

# General License Information

## Purchasing a License

Hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses can be purchased at over 1,200 agent locations throughout NYS, over the phone via the DEC call center (1-866-933-2257/M-F, 8:30-4:30) and online through the DEC's Automated Licensing System, DECALS ([www.dec.ny.gov/permits/365.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/365.html)). To find an agent near you, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/95448.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/95448.html). Visa & Mastercard are accepted online and over the phone.

## Mandatory Hunter Education

A hunter education course is required for persons who cannot provide proof that they have ever possessed a hunting license. You must be at least 11 years of age to take this class. The general course is an in-person or on-line course offered by DEC and is a minimum of seven hours in length. Once the course is complete, the individual must have the DEC hunter education certificate added to their DEC licensing profile. This can be done anywhere licenses are sold or by calling 1-866-933-2257. DEC honors hunter education certificates and sporting licenses from all other states and countries.

## Mandatory Bowhunter Education

Hunters wishing to bowhunt for big game must present either:

1. Proof that he or she successfully completed an approved bowhunter education course. (Note: Approved courses are International Bowhunter Education Program courses or an equivalent course conducted in 1974 or later. If in doubt, call toll free — 1-888-HUNT-ED2) OR
2. Proof that he or she previously held a NYS bowhunting license or stamp issued in 1980 or later; if proof is from prior to 1980, he/she must take an additional 7-hour minimum bowhunter education course.

## Mandatory Crossbow Requirement

Hunters wishing to use a crossbow must complete qualifications in the safe use of hunting with a crossbow and responsible crossbow hunting practices. See page 23 for details.

## Residency

To qualify for an annual resident license, a person must live in New York State for more than 30 days immediately preceding the date of application. To qualify for a Lifetime License, a person must live in New York State for at least one year immediately preceding the date of purchase. Land ownership in New York does not make you a resident. Residency is that place where a person maintains a fixed, permanent

*Continued on page 12*

### Licenses, Privileges and Permits

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
<b>Hunting (Ages 16+)</b> <b>Privileges:</b> Hunt small game species with gun, bow or crossbow (see page 23). Hunt deer or bear with gun, muzzleloader, bow (with proof of bow education or a bow privilege), or crossbow (see page 23) during the regular season, or hunt with shotgun or muzzleloader during the January firearms season (permit required — see page 18) in Suffolk County (WMU 1C). You may hunt frogs with a valid hunting or fishing license. <b>Qualifications:</b> Hunter Education Certificate OR previous hunting license. Certificates to possess firearms do not qualify. <b>Note:</b> Those less than 18 years of age who are hunting big game for the first time as a holder of a hunting license must be accompanied for the entire season by a parent or legal guardian, or a person 18 years of age or older designated in writing (see permission form on page 37) with at least one year's experience hunting bear or deer. Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$22
	70+ (NYS Resident)	\$5
	Military Disabled <sup>1</sup>	\$5
	Patriot <sup>2</sup>	FREE
	Native American <sup>3</sup>	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$100
<b>Junior Hunting (Ages 12–15)</b>	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$5
<b>Privileges:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ages 12–13:</b> Hunt small game species with gun or bow during appropriate seasons when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian, or person 21 years of age or older with written permission from parent or guardian (see permission form on page 37).</li> <li>• <b>Ages 14–15:</b> Hunt small game with gun, bow or crossbow (see page 23) when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian or person 18 years of age or older with written permission from parent/guardian. Hunt deer or bear with a gun, bow (with proof of bow education or a bow privilege) or crossbow (see page 23) during the regular season, or hunt with shotgun or muzzleloader during the January firearms season (permit required — see page 18) in Suffolk County, when accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or "youth mentor" 21 years of age or older designated in writing (see permission form on page 37).</li> </ul>		
* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.		
<b>Qualifications:</b> Hunter Education Certificate OR previous hunting license (certificates to possess firearms do not qualify). Must be accompanied by parent/legal guardian to purchase. First-time applicants must show proof of age (birth certificate or passport). Junior hunters do not need a Federal Duck Stamp but are required to register in NYS's Harvest Information Program ( <a href="https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6405.html">https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6405.html</a> ) to hunt migratory game birds.		
<b>Bowhunting Privilege (Ages 16+)</b> <b>Privileges:</b> Hunt deer and bear with a bow during bowhunting seasons. <b>Qualifications:</b> Current year NYS hunting license, PLUS acceptable Bowhunter Education Certificate, OR NYS Bowhunting Stamp issued in 1980 or later, OR NYS Junior Bowhunting License issued 1980 or later. <b>Note:</b> To hunt deer or bear with a bow during the regular season, hunter must possess both a valid hunting license and either a current bowhunting privilege or a valid Bowhunter Education Certificate. This includes Westchester and Suffolk counties.	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$15
	70+ (NYS Resident)	FREE
	Military Disabled <sup>1</sup>	FREE
	Patriot <sup>2</sup>	\$15
	Native American <sup>3</sup>	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$30
<b>Junior Bowhunting (Ages 12–15)</b>	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$4
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$4
<b>Privileges:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ages 12–13:</b> Hunt deer and bear with a bow during the bowhunting season or the regular season or bear during the early bear season when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian, or a "youth mentor" 21 years or older and designated in writing (see permission form on page 37). Youth hunter will receive a deer of either sex carcass tag for use in the regular season, instead of a regular season buck tag.</li> <li>• <b>Ages 14–15:</b> Hunt deer and bear with a bow during the bowhunting season and the regular season when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian or "youth mentor" 18 years of age or older designated in writing (see permission form on page 37).</li> </ul>		
* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.		
<b>Qualifications:</b> Current year NYS hunting license, PLUS acceptable Bowhunter Education OR previous Junior Bowhunting License. Must be accompanied by parent/legal guardian to purchase.		
<b>Muzzleloader Privilege (Ages 14+)</b> <b>Privileges:</b> Hunt deer and bear with a muzzleloading firearm during muzzleloading season, and the January special firearms season in Suffolk County (WMU 1C). Hunt deer and bear with a crossbow (see page 23). <b>Qualifications:</b> Current year NYS hunting license.	14–69 (NYS Resident)	\$15
	70+ (NYS Resident)	FREE
	Military Disabled <sup>1</sup>	FREE
	Patriot <sup>2</sup>	\$15
	Native American <sup>3</sup>	FREE
	14+ (Non-Resident)	\$30

## Licenses, Privileges and Permits

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
<b>Deer Management Permit Application (Ages 12+)</b> <b>Privileges:</b> Application for up to two antlerless deer tags issued through a random computer selection process. Tags are valid for hunting antlerless deer only (both antlers less than 3" long) in a specified Wildlife Management Unit. See DMP information on pages 28–29. Application deadline is October 1 annually. <b>Qualifications:</b> Must hold a current year NYS hunting license to apply and pay a non-refundable \$10 application fee. <b>Fee is waived for hunters 12–15 years of age and holders of Lifetime (Sportsman) Licenses purchased prior to October 1, 2009.</b>	12–15 (NYS Resident)	FREE
	16+ (NYS Resident)	\$10
	Military Disabled <sup>1</sup>	\$10
	Patriot <sup>2</sup>	\$10
	Native American <sup>3</sup>	\$10
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$10
<b>Turkey Permit (Ages 12+)</b> <b>Privileges:</b> Hunt turkey during fall and spring turkey seasons (see page 45). To hunt turkey, all hunters must possess a turkey permit. There are no exceptions. <b>Qualifications:</b> Current year NYS hunting license. Turkey tags are included with a Lifetime License (formerly Lifetime Sportsman).	12+ (NYS Resident)	\$10
	Military Disabled <sup>1</sup>	\$10
	Patriot <sup>2</sup>	\$10
	Native American <sup>3</sup>	\$10
	12+ (Non-Resident)	\$20
<b>Trapping</b> <b>Privileges:</b> Set traps for species during their appropriate seasons (see page 55 for detailed information). <b>Qualifications:</b> Trapper Education Certificate or previous trapping license. See page 37 for additional information on the mentoring program for trappers under 12 years of age.	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$20
	70+ (NYS Resident)	\$5
	Military Disabled <sup>1</sup>	\$5
	Patriot <sup>2</sup>	FREE
	Native American <sup>3</sup>	FREE
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$5
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$275

## Lifetime Sporting Licenses

The following Lifetime Licenses are available to New York State residents only and may be purchased at all license-issuing outlets throughout New York State. Applicants must prove NYS residency for one year prior to application (proofs are the same as annual licenses with the exception of the one-year requirement). For additional information and clarification on Lifetime License sales, contact our License Sales Unit, NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4790, call 518-402-8843, or visit our website [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov). Lifetime License Holders should expect to receive their annual carcass tags in the mail by no later than Sept. 1 annually. License Issuing Agents will replace licenses and tags free of charge between Sept. 1 and Nov. 1. After Nov. 1, there will be a charge up to \$15. If you have a lifetime license card, you will only have to replace carcass tags at a fee of \$10.

### Lifetime License (Sportsman) (combined hunting and fishing licenses, includes turkey permits):

For a person age 0–4	\$380
For a person age 5–11	\$535
For a person age 12–69	\$765
For a person age 70 or older	\$65

### Other Lifetime Licenses/Privileges

Hunting License	\$535
Fishing License (age 0–69)	\$460
Fishing License (age 70 and older)	\$65
Trapping License	\$395
Bowhunting	\$235
Muzzleloading	\$235

<sup>1</sup>**Military Disabled:** Permanent status — must be a NYS resident and provide a letter from the Department of Veterans' Affairs stating the disability is "permanent" and rated at a 40% or greater service-connected disability. Once permanent eligibility is determined, it will stay in your customer profile. Annual Status — must be a NYS resident and provide a letter ANNUALLY from the Department of Veterans' Affairs stating the disability is service connected and rated at 40% or more. The letter must be dated in the current year. **Note:** The first purchase of either a hunting, fishing or trapping license within a calendar year will cost \$5. Subsequent purchases of these license types within the same calendar year will be free for qualifying customers.

<sup>2</sup>**Patriot:** Free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses are available to NYS residents who have the appropriate hunting or trapping education and are active members of the NYS National Guard, US Reserve Forces or certain members of the US Armed Forces. For more detailed information, visit our website or call (518) 402-8843.

<sup>3</sup>**Native American:** Free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses are available to members of the Shinnecock and Poospatuck tribes and members of the Six Nations residing on reservations wholly or partially in New York State. Licenses must be obtained from participating tribal councils or DEC headquarters in Albany (518) 402-8843.

## Deer Hunting Privileges and Tags

### Resident and non-resident hunter licenses

- **Hunting or Junior Hunting (ages 14-15 only):** You will receive a Regular Season Deer Tag and a Regular Season Bear Tag.
- **Muzzleloading privilege:** You will receive a Bow/Mz Season Either Sex Tag.
- **Junior bowhunting or bowhunting privilege:** You will receive a Bow/Mz Season Either Sex Tag. Junior bowhunters may also use this tag during the regular season, with bowhunting equipment.

Residents and non-residents must purchase a hunting license to be eligible for bowhunting and muzzleloading privileges. **If you purchase both bowhunting and muzzleloading privileges, you will receive one Bow/Mz Either Sex Deer Tag and one Bow/Mz Antlerless Deer Tag.** Both tags may be used in either season, with the appropriate implement.

## Lifetime Licenses and Tags for Young Hunters

Young hunters who hold a lifetime hunting privilege and wish to receive their tags must first take the appropriate hunter safety training course and have it entered in their DECALS profile. To have the course added, please call the DEC call center at 1-866-933-2257 (M-F, 8:30-4:30). Young hunters should take the appropriate training course well in advance of the season to allow adequate time for their tags to be mailed. Tags cannot be obtained from a license-issuing agent.

When purchasing a lifetime license for a child, the purchaser must bring proof of the child's age (e.g., birth certificate or passport) and a copy of the parent's proof of residency.

## Remember to Report Your Game Harvest

Visit [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html) for details. It's the law!

See page 13.

# General License Information

Residency continued from page 10

and principal home (regardless of where temporarily located), such as where a person is registered to vote. If under 18, the residence of parents or legal guardian shall be deemed such person's residence. For a complete list of valid residency proof documents please see [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/95452.html#Res](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/95452.html#Res).

Active members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in New York and full-time college students in residence in the state during the school year (proof required) qualify for annual resident licenses.

## Minimum Hunting Age

Minors under the age of 12 may not obtain a hunting license or hunt wildlife.

## License Year

Licenses and permits are valid from September 1 through August 31.

## License Responsibilities

- A license or tag is not transferable and may be used only by the person to whom it was issued (except for Deer Management Permits—see pages 28–29).
- It is illegal to possess another person's license while hunting.
- A license to hunt, trap or fish does not give the holder any right to go on private property without permission of the landowner.
- You can legally purchase and possess only one hunting license per year.
- Your license must be carried on your person when hunting or trapping.
- It is illegal to refuse to show your license on demand to a law enforcement officer or the owner, lessee or person in control of the lands (or their designees) while on their property.
- Make sure that your license has all the correct information. Carefully check it immediately after receipt. If you discover an error, have it corrected as soon as possible.



Lauren Nowak in Monroe County with her first deer.

Stamps / Donations		
Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
<b>Habitat &amp; Access Stamp</b> Donations are used to create or improve fish and wildlife habitat and improve access to those resources for recreational or educational activities.	Any	\$5
<b>Venison Donation</b> Help feed the hungry by supporting NY's venison donation program.	Any	\$1 or more
<b>Federal Duck Stamp</b> Available at most post offices and some sporting goods stores.	16+	\$25

**Privileges:** Hunt migratory waterfowl. It is not needed for gallinules, coot, crows, rails, woodcock or snipe. All migratory game bird hunters, including junior hunters, must register with the Harvest Information Program by calling toll free 1-888-427-5447 or registering online at: [www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6405.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6405.html)

**Qualifications:** Validated by holder's signature on the face of the stamp. Hunter must also possess a current year NYS hunting license.

- Do NOT heat laminate your license. High temperatures will destroy the license and tags and turn them black. If destroyed, there is a fee for replacement.
- Sign the back of your license/privilege panel.

## Back Tags

Must be visibly displayed on the middle of your back while hunting, except in the Northern Zone and Catskill Park.

## Hunting License Exceptions

All residents must have a valid hunting license in their possession except:

- Resident owners primarily engaged in farming, lessees and members of their immediate families do not need a hunting license when hunting small game on farmlands they are occupying and cultivating.
- Native Americans living on a reservation do not need a hunting license while hunting on reservation lands.

## Free Licenses/ Patriot Licenses

Free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses are available to members of the Shinnecock and Poospatuck tribes and members of the Six Nations residing on reservations in the state. They must be obtained from some tribal councils or DEC headquarters in Albany (518) 402-8843.

Free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses are also available to NYS residents who have the appropriate Hunter Education and are active service members of the NYS Guard, US Reserve Forces or certain members of the US Armed Forces. For more detailed information, visit our website or call (518) 402-8843.

## Lost Licenses

A lost current year license may be replaced at any license-issuing outlet at a cost of \$5 for a license panel. Big game carcass tag sets or turkey carcass tag sets may be replaced at a cost of \$10. There is no charge to replace a lost backtag.

## Special Licenses for Hunters with Disabilities

### Non-ambulatory hunter permit

This permit allows qualified hunters to shoot a firearm from a motorized vehicle (including an off-road vehicle) that has the motor turned off and that is completely off the highway right-of-way.

To qualify for a Non-Ambulatory Hunter Permit, a person must be physically unable to move about except with the use of a mechanized aid such as a wheelchair.

### Modified longbow authorization

This authorization allows qualified people to hunt big or small game with a legal bow that is equipped with a device to hold it in a drawn and cocked position. It does not allow for the use of a crossbow.

To qualify for a Modified Longbow Authorization, a person must be permanently physically unable to draw and hold a legal bow.

### Modified crossbow permit

This permit allows qualified people to hunt big or small game during bowhunting season with a crossbow that has been specifically modified with a device that only allows it to be discharged (fired) by means of a breath tube. This permit does not allow the use of an unmodified crossbow.

To qualify for a Modified Crossbow Permit, a person must be permanently physically unable to hold or draw a legal bow or to fire a legal bow that has been modified to hold and release the string.

If a person can pull the trigger on a gun, he or she will not qualify for a Modified Crossbow Permit.

For more information on these permits, write the NYS DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752, email [speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov](mailto:speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov) or call (518) 402-8985. The application process takes time; write or call well before you intend to hunt.

## How To Properly Fill Out Your Carcass Tag and Report Your Harvest

### Carcass Tag

REG SEASON DEER - RES

Doc# 1234-5678-9013      2020-21

Jane Doe      05/31/1982

ID # 314114431020      Issued 08/24/2020 10:52 AM

**Fill out both sides immediately upon harvest**

Kill Info

Date 11-28-20      Sex  M  F

County Green      Antler Pts L 3 R 3

Town Cairo       Reg Season

WMU 4H       Bowhunting

Muzzleloading



### It's as Easy as 1 - 2 - 3!!

- 1 Fill in the date, location, biological and season information on the front of your tag.
- 2 Mark or cut out month and day of kill AND sign the back of your tag.
- 3 Report your harvest! See details below.

Use pen or permanent marker.

Mark or Cut Out month & day of kill

**HuntFishNY**

Check out DEC's mobile app!  
**NY Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife**

Download FREE from the  
Apple App Store or Google Play!

Now includes an electronic license & game harvest reporting feature!

For more information on the app & game harvest reporting, visit:  
[www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html)  
Report by phone: 866-426-3778

EnCon Officer 24/7 Dispatch - call 844-332-3267

All Licensees: I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. False statements are punishable as a Class A misdemeanor pursuant to Section 210.45 of the Penal Law.

Signature Jane Doe

Parents of Junior Licensees must sign and provide supervision.  
Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

It is against the law to improperly or incompletely fill out your carcass tag.

Hole for attaching to your game

## Remember: Take It • Tag It • Report It

### Reporting Your Game Harvest

- Deer, Bear and Turkey harvests must be reported within 7 days of take.
- You can report your harvest by phone, online or through our new mobile app (see page 8 for details).
- Reporting online and through the new mobile app is simple, fast and convenient!

Remember to save the bear's skull so DEC can collect a tooth to age the bear.



### Information You Will Need When Reporting

CUSTOMER ID #

12 DIGIT DOC #

CORRECT TAG TYPE

REG SEASON DEER - RES

Doc# 1234-5678-9013      2020-21

Jane Doe      05/31/1982

ID # 314114431020      Issued 08/24/2020 10:52 AM

**Fill out both sides immediately upon harvest**

Kill Info

Date 11-28-20      Sex  M  F

County Green      Antler Pts L 3 R 3

Town Cairo       Reg Season

WMU 4H       Bowhunting

Muzzleloading

Jane Doe      Valid 09/01/2020

ID# 314114431020      08/31/2021

You must call to report your deer, turkey or bear within 7 days of take.  
To report Call Toll-free: 1-866-426-3778(GAMERPT)  
or visit [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)

	Date of Kill	Reported
DMP Deer Tag-4H	1234-5678-9012	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reg Season Deer	1234-5678-9013	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bear Tag	1234-5678-9014	<input type="checkbox"/>

- For Spring Turkey:
  - » Spur length (none, less than 1/2", 1/2" or longer)
  - » Beard length (less than 3", 3" or greater but less than 7 1/2", or 7 1/2" or longer.
  - » Estimated weight

- For Fall Turkey:
  - » Remember to save a leg. We will request it to determine age and sex.

# General Hunting Regulations

The following are general hunting regulations. Specific regulations for various game species are in the Small Game, Big Game and Trapping sections of this booklet.

## Definitions

**Air gun**—a firearm that uses spring or compressed air (not gunpowder) to propel a single projectile that is .17 caliber or larger and produces a muzzle velocity of at least 600 feet per second. You may use a smooth or rifled bore.

**Bow**—includes long (stick), compound, or recurve bow.

**Crossbow**—consists of a bow, a string, and either compound or recurve limbs with a minimum width of 17 inches (tip of limbs, uncocked), mounted on a stock. The stock shall have a trigger with a working safety that holds the string and limbs under tension until released. It shall have a minimum overall length from the butt of the stock to the front of the limbs of 24 inches and be able to launch a minimum 14-inch arrow/bolt, not including the legal arrowhead. It shall have a draw weight of 100 to 200 pounds. Optical sights are allowed on crossbows.

**Firearm**—all guns, including handguns, rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, BB and pellet guns.

**Handgun**—is any pistol or revolver intended to be aimed and fired with one hand and having a barrel length not exceeding 16 inches. Possession of handguns in New York State requires a NYS Pistol Permit. New York does not recognize permits issued by other states.

**To hunt**—means to pursue, shoot, kill or capture (other than trap) wildlife and includes all lesser acts that disturb or worry wildlife, whether or not they result in taking. Hunting also includes all acts to assist another person in taking wildlife.

**Motor vehicle**—means every vehicle or device operated by any power other than muscle power including but not limited to automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, tractors, trailers, motorboats, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles, whether operated on or off public highways.

**Muzzleloading firearm**—is a firearm loaded through the muzzle, shooting a single projectile and having a minimum bore of .44 inch. Scopes or fiber-optic sights may be used at any time. You must possess a New York State Pistol Permit to hunt with a muzzleloading pistol.

**Public highway**—means any road maintained by a state, county or town. A private road is one maintained by a person or corporation.

**Rifle**—is a firearm with a barrel length of 16 inches or more with rifling in the barrel that uses metallic cartridges.

**Shotgun**—is a firearm with a barrel length of 18 inches or more that uses shells that are non-metallic except for the base.

## Hunt Safe — Hunt Smart

- Assume every gun to be loaded.
- Control the muzzle, point in a safe direction.
- Keep finger off the trigger until firing.
- Be sure of your target and beyond.
- Wear hunter orange.

**To take**—means to pursue, shoot, hunt, kill, capture, trap, snare or net wildlife and game—and all lesser acts that disturb or worry wildlife—or to place or use any net or other device commonly used to take wildlife.

**To trap**—means to take, kill or capture wildlife with traps, deadfalls and other devices commonly used to take wildlife, including the shooting or killing of lawfully trapped animals. It also includes all related activities such as placing, setting, staking or checking traps or assisting another person with these activities.

## Manner of Taking

It is illegal to take or hunt wildlife:

- While in or on a motor vehicle (except by special permit—see page 2)
- With the aid of a vehicle's lights
- On or from any public road
- With any firearm equipped with a silencer
- With any firearm which continues to fire as long as the trigger is held back (an automatic firearm)
- With any semi-automatic firearm with a capacity to hold more than 6 rounds, except:
  1. Firearms using .22 or .17 caliber rimfire ammunition, or
  2. Firearms altered to reduce their capacity to no more than 6 shells at one time in the magazine and chamber combined, or
  3. Autoloading pistols with a barrel length of less than 8 inches
- With a spear
- With a bow equipped with any mechanical device which is attached to the bow (other than the bowstring) for drawing, holding or releasing the bowstring except for a person with a physical disability in possession of a Modified Longbow Authorization (compound bows are legal)
- With a spear gun or modified crossbow except for a person with a physical disability in possession of a Modified Crossbow Permit
- With an arrow with an explosive head or shaft.
- With any device designed or intended to deliver drugs to an animal
- With a crossbow if you are under 14 years old

**Baiting**—It is illegal to hunt with the aid of bait or over any baited area when hunting big game, upland game birds, turkey or waterfowl.

**Fish**—Crossbows may not be used to take carp or any other fish.

## Spotlighting

You may use lights to observe wildlife under the following conditions:

- You are not within 500 feet of a home or farm

building, unless you have permission from the owner or lessee (when looking for deer or bear)

- While in or on a motor vehicle and operating a light and no person has a firearm, bow, or crossbow, or if:

- » the implement is taken down, or
- » the implement is securely fastened in a case, or
- » the implement is locked in the trunk of the vehicle, or
- » the implement is a handgun

For information on hunting furbearers at night, see page 55.

## Possession of Firearms and Crossbows

During the open season for deer, it is illegal to:

- Possess shotgun shells loaded with slug or ball, unless holding a valid license (including carcass tags) or permit to take deer or bear, or
- Possess a rifle larger than a .22-caliber rimfire in areas where rifles are banned for taking deer (**Centerfire rifles less than .22-caliber and muzzleloading rifles are legal**)

In Westchester County and on Long Island, it is illegal to use any rifle for hunting or to carry one afield. In Suffolk, Nassau and Westchester counties, it is illegal to use a crossbow to hunt wildlife.

In the Northern Zone, it is illegal to carry a rifle larger than .22 rimfire or a shotgun loaded with slug, ball or buckshot afield if accompanied by a dog, except when coyote hunting.

Possession of handguns in New York requires a NYS Pistol Permit. New York does not recognize permits issued by other states.

## Transportation of Firearms

A person may not transport or possess a shotgun, rifle or crossbow in or on a **motor vehicle** unless the firearm is unloaded in both chamber and magazine or the crossbow is unloaded or taken down. While legally hunting migratory game birds, a loaded firearm may be possessed in a motorboat not under power OR in a motorboat under power only while retrieving dead/crippled birds.

A muzzleloader is considered unloaded when the cap is off the nipple, the primer is removed, the primer powder is removed from the flintlock pan, or the battery is removed from an electric-fired muzzleloader.

A crossbow is considered unloaded when the arrow/bolt is removed and the crossbow is uncocked.

## Discharge of Firearms, Crossbows and Bows

It is illegal to discharge a firearm, crossbow or bow:

- So that the load or arrow/bolt passes over any part of a public highway
- Within 500 feet for a firearm, 250 feet for a crossbow or 150 feet for a bow of any school, playground, or an occupied factory or church
- Within 500 feet for a firearm, 250 feet for a crossbow or 150 feet for a bow of a dwelling, farm building or structure in occupation or use unless you own it, lease it, are an immediate member of the family, an employee, or have the owner's consent

You may hunt waterfowl over water within 500 feet of a dwelling or public structure as long as neither are within 500 feet in the direction you are shooting.

## Protected and Unprotected Wildlife

In New York State, nearly all species of wildlife are protected. Most species, including endangered species, songbirds, hawks and owls are fully protected and may not be taken. The few unprotected species include porcupine, red squirrel, woodchuck, chipmunk, English sparrow, starling, rock pigeon and monk parakeet.

## Hunter Education

### Hunter Education Requirements

All first-time hunters, bowhunters, and trappers must pass one or more courses before they can purchase a license. Traditionally, hunter and trapper education have been in-person courses taught by trained volunteer instructors certified by DEC. In April 2020, DEC began offering an on-line hunter education course in response to COVID-19. Be sure to check the DEC website about the availability of both in-person and on-line courses before registering.

### In-Person Hunter Education Course

In-person courses have a field day where new hunters can get hands-on experience. All courses are free of charge, but space may be limited. As hunting seasons approach, classes fill quickly. **SIGN UP EARLY!**

All in-person hunter and trapper education courses require the completion of homework prior to attending the course. Proof of completed homework must be brought to the course. Homework may take several hours to complete, so start it well in advance.

To obtain study materials to complete the homework requirement, download the free manual and worksheet from the DEC website. Visit [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html) for more information on materials, including a list of courses and course registration.

### On-line Hunter Education Course

All the requirements to earn a New York State hunter education certificate can be met by completing DEC's on-line course and passing the exam. Upon passing, you will receive your hunter education certificate so you can purchase a hunting license.

You must be a New York State resident. The cost of the course is \$19.95 and can be accessed at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/92267.html>.

Unprotected species may be taken at any time without limit. However, a hunting license is required to hunt unprotected wildlife with a bow, crossbow or firearm.

Game species may be taken only during their open seasons and as summarized in this guide. Persons taking wildlife on licensed shooting preserves must comply with regulations governing those shooting preserves.



# Big Game Hunting

Please read **General Hunting Regulations** first. See page 14.

## Maps Showing Season Dates

- **Legal Implements:** see page 24
- **Deer:** see page 25
- **Bear:** see page 43

## Hunting Hours

Big game hunting hours are sunrise to sunset (see page 81). Sunday hunting is allowed in all areas of New York. For hunting on Wildlife Management Areas or in state parks, confirm regulations for the area before hunting.

## Legally Antlered Deer

A legally antlered deer must have at least one antler that is three inches or longer. Antlerless deer are those without antlers (does and fawns) and deer with antlers less than 3" long. Special regulations apply in the Antler Restriction areas. See page 24 for details.

## Defining “Early” and “Late” Seasons for Deer and Bear

When you see the term “early” muzzleloader or bowhunting season, it means before the regular season for that particular zone. “Late” means after the regular season for that zone.

## Feeding & Baiting Prohibited

Intentional feeding or baiting of deer or bear is prohibited at all times of year. This includes use of mineral blocks or powders. Exempt activities include agricultural plantings, wildlife food plots, and cutting of trees or brush to provide winter forage.

## CWD Import Restrictions

Hunters are prohibited from returning to New York with whole carcasses or intact heads of deer, elk, moose, or caribou that they harvest anywhere outside of New York. Only the deboned meat, cleaned skull cap, antlers with no flesh adhering, raw or processed cape or hide, cleaned teeth or lower jaw, and finished taxidermy products of CWD-susceptible animals may be brought into New York. See page 22 (CWD page) for more information.

## Manner of Taking

Big game may be taken with centerfire rifles, shotguns, handguns, muzzleloading firearms, bows, and crossbows during appropriate

seasons and in areas designated (see maps, pages 24 and 25). You may use decoys, calls and attractant scents to hunt big game.

It is unlawful to:

- Take big game while the deer or bear is in water.
- Possess a firearm of any description when bowhunting or accompanying a person bowhunting during bowhunting seasons.
- Possess a firearm other than a muzzleloading firearm when hunting deer or bear or when accompanying a person hunting deer or bear during a muzzleloading season.
- Make, set or use salt licks or other attractants, whether block, liquid or powder that contains ANY amount of salt, upon lands inhabited by deer or bear at any time of year.

In addition to the general hunting regulations for manner of take listed on page 14, it is unlawful to hunt big game with:

- Dogs or aircraft of any kind, including drones.
- The aid of a pre-established bait pile.
- A firearm or bow aided by any artificial light or a laser that projects a beam toward the target (use of illuminated reticle scopes, red dot scopes, or illuminated sight pins is allowed, provided no light is projected toward the target).
- An autoloading firearm with a capacity of more than 6 shells (one which requires that the trigger be pulled separately for each shot), except an autoloading pistol with a barrel length of less than 8 inches.
- A firearm using rimfire ammunition.
- A shotgun of less than 20 gauge or any shotgun loaded with shells other than those carrying a single projectile (rifling in the barrel or choke is allowed).
- A bow with a draw weight less than 35 lbs.
- Arrows with barbed broadheads; arrowheads less than 7/8 inches at the widest point or with less than 2 sharp cutting edges.
- Double-barreled muzzleloaders or percussion cap revolvers during the special muzzleloading seasons.
- An air gun or air bow.

## Deer Management Focus Area

See [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/82382.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/82382.html) for information on the **Deer Management Focus Area** in Tompkins County. Expanded antlerless bag limits and a January antlerless season in this area provide additional opportunities for hunters and help to reduce deer-related conflicts.

## Long Island Opportunities

All hunting on state-managed land requires a DEC permit. The archery deer season runs from October through January. There is a January firearms season during which shotguns and muzzleloading firearms can be used. Firearms users must obtain a landowner's endorsement to hunt during this season, and may also need a town permit. For more information

on LI hunting opportunities visit our website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8373.html>.

## Prohibited Sale of Deer or Bear Meat

It is unlawful to sell deer or bear meat. Other than meat, the parts (e.g., hides, skulls, claws, antlers, and taxidermy mounts or rugs) from legally taken and reported deer and bear may be sold. Bear gallbladders and bile shall not be possessed or sold unless a valid bear tag (original or copy) is attached.

## Tagging, Reporting and Transporting

Deer and bear are in legal possession only when tagged with the appropriate carcass tag, valid for that season, implement, and sex of animal. See page 26 for clear tag descriptions.

## Tagging and Reporting

After killing a deer or bear:

1. Ensure that you select the proper tag for the harvested deer or bear.
2. **Immediately** fill in all information and sign the carcass tag with ink that won't erase.
3. **Immediately** cut or mark the month and date of kill on the tag reverse.
4. Write the date of kill on the report panel. This will help you when reporting a harvest.
5. **Attach the tag** to the carcass upon arrival at your camp, home or vehicle. You do not need to attach the tag while it is being dragged or physically carried from the place of kill to a camp or point where transportation is available.
6. **Report your harvest** online, by phone or mobile app within 7 days as required by law. See page 8 for details.

After you have used your last deer tag, you may help others hunt deer. You must have your hunting license with you and you may not shoot or attempt to shoot a deer.

## Transporting

Deer and bear may be transported either inside or outside the vehicle.

- A deer carcass with head and deer carcass tag attached may be transported with the taker in attendance.
- If someone other than the taker is transporting the deer or bear, the taker must attach an additional tag to the carcass and include the names and addresses of both the taker and the transporter. The tag may be handwritten in ink or typed on any paper.
- All portions of deer or bear meat being transported by the taker shall be individually tagged and the tags shall include the name, address, big game DOC #, the date that the

*Continued on page 20*

# Big Game Hunting

Continued from page 18

portions were cut, and the signature of the taker. Packaged or boxed portions of venison need only one tag and must be labeled "venison" on the outside of the box. If someone other than the taker is transporting the portions, an additional tag signed by the taker with the names and addresses of the consignee and taker are required for each portion.

- Non-resident hunters: If your home state prohibits the importation of whole deer carcasses from New York, you will need to follow the above guidelines for transportation of individual or packaged portions of deer meat while in New York State.
- A deer carcass minus the head may be transported as above, but evidence of the sex of the deer must be intact. The deer carcass tag must be affixed to the carcass, and a tag

supplied by the taker must also be attached showing the name and address of the taxidermist where the head was sent.

- Heads of male deer may be transported to a taxidermist only if a tag supplied by the taker is attached bearing the taker's signature, address, big game DOC #, number of points on each antler and the name and address of the taxidermist.
- The head of a doe with antlers that are 3 inches or more can be removed for mounting. Follow the same procedure that you would use for a buck you are having mounted (see above).

## Muzzleloader Hunting

Muzzleloading firearms may be used during the muzzleloader and regular seasons, and during the January Firearms season on Long Island.

- Hunters must possess a current muzzleloader privilege to participate during the muzzleloader seasons.
- The muzzleloader privilege is not needed for hunters to use a muzzleloading firearm during regular seasons.
- Muzzleloaders may not be used in WMUs 3S, 4J, 8C, and may only be used in 1C during the Special Firearms season in January.
- Bow/Muzz either-sex or antlerless-only tags may not be used during the regular seasons, except in WMUs 1C and 3S.
- Hunters participating in the muzzleloader season shall not have in their possession, or

Broadheads for Big Game		
Type	Legal	Illegal
Fixed Blade		
Mechanical Blade (shown in position of being withdrawn from an animal)	 Blades pivot forward (no longer barbed)	 Blades do not pivot (remain barbed)

The most up-to-date regulations online.



 eRegulations.com

# Big Game Hunting

be accompanied by a person who has in his or her possession, a bow or firearm other than a legal muzzleloading firearm or crossbow.

- Crossbows may be used to take deer during the regular season and bear during early bear and regular seasons by hunters with a valid hunting or junior hunting (ages 14-15 only) license.
- See page 23 for the required Crossbow Certificate of Qualification. The NYS Legislature does not allow all crossbows to be used to hunt big game in NY. See page 14 for the definition of a legal crossbow.

## Bowhunting

Bowhunting opportunities include both the bowhunting and regular seasons:

- Hunters must possess a current bowhunting or junior bowhunting privilege to participate during the bowhunting seasons.
- The bowhunting privilege is not required to hunt with a bow during regular seasons, but hunters must possess proof of eligibility (either a valid bowhunter education certificate or prior bowhunting license).
- Bow/Muzz either-sex or antlerless-only tags may not be used during the regular seasons except by junior bowhunters or in WMUs 1C and 3S.
- In WMUs 4J and 8C, only bows may be used to take deer during the regular and bowhunting seasons.
- Suffolk (WMU 1C) and Westchester (WMU 3S) counties have separate regular seasons restricted to bows for taking deer.

## Barbed Broadheads

Barbed broadheads are illegal for hunting big game. A barbed broadhead is one in which the angle formed between the trailing or rear edge of any blade and the shaft is less than 90 degrees. A notch at the base of the blade extending no more than two millimeters from the shaft shall not be considered a barb. Broadheads with mechanical blades are legal if the blades DO NOT form a barb or hook when the arrow is pulled from the flesh of a deer or bear. (See graphic on page 20.)

## Crossbow Use

Crossbow opportunities include portions of bow seasons in addition to muzzleloader and regular seasons:

- Crossbows may be used to take deer or bear during muzzleloader seasons and a portion of the early bow seasons (see maps on pages 25 and 43) by hunters with a valid hunting or junior hunting (ages 14-15 only) license and a current muzzleloader privilege.



Carl Kitching used a crossbow to harvest this buck in 2019 in Dutchess County.

## Crossbow Hunting Qualifications and Safety Information

A crossbow must have compound or recurve limbs with minimum width of 17 inches (outer tip of limbs excluding wheels and cams, uncocked); a minimum overall length from butt of stock to the front of the limbs of 24 inches; and be able to launch a minimum 14 inch arrow/bolt, not including the legal arrowhead. It must have a draw weight of 100 to 200 pounds.

Crossbows may be used by any person age 14 or older to hunt deer, bear, unprotected wildlife and **most** small game species except waterfowl and other migratory game birds. Crossbows may not be used to take carp or any other fish.

**Hunters who plan to hunt with a crossbow must have in their possession while afield either their completed Hunter Education Certificate of Qualification card dated on or after April 1, 2014 OR the completed Crossbow Certificate of Qualification located below.**

### Crossbow safety information

- Before shooting your crossbow, read and thoroughly understand your crossbow owner's manual.
- Make sure your fingers are well AWAY (below rail) from the path of the bow string and cables.
- Never dry-fire a crossbow (cock and fire without an arrow placed on the rail).
- Make sure the crossbow limbs are free of obstructions before shooting.
- Never carry a cocked crossbow with an arrow in it while walking.
- If hunting from a tree stand, always cock (but do not load) the crossbow on the ground before climbing into the stand.
- Once seated and secured in the tree stand, pull up your unloaded crossbow with a haul line.
- Do not place an arrow on the crossbow until you are safely secured in your stand.

- Never use a cocking device to uncock a crossbow.
- To uncock a crossbow, shoot an arrow tipped with a field point into the soft ground or a target.
- Always identify your target and the area beyond it before shooting.
- To prevent wounding game, practice often and do not take shots at game that are beyond your effective range, generally less than 30–40 yards, similar to a modern compound bow.
- To better understand how an arrow functions and the skill required for hunting with an arrow, DEC recommends all crossbow hunters take a bowhunter education course.

### NYSDEC Crossbow Hunting Qualifications:

[www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/98061.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/98061.html)

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation	
<b>Crossbow Certificate of Qualification</b>	
I certify that I have read and understand the safety recommendations, license requirements and legal specifications for crossbow use in New York.	
_____	
Print Name	_____
Signature	_____
DEC ID# (this is your back-tag number)	Date

*Fill in, cut out, and carry afield with your hunting license while hunting with a crossbow.*

# Big Game Boundary Descriptions/Legal Implements

Complete descriptions of all wildlife management units are available on DEC's website [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8302.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8302.html)

## Northern-Southern Zone Line

A line commencing at a point at the north shore of the Salmon River and its junction with Lake Ontario and extending easterly along the north shore of that river to the Village of Pulaski, thence southerly along Route 11 to its intersection with Route 49 in the Village of Central Square, thence easterly along Route 49 to its junction with Route 365 in the City of Rome, thence easterly along Route 365 to its junction with Route 28 in the Village of Trenton, thence easterly along Route 28 to its junction with Route 29 in the Village of Middleville, thence easterly along Route 29 to its junction with Route 4, thence northerly along Route 4 to its junction with Route 22, thence northerly and westerly along Route 22 to the eastern shore of South Bay on Lake Champlain in the Village of Whitehall, thence northerly along the eastern shore of South Bay to the New York-Vermont boundary.

## Closed Areas

The following closed areas are specific portions of the state where the taking of deer and bear is prohibited by the Environmental Conservation Law. This section does not include areas covered by town laws, local ordinances or posting by landowners.

### Albany County

Area around Alcove Reservoir: bounded by Albany County Rt. 111 from Rt. 143 to Albany-Greene County line to Albany County Rt. 411 to Rt. 143 to point of beginning. Closed except to landowners and lessees of lands in the area actually occupying and cultivating such lands.

### Erie County

Area around Buffalo: bounded by Tonawanda Creek from East Branch Niagara River to Rt. 78 to Greiner Rd. to Rt. 268 to Rt. 5 to Ransom Rd. to Rt. 33 to Rt. 78 to Rt. 20 to Rt. 20A to Lake Erie.

### Herkimer County

Area along Big Moose Lake: bounded by Judson Rd. from Herkimer-Hamilton County line to Higby Rd. to Big Moose Rd. to Martin Rd. and along it to its eastern end and then to the lake shore and back (starting westerly) along the shore to Herkimer-Hamilton County line and along it to Judson Rd.

### Herkimer and Hamilton Counties

Area bounded by Rt. 28 from Old Forge to Inlet and by South Shore Rd. from Inlet to Old Forge.

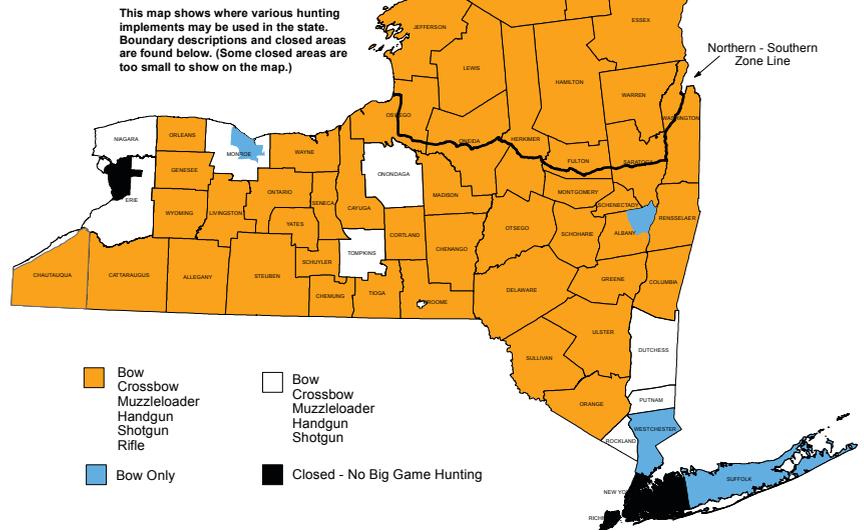
### Nassau County

All of Nassau County.

### New York City

All of the city.

## Legal Implements for the Regular Deer Season, Early and Regular Bear Season



At press time, legislation was pending to allow the use of rifles for big game hunting in Tompkins County. Be sure to check the DEC website for an updated legal implements map before going afield (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/35010.html>)

## Boning Out Deer

Some hunters who take a deer in remote areas may wish to bone out the deer and pack out the meat. This is lawful but you must retain the carcass tag with the boned out meat.

## Antler Restriction Program

A mandatory antler point restriction exists in WMUs 3A, 3C, 3H, 3J, 3K, 4G, 4O, 4P, 4R, 4S, and 4W in southeastern New York (see deer hunting season maps). This program will continue as DEC encourages hunters elsewhere to practice voluntary restraint. Over time, as more and more hunters in the broader region opt to pass on young bucks voluntarily, it may be appropriate to lift the restrictions.

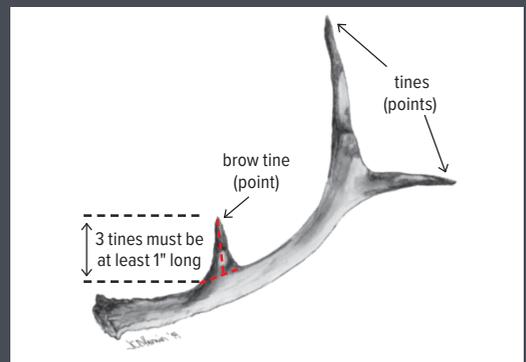
## Antler Identification

### Antler Point Restriction

- At least 1 antler with 3 or more points that are at least 1" long
- Applies to all public and private land and all seasons
- Hunters aged 12-16 are exempt and may take any buck with antlers 3" or longer

### Antlerless Deer

- Adult does, doe fawns, buck fawns (button bucks), adult bucks without antlers, or with antlers less than 3" long
- May be tagged with your DMP or Bow/Muzzleloading antlerless or either-sex tags.

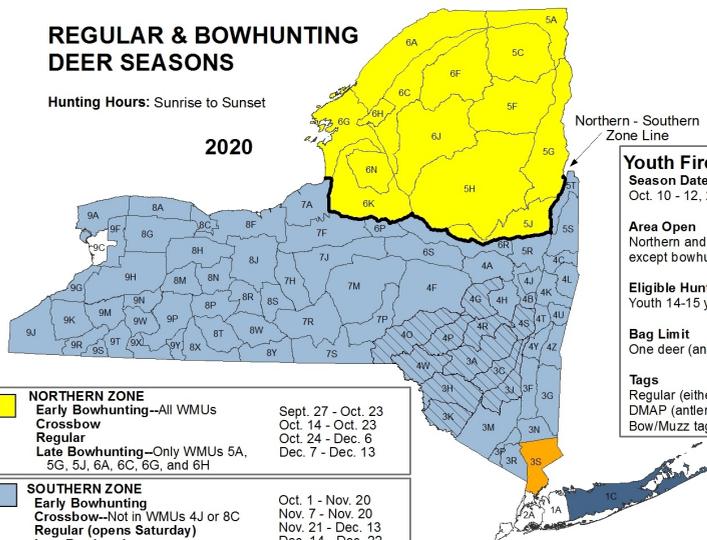


# Deer Hunting

## REGULAR & BOWHUNTING DEER SEASONS

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset

2020



### Youth Firearms Season

Season Dates  
Oct. 10 - 12, 2020

**Area Open**  
Northern and Southern Zone, except bowhunting only WMUs

**Eligible Hunters**  
Youth 14-15 years of age

**Bag Limit**  
One deer (antlered or antlerless)

**Tags**  
Regular (either-sex), DMP and DMAP (antlerless only);  
Bow/Muzz tags are not valid

NORTHERN ZONE	Early Bowhunting--All WMUs	Sept. 27 - Oct. 23
	Crossbow	Oct. 14 - Oct. 23
	Regular	Oct. 24 - Dec. 6
	Late Bowhunting--Only WMUs 5A, 5G, 5J, 6A, 6C, 6G, and 6H	Dec. 7 - Dec. 13

SOUTHERN ZONE	Early Bowhunting	Oct. 1 - Nov. 20
	Crossbow--Not in WMUs 4J or 8C	Nov. 7 - Nov. 20
	Regular (opens Saturday)	Nov. 21 - Dec. 13
	Late Bowhunting	Dec. 14 - Dec. 22

WESTCHESTER COUNTY (3S)	Regular--Bowhunting Only	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31
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SUFFOLK COUNTY (1C)	Regular--Bowhunting Only	Oct. 1, 2020 - Jan. 31, 2021
	Special Firearms--(Permit Req.)	Jan. 3 - Jan. 31, 2021

**Antler Point Restrictions**  
During all seasons, antlered bucks must have at least one antler with 3 or more points that are at least 1 inch long. Young hunters (ages 12-16) are exempt.

No Deer Hunting

### Crossbows

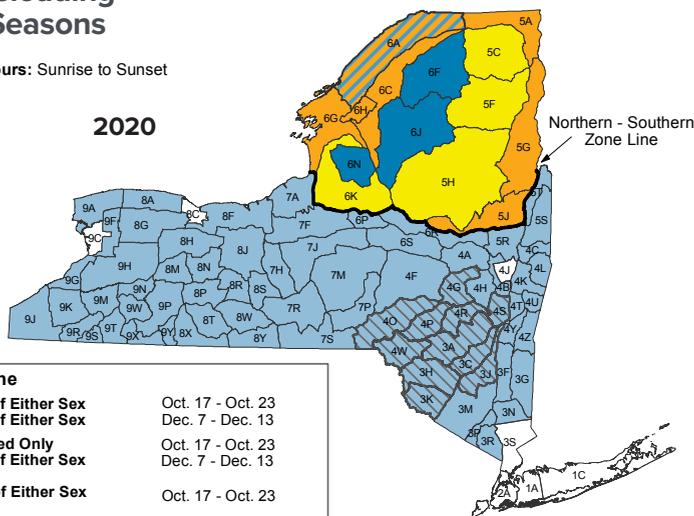
May be used to hunt deer during the Northern and Southern Zone Regular Seasons.

May not be used to hunt deer:  
- during the Youth Firearms Season; or  
- anytime in WMUs 1C (Suffolk County), 3S (Westchester County), 4J or 8C.

## Muzzleloading Deer Seasons

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset

2020



### Northern Zone

Antlered Only	Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 17 - Oct. 23
	Deer of Either Sex	Dec. 7 - Dec. 13
Deer of Either Sex	Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 17 - Oct. 23
	Antlered Deer Only	Oct. 17 - Oct. 23

### Southern Zone

Deer of Either Sex	Dec. 14 - Dec. 22
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### Antler Point Restrictions

During all seasons, antlered bucks must have at least one antler with 3 or more points that are at least 1 inch long. Young hunters (ages 12-16) are exempt.

No Muzzleloading Season

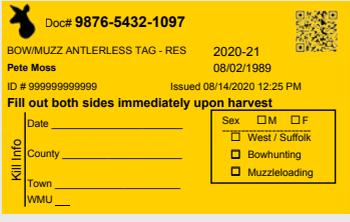
### Crossbows

May be used to hunt deer during the Northern and Southern Zone Muzzleloader Seasons.  
May not be used to hunt deer anytime in WMUs 1C (Suffolk County), 3S (Westchester County), 4J or 8C.

Hunters using a crossbow during the last 10 days of the early bow season in the Northern Zone are not subject to the antlered deer-only requirement of the early muzzleloader season in WMUs 6A, 6F, 6J, and 6N, despite the overlap in season dates.

## Deer Tag Descriptions

For all season dates, see page 25. See page 11 for privilege information.

Tag Name	Tag Can Be Used In	Tag Is Valid For
<p><b>Regular Season Deer Tag</b> Only you may hunt with this tag. No transferring tag to another hunter.</p>	<p><b>Regular Season</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Westchester County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular (bowhunting only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Suffolk County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular (bowhunting only)</li> <li>Special Firearms (special permit, see page 18)</li> </ul> <p><b>Late Season Bowhunting (privilege required)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Late Season Muzzleloading (privilege required)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone (check open areas and dates on map on page 25)</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Youth Deer Season</b></p>	<p><b>Antlered Deer Only</b> <b>Except:</b> May be used for Antlered or Antlerless Deer as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Westchester County (WMU 3S)</li> <li>In Suffolk County (WMU 1C)</li> <li>In areas restricted to bowhunting only (WMUs 4J and 8C)</li> <li>In late seasons (with bowhunting or muzzleloading privilege)</li> <li>By Junior Hunters during the Youth Deer Hunt</li> <li><b>IF</b> you have a non-ambulatory permit.</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Bow/Mz Season Either Sex Tag</b> Only you may hunt with this tag. No transferring tag to another hunter.</p>	<p><b>Bowhunting Season (privilege required)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Muzzleloading Season (privilege required)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone (check open areas and dates on map on page 25)</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Westchester County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular (bowhunting only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Suffolk County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular (bowhunting only)</li> <li>Special Firearms (special permit; see page 18)</li> </ul> <p><b>Not valid during the Northern or Southern Zone Regular Seasons or Youth Hunt.</b></p>	<p><b>Antlered or Antlerless Deer</b> <b>Bowhunting OR Muzzleloading seasons only</b> (including the regular season in Westchester County and any season in Suffolk County) Junior Bowhunters will receive this tag, which will be valid in the special bowhunting seasons and during the regular season, with bowhunting equipment only.</p> <p><b>Except:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be used for antlered deer only during muzzleloading seasons in certain Northern Zone WMUs (see map page 25).</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Bow/Mz Season Antlerless Tag</b> Only you may hunt with this tag. No transferring tag to another hunter.</p>	<p><b>Bowhunting Season (privilege required)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Muzzleloading Season (privilege required)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Zone (check open areas and dates on map, page 25)</li> <li>Southern Zone</li> </ul> <p><b>Westchester County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular (bowhunting only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Suffolk County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular (bowhunting only)</li> <li>Special Firearms (special permit; see page 18)</li> </ul> <p><b>Not valid during the Northern or Southern Zone Regular Seasons or Youth Hunt.</b></p>	<p><b>Antlerless Deer Only</b> <b>Bowhunting OR Muzzleloading seasons only</b> (including the regular season in Westchester County and any season in Suffolk County)</p> <p><b>Except:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not be used during muzzleloading seasons in certain Northern Zone WMUs that are Antlered Deer Only areas (see map page 25).</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Deer Management Permit Deer Tag</b></p>	<p><b>Any Open Deer Season</b></p>	<p><b>Antlerless Deer Only</b> Valid ONLY for the WMU specified and printed on the DMP Deer Tag (Deer Management Permit) See page 29.</p> <p><b>This is the only tag that can be transferred to another hunter (see page 29 for How to Transfer a DMP Deer Carcass Tag).</b></p> 

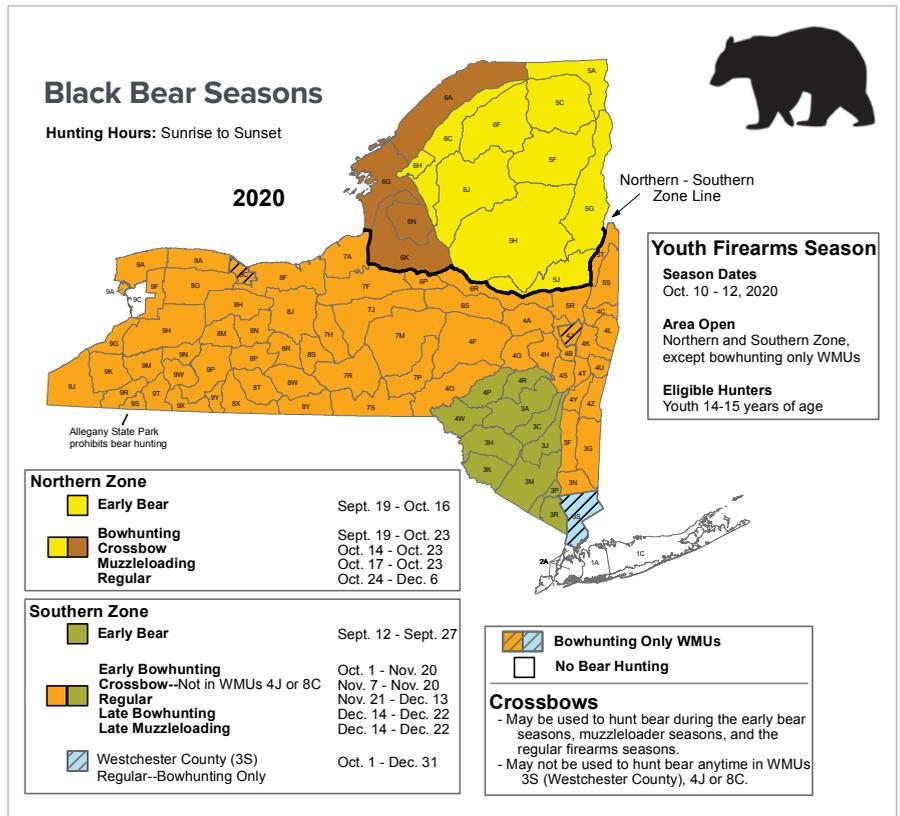
For information on which tags may be used when hunting with a crossbow, see page 21.

## Bear Hunting

- Resident and non-resident hunters require a bear carcass tag with their hunting license and may take one bear per year.
- In the Southern Zone, hunters may not shoot a cub or a bear that should be known to be a cub, shoot any bear from a group of bears, or shoot or take a bear from its den.
- Hunters may use and carry up to 1.5 fluid ounces of a liquid scent or lure, though such scent or lure may not be placed in a manner that it may be consumed as bait.
- Hunting bear with the aid of bait or dogs is prohibited.

## Bear age and weight data

Hunters who harvest bears in New York are asked to submit a premolar tooth or part of the lower jaw of the bear for DEC to determine the bear's age and to record the dressed weight of the bear (see [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/45598.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/45598.html) for more information). A collection packet including instructions and a postage-paid return envelope will be mailed to each hunter that reports taking a bear. There are many cooperating taxidermists in New York that can extract the requested premolar teeth, weigh bears, and submit the data to DEC on your behalf, so check with your taxidermist. Generally, taxidermists do not use teeth or the lower jaw when preparing mounts or rugs. All successful hunters are still required to report their bear harvest online, via the mobile app, or via the automated phone system.



\*See map on page 24 for information on legal implements during the early and regular bear seasons.

## Attention Bear Hunters and Taxidermists

Bear gallbladders and bile shall not be possessed or sold unless a valid bear tag (original or copy of bear carcass tag) is attached. A new law now also requires taxidermists to keep records of all bear gallbladders and bile received or sold.

## Know of Any Active Bear Dens?

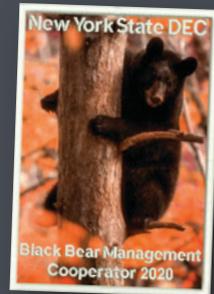
DEC wants to know about occupied dens. Please call the nearest DEC wildlife office. See page 6.

## New York State Bear Management Cooperator Program

The Bureau of Wildlife is requesting the assistance of successful black bear hunters in New York State.

Hunters who harvest a bear in New York are required to report their harvest through the DECALS telephone system at 1-866-426-3778 (1-866-GAMERPT), via the mobile app, or use the new online Harvest Reporting System at [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov). Successful bear hunters will be sent a tooth collection packet with premolar removal and submission instructions. Hunters may be contacted by a DEC wildlife biologist to examine your bear and extract a premolar tooth for aging.

Report your bear and return a bear tooth to receive a commemorative 2020 NYS Black Bear Cooperator Patch. Samples will be aged in the summer of 2021. Cooperating hunters will receive patches and letters indicating the age of their bear in early fall 2021.



## iSeeMammals

Help researchers study NY bears!

Collect data about presence and absence from your observations + hikes + trail cams

[iseemammals.org](http://iseemammals.org)



## "Living with New York Black Bears"

(Great Outdoors Multimedia 2007).

Take an inside look at the mysterious world of black bears and learn some secrets to sharing the landscape with bears. This video will explore the history of black bears, the challenges that face New York black bear biologists, and how landowners can responsibly and safely share their neighborhood with bears.

Available for viewing or loan from your local library or local DEC Regional Wildlife Office.



# Small Game Hunting

Small game includes upland and migratory game birds, small game mammals, certain furbearers, and reptiles and amphibians.

Please read general hunting regulations first on page 14.

## General Regulations

- You may not use a rifle or handgun to hunt pheasant or migratory game birds. See page 48 for more information on turkeys.
- See pages 51–52 for additional information on migratory game birds.
- Air guns (see page 14) may be used to hunt squirrels, rabbits, hares, ruffed grouse, furbearers that may be hunted (e.g., raccoons and coyotes) and unprotected species (see page 15). Air guns may not be used to hunt waterfowl, pheasant, wild turkey, or big game.
- Crossbows may not be used to take waterfowl or other migratory game birds. Crossbows may not be possessed afield in the Northern Zone when hunting small game (except coyotes) with the aid of a dog or when accompanied by a dog. Crossbows may be used to take any other small game or upland game birds during their respective open seasons except in Westchester and Suffolk counties.
- In Wildlife Management Unit 2A, hunting is permitted by falconry only.

## Reptiles and Amphibians

**Frogs**—“Frogs” are defined as eastern spadefoot toad, eastern American toad, Fowler’s toad, northern cricket frog, northern gray treefrog,

northern spring peeper, western chorus frog, bullfrog, green frog, mink frog, wood frog, northern leopard frog, southern leopard frog, and pickerel frog.

Reptile and Amphibian Hunting Seasons	
Frogs	
Open Season	June 15–Sept. 30
Open Area	All wildlife management units except that (1) leopard frogs shall not be taken in Wildlife Management Units 1A, 1C, or 2A; and (2) northern cricket frogs and eastern spadefoot toads shall not be taken in any area of the state.
Size Limit	None
Daily Bag	None
Season Bag	None
Hunting Hours	Any time of the day or night, except that no person shall use a gun to take frogs when hunting at night (sunset to sunrise).
Snapping Turtles	
Open Season	July 15–Sept. 30
Open Area	Statewide
Size Limit	The upper shell (carapace) must be 12 inches or longer, measured in a straight line.
Daily Bag	5
Season Bag	30
Hunting Hours	Any time of the day or night

A fishing or hunting license is required to take frogs with a spear, club, hook, or by hand. A hunting license is required to take frogs with a gun, bow or crossbow.

**Snakes, Lizards, and Salamanders**—You may not harvest, take, or possess any native snakes, lizards, or salamanders at any time.

**Turtles**—The only turtle species for which there is an open hunting season is the snapping turtle. You may not harvest, take, or possess any other turtle species at any time.

The final diamondback terrapin season was April 1, 2017 through April 30, 2018, with licenses expiring June 4, 2018. **You may no longer take or possess diamondback terrapins.**

**Snapping turtles**—A hunting license is required to take snapping turtles. The only legal implement for taking snapping turtles is a gun, bow or crossbow.

If you choose to eat snapping turtles, you should carefully trim all fat and discard fat, liver and eggs prior to cooking to reduce exposure to contaminants. For information on these health advisories, call 1-800-458-1158 or visit the website [http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health\\_advisories/](http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/)

## Falconry Seasons

To hunt small game species with trained raptors, you must possess a Falconry License and a hunting license. Licensed falconers may take

## Spruce Grouse vs. Ruffed Grouse

Male spruce grouse are very distinctive (mostly black with white markings and a red comb over each eye), but female spruce grouse are similar in color to ruffed grouse. By knowing the differences, hunters can avoid accidentally shooting spruce grouse. Loss of a female spruce grouse could be a significant setback for a small local population.

In New York State, the spruce grouse is an endangered species and not legal to hunt. Spruce grouse exist in lowland conifer forests in the Adirondacks. Although ruffed grouse occur in upland hardwoods statewide, during the fall and winter ruffed grouse may be found in spruce grouse habitat. Small game hunters in the Adirondack region must learn to distinguish between these species so that spruce grouse are not shot by mistake.



small game from October 1 through March 31 in any area of the state open to hunting these species EXCEPT:

- Waterfowl may be taken only during the regular firearm hunting season or during a specific period outside of the firearms seasons as specified by DEC.
- Common crow may only be taken during the open firearms season.
- A licensed falconer may take both male and female pheasants anywhere in the state when hunting under a Falconry License.

For more information on falconry, contact the DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752 or call 518-402-8985.

## Possession and Release of Game Birds

It is illegal to possess or release migratory game birds and upland game birds without the proper license(s) from DEC. Before you take possession of any captive-reared or wild game birds, contact the DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752 or call 518-402-8985 or e-mail [speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov](mailto:speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov).

## Use of Hunting Dogs

Dogs may be used to hunt small game, except:

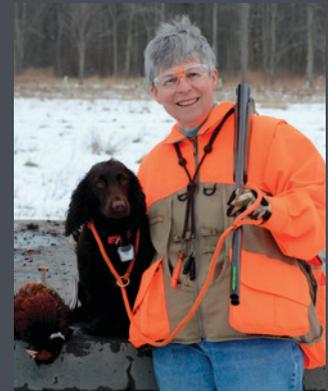
- You may not use dogs to hunt wild turkey in the spring.
- In the Northern Zone, if you are hunting with a dog, or accompanied by a dog, you may not possess a rifle larger than .22-caliber rimfire or possess a shotgun loaded with slug, ball or buckshot unless you are coyote hunting with a dog. In the Northern Zone, crossbows may not be possessed afield when hunting small game (except coyotes) with the aid of a dog or when accompanied by a dog.

## Training

You may train dogs on raccoon, fox, coyote, and bobcat from July 1 through April 15. You may train dogs on other small game only from August 15 through April 15. You may train dogs at any time on lands you own, lease, or have written permission to use, if you are not training on wild game. You may only use blank ammunition when training dogs, except during an open season.

## Control

Hunting dogs should remain under control of the hunter or trainer, especially on lands inhabited by deer. Do not allow your dogs to pursue game on any posted land without the landowner's permission. Do not shoot dogs; report stray dogs to a local Environmental Conservation Officer or your local animal control officer.



Jean-Marie Tate with her English Cocker Spaniel in Tonawanda, NY.

## Hunters: You Can Help Combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade

One of the biggest threats to New York's turtles is illegal collection. What to look for: people with bags poking around wetlands and streams; unmarked traps in wetlands (a trap set for legitimate purposes will be clearly labeled); sheets of metal/plywood laid out on the ground to attract reptiles; cars with collection equipment like nets, containers, pillowcases visible inside; unattended backpacks/bags left in the woods along a trail or road. If you see or hear about suspicious behavior that may be connected to poaching call DEC Law Enforcement - 1-844-DEC-ECOS. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also has an anonymous tip line - 1-844-FWS-TIPS. For more visit: <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/lawEnforcement/report-wildlife-crimes.php>.



# Turkey Hunting

## General Regulations

- You may buy only one turkey permit per year.
- If you have filled your bag limit, you may call turkeys for another hunter, but you may not carry a bow, crossbow, or firearm. You may call turkeys to aid another hunter only if you are licensed to hunt wild turkey in New York and have a valid turkey permit.
- If you have taken a turkey that is unfit for consumption, authorized DEC staff may issue a special permit to take another. You will have to surrender the carcass. Call your wildlife or law enforcement office (see page 6).

## Turkey Hunters Needed for Grouse Survey

DEC is seeking spring turkey hunters to participate in a survey to help monitor grouse populations.

For more information:

- E-mail us at [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov) and type "Grouse Drumming Survey" in the subject line, or
- Call 518-402-8883, or
- Visit [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov) and search for "drumming survey."

## Manner of Taking

- You must carry your hunting license and turkey permit while you hunt.
- You may hunt with a bow or crossbow; however, crossbows may not be used to take wild turkeys in Westchester or Suffolk counties.
- You may hunt with a shotgun or handgun only when using shot no larger than #2 and no smaller than #8.
- You may not take a turkey with a rifle or air gun, or with a handgun firing a bullet.
- You may use a muzzleloading shotgun.
- You may not hunt with a dog during the spring season. You may hunt with a dog during the fall season.
- You may not use bait to hunt turkey.
- You may not use an electronic calling or amplifying device to locate or hunt turkeys during the open season.
- You may use decoys. You may not use a live decoy when turkey hunting.
- A scope of any type is allowed.

## Reward

Protect wild turkeys against illegal hunting. Their future depends on you!

The National Wild Turkey Federation is offering a \$200 reward to anyone giving information and testimony leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone illegally hunting or killing a wild turkey in New York State.

1-844-DEC-ECOS

## Tagging, Possession and Reporting

- Immediately after taking a wild turkey, you must fill out the appropriate carcass tag in ink, mark or cut out the date and month of kill, sign the back, and attach it to the carcass.
- The carcass tag must stay attached to the turkey carcass until it is prepared for eating.
- You may give your turkey to another person.
- You must attach a tag with the following information to the turkey carcass:
  - » Your name
  - » Your address
  - » Your hunting license number
  - » Turkey permit carcass tag number
  - » The recipient's name
  - » The recipient's address
- You must report your harvest within 7 days via phone (1-866-GAMERPT), online ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)) or through our HuntFishNY mobile app (see page 8).

## What is a “Migratory Game Bird”?

Under state and federal laws and regulations, all of the following are considered migratory game birds in New York:

- All wild ducks, mergansers, geese, and brant (“waterfowl”)
- All coot, rails, and gallinules (moorhens)
- Woodcock and snipe

Crows are not considered migratory game birds under federal regulations, but most of New York’s migratory game bird hunting regulations apply to crows. You should assume they are the same except where differences are noted.

Mourning doves are considered migratory game birds under federal regulations, but they are not defined as such under New York State law so no hunting season has been established for this species.



## Help Monitor Woodcock Populations

Join our grouse and woodcock hunting log: [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9351.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9351.html) or call 518-402-8886.

## Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Migratory game bird hunting regulations are set by the federal government in consultation with state agencies. A pocket reference for migratory game bird seasons is also available from regional DEC offices upon request or by emailing [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov).

## Consumption of Wild Waterfowl

The New York State Department of Health recommends that you remove the skin and fat of wild waterfowl before cooking, and eat no more than two meals containing waterfowl per month (with the exception of mergansers). Mergansers are fish-eating birds that tend to be the most heavily contaminated waterfowl and should not be eaten.

Recent data indicate that waterfowl residing in the Hudson River between Hudson Falls and Troy have higher PCB levels than waterfowl from other portions of the Hudson River and are likely to have higher PCB levels than waterfowl from other areas of the state. Because PCBs may have a greater effect on young children or an unborn child, it is particularly important for women under 50 and children under 15 to minimize their PCB exposure. For more information visit: <https://www.health.ny.gov>.

## Waterfowl Hunting in Populated Areas

Some excellent waterfowl hunting opportunities occur in shoreline areas of New York that are becoming more populated and developed. Waterfowl hunters have special privileges in New York, but please consider the possible concerns that nearby homeowners may have about noise, safety or invasion of privacy before you go afield. Avoiding such conflicts will help ensure that waterfowl hunting remains an accepted tradition in fast-developing shoreline areas. For more information, go to: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/94213.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/94213.html).

DEC, in cooperation with the South Shore

Waterfowlers Association (SSWA), has produced *A Pocket Reference for Police Officers and Waterfowl Hunters* that summarizes the state laws that pertain to waterfowl hunting in general and includes a “code of ethics” for waterfowl hunters to help ensure that waterfowl hunting remains a viable recreational opportunity in New York. For a copy, call (518) 402-8883 or email [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov).

## Snow Goose Conservation Order

Waterfowl hunters in New York will have a special opportunity to harvest snow geese in most areas of the state from January 16 through April 15, 2021. This additional opportunity is offered because of concerns about impacts that snow geese are having on natural ecosystems. For more information, including harvest regulations for 2020–21, go to: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/50514.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/50514.html).

## General Regulations

Following is a summary of state and federal rules that apply to the taking, possession, shipping, transporting and storing of all migratory game birds in New York. For more complete information, consult the specific federal (50 CFR Part 20) and state (6 NYCRR Part 2.30) regulations. You can find links to both of these at: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28175.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28175.html).

### Definitions

Migratory game birds are wild ducks, geese, brant, coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock and snipe. Migratory waterfowl are wild ducks, geese, brant and coot.

### License requirements

All migratory game bird hunters must carry a valid New York State hunting license, except for persons not required to have a hunting license. All migratory game bird hunters in New York must also register annually with New York’s Harvest Information Program (HIP) and carry proof of compliance whenever going afield. To register visit the website ([www.newyorkhip.org](http://www.newyorkhip.org)) or call toll-free 1-888-4ASKHIP (1-888-427-5447).

You will be given a confirmation number that you can record on the back of your hunting license as proof of participation in HIP. HIP registration is valid from August 1 - July 30 annually.

If you are 16 years or older and you hunt waterfowl, then you also need a federal migratory game bird hunting stamp (“duck stamp”). The stamp is not needed to hunt coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock, snipe, or crows.

### Migratory bird hunting stamp

Each waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must carry on his/her person a valid Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (“duck stamp”) signed in ink across the face. Stamps do not have to be attached to your license. Duck stamps are not required to hunt coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock or snipe. Duck stamps are not required of minors 12 to 15 years of age hunting migratory waterfowl in New York State.

Federal duck stamps are sold at most post offices and many sporting goods stores and cost \$25.00 each. They may also be ordered by calling 1-800-852-4897 or visiting the website [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com). There is a shipping and handling fee for phone or Internet orders.

### Hunting hours

Woodcock may be taken from sunrise to sunset. All other migratory game birds may be taken from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset in all hunting zones. Canada geese may be taken until one-half hour after sunset during the September seasons, except on Youth Waterfowl Hunt Days, when hunting hours end at sunset. Snow geese may be taken until one-half hour after sunset during January 15–April 15 whenever all other waterfowl hunting seasons are closed.

### Non-toxic shot requirement

Non-toxic shot is required for hunting any migratory game bird, except woodcock, everywhere in New York State. Possession or use of shells loaded with shot other than steel, bismuth-tin, iron-tungsten, iron-tungsten-nickel, tungsten-bronze, tungsten-iron-copper-nickel, tungsten-matrix, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-tin-iron, tungsten-tin-bismuth, tungsten-tin-iron-nickel

# Migratory Game Birds

or other shot approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is strictly prohibited when hunting waterfowl, snipe, rails or gallinules.

## Duck hunting blinds

NYS Navigation Law Section 33-b requires that duck blinds placed in the waters of lakes within New York State be prominently marked with the owner's full name and address. All duck blinds placed in lakes must be removed no later than March 15 annually.

## Prohibitions on methods of take

No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance. However, semi-automatic shotguns may not exceed six shells in the magazine and chamber, combined, at any time when waterfowl hunting.
- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler that is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun. This does not apply to the taking of snow geese in any area or zone, or taking of Canada geese during September, when all other waterfowl seasons are closed.
- From a sink box (a low-floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water).
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may, with a permit issued by the Department of Environmental Conservation, take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with involvement of both legs, usually due to disease or injury to the spinal cord.
- From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased. Motorboats and sailboats under power may be used to retrieve dead or crippled birds; however, crippled birds may not be shot from such craft under power except in the Special Sea Duck Area described in the Hunting Seasons Table.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- Using recorded migratory bird calls or sounds or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls. This does not apply to the taking of snow geese in any area or zone, or taking of Canada geese in September, when all other waterfowl seasons are closed.
- By driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sailboat to put them in the range of hunters.
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn,



Seth, Keegan, and Cooper (dog). Photo credit Ed Tanguay

wheat, salt or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement) or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation. Migratory game birds may be taken on or over standing crops, flooded harvested crop lands, grain crops properly shocked on the field where grown or grains found scattered solely as a result of the normal agricultural planting or harvesting.

## Wanton waste/possession of live birds

No person shall kill or cripple any migratory game bird without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird and retain it in his/her actual custody. Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be killed immediately and included in the daily bag limit.

## Field possession limit

No more than one daily bag or aggregate daily bag limit of migratory game birds may be possessed or transported, tagged or untagged, at or between the place of taking and:

- His or her automobile or principal means of land transportation
- His or her personal abode or temporary place of lodging
- Migratory bird preservation facility
- Post office or common-carrier facility

No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird and then transport the bird from the field. The head or one fully feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported.

## Possession, tagging, shipment and importation

The possession limit is the maximum number of migratory game birds that any person may possess in total in his/her automobile or principal means of land transportation, personal abode, or in his/her name at any migratory bird preservation facility, post office or common-carrier facility.

The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit for all waterfowl species except snow geese.

No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place (other than personal abode) or in the custody of another person for picking, cleaning, processing, shipping, transportation, storage (including temporary storage) or taxidermy services, unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

- Hunter's name, address and signature
- Total number of birds involved, by species
- Dates such birds were killed

For more information on regulations pertaining to possession, tagging, shipment and importation of legally killed migratory game birds, consult the specific federal and state regulations cited above.

## Caution/dual violation

More restrictive regulations may apply to national wildlife refuges and state wildlife management areas (WMAs) open to public hunting. Violation of New York State migratory bird hunting regulations is also a violation of federal regulations.



Report band recoveries online at:  
[WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV](http://WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV)

or send your information to:  
Bird Banding Lab  
12100 Beach Forest Road  
Laurel, MD 20708



# Furbearer Hunting



Precious Smith, after a successful fox hunt.

## General Regulations

To hunt furbearers, you must possess a resident or non-resident hunting license. A trapping license does not allow you to hunt furbearers. Furbearers may be hunted with a bow, crossbow or firearm as described below.

- You may hunt red and gray fox, coyote, bobcat, raccoon, skunk, weasel and opossum anywhere in the State.
- If you take a bobcat, it must be tagged and sealed.

- You may use a call, including an electronic call.
  - Mink may only be hunted in the Southern Zone with a firearm not larger than .22 caliber during their open trapping season. Mink may not be hunted with a firearm in the Northern Zone.
  - Muskrat may only be hunted on Lake Champlain during the open trapping season with a firearm not larger than .22 caliber.
  - You may not hunt from any motor vehicle, including an ATV or snowmobile.
  - Except as noted above, you may hunt furbearers using any handgun, shotgun, muzzleloading rifle, bow, crossbow or air gun.
- If **YES**, you may use any caliber rimfire or centerfire rifle for hunting furbearers during any open deer season.
  - If **NO**, you may only possess afield rimfire rifles .22-caliber or smaller, or centerfire rifles **LESS THAN** .22 caliber (.204, .17, etc.) during any open deer season. Once all deer seasons are closed, the restriction ends, except:
    - You may **NEVER** possess a rifle afield in Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties.
    - In the Northern Zone, it is illegal to carry a rifle larger than .22 caliber rimfire (or .22-caliber or larger centerfire rifles) at any time if accompanied by a dog, except when coyote hunting.

## Possession and Use of Rifles for Hunting Furbearers

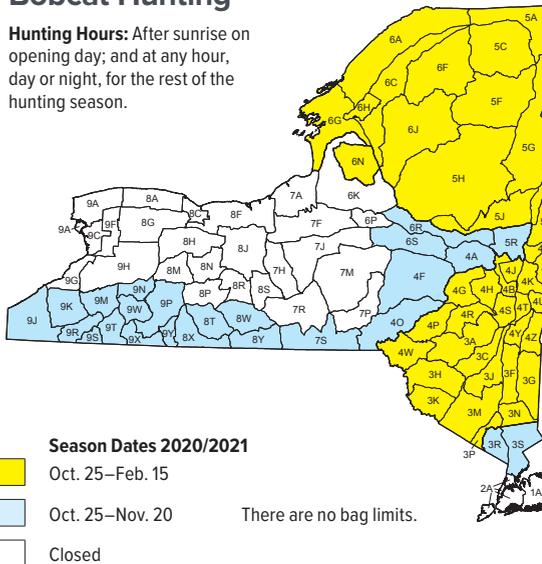
- Is **any deer season open** in the location you wish to hunt (including archery, muzzleloading, regular, late and Focus Area)? (pg. 25)
  - If **NO**, you may use any caliber rimfire or centerfire rifle for hunting furbearers.
  - If **YES**, can deer be hunted with rifles in that location during the regular season? (pg. 24)

## Hunting Furbearers at Night

- Spotlights, night vision, thermal and laser devices are permitted for furbearer hunting. They may be attached to the firearm. All laws pertaining to the use of a spotlight apply.
- Hunters should consult with local government officials for any laws that may prohibit the discharge of firearms at night.

### Bobcat Hunting

**Hunting Hours:** After sunrise on opening day; and at any hour, day or night, for the rest of the hunting season.



#### If you take a bobcat, you must:

- Complete a Furbearer Possession Tag **AND**
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.



### Weasel, Opossum, Skunk, Raccoon and Fox Hunting

**Long Island:** Nov. 1–Feb. 25  
**All other areas of New York:** Oct. 25–Feb. 15

There are no bag limits for these species. Hunting Hours: After sunrise on opening day; and at any hour, day or night, for the rest of the hunting season.



### Coyote Hunting

**Statewide except Long Island and New York City:** Oct. 1–Mar. 28

There are no bag limits for coyotes. They may be hunted during the day or night.

