Management Unit 37B



Military
  Nat Park
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([http://gis.azgfd.gov/gmuimg/azgfd\\_Unit37b.jpg](http://gis.azgfd.gov/gmuimg/azgfd_Unit37b.jpg))

Species within this unit:

Javelina, Mule Deer, Cottontail Rabbit, Dove, Quail

### Unit Boundaries

Beginning at the junction of AZ Hwy 79 and AZ Hwy 77; northwest on AZ Hwy 79 to U.S. Hwy 60; east on U.S. Hwy 60 to AZ Hwy 177; southeast on AZ Hwy 177 to AZ Hwy 77; southeast and southwest on AZ Hwy 77 to AZ Hwy 79.

### Florence Military Reservation

([https://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/h\\_f/huntingunits/FlorenceMilitaryReservationmap7-26-06.pdf](https://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/h_f/huntingunits/FlorenceMilitaryReservationmap7-26-06.pdf))

## Species Information

### Javelina

**Overview:** Javelina populations in 37B continue to do well. Herds can be found throughout the unit from the lower elevation flat terrain to the upper more mountainous country. Generally speaking, javelina can be found near washes and bottomlands. During cold weather, they can be located on sunny slopes feeding and warming up as they lack an undercoat that deer have. One exception to this rule is if it is windy. Javelina do not like the wind and avoid it at all costs, especially during cold weather. If it's windy and cold, you have to be glassing in the wind to look at the areas out of the wind. If there has been recent rainfall, especially in the flatter terrain, try walking in short loops to intersect fresh tracks then following these to where the herds are feeding or bedding. This can be very effective.

As always, be a good habitat steward and set a good example. Please drive motor vehicles including ATV's on existing roads only, camp at least ¼ mile away from waters, and observe safe firearm handling rules. The hotline phone number to report violations is on your license.

**Areas:** The 96 Hills have good numbers of javelina however this area receives a lot of hunting pressure. Try areas such as the washes that are better-watered and farther from roads to locate the larger herds. Access this area from Highway 79 at milepost 119. Try the north end of the 96 hills and beyond to the Box-O Hills. There are some small 4WD/ATV roads leading into the north end of the 96 Hills from the south that aren't marked well on maps and require some preseason scouting to become familiar with. From the north end of the 96 Hills, the access to the Box-O Hills is walk-in only so get out well before the season with your topo maps and a map showing land-status to figure out the access. BLM has these maps available for sale. The vehicular access into the Box-O's is blocked by posted private land on the north, west, and east so be careful not to trespass when accessing them on foot.

The river bottom and adjacent upland of the Gila and San Pedro are always good bets for javelina. Most land surrounding the Gila and San Pedro upstream of Kelvin is privately owned. Respect private property and be aware of land posted closed to hunting. The majority of private land in this area is open to hunting, but there are several large tracts that are posted as closed. A little preseason scouting will help a lot. Landowners will usually grant permission to hunters who ask, but landowners can also close access at any time so ask before you hunt and be respectful of their requests.

The Mineral Mountain area boasts some great herds and offers javelina hunting to those not afraid of rugged terrain. Although this area is heavily used by Off-Highway-Vehicle enthusiasts, there is still a lot of javelina once one gets off the beaten path. Watered canyon bottoms are

good places to start. Access this area from Cottonwood Canyon Road off Highway 79 at milepost 144 or from Highway 60 at milepost 216. Be sure and check the Game & Fish information kiosks at these entrances for recent information. Also, be aware that the Florence Military Reservation uses the bajada lands to the west for live fire training. Beware of the posted live fire dates and do not enter during those times. A red flag flying at these entrances means live fire is occurring.

The White Canyon area north of the Gila River southwest of Superior, AZ is rugged, wild country. If you are seeking a truly adventurous hunt with little competition with other hunters, a trip into this country by mule, or backpack is what to expect here. The White Canyon Wilderness area and Battleaxe Butte area offer more opportunities for solitude. Access this area off the Battleaxe road at about milepost 165 on Highway 177 south of Superior. This area is rugged, remote and isolated; go prepared. Preseason scouting is advised if you haven't been here before.

The bajada country south and east of Black Mountain is an old favorite for many. Be sure to respect private property and be aware of land posted closed to hunting. 19,000 acres of private land surround Black Mountain. Some of this land is posted closed to hunting; other parcels are open. Access this area from the south at milepost 96 off Highway 77. A particularly effective way to hunt javelina in this low, wash-braided country is to look for fresh tracks after a rain. Fresh tracks are relatively easy to distinguish, and if not spooked, javelina generally will not move far. So, if you find fresh tracks the day after a rain, follow them! This tactic allows hunters to pursue herds that can't be spotted with binoculars from a high point.

The Tortilla Mountains overlook the Gila River valley to the west of Winkelman, north to west of Kelvin/Riverside. This area has very light hunting pressure, being hunted mainly by local hunters. It is an excellent place to get away from the crowds and have a really good chance at getting your pig. There are multiple ways to access this area, but it is advised to take Haydon Ranch bypass road to the gasline road north from Freeman Road. The gasline will take you all the way to Kearny and provides access to a lot of huntable country without having to cross private land. Once you get down by the river you'll be on private land, but most of it is not posted. The Camino Rio runs along the west side of the river from Kearny to Winkelman, and on down the San Pedro to Mammoth.

Other places to try your luck are the Black Hills west of Mammoth and north of Oracle, and Falcon Valley north of Oracle Junction. Access the Black Hills and the whole east side of the unit via the Camino Rio which starts at Mammoth and continues north to Kearny. Multiple roads go into the Black Hills and Tortilla Mtns from the Camino Rio. Access Falcon Valley through the sign-in station at the ranch headquarters located off Highway 79 at milepost 93. Access is limited to foot travel on some State Land in the Falcon Valley area. Contact the Tucson Regional office for more information (520) 628-5376. Off-road travel is prohibited. As a general rule, a route must show a clear history of use to qualify as a legal road.

## **Mule Deer**

**Overview:** Mule deer numbers continue to slowly increase in 37B. If you drew a tag for 37B, expect an extremely tough hunt. There are deer out there, but densities are low. It is common to glass all day and only see a few deer.

There are a few whitetail deer in the unit. If you are looking for whitetails the only place where they can be found is in the higher elevations of the White Canyon area or in the Tortilla Mountains. Most of the White Canyon area is hike-in access and some of it is designated wilderness so be prepared to walk to hunt there.

As always, be a good habitat steward and set a good example. Please drive motor vehicles including ATV's on existing roads only, camp at least ¼ mile away from waters, and observe safe firearm handling rules. The hotline phone number to report violations is on your license.

**Areas:** Hunting pressure in 37B varies. The highest hunter densities occur in the Black Hills north of Oracle and west of Mammoth, near the Willow Springs Ranch which includes Star Flat, Bloodsucker and Camp Grant washes; and around the 96 Hills. Recently the 96 Hills have not produced many deer for several years as a result of drought.

To avoid the crowd and still have a chance of finding deer, try these areas: the Tortilla Mountains west of Kearny, the palo verde-saguaro desert west of Black Mountain, and the palo verde-saguaro desert areas northeast of Florence, and the flatter terrain throughout the unit which is very difficult to hunt effectively yet has good deer numbers.

For those looking for good hunting without the distraction of motorized hunters, try the Falcon Valley area north of Oracle Junction. Access is limited to foot travel on several parcels of State Land in this area. This may be a good place to make a stand on a water hole or well-traveled game trail. Be careful to ensure gates are closed, fences are not damaged or cut and you avoid crossing into the few posted areas in that part of the unit.

The hunting method most successfully used by hunters in 37B is glassing from high points to locate browsing or moving deer. This is most effective during morning and evening hours when deer are most active and the sun is low.

Preseason scouting is essential. About 19,000 acres of private land surround Black Mountain. Some of this land is posted closed to hunting; other parcels are open. Additionally, there are several parcels near the Haydon and Flying UW ranches along the Freeman road which are private and posted. Please respect private property and be aware of land posted closed to hunting. Landowners will usually grant permission for access to those who take the time to ask, but they can also deny it at any time.

Off-road travel is prohibited. As a general rule, a route must show a clear history of use to qualify as a road.

### **Cottontail Rabbit**

**Overview:** Cottontail hunting is usually quite good. Get out early and enjoy some of the best hunting of the year. Rabbit hunting before the bird season gives you an opportunity to scout for other species and hunt without any competition. Even on the hottest days you'll be glad you

went if you get out before sun-up and make the most of a cool morning. Look for dense ground cover, especially grass, for the better habitat for cottontails. In the lower desert, try along washes and other, better-watered habitat, with lots of places to hide from the sun.

**Areas:** Cottontails can be found unit-wide, but there are a few hot spots. Desert grassland habitat with lots of prickly pear, such as that found in the southern portion of the unit holds good cottontail populations. The Gila and San Pedro Rivers both flow through the unit and both have good stretches of riparian vegetation. These areas are a good bet as well as the many washes that drain into each waterway. While these habitat types hold the highest concentrations of cottontails in the unit, remember that you can find them anywhere.

Cottontails can be hunted year round and provide excellent sport during the off-season. Cottontails hide in thick brush during the hot hours of summer. Focus your activity during the cooler morning hours when they are the most active.

Off-road travel is prohibited. As a general rule, a route must show a clear history of use to qualify as a road.

## Dove

**Overview:** Some good shooting is usually available around the many stock tanks. Monsoon rains tend to scatter the birds just before the first season opens and these water holes are often not as productive then as they will be in the late season. The Gila River bottom near Florence, Stock Tanks in the interior of the unit, and grain fields along the San Pedro River are all places to try your luck for doves.

**Areas:** Once you've located a stock tank worthwhile to hunt, remember not to camp within a quarter mile of water.

Be mindful of other hunters. When it comes to tank hunting, it's "first come first serve." If other hunters are at the tank first, be courteous and find another tank or at least get far enough away so as not to interfere with them. Crowding a stock tank is not only rude, it is dangerous. Please pick up all your spent shotshells because they are litter.

## Quail

**Overview:** Quail hunting is typically quite good following average or above average precipitation years. Good coveys exist unit wide for anyone willing to get off of the road and work lower elevation wash bottoms. Many of these areas have lots of cactus which can be difficult for those of you using dogs.

**Areas:** One of the most popular areas to hunt is in the southern third of the unit, but beware not to trespass on posted private property. Some land is posted closed to hunting; other parcels are open. You may access this area from the south at milepost 96 off Highway 77 or through the sign-in gate at the Falcon Valley ranch off Highway 79 at milepost 93 north of Oracle Junction. Access is also available via Freeman Road, which crosses the unit from Highway 79 at milepost 112 to Dudleyville off Highway 77. Though most of the true semi-desert grassland has been converted to a brushier shrub community that Gambel's quail prefer, a limited population of scaled quail exists in the healthiest sections of the grasslands. These birds provide a welcome addition to the game bags of hunters seeking Gambel's quail.

There is also good access to quail hunting from Highway 79 on Freeman Rd., 96 Ranch Rd., and Florence-Kelvin Highway For those who don't mind hunting quail in steep terrain, try the Mineral Mountain area north of the Gila River.

Shotgun magazines do not require being plugged to hunt quail. Your shotgun is allowed to hold more than 3 shells for hunting quail and rabbits. Pick up you empty shot shells because they are litter.

Off-road travel is prohibited. As a general rule, a route must show a clear history of use to qualify as a road.

## Unit Summary

### Primary Game Species/ Hunting Month(s)

Quail	October-February
Mule Deer	October-January
Javelina	January/February

### Secondary Game Species/Hunting Month(s)

Cottontail Rabbit	Year-round
Dove	September, November-January

### Average # permits in past 5 years

Mule Deer	560
Javelina	2130

## Climate Information

Month	Avg. Temp	Avg. Rainfall	Avg. Snowfall
January	Max 58°/Min 31°	1.25"	0.1"
February	Max 62°/Min 33°	1.02"	0.9"
March	Max 67°/Min 37°	1.08"	0.9"
April	Max 75°/Min 44°	0.59"	0.5"

May	Max 84°/Min 51°	0.25"	0.0"
June	Max 93°/Min 61°	0.33"	0.0"
July	Max 95°/Min 67°	2.53"	0.0"
August	Max 92°/Min 64°	2.58"	0.0"
September	Max 89°/Min 59°	1.23"	0.0"
October	Max 80°/Min 49°	1.28"	0.0"
November	Max 68°/Min 39°	1.03"	0.2"
December	Max 59°/Min 32°	1.92"	0.6"

### Other Pertinent Climate Information

There are few paved roads in the interior of the unit. Summer monsoons produce numerous flash floods in the washes which cross the even the largest roads. Motorists should plan ahead and exercise extreme caution with regard to desert washes during the monsoon.

### Cities, Roads & Campgrounds

#### Major Cities and Towns in or Near Game Management Unit and Nearest Gas, Food, and Lodging

Oracle, Oracle Jct., Mammoth, Dudleyville, Winkelman, Hayden, Kearney, Florence, Florence Jct., Superior

#### Major Highways and Roads Leading To

From the East: Hwy 60

From the West: Hwy 60, Hunt Hwy

From the North: Hwys 60, 177, 79

From the South: Hwy 77

#### Developed Campgrounds

None.

#### Undeveloped Campgrounds

None.

#### Brief Description of Terrain, Elevation, and Vegetation

The vegetation of 37B ranges from creosote bush in the lowlands near Florence to oak woodland near Oracle, with the greater part of the unit lying within both Sonoran desertscrub, composed of the saguaro-paloverde community, and semidesert grassland, containing various grasses, yuccas, mesquite, and catclaw. The Mineral Mountains north of the Gila are a rugged desert range. South of the Gila several small ranges rise from flat to rolling country intersected

by sand washes. The intermittent San Pedro River flows along the eastern boundary to its confluence with the Gila at Winkelman. The Gila flows west toward Florence but is completely diverted for irrigation before reaching the town.

### **Government Agencies and Phone Numbers**

Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region V – (520) 628-5376

Arizona State Land Department – (520) 628-5480

Bureau of Land Management, Tucson Field Office – (520) 722-4289