

# 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
	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
<b>Junior Hunting (Ages 12–15)</b>	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> <p>* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.</p> <p><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.</p>		
<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> <p>* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.</p> <p><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.</p>		
<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  
Antler Pts L 3 R 3  
County Green  Reg Season  
Town Cairo  Bowhunting  
WMU 4H  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 Hole

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

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### 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  
Antler Pts L 3 R 3  
County Green  Reg Season  
Town Cairo  Bowhunting  
WMU 4H  Muzzleloading

Jane Doe Valid 09/01/2020  
ID# 314114431020  
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.

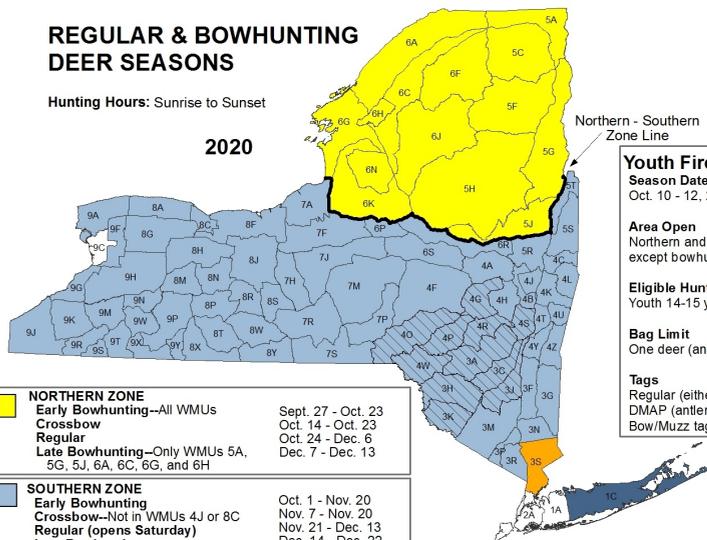


# Deer Hunting

## REGULAR & BOWHUNTING DEER SEASONS

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset

2020



<b>NORTHERN ZONE</b>	
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

<b>SOUTHERN ZONE</b>	
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

<b>WESTCHESTER COUNTY (3S)</b>	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31
Regular--Bowhunting Only	

<b>SUFFOLK COUNTY (1C)</b>	Oct. 1, 2020 - Jan. 31, 2021
Regular--Bowhunting Only	
Special Firearms--(Permit Req.)	Jan. 3 - Jan. 31, 2021

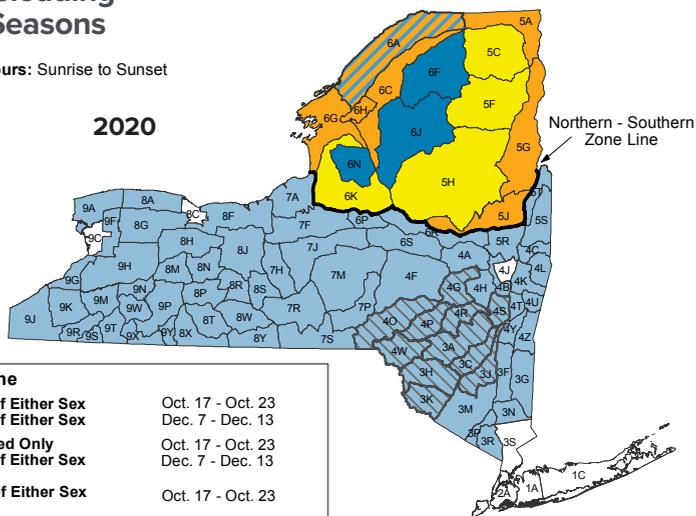
<b>Antler Point Restrictions</b>	
During all seasons, antlered bucks must have at least one antler with 3 or more points that are at least 1 inch long. Young hunters (ages 12-16) are exempt.	
No Deer Hunting	

**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



<b>Northern Zone</b>	
Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 17 - Oct. 23
Antlered Only	Dec. 7 - Dec. 13
Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 17 - Oct. 23
Antlered Deer Only	Dec. 7 - Dec. 13
	Oct. 17 - Oct. 23

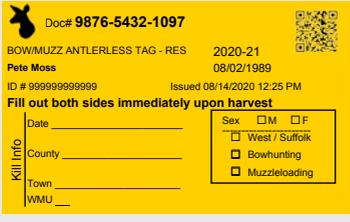
<b>Southern Zone</b>	
Deer of Either Sex	Dec. 14 - Dec. 22

<b>Antler Point Restrictions</b>	
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.

# MAKING IT LAST

## Continuing the Tradition.

Jeff Liddle, late Hunter Education Coordinator for New York's Department of Environmental Conservation, taught a new hunter critical firearm handling skills. Jeff inspired countless new hunters during his long career with DEC. Conservation is dependent on funding provided by hunters and trappers. Our Hunter Education Program – with the help of volunteer hunter and trapper education instructors – are working hard to continue the tradition and conserve beautiful New York for years – and generations – to come. For more information, or to volunteer as an instructor, visit: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html)



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

## The 10 Commandments of Firearm Safety

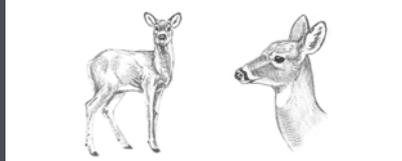
1. **Watch that muzzle!** Keep it pointed in a safe direction at all times.
2. **Treat every firearm with the respect due a loaded gun.** It might be loaded, even if you think it isn't.
3. **Be sure of your target and what is in front of it and beyond it.** Know the identifying features of the game you hunt. Make sure you have an adequate backstop—don't shoot at a flat, hard surface or water.
4. **Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot.** This is the best way to prevent an accidental discharge.
5. **Check your barrel and ammunition.** Make sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions, and carry only the proper ammunition for your firearm.
6. **Unload firearms when not in use.** Leave actions open, and carry firearms in cases and unloaded to and from the shooting area.
7. **Point a firearm only at something you intend to shoot.** Avoid all horseplay with a gun.
8. **Don't run, jump, or climb with a loaded firearm.** Unload a firearm before you climb a fence or tree, or jump a ditch. Pull a firearm toward you by the butt, not the muzzle.
9. **Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely.** Store each in a secured location beyond the reach of children and careless adults.
10. **Do not consume alcoholic beverages before or during shooting.** Also avoid mind- or behavior-altering medicines or drugs.

## Doe or Fawn?

During the fall, it can often be difficult to distinguish adult does and fawn deer, particularly if seen alone. In recent years, about 30% of the total antlerless deer harvest has been fawns (5–7 months old), split roughly as 13% doe fawns and 17% buck fawns. Though fawns provide excellent table fare, some hunters prefer to target adult deer. Taking adult female deer contributes to management objectives, and passing buck fawns may allow some of them to be available later as antlered bucks. By learning the differences between antlerless deer, hunters can make more informed harvest choices.

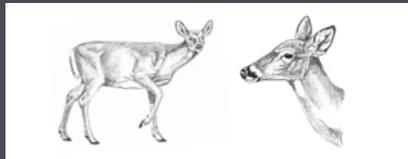
## Hunting Tips

- Button bucks often travel alone, but adult does rarely do. Wait until several antlerless deer are present before making a harvest decision.
- It is easier to identify sex and age when animals are standing still or moving slowly.
- Harvest antlerless deer early in the season when differences between fawns and adult does are most noticeable.



Fawn

- Body about as long as tall (square)
- Short neck and compact nose/head
- Eyes look large for head
- Doe fawns have a more rounded head shape between their ears
- Buck fawns' heads appear flattened and may have visible antler nubs or "buttons"



Adult Doe

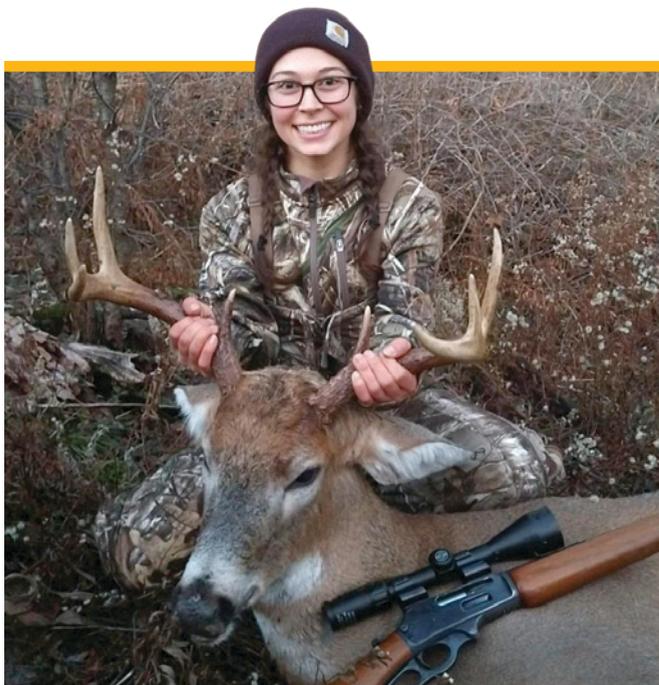
- Body longer than tall (rectangle)
- Long neck and elongated nose

## Tree Stand Safety — Hunt Safe, Hunt Smart

- Read the manufacturer's instructions. Replace worn/missing parts.
- Use a full-body harness with a foot strap to relieve harness leg pressure.
- Use a "lifeline" or safety rope that is secured at base of the tree or stand and to the tree just above your head when sitting in the stand. Stay connected to a lifeline from the time you leave the ground to the time you get back down.
- Attach the tether from your full-body harness to the lifeline using a carabiner and prusik knot, which easily slides up and down the lifeline.
- Once secured in your stand, use a haul line to raise/lower unloaded implements and quiver. Do not tie the haul line around the trigger or trigger guard. Haul unloaded guns, bows, and cocked (but unloaded) crossbows pointed down.
- Carry emergency equipment (knife, phone, flashlight, whistle) in your pockets at all times, not in your pack.
- Tell someone where you will be hunting and when you will return.

# Big Game Season Dates

Future Big Game Season Dates	
Northern Zone	
<b>Early Bear</b> (some WMUs, see page 43)	The first Saturday after the second Monday in September through the Friday immediately preceding the early muzzleloading season
<b>Early Bowhunting—Bear</b>	The first Saturday after the second Monday in September through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season
<b>Early Bowhunting—Deer</b>	September 27 through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season
<b>Early Muzzleloading—Deer and Bear</b>	7 consecutive days beginning on the first Saturday after Columbus Day
<b>Regular—Deer and Bear</b>	44 consecutive days beginning on the second Saturday after Columbus Day
<b>Late Bow and Muzzleloading—Deer</b>	7 consecutive days immediately following the regular season
<b>Youth Big Game Firearms Hunt—Deer and Bear</b>	Columbus Day Weekend; Saturday through Columbus Day (Monday)
Southern Zone	
<b>Early Bear</b> (some WMUs, see page 43)	16 consecutive days beginning on the first Saturday after Labor Day
<b>Early Bowhunting—Deer and Bear</b>	October 1 through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season
<b>Regular—Deer and Bear</b>	23 days beginning the third Saturday of November
<b>Late Bow and Muzzleloading—Deer and Bear</b>	9 consecutive days immediately following the regular season
<b>Youth Big Game Firearms Hunt—Deer and Bear</b>	Columbus Day Weekend; Saturday through Columbus Day (Monday)
Westchester County (WMU 3S)	
<b>Regular—Deer and Bear (bowhunting only)</b>	October 1 through December 31
Suffolk County (WMU 1C)	
<b>Regular—Deer (bowhunting only)</b>	October 1 through December 31
<b>Special Firearms Season—Deer</b>	First full week in January, through January 31



On a hunting trip with her dad and cousin, Lauren Maynard harvested her first deer with a Marlin 30/30 lever-action rifle.

# Special Seasons Designated for Young Hunters

## Share Your Knowledge, Reconnect with Nature — Take a Junior Hunter Afield During These Special Seasons!



Youth Pheasant Hunt at the Wood and Brook Sportsman Club in Crittenden, NY.



Hailey Masterson with her first pheasant.

Once again, DEC is providing a special youth deer season over the three-day Columbus Day weekend. Junior hunters (ages 14–15) will be eligible to take one antlered or antlerless deer and/or a bear with a firearm during this season. Rules of the Junior Hunter Mentoring Program (page 37) also apply.

DEC also offers special opportunities for junior hunters (ages 12–15) for waterfowl, wild turkey, and pheasants.

For all youth hunts, junior hunters must be accompanied by an adult hunter. Both the junior and adult hunters are required to have a hunting license for the youth deer season, a hunting license and a turkey permit for the turkey hunt, and a hunting license and current HIP registration for the waterfowl hunt. During the youth waterfowl hunt the accompanying adult must have a federal duck stamp. Adults are not allowed to possess a firearm, crossbow or bow or to harvest an animal while accompanying a junior hunter during the youth hunts.

Crossbows may only be used by licensees who are 14 years of age or older.

**Note:** Junior hunters (ages 12-15) must be accompanied by a licensed adult hunter whenever they are afield in pursuit of game, not just during designated special youth seasons.

Youth Hunts	
Youth Pheasant Hunt	
Northern and Eastern New York	September 26-27, 2020
Western New York	October 10-11, 2020
Long Island	October 24-25, 2020
Youth Waterfowl Hunt	
Waterfowl Hunting Zone	Dates
Northeastern	September 19-20, 2020
Southeastern	September 19-20, 2020
Lake Champlain	September 26-27, 2020
Western	October 3-4, 2020
Long Island	November 7-8, 2020
Youth Wild Turkey Hunt	
Upstate NY (north of Bronx-Westchester Co. boundary) and Suffolk County	April 24-25, 2021
Youth Firearms Deer and Bear Hunt	
Upstate NY (north of Bronx-Westchester Co. boundary; excluding bowhunting-only WMUs)	Columbus Day Weekend; October 10-12, 2020

## New York is on Target!

The National Archery in the Schools Program:

- Is an archery program for grades 4-12
- Is taught during school in the curriculum
- Includes instructor training
- Uses standardized equipment
- Has 40,000 students participate annually



For more information, please contact NY NASP at 518-402-8967, or [jillian.trunko@dec.ny.gov](mailto:jillian.trunko@dec.ny.gov)



Take them outside the classroom. Way outside.

**EXPLORE**  
BOWHUNTING



The NYSDEC has partnered with the Archery Trade Association to bring you a next step archery program with curriculum that includes over 20 introductory lessons to bowhunting for youth ages 11-17.

Contact the NY Explore Bowhunting coordinator for local instructor training opportunities.  
P: 518-402-8967 E: [jillian.trunko@dec.ny.gov](mailto:jillian.trunko@dec.ny.gov)

## Junior Big Game Hunting

### 12- and 13-year-old junior bowhunters can hunt deer and bear with a bow if they meet the following requirements:

- Have completed a course in both Hunter Education and Bowhunter Education.
- Purchase a Junior Bowhunting License.
- Be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or a "youth mentor" who is 21 years or older and designated in writing by the junior hunter's parent or legal guardian (use the form below).
- The accompanying adult needs to have at least 3 years of experience in hunting deer or bear by longbow AND have a license to hunt big game in the same seasons.
- The parent, guardian or youth mentor must maintain physical control over the minor at all times while hunting.

### 14- and 15-year-old junior hunting license holders can hunt deer and bear with a gun if they meet the following requirements:

- Have completed a course in Hunter Education.
- Purchase a Junior Hunting License.
- Be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or a "youth mentor" who is 21 years or older designated in writing (use the form below).
- The accompanying adult needs to have at least 3 years of hunting experience AND have a license to hunt big game in the same seasons.
- The parent, guardian or youth mentor must maintain physical control over the minor at all times while hunting.
- The Junior Hunter must stay on the ground and cannot use an elevated (tree) stand.

- Both junior hunter and accompanying adult must wear fluorescent orange or pink: a shirt or jacket with 250 sq inches of solid/patterned fluorescent orange or pink (the pattern must be no less than 50% fluorescent orange or pink) OR a hat with no less than 50% of the exterior consisting of solid fluorescent orange or pink AND visible from all directions.

### 14 and 15-year-old junior bowhunters and first-time 16 and 17-year-old big game hunters must:

- Be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or person 18 years or older designated in writing (use form below).
- The accompanying adult needs to have at least 1 year of hunting experience AND have a license to hunt big game in the same seasons.

## Junior Trapping

### Trappers under 12 years of age:

- May accompany and assist a licensed trapper in all aspects of trapping without possessing a trapping license themselves.
- The licensed trapper must have at least 3 years of trapping experience and may be a parent, legal guardian, or someone 18 years or older designated in writing (use the form below).

### Junior Trappers 12 years or older:

- Must complete NY's Trapper Education Program whether they will be trapping alone or with an adult licensed trapper.

## Share Your Hunting and Trapping Photos With Us!

Help us celebrate the successes of young and first-time hunters and trappers by submitting photographs to DEC's Hunting and Trapping Photo Gallery. Instructions for submitting photographs are included on the photo gallery webpage.

[www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/54055.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/54055.html)

Hunters Lucas, Nick, and Merganzer the lab after a successful youth hunt at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge.



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

## Mentored Youth Hunter and Trapper Permission Form

Use this form to designate a licensed adult hunter or trapper to accompany young hunters or trappers.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am the parent/legal guardian  
(Print name of parent or legal guardian above.) (Please circle one.)

of \_\_\_\_\_, and I hereby give permission for him or her  
(Print name of young hunter/trapper above.)

to be accompanied by \_\_\_\_\_ whom I acknowledge meets  
(Print name of adult hunter/trapper above.)

the legal age, experience, and licensing requirements to function as a mentor during hunting and trapping seasons.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent or legal guardian sign above.)

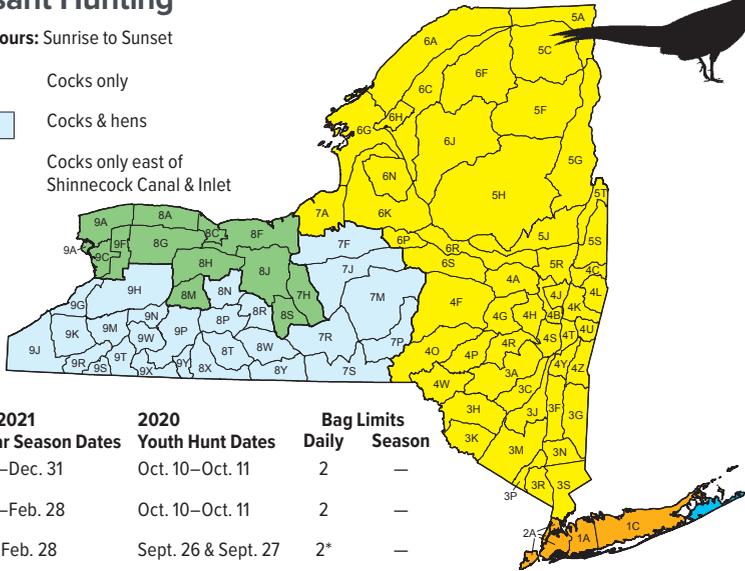
Date \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print today's date above.) (Print phone number above.)

*Attention Young Hunter or Trapper: carry this form with you while afield.*

## Pheasant Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset

- Cocks only
- Cocks & hens
- Cocks only east of Shinnecock Canal & Inlet

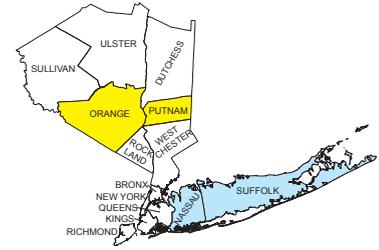


2020/2021 Regular Season Dates	2020 Youth Hunt Dates	Daily Bag Limits	Season Bag Limits
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Oct. 17–Dec. 31	Oct. 10–Oct. 11	2	—
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Oct. 17–Feb. 28	Oct. 10–Oct. 11	2	—
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFD700; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Oct. 1–Feb. 28	Sept. 26 & Sept. 27	2*	—
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFA500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Nov. 1–Dec. 31	Oct. 24–Oct. 25†	2*/4**	30
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #00B0F0; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Nov. 1–Dec. 31	Oct. 24–Oct. 25	2*/4**	30

\* Youth Hunt  
 \*\* Regular Season  
 † No youth hunt in WMU 2A

## Bobwhite Quail Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset



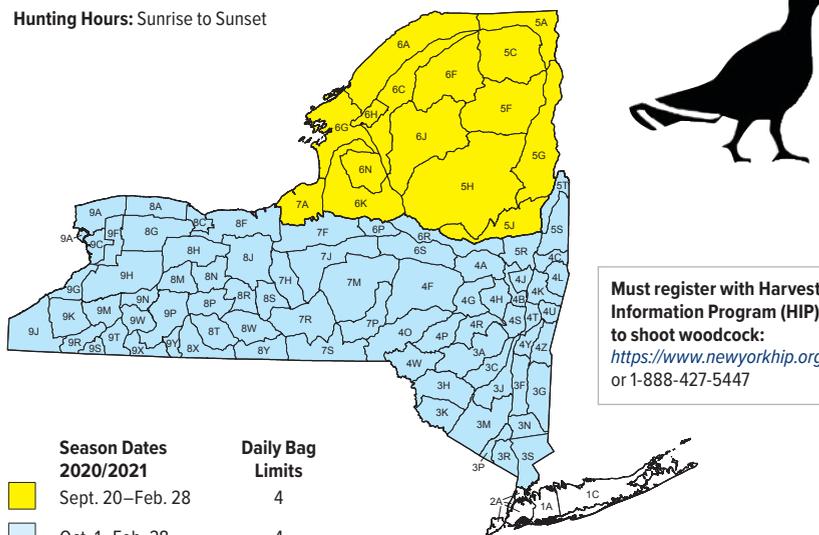
2020/2021 Season Dates	Daily Bag Limits	Season Bag Limits
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFD700; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Oct. 1–Feb. 28	4	10
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Nov. 1–Dec. 31	6	40
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFFFFF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Closed		

## Attention –

If you would like to raise and release pheasants to increase pheasant hunting opportunities, please e-mail us at [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov) and type "pheasants" in the subject line or call (607) 273-2768. For a list of hunting areas where pheasants are released, contact a DEC Regional Wildlife Office (on page 6) or visit our website at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9349.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9349.html)

## Ruffed Grouse Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset



2020/2021 Season Dates	Daily Bag Limits
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFD700; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Sept. 20–Feb. 28	4
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Oct. 1–Feb. 28	4
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFFFFF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Closed	

Must register with Harvest Information Program (HIP) to shoot woodcock:  
<https://www.newyorkhip.org/>  
 or 1-888-427-5447

## Grouse Hunters Needed!



*Easy as 1-2-3!*

- 1 Collect 1 central tail feather
- 2 Pluck 2-5 rump feathers
- 3 Collect outer 3 wing feathers

DEC is embarking on a study of ruffed grouse age and sex composition. You can help by sending a sample of rump, wing, and tail feathers from all NY harvested ruffed grouse.

To request more information and supplies, please call 518-402-8929 or email [wildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildlife@dec.ny.gov).



## Fall Turkey Season

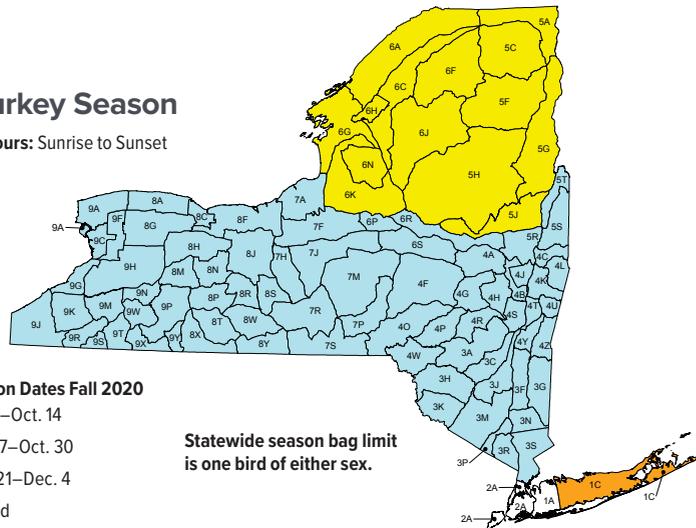
- You may take a bird of either sex.
- There is one carcass tag for the fall season and it may be used in any fall turkey hunting zone. Immediately after taking a turkey, you must fill out the carcass tag in ink and attach it to the bird.
- **If you take a turkey, save one of its legs.** You will receive instructions about what to do with the leg when you report your harvest. The legs are used for age and sex information.

## Spring Turkey Season

- In the spring, you may take two bearded birds. You may only take one bird per day.
- Fill out the carcass tag and attach it to the bird.
- You do not need to save and send in turkey legs in the spring. You do need to take careful spur, beard, and weight measurements for harvest reporting.
  1. Spur measurements: Spurs should be measured from the tip of the spur to the base of the spur, where it emerges from the scaly part of the leg. Measure to the nearest ¼ inch. Do not measure to the forward edge of the leg, only to the base of the spur.
  2. Beard measurements: Beards should be measured from the tip of the beard to the base, where it emerges from the skin. Put the end of your ruler against the base of the beard and extend the beard along the body of the ruler. Measure to the nearest ¼ inch.
  3. Record the weight of the turkey to the nearest pound.

## Fall Turkey Season

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to Sunset



## Spring Turkey Season (no map)

### Hunting Hours

One half-hour before sunrise to noon

### Area Open

All of upstate New York north of the Bronx-Westchester County boundary

### Season Dates

May 1–May 31

### Season Bag Limits

Two bearded turkeys (**one bird per day**)

## Spring Youth Hunt

### Season Dates

April 24–25, 2021

### Area Open

Same as regular spring season plus Suffolk County (WMU 1C)

### Eligible Hunters

Youth 12–15 years of age

### Bag Limit

One bearded turkey

## Turkey Hunting Tips

Successful turkey hunters sit and call.

Don't wear red, white, blue or black.

Most turkey hunting injuries happen when one hunter stalks another hunter.

**DON'T TRY TO STALK TURKEY!**

Assume anything that sounds like a turkey is a human (calls, footsteps).

If you see another hunter:

- **Don't move, wave or nod.**
- **Don't make turkey or animal sounds.**
- **Do speak up clearly, saying "STOP."**

If you see a turkey:

Be **100%** sure of your target and beyond. To prevent another hunter from mistaking you for a gobbler, avoid using a turkey "reaper fan".



Hunter Jennifer Kailbourne after a successful turkey hunt.

# Turkey Hunting

## Spring Youth Hunt

Eligible hunters are 12–15 years of age and hold a Junior Hunting License and a Turkey Permit.

All youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult, as required by law for a Junior Hunting License (see pages 36 and 37).

The accompanying adult must have a current hunting license and Turkey Permit. He/she may assist the youth hunter (including calling), but may not carry a firearm, crossbow or bow, or kill or attempt to kill a wild turkey during the youth hunt. Crossbows may only be used by licensees who are 14 years of age or older.

The bag limit for the youth hunt is one bearded bird. This bird becomes part of the youth's regular season bag limit of two bearded birds. A second bird may be taken beginning May 1.

All other wild turkey hunting regulations remain in effect.



Lori Suave, her daughter Alexis, and her daughter's friend Jessica.

## BE TICK SAFE!

Ticks can spread disease, but not all bites will make you sick. Deer ticks may carry Lyme disease, the most common tick-borne disease in New York.

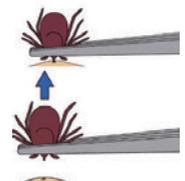


## QUESTIONS?

- Contact the NYS Department of Health or your healthcare provider if you have symptoms of fever, rash, body aches or fatigue after a tick bite.
- See [www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme/](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme/)

## TICK REMOVAL

- Using tweezers, grab the tick as close to your skin as possible.
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure.
- Clean the bite area with soap and water, rubbing alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide.



Check yourself, your children and pets for ticks daily.

## 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.



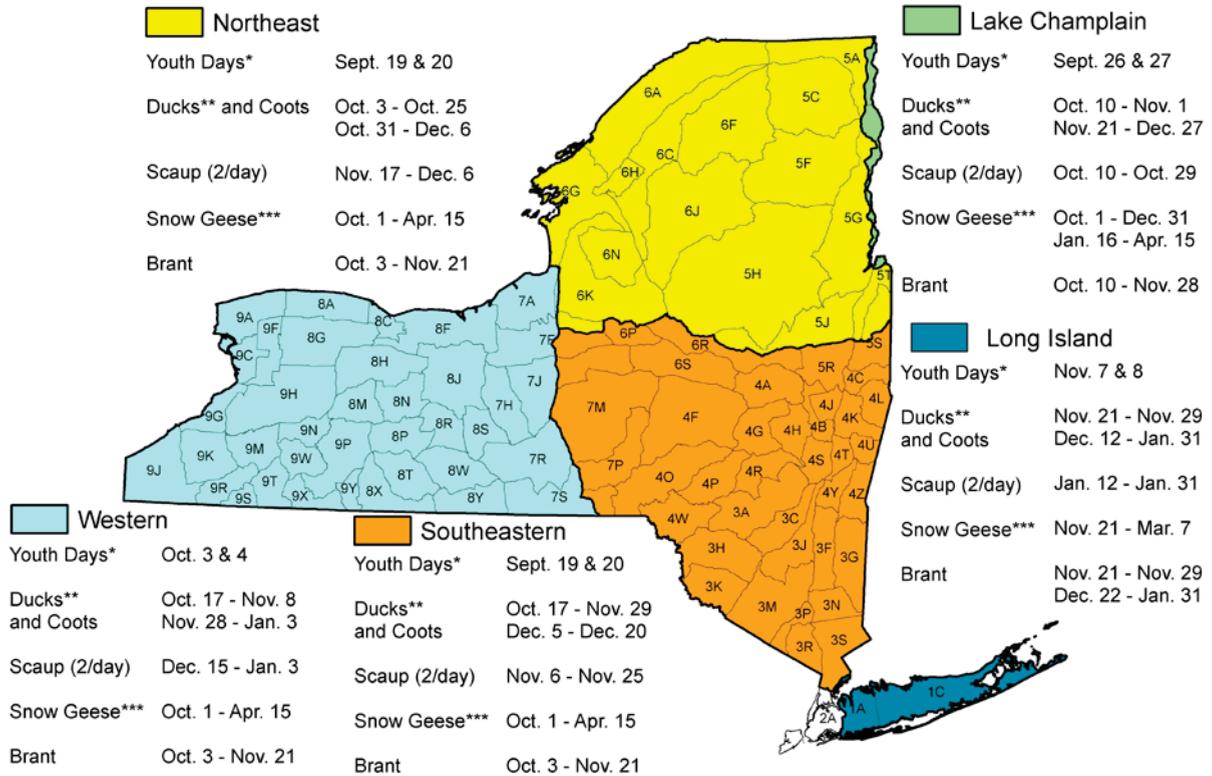
Report band recoveries online at:  
[WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV](http://WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV)

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



# Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

## 2020–2021 Waterfowl Seasons



### Bag Limits

The daily bag limit is the maximum number of birds of each species that any person may take or possess in the field during any one day. The possession limit is three times the daily bag limit for all migratory game birds except snow geese.

Species	Daily Limit	Possession Limit
Ducks <sup>a</sup>	6	18
Coot	15	45
Canada Geese	See map	* Three times the daily limit – see map page 50
Snow Geese <sup>b</sup>	25	No limit
Brant	2	6

- a The daily limit of 6 ducks includes all mergansers and sea ducks (scoters, eiders and long-tailed ducks) and may include no harlequin ducks and no more than 2 mallards (1 of which may be a hen), 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks, 1 pintail, 1 scaup (2 scaup are allowed during the 20 days specified above for each zone), 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, 4 scoters, 4 eiders, 4 long-tailed ducks or 2 hooded mergansers. For all other duck species found in New York, the daily limit is no more than 6.
- b Cackling geese and white-fronted geese may be taken as part of the Canada goose daily and possession limits. Snow geese and Ross' geese may be taken as part of the snow goose limits.

### Additional Veteran Hunting Days

When this guide was printed, regulations to provide additional hunting days for active duty military personnel and veterans were still pending. If approved, dates for each zone will be posted on the DEC website.

- \* Youth hunters, 12 to 15 years of age, possessing a junior hunting license and HIP registration, may hunt ducks, mergansers, Canada geese, brant, gallinules, and coot on two (2) special days in each zone. Daily bag limits for all species are the same as those allowed during the regular hunting season for all species. Youth hunters must be accompanied by a licensed (including current HIP registration and duck stamp) adult hunter, but the adult hunter may only shoot migratory game birds if the respective hunting season is open for hunters of all ages.
- \*\* Crippled sea ducks may be taken under power in the Special Sea Duck area, only. The Special Sea Duck Area is defined as the coastal waters of New York State and all waters of streams and rivers seaward from the first upstream bridge.
- \*\*\* Snow goose seasons include both the regular hunting season and the Conservation Order that runs from January 16 - April 15 in all zones (except Long Island).

### Attention Boaters!

Before you launch your boat or leave a site you are required to clean all visible plant and animal material from your boat, trailer, and associated equipment. Drain your boat's bilge, livewell, baitwell, and other water-holding compartments.

### Brianna's Law – New Boating Safety Law!

If you were born on or after:	You will need a boating safety certificate when operating a motorized vessel in:
January 1, 1993	2020
January 1, 1988	2022
January 1, 1983	2023
January 1, 1978	2024

All operators of motorized vessels, regardless of age, will need a boating safety certificate by January 1, 2025. For more information and to find courses: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/boating/education.aspx>

# Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

## Woodcock, Crow, Snipe, Rail and Gallinule Hunting Season Dates, Bag Limits, and Regulations for 2020–2021

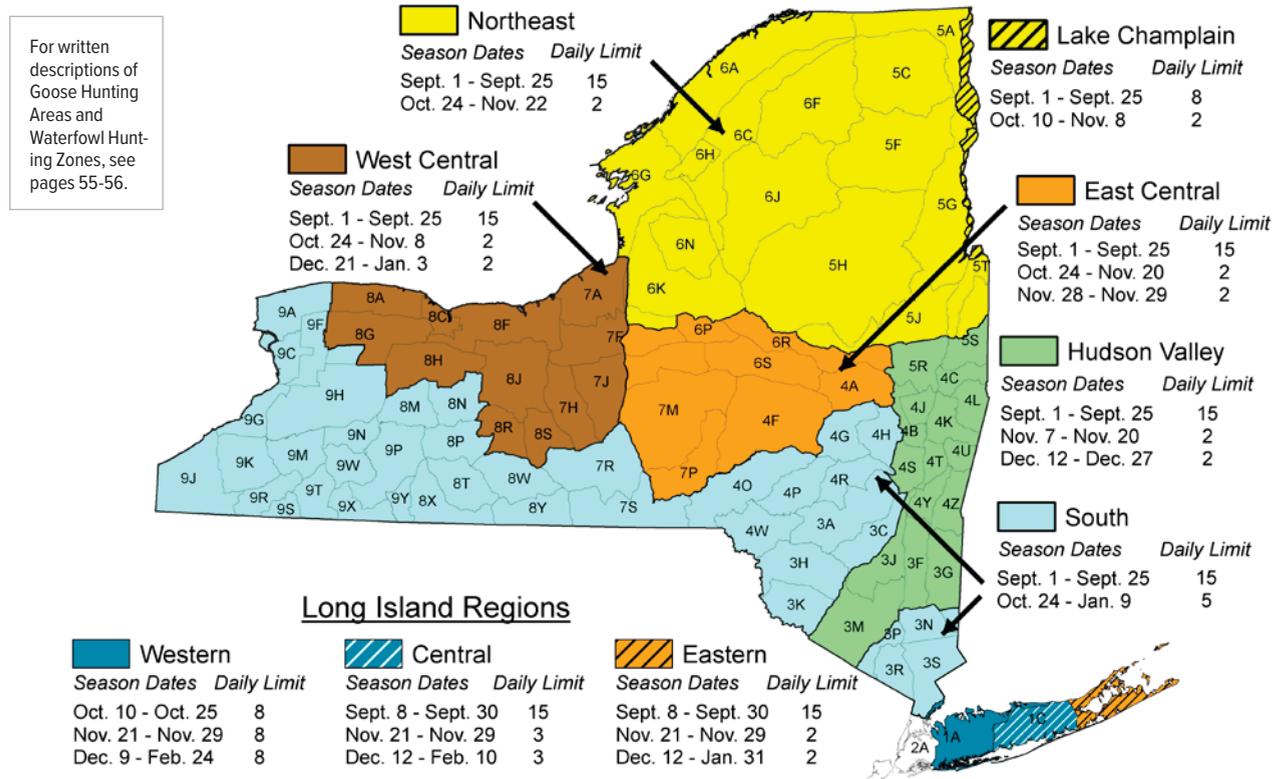
Regulations	Woodcock	Crow	Snipe	Virginia & Sora Rails	Gallinules	Clapper & King Rails
<b>Upstate New York</b> <sup>1,3</sup>	Oct. 1 – Nov. 14	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Closed
<b>Long Island</b> <sup>2,3</sup>	Oct. 1 – Nov. 14	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
<b>Bag Limit</b>	3/day 9 in possession	None	8/day 24 in possession	8/day 24 in possession	8/day 24 in possession	n/a
<b>Shooting Hours</b>	Sunrise to Sunset	Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sun- rise to Sunset	n/a
<b>Non-Toxic Shot</b>	NOT Required	NOT Required	Required	Required	Required	n/a
<b>HIP Registration</b>	Required	NOT Required	Required	Required	Required	n/a
<b>Other</b>	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	Hunting on Fri., Sat., Sun. & Mon. ONLY; Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required; Rifles and electronically amplified bird calls or sounds permitted	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	Fed Migratory Bird Stamp NOT Required	n/a

1 Upstate New York includes all of New York State north of the Bronx-Westchester County boundary

2 Long Island includes all of WMUs 1A and 1C (Nassau and Suffolk counties)

3 Hunting season closed in New York City for all species listed in table; New York City includes all of WMU 2A (Bronx, Kings, Queens, New York, and Richmond counties)

## 2020–2021 Canada Goose Seasons



## NY State Goose Hunting Areas

See road boundaries at: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28510.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28510.html)

1. The Lake Champlain Goose Hunting Area is the same as the Lake Champlain Waterfowl Hunting Zone (see below).
2. The Northeast Goose Hunting Area is the same as the Northeastern Waterfowl Hunting Zone (see below).
3. The West Central Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 7A, 7H, 8A, 8C, 8F, 8H, 8J, 8R and 8S. The West Central Goose Hunting Area also includes: that part of WMU 6K lying west of a continuous line extending along the north shore of the Salmon River from US Route 11 to Interstate Route 81, then south along Route 81 to Route 49; those parts of WMUs 7F and 7J lying west of Route 81; and that part of WMU 8G lying north and east of a continuous line extending along the New York State Thruway from Crittenden-Murrays Corners Road (near the Erie-Genesee county line) to Exit 48 in Batavia, then south along Route 98 to Route 20.
4. The East Central Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 4A, 4F, 6P, 6R, 6S, 7M and 7P. The East Central Goose Hunting Area also includes those parts of WMUs 7F and 7J lying south of Route 31 and east of Route 81.
5. The Hudson Valley Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 3F, 3J, 3M, 4B, 4C, 4J, 4K, 4L, 4S, 4T, 4U, 4Y, 4Z, 5R; that part of WMU 5S lying south of a continuous line extending east along Route 29 to Route 22, north along Route 22 to Washington County Route 153, then east along Route 153 to the New York–Vermont boundary; and that part of WMU 3G lying in Dutchess County.
6. The South Goose Hunting Area consists of the following WMUs: 3A, 3C, 3H, 3K, 3N, 3P, 3R, 4G, 4H, 4O, 4P, 4R, 4W, 7R, 7S, 8M, 8N, 8P, 8T, 8W, 8X, 8Y, 9A, 9C, 9F, 9G, 9H, 9J, 9K, 9M, 9N, 9P, 9R, 9S, 9T, 9W, 9X and 9Y. The South Goose Hunting Area also includes: that part of WMU 8G lying south and west of a continuous line extending along the New York State Thruway from Crittenden-Murrays Corners Road (near the Erie-Genesee county line) to Exit 48 in Batavia, then south along State Route 98 to State Route 20; that part of WMU 3G lying in Putnam County; and that part of WMU 3S lying north of Route 1-95.
7. The Western Long Island Goose Hunting Area is that area of Westchester County and its tidal waters southeast of Interstate Route 95 and that area of Nassau and Suffolk counties lying west of a continuous line extending due south from the New York-Connecticut boundary to the northernmost end of Sound Road (just east of Wading River Marsh); then south on Sound Road to North Country Road; then west on North Country Road to Randall Road; then south on Randall Road to Route 25A, then west on Route 25A to Sunken Meadow Parkway; then south on Sunken Meadow Parkway to the Sagtikos State Parkway; then south on the Sagtikos Parkway to the Robert Moses State Parkway; then south on the Robert Moses Parkway to its southernmost end; then due south to international waters.
8. The Central Long Island Goose Hunting Area is that area of Suffolk County lying between the Western and Eastern Long Island Goose Hunting areas, as defined above and below.
9. The Eastern Long Island Goose Hunting Area is that area of Suffolk County lying east of a continuous line extending due south from the New York-Connecticut boundary to the northernmost end of Roanoke Avenue in the Town of Riverhead, south on Roanoke Avenue (which becomes County Route 73) to State Route 25, west on Route 25 to Peconic Avenue, south on Peconic Avenue to County Route (CR) 104 (Riverleigh Avenue), south on CR 104 to CR 31 (Old Riverhead Road), south on CR 31 to Oak Street, south on Oak Street to Potunk Lane, then west on Stevens Lane, then south on Jessup Avenue (in Westhampton Beach) to Dune Road (CR 89), then due south to international waters.

# Waterfowl Hunting Zone Descriptions

## Waterfowl Hunting Zones

**Western Zone** – That area west of a continuous line extending from Lake Ontario east along the north shore of the Salmon River to Interstate Route 81 and then south along Interstate Route 81 to the New York-Pennsylvania boundary.

**Northeastern Zone** – That area north of a continuous line extending from Lake Ontario east along the north shore of the Salmon River to Interstate Route 81, south along Interstate Route 81 to Route 31, east along Route 31 to Route 13, north along Route 13 to Route 49, east along Route 49 to Route 365, east along Route 365 to Route 28, east along Route 28 to Route 29, east along Route 29 to Route 22, north along Route 22 to Route 153, east along Route 153 to the New York-Vermont boundary, exclusive of the Lake Champlain Zone.

**Lake Champlain Zone** – That area east and north of a continuous line extending along Route 11 from the New York-Canada boundary south to Route 9B, south along Route 9B to Route 9, south along Route 9 to Route 22 south of Keeseville, south along Route 22 to the west shore of South Bay along and around the shoreline of South Bay to Route 22 on the east shore of South Bay, southeast along Route 22 to Route 4, northeast along Route 4 to the New York-Vermont boundary.

**Southeastern Zone** – That area east of Interstate Route 81 that is south of a continuous line extending from Interstate Route 81 east along Route 31 to Route 13, north along Route 13 to Route 49, east along Route 49 to Route 365, east along Route 365 to Route 28, east along

Route 28 to Route 29, east along Route 29 to Route 22, north along Route 22 to Route 153, east along Route 153 to the New York-Vermont boundary, and northwest of Interstate Route 95 in Westchester County.

**Long Island Zone** – That area consisting of Nassau and Suffolk counties and their tidal waters, and that area of Westchester County and its tidal waters southeast of Interstate Route 95. (See map page 53).

**Special Sea Duck Area** – All coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams in New York State seaward from the first upstream bridge.

## Accessing Great Waterfowl Hunting in New York State

New York boasts a variety of waterfowl hunting opportunities on private lands, public lands, and public waterways. As a “pinch point” in the Atlantic Flyway, almost all species found in the flyway can be found or hunted in New York (33 species to be exact!). Hunters can experience duck and goose hunting in diverse habitats from tidal marshes on the south shore of Long Island, to small beaver ponds in the Adirondacks and Catskills, to large open waters of the Finger Lakes and Great Lakes. DEC divides the state into five hunting zones with independent season dates to maximize hunting opportunity that overlaps with waterfowl migration, weekends, and holidays. The result is that hunters can find an open waterfowl season somewhere in the state from September through April!

Although the many waterways across the state provide great hunting opportunities, goose hunters will typically need access to private lands where fields can be very productive hunting locations. Approaching landowners can be an intimidating experience, but keep in mind that Canada geese can damage agricultural plantings and hunting can be a useful management tool to reduce damage. As a result, many farmers and property owners are open to allowing hunting. Taking the time to scout and politely ask permission can greatly improve your odds of having a successful hunt.

Aside from field hunting opportunities, waterfowl hunters have the distinct advantage that many of the best hunting areas and waterways around the state are publicly owned. Hunters without access to private lands can concentrate on larger bodies of water such as Lake Ontario, Lake Champlain, Great South Bay, or the Finger Lakes in Central New York. If hunting from shore, hunters should be aware

that most shorelines above the mean low tide mark are private property and hunters may not hunt from or anchor on private property without permission from the landowner. On these larger bodies of water, housing or other developments often are near high quality waterfowl habitats and the State Legislature determined that special considerations were warranted. As a result, hunters pursuing waterfowl on public property or private property with the permission from the landowner may discharge their firearm over open water within 500 feet of a dwelling, provided there is not any dwelling, public structure, livestock, or person within 500 feet of the shooter in the direction they are shooting. When hunting ducks or geese that congregate on near-shore waters, it is safer for a hunter to shoot away from shore than to shoot toward shore from open water. DEC encourages hunters to be considerate of residents living along shorelines who may not be knowledgeable about duck hunting seasons and methods. Abusing this exemption from the 500' setback distance could result in areas being permanently closed to hunting.

If hunters do not have access to the necessary equipment to hunt larger bodies of water, there is an abundance of opportunity on DEC managed wetlands that can be accessed on foot and by canoe or kayak and with minimal equipment. On many Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), DEC manipulates water levels to maximize food availability for waterfowl and to provide migratory and breeding habitat for a variety of game and non-game species throughout the year. Places like Northern Montezuma, Tonawanda, Oak Orchard, Perch River, and Wilson Hill WMAs provide excellent viewing and hunting opportunities.

For a list of public properties with waterfowl hunting opportunities in each waterfowl hunting zone, visit: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/103606.html>

## Waterfowl Blinds for Hunters with Disabilities

Duck hunting is available for people who require easier access to hunting locations. DEC and cooperating state and federal partners have developed blinds on WMAs accessible for people of all abilities:

- » Region 1: Otis Pike Preserve
- » Region 4: Vosburgh Swamp WMA
- » Region 6: Upper and Lower Lakes WMA
- » Region 7: Hamlin Marsh WMA
- » Region 8: Northern Montezuma, Tonawanda, John White WMAs
- » Region 9: Spicer Creek WMA, Chautauqua Lake FWMA

For more information on hunting at these locations contact the regional wildlife office. To see the full list of accessible duck hunting blinds and other recreation opportunities visit: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/34038.html>

