

HUNTING SAFETY STATISTICS

2022



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

2022 ties 2021 for the lowest number of incidents in New York's History

	2020	2021	2022	5yr avg.
Total Incidents	22	9	9	13
Fatal	3	1	1	1.8
Non-fatal	19	8	8	11
Self-Inflicted	13	2	5	6.2
Two-Party	9	7	4	6.6
Big Game				
Bear	0	0	0	0
Deer	10	4	5	6.6
Turkey				
Spring	1	1	1	1
Fall	0	0	0	0
Small Game				
Rabbit	1	0	0	0.2
Squirrel	4	1	0	1.2
Upland Bird	1	2	0	0.8
Raccoon	0	0	0	0
Fox/Coyote	1	1	1	0.8
Waterfowl	4	0	1	1.8
Other	0	0	1	0.4
Shotgun	10	5	3	6
Rifle	5	4	5	4.8
Handgun	0	0	0	0.4
Muzzleloader	4	0	0	0.8
Crossbow	2	0	1	0.6
Bow	0	0	0	0
Air Gun	1	0	0	0.2

2022 tied 2021 for the record of lowest number of hunting-related shooting incidents since 1949. The low incident rates reflect the dedication of New York's 1,800 volunteer hunter and bowhunter education instructors and strong safety consciousness of hunters. Since 2020, more than 100,000 hunters have been certified through the online course. In-person courses, which had been paused in 2020-21 due to COVID-19, are again available, and DEC is encouraging anyone who wants to take a course to join our knowledgeable instructors for hands-on firearm, bow, and trapping instruction. For those who took an online course, or others seeking more hands-on experience, DEC will be offering *Next Steps* courses in 2023 to ensure the public can get the instruction they need to develop proficiency and continue to hunt safely.

Of the nine incidents that occurred in 2022, five were self-inflicted and four were two-party firearm incidents. Of those nine incidents, seven of the shooters received their hunting certificate from an in-person course, and two were online learners with self-inflicted injuries. The average age of the person causing an incident was 57, and average hunting experience was 30 years. The 5-year average for 2022 was 1.5 incidents per 100,000 hunters.

With over 550,000 hunting licenses sold in NY, DEC and the volunteer instructors would like to remind all hunters to always be safe and prepared while afield. 2022 marks the second year where fatalities and injuries due to falls from tree stands outnumbered firearm-related hunting incidents. During 2022, there were four fatalities due to not using or improperly using a fall restraint system while hunting from a tree stand. To work properly, a harness must be attached to the tree at all times when ascending, descending, and while in the stand.

Please note that the 2022 figures are compiled from preliminary reports and are NOT final. Final investigation reports take months in some cases.

This report includes only hunting-related shooting incidents involving firearms, bows, or crossbows. It does not include all incidents and fatalities that occurred while hunting (such as heart attacks).

Hunting-Related Shooting Incidents 2012-2022			
Year	Big Game	Small Game/Other	Total
2013	10	9	19
2014	9	13	22
2015	13	10	23
2016	8	5	13
2017	6	13	19
2018	8	5	13
2019	7	5	12
2020	10	11	22
2021*	4	5	9
2022	5	4	9
10-year Average	8.0	7.4	16.1

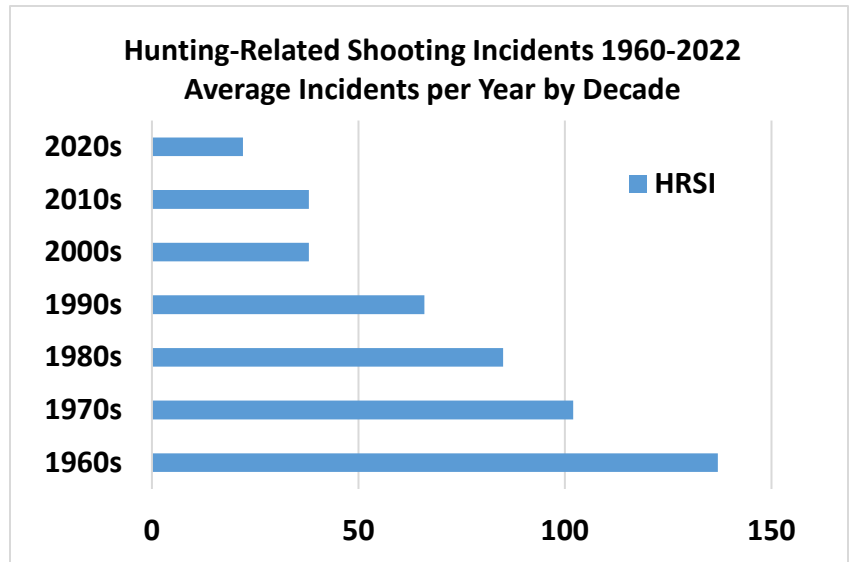
* Big and small game totals corrected; numbers were reversed in 2021 summary

The Stories behind the Statistics: Hunting-Related Shooting Incidents 2022

Preliminary descriptions of incidents as of 2/1/2023. Some incidents are still under investigation. Some incidents involve a shooter who was participating in an illegal act. Fatalities are listed in red.

FORMAT FOR 2022 DESCRIPTIONS:

Date (mm/dd) - County - Brief description of incident - Age of shooter - Years of hunting experience of the shooter - Victim orange notes if the victim was wearing fluorescent orange or pink - Violations notes if the incident involved an illegal act.



SMALL GAME & NONGAME

2/11 - Cayuga. Shooter was coyote hunting with a friend when they slipped and fell and discharged a round, striking their friend in the leg and stomach. Age 52. Hunting experience: 38 yrs. Victim orange: No. Violations noted: No.
08/17 - Genesee. Shooter was hunting woodchuck and unintentionally discharged their firearm, striking themselves in the hand. Age 88. Hunting experience: 73. Victim orange: No. Violations noted: No.

WATERFOWL HUNTING

10/15 - Warren. Victim was hiking when struck by #4 shot from a shooter who was waterfowl hunting, causing minor injuries. Age 57. Hunting experience: 40 yrs. Victim orange: No. Violations noted: Yes.

TURKEY HUNTING

05/12 - Schoharie. **Fatality.** Shooter was turkey hunting from a tree stand and unintentionally discharged their firearm striking themselves in the hand and head. Age 76. Hunting experience: 30+ yrs. Victim orange: No. Violations noted: No.

BIG GAME HUNTING

11/19 - Madison. Shooter unintentionally discharged one round into their foot and toe. Age 42. Hunting experience: 2 yrs. Victim orange: Yes. Violations noted: No.

11/22 - Tioga. Shooter struck a member of their hunting party in the lower left leg when shooting at a deer. Age 70. Hunting experience: 40 yrs. Victim orange: Yes. Violations noted: Yes.

11/23 - Wyoming. Shooter shot at a running deer and struck another hunter who was sitting approximately 700 yards away, slightly bruising their abdomen. Age 60. Hunting experience: 40 yrs. Victim orange: Yes. Violations noted: Yes.

11/24 - Cattaraugus. Victim unintentionally shot themselves while riding as a passenger on an ATV. Age 18. Hunting experience: 5 yrs. Victim orange: No. Violations noted: Yes.

12/31 - Ulster. Victim unintentionally discharged their crossbow causing the bolt to go through their thigh. Age 50. Hunting experience: 2 yrs. Victim orange: No. Violations noted: No.

New York is thankful for the dedication of thousands of Hunter Education Program volunteer instructors whose efforts since the program began in 1949 have resulted in hunting being an activity that is safer than ever.



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation | Hunter Education

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