

## Hunting at Stewart State Forest

Stewart State Forest encompasses about 6,700 acres west of Stewart Airport in the Towns of Montgomery, New Windsor, and Hamptonburg and the Village of Maybrook in Orange County. Since the property was first opened as a cooperative hunting area in 1974, it has been one of the most popular hunting destinations in the state. Each year, thousands of sportsmen and women flock to Stewart to take advantage of its diverse habitats and abundant game populations. White-tailed deer and ring-necked pheasants are the most commonly pursued game species at Stewart. However, the area also provides high-quality turkey, waterfowl, rabbit, squirrel, and furbearer hunting.

## Access to Stewart State Forest for the Fall Hunting Seasons

Stewart State Forest is open to the public during the small game and special big game (archery and muzzleloader) hunting seasons. However, access during the Regular Big Game Season is restricted to licensed hunters and trappers for the purpose of hunting and trapping.

Licensed hunters and trappers can gain vehicular access to the interior road network and internal parking areas through the Weed Road gate from October 1 through December 31 between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset (road and weather conditions permitting). Vehicle access to the interior of the area is also permitted for participants in the statewide youth pheasant hunting weekend (the weekend immediately proceeding October 1). All other users are prohibited from accessing the property by motor vehicle unless permitted by the Department and must park in an exterior parking area.

The Department and Orange County Federation of Sportsmen host an annual **Youth Hunting Day** on the **4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in October**. Hunting parties must include a junior hunter (ages 12-15) to access the area.

## Reservations for the Regular Big Game Hunting Season

*Reservations are required for the first two days (Saturday and Sunday) of the Regular Big Game season.* To make a reservation, call **Tuesday, 11 days before opening day**, beginning at 8:30 AM. Only one reservation will be accepted per phone call. The telephone number to make a reservation is 845-256-3095.

DEC staff will be at the hunter check station on Weed Road one hour before sunrise to check in hunters on mornings when reservations are required. Hunters must claim their reservations by 7:00 AM. Unclaimed reservations may be reassigned after that time. Vacating a parking area after 8:00 AM will result in forfeiture of a party's reservation for the remainder of the day.

## Special Hunting Regulations for Stewart State Forest:

*(Adapted from 6 NYCRR §190.34, Fall 2008)*

1. No person shall possess or discharge a rifle or handgun on the property, with the exception of .22 caliber rimfire handguns. *(Muzzleloading firearms are not defined as rifles and may be used during the Regular Big Game and Muzzleloading hunting seasons.)*
2. Camping is by permit only and limited to designated sites. The permit must be obtained prior to set-up. Camping is prohibited from the first day of the early bowhunting season in the Southern Zone to the last day of the late muzzleloading and bowhunting season in the Southern Zone.
3. No person shall kindle, build, maintain or use a fire except by permit from the Department.
4. **No person shall operate a motor vehicle on the property, except:**
  - (a) persons possessing a permit for such use from the Department, **or**
  - (b) licensed hunters and trappers entering the area between **one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset** for the purpose of hunting or trapping from October 1 to December 31, except when unsafe conditions prohibit such access; **or**
  - (c) adults accompanying youth pheasant hunters participating in the statewide youth pheasant hunt.
5. **From October 1 to December 31:**
  - (a) Any person hunting must park their motor vehicle in a designated parking area. *(The parking quota for all designated hunter parking areas is one (1) vehicle. Designated hunter parking areas are numbered on the Hunting Map (reverse side) and are marked in the field with orange signs and number discs.)*
  - (b) Hunters shall hunt only on the same side of the road as their vehicles are parked.
  - (c) Crossing of roads while hunting is prohibited.
  - (d) No person shall hunt or trespass in areas posted as restricted areas, except as permitted by the Department. *(These areas are reserved for hunters with disabilities who have been issued a "Non-Ambulatory Hunter Permit.")*

6. No person shall enter Stewart State Forest during the Regular Hunting Season for deer as provided by Environmental Conservation Law section 11-0907, except for licensed hunters and trappers for the purpose of hunting or trapping or by permit from the Department.
7. No person shall enter Stewart State Forest during the first two days of the Regular Hunting Season for deer without obtaining a reservation from the Department prior to entrance.

### **Nighttime Furbearer Hunting**

Nighttime furbearer hunting is allowed in season. Night hunters, however, are prohibited from accessing the interior of the area by motor vehicle and must park in one of the peripheral parking areas.

### **Trapping**

Trapping is allowed in season. Trappers may access the area by motor vehicle from October 1 to December 31 between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset. Trappers must not park in designated hunter parking areas.

### **Hunting Opportunities from January 1 to September 30**

Hunting for all species is allowed in season; however, vehicle access to the area is prohibited. Hunters must park in one of the peripheral parking areas and access the area on foot or bicycle. Special permits are available for people with disabilities to access the area with a motor vehicle.

### **For Further Assistance:**

NYSDEC Region 3  
21 South Putt Corners Rd.  
New Paltz, NY 12561-1620  
(845) 256-3000

Forest Rangers: (845) 256-3026  
Wildlife: 256-3098  
Lands and Forests: 256-3076  
Law Enforcement: 256-3013

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/>

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## Hunting



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

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