

New York HUNTING & TRAPPING

2025–2026 Official Guide
to Laws & Regulations
Volume 19, Issue No. 1,
September 2025



See Inside

**How to Fill Out Your Carcass Tag
and Report Your Harvest**

Pages 13–15

Season Summary

Pages 39–42



**Department of
Environmental
Conservation**

Remember to Report Your Game Harvest

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Most regulations are in effect September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026

Message from the Governor



The 2025 fall hunting and trapping seasons are just around the corner. As the long summer days wane and nights become cool, excitement starts to build for the many New Yorkers who enjoy precious time afield hunting or trapping with family and friends or the peace of uncrowded woods. It's a time to connect with nature, enjoy the outdoors, and leave modern distractions behind to 'Get Offline and Get Outside.'

New York State offers an incredible range of opportunity to those who engage in hunting and trapping. New York's robust environmental programs, policies, and investments not only help to safeguard and preserve our natural resources, but also protects them for generations of New Yorkers to come. This ensures that cherished traditions like hunting and trapping remain affordable and accessible for all New Yorkers, far into the future.

This 2025-26 hunting and trapping syllabus contains all the relevant laws and regulations you need to know for a safe, legal, and enjoyable season. It also includes valuable information about the work of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and our state's many partners working to offer mentoring, hunter safety, citizen science, and other conservation opportunities to help manage and protect our wildlife resources.

By whatever measure you define success, enjoy your time afield this year. Stay safe and enjoy the time offline and out of doors!

Governor Kathy Hochul

Photo by Charles Moulder

Contents

2025–2026 Highlights of Changes	4
DEC Regional Offices/Important Phone Numbers	6

General Hunting Information

Licensing Information.....	10–15
Special Licenses for Hunters with Disabilities.....	13
E-Tag Q&A.....	13
How to Fill Out Your Carcass Tag and Report Your Harvest ...	14–15
Hunting Regulations and Hunter Education.....	16–17
Firearm Safety Tips.....	34
Opportunities for Young Hunters.....	44–45

Hunting Area Information

Private Lands/State Lands/Other Areas to Hunt.....	18–19
Public Campgrounds and Licensed Guides	19

Big Game Hunting

General Big Game Regulations	20
Tagging, Reporting, and Transporting.....	22
Muzzleloading and Bowhunting	23
Big Game Boundary Descriptions and Legal Implements.....	26
Deer Hunting Season Dates	27
How and When to Use Your Deer Carcass Tags	28
Deer Management Permits	30–31
Hunters: Want Older Bucks in New York?.....	36
Determining Future Big Game Season Dates.....	37
Bear Hunting.....	38

Small Game Hunting

General Small Game Regulations.....	46–47
Reptiles and Amphibians	46
Possession and Release of Game Birds.....	46–47
Falconry Seasons	47
Use of Hunting Dogs	48
Small Game Season Dates and Bag Limits.....	48–49

Turkey Hunting

General Turkey Regulations.....	50
Turkey Season Dates and Bag Limits.....	51

Migratory Game Bird Hunting

General Migratory Game Bird Regulations.....	53–55
E-Stamp	53
Migratory Game Bird Season Dates and Bag Limits.....	55–56
Waterfowl Hunting Zone Descriptions.....	57–58

Furbearer Hunting

General Furbearer Hunting Regulations.....	59–60
Furbearer Season Dates and Bag Limits.....	59
Hunting Furbearers at Night	60

Furbearer Trapping

License Information, Definitions and Trapping Methods.....	61–63
Body-Gripping Traps and Trigger Specifications.....	63–64
Furbearer Trapping Season Dates and Bag Limits	65

Environmental Conservation Officers

Q&A	68
Photo Gallery.....	69
Contact Information QR Code	69

Maps and Other Info

Regional Maps and Accessible Features	70–77
Sunrise/Sunset Table	80



New York State

Kathy C. Hochul, Governor

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625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4754
Website: dec.ny.gov

Division of Fish and Wildlife's Mission:

The mission of DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife is to serve the interests of current and future generations of New Yorkers by using our collective skills, in partnership with the public, to describe, understand, manage, and perpetuate a healthy and diverse assemblage of fish, wildlife, and ecosystems.

This guide is a summary that is intended for convenience only. For complete references, consult the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and Volume 6 of the Codes, Rules and Regulations of New York State. These are available at:

dec.ny.gov/regulatory/regulations
<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/lawssrch.cgi?NVLWO>:
(Environmental Conservation Law)

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Features

- 4 Highlights for 2025–2026
- 9 DEC Wildlife Health Program uses a "One Health" Approach to Track and Control Diseases and Toxins
- 13 E-Tag Q&A
- 14–15 Game Harvest Reporting
- 24 DEC's Response to CWD in a Captive Deer Herd in 2024
- 30 HuntFishNY Events
- 34 Non-lead Ammunition Rebate Program—Going Statewide: Hunters for Eagle Conservation in New York
- 35 Strap Up Before You Go Up
- 39–42 Pullout of 2025–26 Hunting and Trapping Seasons Summary
- 43 HPAI and Hunting: What Waterfowl Hunters Need to Know
- 66 Don't Eat the Mice! Rodenticides in Furbearers
- 68–69 Focus on Law Enforcement

ON THE COVER:

Photograph taken in a private vineyard in Town of Dundee, Yates County, courtesy of Jeb McConnell.

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Proposed Regulations in Process

At press time, DEC had several proposed regulations in process. Check DEC's website for updates prior to the hunting season.

- **E-Licenses, E-Tags, & Harvest Reporting:** DEC has proposed to allow hunters and trappers to possess only an e-license while hunting or trapping and use e-tags for deer, bear, or turkey. An e-license is the electronic record of your hunting, fishing, and trapping license privileges in DEC's HuntFishNY mobile app. E-tags are electronic records of your unreported and reported carcass tags for deer, bear, and turkey in the HuntFishNY app. The app works even without immediate cell service, as it stores the harvest report and transmits it to DEC upon reconnection to cell service. Paper licenses and paper tags will still be available. See page 13 for more information.

With this potential change, DEC also proposed changing the time frame for required reporting of your harvest of deer, bear, or turkey. If adopted, users of e-tags will be required to report immediately upon harvesting the animal. Users of paper tags will be required to report within 48 hours of the harvest. Hunters will no longer have 7 days to report their harvest.

- **Bonus Youth Tag:** Some young hunters who are successful during the Youth Big Game Hunt weekend may not have another tag available to use during the subsequent regular firearms season. DEC has proposed to provide these youth hunters a bonus or replacement tag for the regular firearms season. Bonus regular season tags would be for the opposite sex deer as was harvested during the youth hunt.

Printing and Mailing Fee

DEC has transitioned from special license stock (valeron) to printing all sporting licenses, carcass tags, and other items on plain paper. License Issuing Agents (LIAs) are now supplying their own paper, printers, and ink, and license buyers purchasing their paper licenses and tags at LIAs may be charged a \$1 printing fee to cover costs. Additionally, DEC's license fulfillment vendor may levy a \$2 fee when the customer requests the license be printed and mailed to them. All customers who purchase online, by phone, or at an LIA can avoid the printing fee by choosing to receive their licenses and tags by email for printing at home.

Pending Legislation on Crossbows

At press time, legislation was pending that, if adopted, will allow crossbows to be used during the entire bowhunting season by hunters

with the bowhunting privilege in all areas where other bowhunting equipment can be used. All crossbow users would be required to have a certificate of bowhunter education. Additionally, the law would remove the minimum limb width and maximum draw weight restrictions for crossbows. The discharge setback for crossbows would remain at a minimum of 250' from certain structures, except it will be 500' in Suffolk and Westchester counties. Check DEC's website for the status of the pending legislation.

Backtags No Longer Required

As a result of law change, backtags are no longer required while hunting anywhere in New York State.

Legislation – Rifles in Niagara County

Legislation adopted in 2024 allows use of rifles for big game hunting in Niagara County except within the cities of Niagara Falls, Lockport, and North Tonawanda.

HuntFishNY Events – Mentored Hunt Opportunities and More!

HuntFishNY is your one-stop resource for events offered by DEC and a network of partners and instructors. Events are hands-on and designed to teach you the basics about hunting, fishing, trapping, outdoor safety, wildlife, and other outdoor skills. You can find sponsored pheasant hunts, mentored hunts, target shoots, hunting seminars, social events, and more. Events are designed for all ability levels. See DEC's Learn to Hunt Opportunities in New York page (<https://on.ny.gov/learntohunt>) for information about HuntFishNY Events, the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) program, sponsored pheasant hunts, and mentored hunts. These programs help new hunters develop the skills they will need to be safe and successful.

Non-lead Ammunition Rebate Program – Continuing Statewide

DEC has partnered with researchers to implement a multiyear study to determine the reduction in eagle deaths resulting from use of non-lead ammunition for deer hunting. Researchers are offering a rebate of up to \$60 to hunters for purchase of certified non-lead ammunition. For more information about this program, please refer to page 34.



About This Guide

This high-quality reference guide is brought to you by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation through a partnership with Kalkomey, a trusted leader in outdoor safety education since 1995. In addition to producing this guide, Kalkomey also offers a suite of educational courses to help people enjoy the outdoors safely.

The revenue generated through ad sales in this publication significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important agency programs and we thank the advertisers for their support.



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**The hunting and trapping regulations
in this guide are online at:**

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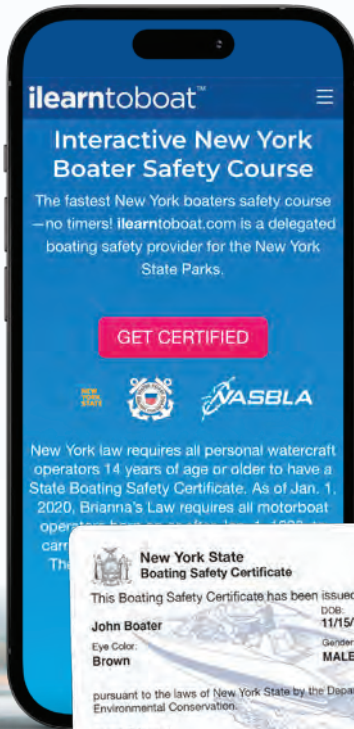


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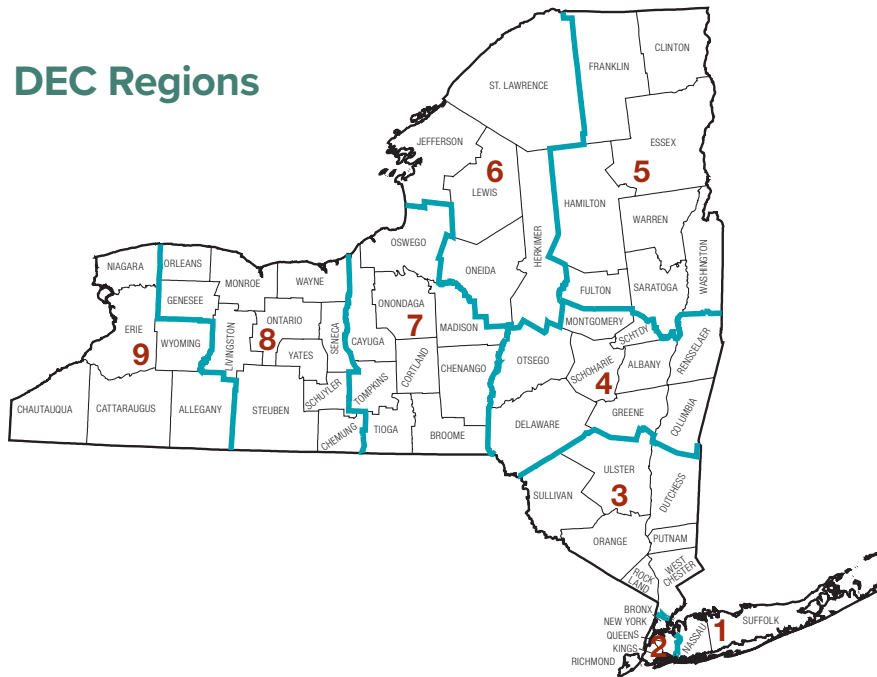
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Important Numbers

DEC Regions



www.dec.ny.gov
Search 'Becoming an Outdoors Woman'
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Other Important Numbers	
DEC Automated Licensing System	1-866-933-2257 M-F 8AM-5PM, Sat 9AM-5PM
Lifetime License Information	518-402-8843
NYC Watershed Hunting Permits	1-800-575-5263
Hunter Ed	1-888-HUNT ED2 (1-888-486-8332)
Deer Management Permit (DMP) Hotline	1-866-472-4332
Game Harvest Reporting via DECALS	1-866-GAME-RPT (1-866-426-3778)
Reporting Banded Waterfowl	www.reportband.gov
Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP)	decals.east.licensing.app
Information on NY SAFE Act	1-855-LAW-GUNS (1-855-529-4867)
Forest Rangers	1-833-NYS-RANGERS (1-833-697-7264)
Law Enforcement (ECOs)	1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

Important Numbers					
Region	Offices	Wildlife	Law Enforcement	Hunter Ed	Forest Rangers
1	Stony Brook University 50 Circle Rd. Stony Brook, NY 11790-3409	631-444-0310	631-444-0250	631-444-0255	631-444-0291
2	1 Hunters Pt. Plaza 47-40 21st St. Long Island City, NY 11101-5407	718-482-4922	718-482-4885	718-482-6429	631-444-0291
3	21 South Putt Corners Rd. New Paltz, NY 12561	845-256-3098	845-256-3013	845-256-3122	845-256-3026
4	1130 North Westcott Rd. Schenectady, NY 12306-2014	518-357-2355	518-357-2047	518-357-2158	518-357-2161
	65561 State Hwy 10, Suite 1 Stamford, NY 12167-9503	607-652-7367			
5	1115 Route 86, PO Box 296 Ray Brook, NY 12977-0296	518-897-1291	518-897-1326	518-623-1240	518-897-1303
	232 Golf Course Rd. Warrensburg, NY 12885	518-623-1240			
6	317 Washington St. Watertown, NY 13601-3787	315-785-2263	315-785-2231	315-785-2533	315-785-2263
	225 North Main St. Herkimer NY 13350	315-866-6330			
	190 Outer Main St, Suite 103 Potsdam, NY 13676	315-265-3090			
	17893 Game Farm Rd. Dexter, NY 13634	315-639-6122			
7	615 Erie Blvd. West Syracuse, NY 13204-2400	—	315-426-7431	607-753-3095 ext. 242 or 247	607-753-3095 x.223
	1285 Fisher Ave. Cortland, NY 13045	607-753-3095 ext. 247			
8	6274 E. Avon-Lima Rd. Avon, NY 14414-9519	585-226-5380	585-226-6706	585-226-5463	585-226-5319
	7291 Coon Rd. Bath, NY 14810-9728	607-776-2165			607-622-8287
9	700 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209	716-851-7010	716-851-7050	716-372-0645	716-372-0645
	182 East Union St., Suite 3 Allegany, NY 14706	716-372-0645			

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Message from the Commissioner



Shared Resource, Shared Responsibility

As DEC's new Commissioner, I am honored to lead our agency's effective stewardship and management of New York's natural resources. From Long Island's coastal pine barrens to unique boreal forests in the Adirondacks, to the hardwood forests across the Southern Tier, connecting with these environments is foundational to who we are. Few activities create and foster those bonds more than hunting and trapping.

Spending time in nature with family and friends, or in peaceful solitude, is a value I share with the hunters, trappers, and many others who enjoy New York's lands. The need for protection and management of our wildlife and our public lands is ever present and a responsibility we all share. I am grateful for the cooperation of our sporting community to help address ongoing challenges and provide new opportunities to attract and retain people new to hunting and trapping.

Over the past year, DEC and our public and private partners helped conserve thousands of acres of land, establishing new conservation easements and creating new or expanding existing State Forests and Wildlife Management Areas for ecological protection and public recreational access. With the expansion of new information-sharing tools like HuntFishNY Events to promote mentoring opportunities, hunters are helping share their experiences to foster a conservation ethic and introduce novice youth and adult hunters to this treasured activity.

DEC looks forward to continuing to build upon our many relationships to protect our shared resources and promote the hunting and trapping traditions at the heart of our conservation efforts in the state. Best of luck to you in the upcoming season, and I hope to see you out and about enjoying the wilds of New York.

Amanda Lefton

Commissioner

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



Report Your Harvests with the HuntFishNY App

Use DEC's HuntFishNY app as an e-license and to report your game harvest. HuntFishNY gives you a quick and easy way to:

- Access your sporting licenses, privileges, and permits
- Submit game harvest reports, even when out of cellular range
- View current and past harvest reports
- Look at season maps and a sunrise-sunset table
- Read DEC's current Hunting & Trapping Guide

HuntFishNY now includes the Tackle Box feature for anglers!

Get the HuntFishNY app free from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Note: You will need a DECALS username and password to access your license documents through the app. If you don't have a username and password, visit <https://on.ny.gov/3KXkt5n> to get yours today.

Questions? Call our sporting license hotline at 1-866-472-4332.





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Hunting-Related Shooting Incidents 1960-2024
Average Incidents per Year by Decade

Decade	Average Incidents per Year
2020s	~10
2010s	~15
2000s	~30
1990s	~60
1980s	~80
1970s	~100
1960s	~120

4 Rules of Firearm Safety

- Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times
- Treat every firearm as though it is loaded
- Be sure of your target and what is in front of and beyond it
- Keep your finger off the trigger and outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot

HuntSafeNY
Be Safe, Be Seen

Wear blaze orange or blaze pink

DEC Wildlife Health Program uses a “One Health” Approach to Track and Control Diseases and Toxins

The long-term sustainability of wildlife in New York State is dependent on the continued health and resilience of wild animal populations. Recent disease outbreaks have reinforced a critical truth: wildlife health is usually interconnected with the health of humans, domestic animals, and our shared environment. A clear example is the ongoing highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) or “bird flu” outbreak. This virus is widespread, affecting many wildlife species including waterfowl, raptors, and some mammals such as foxes and bobcats. In addition to its impact on wild species, HPAI has caused significant losses in domestic animal industries, like poultry farms and dairy operations, as well as caused illness in domestic cats and, in rare cases, humans.


The DEC Wildlife Health Program (WHP) uses the One Health approach—a collaborative, multidisciplinary framework that recognizes this vitally important intersection of human health, animal health, and the environment. Understanding wildlife health through a One Health lens helps guide our response and highlights opportunities for prevention, mitigation, and shared stewardship. To this end, the DEC WHP works closely with relevant staff at NYS Departments of Agriculture and Markets and Health as well as the USDA.

Hunters, trappers, and other outdoor recreationists play a vital role in maintaining wildlife health in New York. Their time spent in the field provides valuable opportunities to observe and report signs of illness, contribute to disease surveillance, and support data collection that informs management decisions. For instance, chronic wasting disease (CWD), an always-fatal neurological illness affecting deer and other




cervids, poses a significant threat to deer populations and the tradition of hunting. Reporting abnormal behavior is critical for surveillance of CWD and can help maintain resilient deer populations for future generations.

The decisions we make in the field can have significant impacts on both wildlife and human health. For example, using non-lead ammunition can help prevent lead poisoning in scavenging species such as bald eagles, as well as reduce the risk of lead exposure in hunter-harvested game meat. This year's *Hunting and Trapping Regulations Guide* features important wildlife health concerns and practical steps you can take to protect wildlife and your own well-being.



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General License Information

Purchasing a License

Hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses can be purchased at over 1,200 agent locations throughout New York State, over the phone via the DEC call center at 1-866-933-2257/M–F, 8AM–5PM, Sat. 9AM–5PM (extended hours Aug. 1–Nov. 30, M–F 7AM–7PM, Sat. 9AM–5PM), and online through DEC’s Automated Licensing System (DECALS) at dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/decals.

You can also locate a license-issuing vendor from the DECALS website. All major credit cards 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 online course offered by DEC and is a minimum of seven hours in length. A hunter education certificate will be provided upon completion of the course. This certificate must be added to the individual’s DEC licensing profile before purchasing a license. 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 that meet IHEA-USA requirements as proof of hunter education in order to purchase a New York State hunting license.

Mandatory Bowhunter Education

Hunters wishing to bowhunt for big game must present either:

1. Proof that they successfully completed an approved bowhunter education course (in person or online). (Note: Approved courses are International Bowhunter Education Program courses or an equivalent course. If in doubt, call toll-free 1-888-HUNT-ED2); OR
2. Proof that they previously held a New York State bowhunting license or stamp issued in 1980 or later; if proof is from prior to 1980, they must take a bowhunter education certification 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 25 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

Licenses, Privileges, and Permits

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
Hunting (Ages 16+) Privileges: Hunt small game species with gun, bow, or crossbow (see page 25). Hunt deer or bear with gun, muzzleloader, bow (with proof of bow education or a bow privilege), or crossbow (see page 25) during the regular season, or hunt with shotgun or muzzleloader during the Jan. firearms season (permit required — see page 20) in Suffolk County (WMU 1C). You may hunt frogs with a valid hunting or fishing license (see page 46 for more details). Qualifications: Hunter Education Certificate OR previous hunting license. Certificates to possess firearms do not qualify. Note: Those 16-17 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 45) 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 45.	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$22
	70+ (NYS Resident)	\$5
	Military Disabled ¹	\$5
	Patriot ²	FREE
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
Junior Hunting (Ages 12–15)	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$100
	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$5
Privileges:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages 12–13: Hunt small game species with gun or bow and deer with gun or crossbow 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 45). Check DEC’s website (dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/junior-big-game) for a map of counties where 12- and 13-year-olds can hunt deer with a gun or crossbow and page 37 for details.) • Ages 14–15: 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 Jan. 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). 		
* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 45.		
Qualifications: 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 the NYS Harvest Information Program (dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/hunting-license/harvest-information-program) to hunt migratory game birds.		
Bowhunting Privilege (Ages 16+) Privileges: Hunt deer and bear with a bow during bowhunting seasons. Qualifications: 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. Note: 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 ¹	FREE
	Patriot ²	\$15
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
Junior Bowhunting (Ages 12–15)	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$30
	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$4
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$4
Privileges:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages 12–13: 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 youth mentor 21 years or older and designated in writing (see permission form on page 45). Youth hunter will receive a deer of either sex carcass tag for use in the regular season, instead of a regular season buck tag. • Ages 14–15: 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 45). 		
* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 45.		
Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license, PLUS acceptable Bowhunter Education OR previous Junior Bowhunting License. Must be accompanied by parent/legal guardian to purchase.		
Muzzleloader Privilege (Ages 12+) Privileges: Hunt deer (ages 12+) and bear (ages 14+) with a muzzleloading firearm during muzzleloading season, and the Jan. special firearms season in Suffolk County (WMU 1C; ages 14+). Hunt deer (ages 12+) and bear (ages 14+) with a crossbow (see page 25). Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license.	12–69 (NYS Resident)	\$15
	70+ (NYS Resident)	FREE
	Military Disabled ¹	FREE
	Patriot ²	\$15
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
	12+ (Non-Resident)	\$30

Licenses, Privileges, and Permits

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
Deer Management Permit Application (Ages 12+) Privileges: 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 (WMU). See DMP information on pages 30–31. Application deadline is Oct. 1 annually. Qualifications: Must hold a current year NYS hunting license to apply and pay a non-refundable \$10 application fee. Fee is waived for hunters 12–15 years of age and holders of Lifetime (Sportsman) Licenses purchased prior to Oct. 1, 2009.	12–15 (NYS Resident)	FREE
	16+ (NYS Resident)	\$10
	Military Disabled ¹	\$10
	Patriot ²	\$10
	Indigenous Peoples ³	\$10
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$10
Turkey Permit (Ages 12+) Privileges: 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. Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license. Turkey tags are included with a Lifetime License.	12+ (NYS Resident)	\$10
	Military Disabled ¹	\$10
	Patriot ²	\$10
	Indigenous Peoples ³	\$10
Trapping Privileges: Set traps for species during their appropriate seasons (see pages 61–65 for detailed information). Qualifications: Trapper Education Certificate or previous trapping license from any state or country. See page 45 for additional information on the mentoring program for trappers under 12 years of age.	12+ (Non-Resident)	\$20
	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$20
	70+ (NYS Resident)	\$5
	Military Disabled ¹	\$5
	Patriot ²	FREE
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$5
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$275

¹**Military Disabled:** Must be a NYS resident and provide a letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs showing a 40% or greater service-connected disability. Once the disability is confirmed and entered, it will stay in your customer profile. **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.

²**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.

³**Indigenous Peoples:** Recognizing the sovereignty of Indigenous Nations and their governments, tribal members do not need a hunting, fishing, or trapping license from DEC when engaged in these activities on Nation territory. Members of the Shinnecock and Unkechaug Nations, and members of the Haudenosaunee Nations enrolled on reservations wholly or partially in New York State may hunt, fish, and trap off of tribal lands using their tribal identification card or by obtaining a free hunting, fishing, and trapping license from DEC. Licenses can be obtained from participating tribal and nation councils or by calling DEC headquarters in Albany at 518-402-8843.

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 State does not make you a resident. Residency is that place where a person maintains a fixed, permanent, and principal home (regardless of where temporarily located), such as where a person is registered to vote. If under age 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 dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/general-info#Res.

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

Lifetime License Delivered Via Email

As a Lifetime License holder, you now have the option to have your license and tags emailed directly to you each year instead of being mailed. By choosing to have your license and tags emailed, you will receive them sooner and avoid the possibility of having them get lost in the mail. Once you receive the email, you can print your license and tags and be ready for the season. To sign up call 1-866-933-2257 or sign into your online DECALS account at <http://decals.east.licensing.app/>. Click on Lifetime Delivery Preference under My Account and change your Current Selection to Send Tags Via Email.

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 (see **Residency information** on page 10). 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 dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/lifetime.

Lifetime License holders should expect to receive their annual carcass tags in the mail no later than Sept. 1 annually. Lifetime License holders can also sign up to have their qualifying license and tags emailed to them, see Lifetime License Delivered Via Email below. License Issuing Agents will replace licenses and tags free of charge between Sept. 1 and Nov. 1. After Nov. 1, there will be a replacement 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

Lifetime Licenses and Tags for Young Hunters

Lifetime licenses can be purchased only as a gift for children under 16. 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, 8AM–5PM). 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**



It's the law!

For more information see page 15.

General License Information

Deer Hunting Privileges and Tags

Resident and Non-resident Hunter Licenses

- **Hunting or Junior Hunting (ages 12–15):** Hunters ages 12 and older will receive a Regular Season Deer Tag and hunters ages 14 and older will receive a Regular Season Deer Tag and 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 ages 12–13 will receive an Either Sex Tag and a Bear Tag. Junior bowhunters ages 14–15 will receive an Either Sex Tag. Junior bowhunters may use the Either Sex Deer 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.

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 Sept. 1 through Aug. 31.



Paul D. hunting in Wayne County.
Photo taken by Anthony F.

Stamps / Donations

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
Habitat & Access Stamp Donations are used to create or improve fish and wildlife habitat and improve access to those resources for recreational or educational activities.	Any	\$5
Venison Donation Help feed the hungry by supporting NYS's venison donation program.	Any	\$1 or more
Federal Duck Stamp 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 1-866-933-2257 or dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/hunting-license/harvest-information-program . Qualifications: Validated by holder's signature on the face of the stamp. Hunter must also possess a current-year NYS hunting license.		

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 [DMPs]—see pages 30–31).
- 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 land 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.
- Sign the front of your license/privilege page.

Valid Proof of Licenses and Carcass Tags

You must carry valid proof of your license(s), privilege(s), permit(s), and all applicable tags. Valid proof of license(s), privilege(s), permit(s) includes: print out on 8.5" x 11" paper, digital copy, or electronic license in HuntFishApp. Carcass tags must be printed on 8.5" x 11" paper. You must be able to fill out your paper tag upon harvest. See pages 14-15 for more information on tagging your harvest.

Backtags

As a result of law change, backtags are no longer required while hunting anywhere in New York State.

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.

Indigenous Nations Licenses/ Patriot Licenses

Free hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses are available to members of the Shinnecock and Unkechaug Nations and members of the Six Nations residing on reservations in the state. They must be obtained from some Nations councils or by calling DEC headquarters in Albany at 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

License holders can replace licenses and tags for free by accessing their sporting license account, online at decals.east.licensing.app. License holders can login to their online DECALS profile and print a copy of their license and tags free of charge. Additionally, a lost license may be replaced at any license issuing agent (LIA) at a cost of \$5 for a license sheet. Big game carcass tag sets or turkey carcass tag sets may be replaced at a cost of \$10. Licenses and tags replaced at a LIA or over the phone (1-866-933-2257) may be subject to the applicable printing/ mailing fee.

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 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 in place of a bow for the entire bow season.

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.

Reasonable Accommodation To Use an Unmodified Crossbow During the Regular Bow Season

This reasonable accommodation may be requested by an individual who is incapable of holding a bow or operating a mechanical device attached to a legal longbow for drawing, holding, and releasing a bowstring due to a temporary or permanent physical disability and whose needs are not met by the Modified Longbow Authorization or Modified Crossbow Special Permit.

To qualify for a Reasonable Accommodation To Use an Unmodified Crossbow During the Regular Bow Season, an individual must obtain certification of disability from a physician and submit a reasonable accommodation request form.

For more information on these permits, visit dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/hunting-license/permits-for-hunters-with-disabilities; write the NYS DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752; email speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov; or call 518-402-8985. The application process takes time; write or call well before you intend to hunt.

E-Licenses, E-Tags & Paper Tags

Note: At press time, regulation changes were pending that would authorize use of e-licenses and e-tags and would change the length of the harvest reporting period. Check DEC's website before hunting seasons to see if e-tags were adopted.

Q: What is an e-license and an e-tag?

A: An e-license is the electronic record of your hunting, fishing, and trapping license privileges in DEC's HuntFishNY mobile app. E-tags are electronic records of your unreported and reported carcass tags for deer, bear, and turkey in the HuntFishNY app. The HuntFishNY mobile app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and the Google Play store (see <https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/huntfishny-mobile-app> for more information). Once you are signed into the app you can tap on My Licenses & Tags/Report Harvests to view your licenses and tags.

Q: Will I still have the option to use paper tags?

A: Yes. Plain paper licenses and tags will still be available and a valid option while hunting.

Q: How do I purchase my license(s) and tags?

A: You may still purchase your licenses and tags online, at an LIA or over the phone. You'll now have the option to choose an e-license and e-tags or to receive a paper license and paper tags.

Q: Is harvest reporting changing?

A: Yes. E-tag users must report immediately after taking a deer, bear, or turkey. Paper tag users must report within 48 hours (no longer 7 days) of taking an animal.

Q: Do I need internet service to view my e-licenses or report my e-tags?

A: No. As long as you sign into your HuntFishNY account while online before going afield, your licenses and tags continue to show in the app even while offline. You can report an e-tag without internet service. The report will be uploaded as soon as you regain internet service.

Q: If I use an e-tag, do I have to attach anything to the deer I harvest?

A: Hunters using e-tags who harvest a deer, bear, or turkey must immediately electronically "tag" the animal by reporting the harvest via the HuntFishNY mobile app. They do not need to attach anything to the carcass while they remain in possession of the carcass, including in their vehicle and at their home. If the carcass is not in their possession, the hunter must attach to the carcass a tag of their making that includes their name and reporting confirmation number (available in the mobile app). They can also print, fill-out (including reporting confirmation number), and attach the carcass tag from their DECALS account.

E-Tag → Take it → Report it → Tag it if you Leave it

Paper Tag → Take it → Tag it → Report it

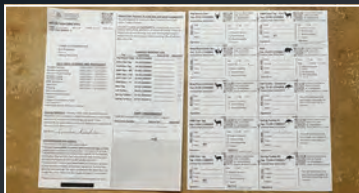
Print and Tag



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Steps for attaching your new plain paper tag to your harvest:

1. Get your paper tags from a license-issuing agent or print them from the PDF sent to your email



2. Cut the appropriate tag from the sheet of paper



3. Upon harvesting, fill in the tag with the harvest information and sign it



4. Place the tag in a weatherproof case or bag (see below for examples)



5. Attach weatherproof case or bag to the animal, keeping the tag visible



Remember: Hunters are responsible for protecting their paper tag so it remains intact and legible and must attach the tag so it is visible. Tags do not need to be attached to deer or bear until arrival at home, camp, or vehicle.

Examples of weatherproof casings:



Reusable
sandwich bag



Reusable plastic
tag holder



ID holder



Plastic
sandwich bag



Report Your Harvests with the HuntFishNY App

Use DEC's HuntFishNY app as an e-license and to report your game harvest. HuntFishNY gives you a quick and easy way to:

- Access your sporting licenses, privileges, and permits
- Submit game harvest reports, even when out of cellular range
- View current and past harvest reports
- Look at season maps and a sunrise-sunset table
- Read DEC's current Hunting & Trapping Guide

HuntFishNY now includes the Tackle Box feature for anglers!

Get the HuntFishNY app free from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Note: You will need a DECALS username and password to access your license documents through the app. If you don't have a username and password, visit <https://on.ny.gov/3KXkt5n> to get yours today.

Questions? Call our sporting license hotline at 1-866-472-4332.



How to Properly Fill Out Your Carcass Tag and Report Your Harvest

Reg Season Deer Tag
Tag: 25-03-12340001
License Year 2025/2026

Kill info
 Date 11/27/24
 County Greene
 Town Cairo
 WMU 44

Signature Cornelius Raberdasher

Antler Pts: L 3 R 3

Sex ☒ M ☐ F

☒ Regular Season
☐ Bowhunting
☐ Muzzleloading
☐ Youth

DOB: 05/31/1982
ID: 100409008941
Issued: 08/06/25 11:50AM

Affirmed under penalty of perjury pursuant to PL 210.45

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

- 1 Fill in the date, location, biological, and season information on your tag.
- 2 Sign your tag.
- 3 Report your harvest! See details below.

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

E-Tag → Take it → Report it → Tag it if you Leave it
Paper Tag → Take it → Tag it → Report it

Reporting Your Game Harvest

- Deer, Bear, and Turkey harvests must be reported.
- At press time, DEC proposed regulations to reduce the time period for reporting. See DEC's website for updates.
- You can report your harvest by phone, online, or through our HuntFishNY mobile app (see page 8 for details).
- Reporting online (dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/report-your-harvest) and through the mobile app is simple, fast, and convenient!

Information You Will Need When Reporting

12 DIGIT TAG #

Reg Season Deer Tag
Tag: 25-03-12340001
License Year 2025/2026

Kill info
 Date 11/27/24
 County Greene
 Town Cairo
 WMU 44

Signature Cornelius Raberdasher

Antler Pts: L 3 R 3

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☒ Regular Season
☐ Bowhunting
☐ Muzzleloading
☐ Youth

DOB: 05/31/1982
ID: 100409008941
Issued: 08/06/25 11:50AM

Affirmed under penalty of perjury pursuant to PL 210.45

CORRECT TAG TYPE

HARVEST REPORT LOG

Tag	Tag Number	Date of Kill	Reported?
Bear	24-02-12340001		<input type="checkbox"/>
Reg Season Deer	24-03-12340001	<u>11/27/2024</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Sex	24-19-12340003		<input type="checkbox"/>
Antlerless	24-20-12340002		<input type="checkbox"/>
Fall Turkey	24-02-12340002		<input type="checkbox"/>
Spring Turkey 1	24-02-12340003		<input type="checkbox"/>
Spring Turkey 2	24-02-12340004		<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.

For Black Bear >> Remember to save the bear's skull. DEC will request a tooth to determine the bear's age.

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NEW YORK STATE Department of Environmental Conservation

at one of the 51 DEC Campgrounds in the Adirondack & Catskill Forest Preserve of New York State

newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com

If you SEE something, SAY something

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PRIME HUNTING LAND FOR SALE

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 a 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 100–200 pounds. Optical sights are allowed on crossbows. * Pending legislation would, if adopted, remove the minimum limb width and maximum draw weight restrictions.

Dwelling—a permanent place where people live and sleep. Excluded are temporary residential units including camping trailers, motor homes or other portable shelters. Also excluded are abandoned dwellings, detached garages, tree houses, "playscapes", decks, pool areas, storage sheds and out-buildings - even when/if they are temporarily occupied. A permanent camp or cabin may qualify as a dwelling house.

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 State does not recognize permits issued by other states.

Muzzleloading firearm—is a firearm loaded through the muzzle, shooting a single projectile and having a minimum bore of .44 inches. 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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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 12)
- 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 semiautomatic 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 (except for frogs—see page 46)
- 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

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 60.

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

Donate \$5 to the Habitat & Access Stamp Program

This year's Habitat & Access Stamp features an American kestrel. All funds from stamp donations are used for projects aimed at conserving fish and wildlife habitat and increasing access to public and private lands for outdoor recreation.

To make your donation today, scan the QR code, visit your local license-issuing agent, or call **1-866-933-2257**.



deer. A rifle larger than .22-caliber rimfire means a rifle chambered for a rimfire cartridge greater than .22-caliber or any centerfire rifle. 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.

New York State recently adopted legislation governing the purchase or transfer of ownership of semiautomatic rifles. Go to www.dec.ny.gov or <https://safeact.ny.gov/resources-hunters> for more information.

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 taken down or unloaded (bolt removed and crossbow uncocked).

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. 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.

Whenever a gun is in a vehicle and an adult is not present, the gun must be locked in a plastic or metal hard-sided case or safe and be hidden from view. See <https://gunsafety.ny.gov/resources-gun-owners> for more details about gun transportation.

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

Hunter Education

Hunter Education Program Requirements

All first-time hunters, bowhunters, and trappers must pass one or more courses before they can purchase a license. New York State offers both in-person courses and online options. For more information, visit: <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/hunter-education/courses-certifications>

In-Person Hunter Education Program Courses

Free of charge – Hands on experience – Homework – Exam

In-person courses are taught by DEC trained and certified volunteer instructors and are offered throughout the year in all regions of the state. Homework must be completed in advance and brought to the class. Visit https://www.register-ed.com/programs/new_york for available in-person courses near you.

Online Hunter Education Program Courses

Has a fee – Take at your own pace – Question Modules – Exam

NY's online course options meet all the requirements to earn your hunter education or bowhunter education certificate. You must be a NYS resident to take the online courses. Visit <https://www.hunter-ed.com/newyork/> to access online courses.

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. 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.



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Regulations for Land Types

Places to Hunt in New York

DECinfo Locator is an interactive map that includes DEC lands with public hunting access and other outdoor recreation information. Go to dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator.

For additional information about places to hunt in New York State, go to dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/places.

Private Lands

Always ASK the landowner for permission to hunt and trap on private land. Consider if it were your land and how you would like a visitor to act.

- Be courteous—ASK permission well in advance.
- ASK what is permitted. What species can be hunted? Are tree stands allowed?
- ASK if friends can join you.
- Exercise safety—always!
- Thank the landowner.

Many landowners use "ASK permission" stickers on their signs, which show the landowners' willingness to allow access to their lands. Stickers are available for free from your local Regional Wildlife Office (see page 6) or from DEC Central Office, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4754. For more information on hunting on private lands: dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/places#Hunting.

Remember: Damaging bark or cutting trees, branches, or plants is illegal without permission of the landowner.

ASK Permission

"ASK Permission" stickers, a brochure explaining the program, Landowner Permission forms, and information about fish and wildlife conservation are available for free from DEC Regional Wildlife Offices or by writing:

NYSDEC, 625 Broadway,
Albany, NY 12233-4754

OR online
at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/places



Rights-of-way that cross private property, such as for power lines and railroads, are not public land. Trespassing on these areas without permission from the landowner is illegal.

FWMA Cooperative Areas

Through cooperative agreements under New York State's Fish and Wildlife Management Act (FWMA), Cooperative Hunting Areas provide access and management services to privately owned lands in order to increase public hunting opportunities. When using these areas, remember that you are a guest on private property. Littering and other abuses will only result in closure of many excellent hunting areas.

A Word About Liability

Whether or not the land is posted, New York State General Obligations Law protects landowners from liability for non-paying recreationists engaged in hunting, trapping, and fishing on their property. Because of this protection, recreational liability lawsuits against rural landowners are uncommon. This protection does not apply in cases of willful or malicious failure to guard or warn against dangers.

State Recreation Lands

For information on hunting and trapping opportunities and rules governing the use of State land, contact the regional DEC office for the county where you would like to hunt or trap (see page 6). DEC Wildlife staff can provide information on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and Cooperative Hunting Areas. DEC Forestry staff and Forest Rangers can provide details on State Forest lands and Forest Preserve lands. In some instances, written permission or permits are required to use State lands. These are available from DEC regional offices during normal business hours. For more information on State land regulations, visit: dec.ny.gov/regulatory/regulations.

Motorized Access to State Lands

DEC has designated routes on State Forests, WMAs, Forest Preserve lands and conservation easement lands for motor vehicle use by people with a qualifying mobility disability. For a list of these opportunities, along with information on how to obtain a motorized access permit, visit: dec.ny.gov/places-to-go/accessible-recreation/mappwd.

Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)

The Division of Fish and Wildlife manages over 211,000 acres of WMAs. These areas are located throughout the state and contain many different types of habitat and wildlife. They are managed primarily for wildlife and wildlife-related public use.

WMAs have specific use regulations in addition to the general use regulations for State land, and some WMAs also have area-specific regulations. Hunting, trapping, and fishing are allowed, except as specifically restricted by posted notice.

On WMAs, it is unlawful to:

- Target shoot unless posted as an allowed activity
- Camp without written permission
- Travel off-road by use of motorcycles, motor scooters, mopeds, trail bikes, snowmobiles, or any other motorized vehicle, except as specifically allowed by a permit or posted notice
- Remove, cut, or willfully damage or destroy living vegetation of any kind
- Construct or place a permanent structure, blind, stand, or platform (including placement of nails or other hardware into trees)
- Leave any personal property when exiting the area, including trail cameras. Tree stands labeled with name and address or DEC ID number may be left overnight, but must be removed at the end of the hunting season
- Enter property posted with "No Trespassing" signs, except with written permission from DEC

For more information on WMAs, go to:

dec.ny.gov/places-to-go/wildlife-management-areas.

Lands and Forests

The Division of Lands and Forests manages nearly 5 million acres of land, located in almost every county of the state. From the remote locations of the Adirondack and Catskill mountains to the rolling hills of the western part of the state and the forested areas on Long Island, a wide range of hunting and trapping opportunities await the outdoor recreationist.

Forest Preserve Lands

Hunting and trapping are permitted in the Adirondack and Catskill forest preserves. State-owned lands located within these preserves are designated Forever Wild. All State land rules and camping requirements apply to the preserves, as well as additional rules specific to certain areas.

Need help? Call a Ranger 833-NYS-RANGERS (833-697-7264)

Call a Forest Ranger for assistance with search and rescue, wildfires, reporting violations on DEC lands, obtaining backcountry camping permits, and more.

For a list of Forest Rangers by county, visit dec.ny.gov/about/contact-us/forest-ranger-rosters or scan the QR code.

If you need immediate assistance, dial 911.



Contact the regional DEC office (see page 6) of the county where you would like to hunt or trap for more information. For further information on Forest Preserve lands, visit: dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/forest-preserve.

Conservation Easement Lands

Conservation easements are tracts of privately owned property on which New York State has acquired certain public recreation rights. These rights are outlined in the easement document as well as in a recreation management plan jointly developed by DEC and the landowner. Public hunting and trapping are allowed on many conservation easements, but due to the individual nature of each property, members of the public wishing to hunt or trap on a given easement are strongly encouraged to contact a local DEC office (see page 6) in the county where the property is located. The office can provide details on how to properly access the property and the hunting and trapping regulations unique to the easement. For further information on DEC-held conservation easements, visit dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/conservation-easements.

State Forest Lands

Outside the Adirondacks and Catskills, State Forest lands are the most common type of State lands. Many recreational activities can be pursued on these lands, including hunting and trapping.

In some instances, permits are required to camp overnight on undeveloped State Forest lands. Unless specifically prohibited, groups of less than 10 people may camp on State Forest lands (other than developed campgrounds and WMAs) for three consecutive nights without a permit. To camp for four consecutive nights or more, a permit must be obtained. Groups of 10 or more people need a permit to camp on such lands for one night. Further information may be obtained from DEC regional offices for the county you want to camp in (see page 6). For further information on State Forest lands, visit: dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/state-forests.

Remember, it is unlawful to:

- Cut or injure trees (including construction of permanent tree stands, construction of natural blinds, clearing of shooting lanes around portable stands, placement of nails or other hardware into trees, or use of live trees as targets while sighting-in firearms).
- Store personal property, which includes:
 - » Trail cameras.
 - » Tree stands or hunting blinds that do not injure a tree and are properly marked or tagged with the owner's name and address or valid hunting license number may be placed during the appropriate hunting season, but must be removed at the end of the season.

- Erect, use, or maintain a building or structure.
- Deposit or leave any litter or rubbish.
- Operate a motor vehicle off maintained roads, except where specifically allowed.
- Operate an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) other than designated by posting or by permit.
- Camp without a permit when a permit is required.
- Possess a rifle, shotgun, or firearm in or upon buildings or grounds used for educational purposes (see Penal Law Section 265.01-a).

State Parks

Many State Parks offer waterfowl, small game, and big game hunting. For more information, contact the appropriate DEC regional office (see page 6) or visit the State Parks hunting website (parks.ny.gov/recreation/hunting). Call each State Park to find out specific hunting and access regulations. For a listing of State Parks that allow deer hunting, visit dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/places/state-parks-that-allow-hunting.

Other Areas to Hunt

- **Finger Lakes National Forest (federal):** Located east of Seneca Lake in Schuyler and Seneca counties, small and big game hunting opportunities are available. Special hunting permits are not required.
- **Fort Drum Military Base (federal):** Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) 6H, located in Jefferson and Lewis counties includes over half of the 107,000-acre U.S. Army military installation, which is open to the public for hunting and trapping. See the Fort Drum Fish and Wildlife Management Program website for more information at fortdrum.isportsman.net or call 315-772-9303.
- **Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (federal):** Located at the north end of Cayuga Lake in Seneca County, this site offers small game and waterfowl hunting opportunities. This area is also open for deer hunting on a controlled basis during both the bowhunting and regular seasons. Permits are required. When deer management permit use is allowed, WMU 8J permits are valid. For current information on seasons, permits, maps, and regulations visit Montezuma's website at fws.gov/refuge/montezuma/visit-us/activities/hunting.
- **Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge (federal):** Located in Genesee and Orleans counties in western New York, this site offers small game and waterfowl hunting opportunities.

This area is also open for deer hunting during both the bowhunting and regular seasons. For further information, visit fws.gov/refuge/iroquois/visit-us/activities/hunting.

- **Long Island:** For a brochure on areas to hunt and for access permits, please email the DEC regional office at wildlife.r1@dec.ny.gov.
- **New York City Watershed Lands:** The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) allows trapping, as well as deer, bear, turkey, and small game hunting on specially designated city water supply lands. Hunters and trappers must possess the appropriate, valid New York State sporting license and a valid access permit to hunt or trap on designated hunting and trapping areas on City water supply lands. For more information, including maps, visit nyc.gov/site/dep/recreation/hunting-trapping.page.

DEC Campgrounds

DEC operates 52 public campgrounds in the Adirondack and Catskill parks. Hunting is not permitted within these campgrounds, although some campgrounds allow camping during big game season. Unloaded firearms are allowed on public campgrounds only during the spring and fall hunting seasons. A valid hunting license is needed. Firearms cannot be discharged in the campground or day-use facilities at any time. For more information on DEC's campgrounds, visit dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/camping/campgrounds-day-use-areas.

Campgrounds outside the forest preserves are operated by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (see State Parks).

For all campgrounds, reservations can be made by calling 1-800-456-CAMP or online at newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com.

Licensed Guides

For information on licensed professional guides in New York State, contact NYS DEC, 625 Broadway, NY 12233-4752; call 518-402-8985; or visit dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/fish-wildlife-plant/licensed-guide-program.

Use of ATVs and off-road vehicles (ORVs) is restricted on most State lands.

Indigenous Nations Territories

New York State shares borders with nine sovereign Indigenous Nations. Nation territories or lands, most often being reservations, are reserved for the exclusive use of recognized Nation citizens. While most Indigenous Nations do not permit non-Nation citizens to hunt, trap, or fish on their land, some have made exceptions for limited public hunting, trapping, and fishing access. New York State sporting license privileges do not extend to Indigenous Nations lands. Check with the respective Nation's office to determine the requirements for hunting, trapping, and fishing within the Nation's boundaries, and whether a special permit may be required if these activities are allowed. As a responsible New York State hunter, it is important to know where you are; any trespass onto Indigenous Nations land while hunting or trapping or afield is enforceable by community or tribal police, DEC Environmental Conservation Police Officers, and NYS Police.

Big Game Hunting

Hunting Hours

Big game hunting hours are 1/2-hour before sunrise to 1/2-hour after sunset (see page 80). Sunday hunting is allowed in all areas of New York State. Before hunting on State lands, confirm regulations for the area.

Fluorescent Orange and Fluorescent Pink Clothing Requirements

Any person hunting deer or bear with a firearm or a person who is accompanying someone hunting deer or bear with a firearm shall wear:

1. a minimum total of 250 square inches of solid fluorescent orange or fluorescent pink material worn above the waist and visible from all directions; or
2. a minimum total of 250 square inches of patterned fluorescent orange or fluorescent pink consisting of no less than 50% fluorescent orange or fluorescent pink worn above the waist and visible from all directions; or
3. a hat or cap with no less than 50% of the exterior consisting of solid fluorescent orange or fluorescent pink material and visible from all directions.

Legally Antlered Deer

A legally antlered deer must have at least one antler that is 3" or longer. Antlerless deer are those without antlers (does and fawns) and deer with antlers less than 3" long. Special regulations apply in the Antler Restriction areas. See page 26 for details.

Defining "Early" and "Late" Seasons for Deer and Bear

The term "early" muzzleloader or bowhunting season means before the regular season for that particular zone. "Late" means after the regular season for that zone.

Feeding and Baiting Prohibited

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

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Import Restrictions

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

Manner of Taking

Big game may be taken with centerfire rifles, shotguns, handguns, muzzleloading firearms, bows, and crossbows during appropriate seasons and in designated areas (see maps, pages 26 and 27). You may use decoys, calls, and attractant scents to hunt big game.

It is unlawful to:

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

In addition to the general hunting regulations for manner of take listed on page 16, it is unlawful to hunt big game with:

- Dogs (except as authorized by leashed tracking dog license) or aircraft of any kind, including drones.
- The aid of a pre-established bait pile.
- A firearm or bow aided by any artificial light or a laser that projects a beam toward the target (use of illuminated reticle scopes, laser range-finders, red dot scopes, or illuminated sight pins is allowed, provided no light is projected toward the target).
- An autoloading firearm with a capacity of more than 6 shells (one which requires that the trigger be pulled separately for each shot), except an autoloading pistol with a barrel length of less than 8 inches.
- A firearm using rimfire ammunition.
- A shotgun of less than 20 gauge or any shotgun loaded with shells other than those carrying a single projectile (rifling in the barrel or choke is allowed).



Max C. had a successful hunt with his mentors in Delaware County. Photo credit to Vera C.

- A bow with a draw weight less than 35 lbs.
- Arrows with barbed broadheads; arrowheads less than 7/8 inches at the widest point or with less than 2 sharp cutting edges.
- Double-barreled muzzleloaders or percussion cap revolvers during the special muzzleloading seasons.
- An air gun or air bow.

Deer Management Focus Area

See dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/deer-management-focus-areas for information on the Deer Management Focus Area in Tompkins County. Expanded antlerless bag limits and a Jan. antlerless season in this area provide additional opportunities for hunters and help to reduce deer-related conflicts.

Long Island Opportunities

All hunting on State-managed land requires a DEC permit. The archery deer season runs from Oct. through Jan. There is a Jan. firearms season during which shotguns and muzzleloading firearms can be used. Firearms users must obtain a landowner's endorsement to hunt during this season, and may also need a town permit. For more information on Long Island hunting opportunities, visit dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/places/long-island.

Prohibited Sale of Deer or Bear Meat

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

Continued on page 22



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John Dudley
@nockontv



Big Game Hunting

Continued from page 20

Meat Unfit for Consumption

If a deer, bear, or turkey is found to be unfit for human consumption, a special permit may be issued that allows the hunter to take another deer, bear, or turkey, provided the season is still open. The entire animal, including the antlers, must be forfeited to get a permit. A permit will not be issued if the meat is unfit due to hunter neglect. Call a regional DEC Wildlife office or Law Enforcement office listed on page 6.

Tagging, Reporting, and Transporting

Deer and bear are in legal possession only when tagged with the completed carcass tag, valid for that season. See page 28 for clear tag descriptions.

Hunters who take a deer or bear in remote areas may wish to bone it out and pack out the meat. This is lawful, but you must retain the carcass tag with the boned-out meat.

Tagging and Reporting

After harvesting a deer or bear:

1. Ensure that you select the proper tag for the harvested deer or bear.

2. **Immediately** fill in all information and sign the carcass tag with ink that won't erase.
3. Write the date of kill on the reporting portion of your hunting license. This will help you when reporting a harvest.
4. Place the tag in a weatherproof case or bag. (See page 14).
5. **Attach the tag** to the carcass upon arrival at your camp, home, or vehicle. You do not need to attach the tag while it is being dragged or physically carried from the place of kill to a camp or point where transportation is available.
6. **Report your harvest** online, by phone, or mobile app within 7 days as required by law. See page 15 for details.

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

Transporting

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

- A deer carcass with head and deer carcass tag attached may be transported with the taker in attendance.
- If someone other than the taker is transporting the deer or bear, the taker must attach an additional tag to the carcass and include the

names and addresses of both the taker and the transporter. The tag may be handwritten in ink or typed on any paper.

- All portions of deer or bear meat being transported by the taker shall be individually tagged and the tags shall include the name, address, big game DOC #, the date that the portions were cut, and the signature of the taker. Packaged or boxed portions of venison need only one tag and must be labeled "venison" on the outside of the box. If someone other than the taker is transporting the portions, an additional tag signed by the taker with the names and addresses of the consignee and taker are required for each portion.
- Non-resident hunters: if your home state prohibits the importation of whole deer carcasses from New York State, you will need to follow the previous guidelines for transportation of individual or packaged portions of deer meat while in New York State.
- A deer carcass minus the head may be transported as described previously, but evidence of the sex of the deer must be intact. The deer carcass tag must be affixed to the carcass, and a tag supplied by the taker must also be attached showing the name and address of the taxidermist where the head was sent.
- Heads of male deer may be transported to a taxidermist only if a tag supplied by the taker is attached bearing the taker's signature, address, big game DOC #, number of points



Hunters can help end hunger in New York State

Each year, DEC partners with Feeding New York State to provide food for those in need. Through a cooperative relationship involving hunters, deer processors, the NYS Dept. of Health, and non-profit organizations like Feeding NYS, and regional food banks, nearly 40 tons of venison are made available each year to families across the state.

There are many ways a hunter can help feed those less fortunate. You can donate all or part of your deer at a cooperating processor, support your regional food bank monetarily, or you can make a cash donation to support venison donation programs when you purchase your hunting license.

Learn more about these programs by visiting:

dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/venison-donation

Meat processors help ensure that harvested deer and bears are fully utilized by hunters and their families, or by those in need through venison donation programs. Many processors also allow DEC to collect biological data from deer and bears brought to their shops, which provides critical information to support DEC's deer and bear management. To find a meat processor near you please scan this QR code.



Joey M. showing a successful harvest after hunting with Frank M.

on each antler, and the name and address of the taxidermist.

- The head of a doe with antlers that are 3 inches or more can be removed for mounting. Follow the same procedure that you would use for mounting a buck (see previous).

Muzzleloader Hunting

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

- Hunters must possess a current muzzleloader privilege to participate during the muzzleloader seasons.
- The muzzleloader privilege is not needed for hunters to use a muzzleloading firearm during regular firearms seasons or Jan. firearms season on Long Island.
- Muzzleloaders may not be used in WMUs 3S, 4J, 8C, and may only be used in 1C during the Jan. firearms season.
- Bow/Muzz either-sex or antlerless-only tags may not be used during the regular seasons, except in WMUs 1C and 3S.
- Hunters participating in the muzzleloader season shall not have in their possession, or be accompanied by a person who has in their possession, a bow or firearm other than a legal muzzleloading firearm or crossbow.

Bowhunting

Bowhunting opportunities include both the bowhunting and regular seasons:

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

Crossbow Use

At press time, pending legislation would, if adopted, expand when and where crossbows could be used, making the following information incorrect. Refer to DEC's website (<http://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/regulations/crossbow>) for the most up to date information about hunting with crossbows, including qualification documentation.





- Crossbows may be used to take deer during muzzleloader seasons and a portion of the early bow seasons (see maps on page 27) by hunters with a valid hunting or junior hunting (ages 12–15 only) license and a current

muzzleloader privilege. Junior hunters (ages 14–15) may also take bear with crossbows during these seasons (see map on page 38).

- Crossbows may be used to take deer during the regular season by hunters with a valid hunting or junior hunting (ages 12–15) license and to take bear during the early bear and regular seasons by hunters with a valid hunting or junior hunting (ages 14–15 only) license.
- See DEC's website for the required Crossbow Certificate of Qualification.

Barbed Broadheads

Barbed broadheads are illegal for hunting big game. A barbed broadhead is one in which the angle formed between the trailing or rear edge of any blade and the shaft is less than 90 degrees. A notch at the base of the blade extending no more than 2 millimeters from the shaft shall not be considered a barb. Broadheads with mechanical blades are legal if the blades freely swing forward into a nonbarbed position upon withdrawal of the arrow.

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

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DEC's Response to CWD in a Captive Deer Herd in 2024

No CWD Found in Wild Deer

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal disease that poses a major threat to New York State's white-tailed deer and moose populations, hunting traditions, and sustainable use of venison. It has spread widely through deer and elk populations across North America and is caused by misfolded proteins, called prions, that affect a deer's brain and nervous system. Because there is no vaccine or treatment for CWD, it is almost impossible to eliminate once introduced. Therefore, preventing its introduction or finding it early, if present, are the best management strategies.

Since 2002, DEC has collected samples from and tested over 69,000 deer as part of its annual CWD surveillance program. In 2005, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) detected CWD in a captive deer facility and in two wild deer in Oneida County. Through swift action by DEC and AGM, including depopulation of the index herd and removal of nearly 300 deer in the area, New York eradicated the CWD outbreak, the first successful eradication of CWD ever documented. For the next 19 years, New York continued to be CWD-free.

Unfortunately, in the fall of 2024, AGM again detected CWD in a captive red deer herd in southern Herkimer County. Upon confirmation, DEC and AGM activated the Interagency CWD Response Plan, which guides the actions of both agencies to determine the scope of the outbreak and inform future disease management decisions. DEC's primary responsibility was to determine whether CWD was present in

wild white-tailed deer nearby and, if so, to what extent, while AGM was responsible for depopulating the infected red deer herd and investigating possible sources of origin from other captive deer facilities in the area. AGM found CWD in 4 of the 200 depopulated red deer but could not determine how the red deer herd became infected.

DEC's initial CWD surveillance efforts involved the sampling of wild deer from within approximately one-half mile of the captive deer facility. With cooperating landowner permission, DEC and United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services (USDA-WS) staff collected 31 deer for testing in early November.

DEC also established an area of interest around the captive deer facility that encompassed the towns of Columbia, German Flatts, Litchfield, Warren, and Winfield in Herkimer County, and the town of Richfield in Otsego County. DEC partnered with hunters, venison processors, taxidermists, and highway departments in these towns to collect and test samples from hunter-harvested and road-killed deer. To aid in this process, DEC obtained seven deer head collection bins from the Pennsylvania Game Commission and placed them at convenient locations throughout the six-town area to provide an easy avenue for deer heads to be submitted for CWD testing.

DEC collected samples from a total of 201 wild deer over the course of the fall and into early winter. Of those, 196 were submitted for CWD testing with all determined to be CWD-free. The remaining five samples were not able to be tested for varying reasons. These results are encouraging and indicate that CWD has not spread into the wild deer herd or, if it has, the prevalence rate is very low.

While these results are promising, it is premature to claim that New York is once again CWD-free. There is more work to be done, and you can help.

If you live or hunt in the six-town area of interest:

1. Immediately report any observations of sick-acting deer to the nearest DEC office. For a listing of DEC offices and phone numbers, see page 6.
2. Submit the head of any deer you harvest to DEC for CWD testing. This will strengthen confidence that New York State remains CWD-free and reduce the likelihood that DEC will need to collect additional deer from the area in the future.

DEC also encourages all deer hunters to help prevent the introduction of CWD into New York State:

- If you deer hunt outside of New York, debone your venison before bringing it back into New York State as required by law.
- Avoid using natural deer urine-based scents or lures as they could contain CWD. Use synthetic products instead.
- Dispose of deer carcass parts where the deer was harvested or in a landfill.
- Hunt only wild deer and support fair chase hunting principles.
- Don't feed wild deer which can concentrate animals and facilitate the spread of CWD.

To learn more about CWD and what you can do to help keep New York State CWD-Free, visit DEC's CWD webpage at:

<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/wildlife-health/animal-diseases/chronic-wasting-disease>



CWD head collection bin.

Report Moose Sightings

DEC and its research partners are working to understand the status of the moose population. You can help us by reporting moose sightings at dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/moose.



Photo by April Percy



Emily M. with a successful harvest in Tioga, NY.

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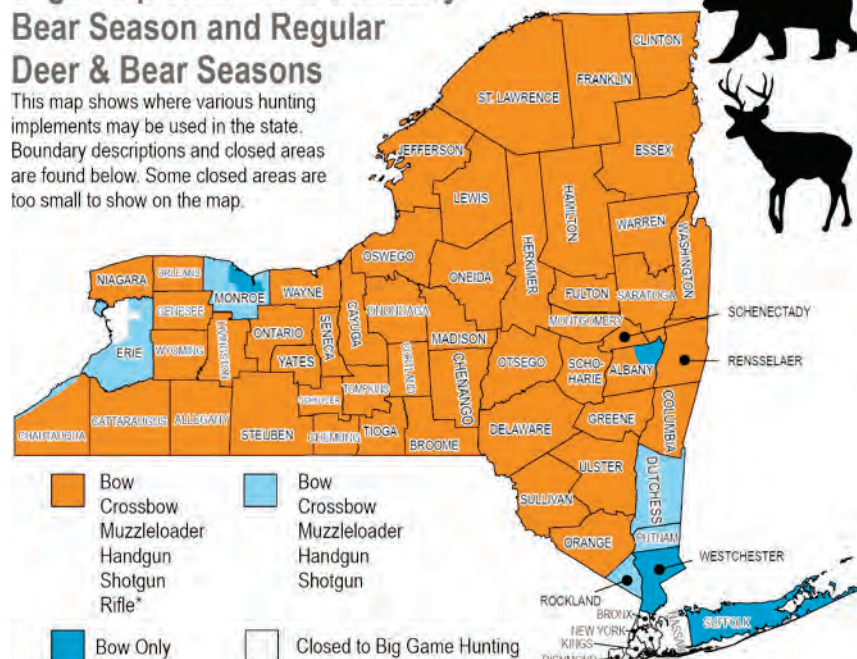


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Big Game Boundary Descriptions/Legal Implements

Legal Implements for the Early Bear Season and Regular Deer & Bear Seasons

This map shows where various hunting implements may be used in the state. Boundary descriptions and closed areas are found below. Some closed areas are too small to show on the map.



*Rifles may NOT be used to hunt big game in the City of Binghamton in Broome County or the cities of Lockport, Niagara Falls, and North Tonawanda in Niagara County

Complete descriptions of all WMUs are available on DEC's website at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/regulations/wildlife-management-units.

Northern-Southern Zone Line

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

Closed Areas

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

Broome County

City of Binghamton

Erie County

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

Herkimer County

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

Herkimer and Hamilton Counties

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

Nassau County

All of Nassau County.

New York City

All of the City.

Antler Restriction Program

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

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Regular and Bowhunting Deer Seasons

Hunting Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset

Northern Zone	
Early Bowhunting (all WMUs)	Sept. 27 - Oct. 24
Crossbow	Oct. 15 - Oct. 24
Regular	Oct. 25 - Dec. 7
Late Bowhunting (WMUs 5A, 5G, 5J, 6A, 6C, 6G, and 6H only)	Dec. 8 - Dec. 14

Youth Firearms

Season Dates
Oct. 11 - 13, 2025

Area Open
Northern and Southern Zone, except bowhunting only WMUs

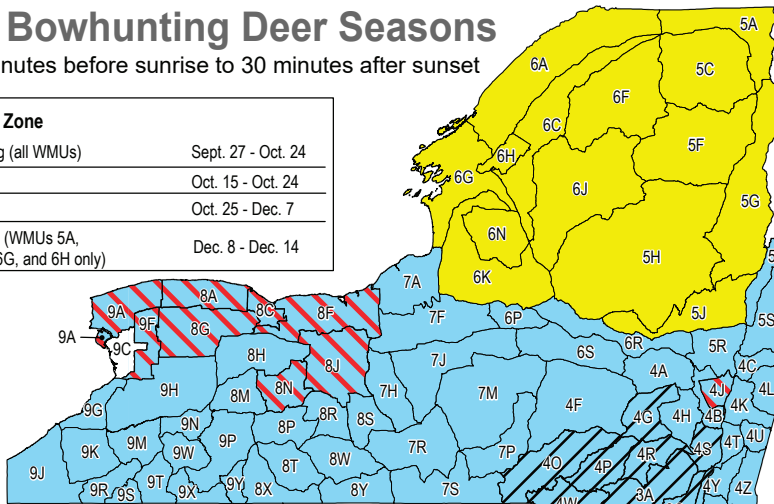
Eligible Hunters
- Youth 14-15 yrs of age
- Youths aged 12-13 (select counties, see below)

Bag Limit
One deer

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

Crossbows

- May be used to hunt deer during the regular seasons.
- May not be used to hunt deer during the youth firearms season or anytime in WMUs 1C, 3S, 4J or 8C.



Southern Zone	
Early Bowhunting	Oct. 1 - Nov. 14
Crossbow (not in WMUs 4J or 8C)	Nov. 1 - Nov. 14
Regular	Nov. 15 - Dec. 7
Late Bowhunting	Dec. 8 - Dec. 16 Dec. 26 - Jan. 1

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

Closed

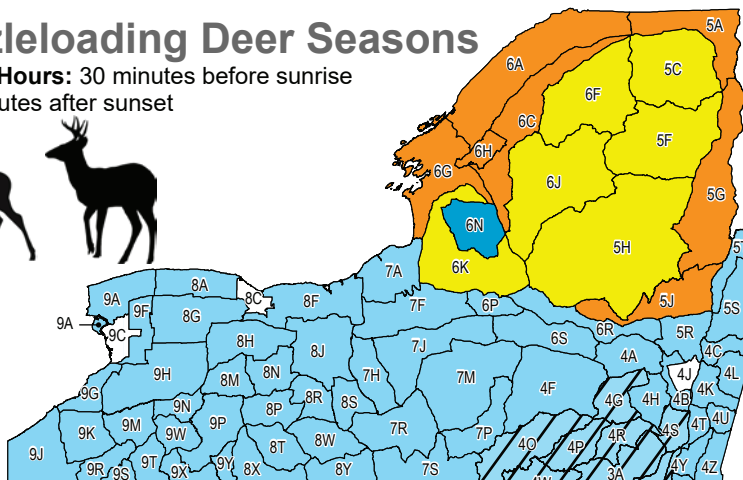
Early Antlerless Season	
Sept. 13 - Sept. 21	
Tags: DMP and DMAP Vertical Bow-Only: 1C, 3S, 4J, 8C Firearms, Bow, & Crossbow: 3M, 3R, 8A, 8F, 8G, 8J, 8N, 9A, and 9F	

Westchester County (3S)	
Regular - bowhunting only	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31
Suffolk County (1C)	
Regular - bowhunting only	Oct. 1 - Jan. 31
Special Firearms (Permit Req.)	Jan. 4 - Jan. 31

Legislation adopted in 2021 allows 12- and 13-year-olds to hunt deer with a firearm or crossbow under supervision of an adult hunter in upstate counties that choose to participate. For a map of counties that have opted in go to dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/junior-big-game.

Muzzleloading Deer Seasons

Hunting Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset



Northern Zone

Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24 Dec. 8 - Dec. 14
Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24
Antlered Deer Only	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24

Crossbows

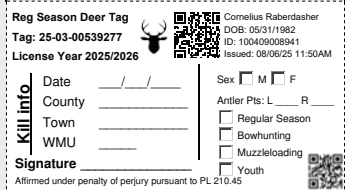


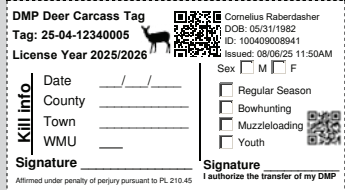
- May be used to hunt deer during the Northern and Southern Zone Muzzleloader Seasons.
- May not be used to hunt deer anytime in WMUs 1C, 3S, 4J or 8C

Southern Zone

Deer of Either Sex	Dec. 8 - Dec. 16 Dec. 26 - Jan. 1
Antler Point Restrictions: during all seasons, antlered bucks must have at least 1 antler with 3 or more points that are at least 1 inch long. Young hunters (ages 12-16) are exempt.	
Closed	

Deer Tag Descriptions

For all season dates, see page 27. See page 12 for privilege information.

Tag Name	Tag Can Be Used In	Tag Is Valid For
Regular Season Tag Only you may hunt with this tag. This tag cannot be transferred to another hunter.	Regular Season <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone Southern Zone Westchester County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular (bowhunting only) Suffolk County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular (bowhunting only) Special Firearms (special permit, see page 20) Late Season Bowhunting (privilege required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone Southern Zone Late Season Muzzleloading (privilege required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone (check open areas and dates on map on page 27) Southern Zone Youth Deer Season	Antlered Deer Only Except: May be used for antlered or antlerless deer as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Westchester County (WMU 3S) In Suffolk County (WMU 1C) In areas restricted to bowhunting only (WMUs 4J and 8C) In late seasons (with bowhunting or muzzleloading privilege) By Junior Hunters during the Youth Deer Hunt IF you have a non-ambulatory permit. 
Bow/Mz Season Either Sex Tag Only you may hunt with this tag. This tag cannot be transferred to another hunter.	Bowhunting Season including dates when crossbows can be used (privilege required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone Southern Zone Muzzleloading Season (privilege required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone (check open areas and dates on map on page 27) Southern Zone Westchester County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular (bowhunting only) Suffolk County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular (bowhunting only) Special Firearms (special permit; see page 20) <p>Not valid during the Northern or Southern Zone Regular Seasons or Youth Hunt except as specified in right-hand column.</p>	Antlered or Antlerless Deer Bowhunting or Muzzleloading seasons only (including the regular season in Westchester County and the regular and special firearms seasons in Suffolk County), corresponding to the privileges purchased. Junior Bowhunters will receive this tag, which will be valid in the special bowhunting seasons and during the regular season, with bowhunting equipment only. Except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be used for antlered deer only during muzzleloading seasons in certain Northern Zone WMUs (see map page 27). 
Bow/Mz Season Antlerless Tag Only you may hunt with this tag. This tag cannot be transferred to another hunter.	Bowhunting Season including dates when crossbows can be used (privilege required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone Southern Zone Muzzleloading Season (privilege required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Zone (check open areas and dates on map, page 27) Southern Zone Westchester County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular (bowhunting only) Suffolk County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular (bowhunting only) Special Firearms (special permit; see page 20) <p>Not valid during the Northern or Southern Zone Regular Seasons or Youth Hunt except as specified in right-hand column.</p>	Antlerless Deer Only Bowhunting or Muzzleloading seasons only (including the regular season in Westchester County and the regular and special firearms seasons in Suffolk County), corresponding to the privileges purchased. Except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May not be used during muzzleloading seasons in certain Northern Zone WMUs that are Antlered Deer-Only areas (see map page 27). May be used by junior Bowhunters during the Bowhunting and Regular Seasons. 
Deer Management Permit Tag This is the only tag that can be transferred to another hunter (see page 31 for how to transfer a DMP carcass tag).	Any Open Deer Season	Antlerless Deer Only Valid only for the WMU specified and printed on the DMP Deer Tag (Deer Management Permit). See page 29. 

For information on which tags may be used when hunting with a crossbow, see page 23.

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Matt T. shows his son Mason T. how to fill out paper tags for their successful harvest.

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Deer Management Permits (DMPs)

Hunters possessing a DMP may take one antlerless deer per permit in addition to any deer that may be taken with a regular hunting license or bowhunting and muzzleloading privileges.

- DMPs may not be used for legally antlered deer (at least one antler 3" or longer).
- DMPs may be used in any open season only in the WMU they are issued for.
- Hunters may transfer or receive up to 2 DMPs from other hunters (see page 31).

Applying for a DMP

- **DMP Application Deadline: Close of business on Oct. 1, 2025**
- You may apply for DMPs at all license-issuing outlets, by phone, or online beginning on Aug. 1, 2025.
- DMPs are available to all hunters age 12 years or older who purchase or possess a regular hunting license (12 years old for Junior Bowhunting license holders).
- There is a \$10 nonrefundable application fee for all applicants. The fee is waived for holders of Lifetime Licenses purchased prior to Oct. 1, 2009, and Junior Hunters and Junior Bowhunters.
- **Know your WMU before you apply.** If you are unsure of your unit, see the WMU maps on pages 70–77 of this guide or visit dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/regulations/wildlife-management-units for written boundary descriptions. You may also call the DMP Hotline for additional information at 1-866-472-4332.
- You may apply for up to two DMPs. Both must be applied for at the same time. Applications can be for DMPs in the same WMU or different WMUs.
- **Disabled veterans** with a service-connected disability rated at 40% or greater (who are

residents of New York State) will receive preference on DMPs. Annually, you must bring a letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs, dated in the current year, with your case number and your disability percentage. If you are claiming permanent disabled status, the letter must clearly state that the 40% or more service-related disability is permanent.

- **Landowners: It is illegal for more than one person per 50-plus-acre tax map ID to apply as a landowner.** If you own 50 or more contiguous acres of land within the WMU you will be hunting in, you will receive preference on DMP selection. Annually, you must bring your tax map identification number and SWIS code (found on your tax bill) with you when you apply. Be sure to tell the license-issuing agent prior to applying that you are a landowner. Lessees do not qualify as landowners.
 - » **Corporate ownership: It is illegal for more than one person to apply as a corporate landowner no matter how many 50-acre parcels are owned.** The corporation must submit an original letter or certified copy of a resolution, dated in the current year, designating one individual and must include the tax map ID and SWIS code information.
 - » **Group ownership: It is illegal for more than one person per 50-plus-acre tax map ID to apply as a landowner,** regardless of how many co-owners. Additional 50-plus-acre parcels in the same WMU require separate tax IDs.
- **Preference points:**
 - » Preference points increase your chances of selection, but do not guarantee DMP selection.
 - » Preference points are won and lost on first permit selection only.
 - » If you receive a DMP in your first choice WMU, all available preference points will be used.
 - » If you do not receive a DMP in your first

Chances of DMP Selection

Your chances of selection for first and second DMPs by WMU are available online at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/deer-management-permits, posted at all license issuing outlets or by calling our Deer Management Permit (DMP) hotline at 1-866-472-4332. Chances of DMP selection remain the same throughout the entire DMP application period.

choice WMU, you will receive a preference point for the following year.

- » Any preference points contained in your file are automatically applied to your first-choice WMU selection, even if preference points are not required for that unit.
- » If you do not receive your first choice, the points are applied to your second choice, but will remain in your file for the following year, regardless of your second-choice selection results.
- » Qualifying landowners and disabled veterans will receive their first choice DMP in all open WMUs.
- » Preference Points are not WMU specific. If you earned a preference point by being denied in one WMU, you can use that preference point in a subsequent year when applying for a DMP in a different WMU.

DMP Selection Order

During the instant issuance, an applicant's chances of selection are determined by an applicant's category. The categories, in priority order, are as follows:

1. Landowners (50 or more acres of land within a WMU) and Disabled Veterans (40% or



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more service-related disability). All applicants in this category will receive their first-choice DMP.

2. NYS Residents and Non-residents with 3 Preference Points
3. NYS Residents with 1–2 Preference Points
4. NYS Residents without Preference Points
5. Non-residents with 1–2 Preference Points
6. Non-residents without Preference Points

Additional DMP Opportunities

Bonus DMPs: If you fill a DMP in bowhunting-only WMUs 1C, 3S, 4J and 8C, you can apply for a bonus DMP for another antlerless deer. New for the 2025 license year, Bonus DMPs will automatically be added to your license holdings when you report a DMP in a qualifying unit. If you have an email address in your DECALS profile, you will be sent a confirmation email with the Bonus DMP attached. Additionally, Bonus DMP tags can be printed at home from your online account, or you can obtain the Bonus DMP from regional wildlife staff at predetermined locations. For complete information, visit our website <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/antlerless-deer-hunting/> or call a DEC Regional Wildlife office as follows:

WMU 1C.....1-631-444-0310
WMU 3S.....1-845-256-3098
WMU 4J.....1-518-357-2355
WMU 8C.....1-585-226-5380

Leftover DMPs: If there are still DMPs remaining after the initial DMP instant-issuance period closes on Oct. 1 and the back-end correction selections have occurred, the remaining DMPs may be available on a first-come, first-served basis, beginning on or around Nov. 1. These DMPs are only available in person at license-issuing agents. Leftover DMPs will not be available by phone or online. WMUs with DMPs available will be announced on our website (dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/deer-management-permits#Leftover). If you already applied for a DMP during the initial application period, there is no additional application fee. If you are applying for the first time this hunting season, you will have to pay a \$10 application fee. Fee is waived for Resident and Non-resident Junior Hunters and Junior Bowhunters, and for Lifetime License holders who purchased prior to Oct. 1, 2009. You will be allowed up to two DMPs during the first-come, first-served application period in addition to any you may have received during the initial application period.

Deer Management Assistance Program

The Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) enables wildlife biologists to help landowners and resource managers implement site-specific deer management on their lands. In doing so, DEC issues a special permit for use only during the open deer hunting seasons and a determined number of antlerless deer tags to landowners or resource managers whose property is in need of site-specific deer management. Hunters are expected to report their harvest. For more information on

the program, refer to dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/white-tailed-deer/overabundance/management-assistance-program.

How to Transfer a DMP Deer Carcass Tag

Hunter Jane Doe wants to transfer her DMP tag to hunter Pete Moss.

Step 1. Jane Doe signs the bottom of her DMP tag.

Step 2. Jane Doe gives the DMP tag to Pete Moss.

Step 3. Pete Moss records the Tag# of the DMP tag on the DMP Consignment portion of his hunting license.


Step 4. If Pete Moss takes an antlerless deer with the transferred DMP, he is required to report the deer by calling the automated reporting system (1-866-426-3778) or by reporting online at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/report-your-harvest using the transferred DMP DOC# and his own date of birth.

- Hunters are allowed to receive only two transferred DMPs per year.
- DMPs can be transferred from the receiving hunter back to the original hunter or to another. The other hunter must record the DOC# on his/her reporting panel, as in Step 3 above, to complete the transfer.

Remember: Hunting licenses are not transferable. Only DMP carcass tags can be used by another hunter. A hunter must be in physical

possession of a DMP when taking antlerless deer pursuant to a DMP. It cannot be shared by a group afield.

Note: To report a deer taken on a transferred DMP, the hunter who took the deer must call the automated reporting system (1-866-426-3778) or report online at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/report-your-harvest using the transferred DMP carcass tag DOC# along with other required information (see page 15).

DMP Deer Carcass Tag		Cornelius Raberdasher DOB: 05/31/1982 ID: 100409008941 Issued: 08/06/25 11:50AM	
Tag: 25-04-12340005			
License Year 2025/2026		Sex <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	
Kill Info	Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular Season	
	County	<input type="checkbox"/> Bowhunting	
	Town	<input type="checkbox"/> Muzzleloading	
	WMU	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth	
Signature _____		Signature <i>Jane Doe</i> I authorize the transfer of my DMP	
<small>Affirmed under penalty of perjury pursuant to PL 210.45</small>			

DMP carcass tag of hunter Jane Doe

DMP CONSIGNMENT		
<small>*DMP #s received from other hunters (limit 2 tags/yr)</small>		
Tag Number	Date of Kill	Reported?
24-04-12340005		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

DMP Consignment portion for hunter Pete Moss

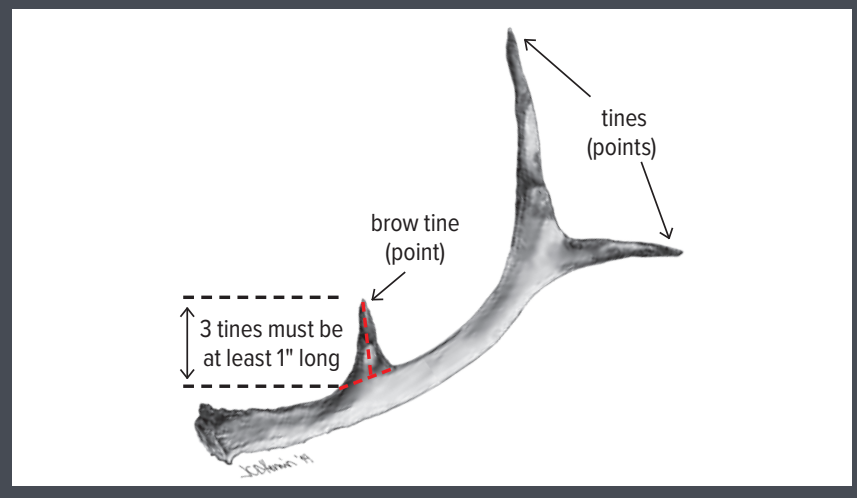
Antler Identification

Antler Point Restriction

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

Antlerless Deer

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



Deer Hunting

Feral Swine Cause Damage!



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Stop Feral Swine**

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For more information:
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Your state wildlife agency



DMAP on State Lands

DEC has enrolled several state lands in DMAP. Tag availability is limited and hunters must apply to participate. See dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/deer-management-assistance-program-hunting for information.

Properties include:

- Bully Hill State Forest, WMU 9P
- Doodletown Wildlife Management Area, WMU 4Z

Eurasian Boar

Eurasian boars are a destructive invasive species that damage habitat and crops, and threaten native wildlife and domestic livestock. DEC and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have worked hard to eradicate these animals from the state's landscape. We are now working to prevent their reintroduction into New York State.

- It is illegal to possess, sell, distribute, trade, or transport Eurasian boars or their hybrids.
- It is illegal to import, breed, or release Eurasian boars or their hybrids.
- It is illegal to hunt, trap, or take free-ranging Eurasian boar or their hybrids.

Although DEC's eradication efforts have been very successful to date, we must remain vigilant. Anyone who sees a Eurasian boar should report it to DEC as soon as possible by emailing wildlife@dec.ny.gov or calling 518-402-8883.

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Ann Wilcox-Swanson, Instructor



Qualifications

- At least 18 years of age
- Good communication skills
- Hunting experience preferred
- Good moral character

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3. Take a post-hunt survey
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Surveys and rebates will be sent out in winter 2026, after deer season ends in NY. For details, visit:

HuntersForEagleConservation.org/New-York

Hunters For Eagle Conservation in New York: Non-Lead Ammunition Rebate Program

Lead bullets used for hunting often fragment, leaving small particles behind in a gut pile that can sicken or cause death to eagles and other scavengers that feed on them. DEC partnered with the NY Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Cornell University, United States Geological Survey, and Conservation Science Global to implement a multiyear program to determine if we can improve eagle survival by increasing the use of non-lead ammunition. As part of this voluntary program, Conservation Science Global provides rebates to hunters to offset the cost of non-lead ammunition.

YOU ARE ELIGIBLE IF YOU INTEND TO HUNT DEER WITH A FIREARM ANYWHERE IN NEW YORK STATE!

Earn a \$60 rebate by:

1. purchasing one or more boxes of certified non-lead (less than 1% lead content) shotgun slugs, rifle bullets, muzzleloader bullets and reloading bullets for calibers legal to harvest deer; and
2. participating in pre- and post-season surveys.

Hunters eligible for the rebate must submit appropriate documentation of their non-lead ammunition purchase. To find non-lead ammunition, view a list of manufacturers, retailers, and resources at <https://huntersforeagleconservation.org/new-york/>.



To Learn More and Sign-up!

We're looking for volunteer deer hunters throughout NYS! To learn more and sign-up, go to <https://huntersforeagleconservation.org/new-york/>.

For more information on DEC efforts to minimize risks from lead ammunition, please visit <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/48420.html>. Have questions? Contact wildlife@dec.ny.gov (subject: non-lead ammo study).



New York Hunter Education Firearm Safety Tips

- Keep unloaded firearms locked in a safe or use cable locks
- Store ammunition separate from firearms
- Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction
- Never place a loaded firearm in a vehicle



X-Bolt 2 Medallion

2025 SHOT Show Special – This new bolt-action hunting rifle features a Grade III walnut stock with rosewood caps and a gloss finish. Gloss blued receiver with scroll engraving. Sporter-weight barrel with radial muzzle brake.



KITTERY TRADING POST®

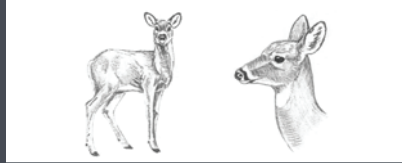
Rte 1 Kittery, ME / 888-587-6246 / Open Mon-Sun 9am-7pm / ktp.com

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 20% of the total antlerless deer harvest has been fawns (5–7 months old), with nearly even proportions of doe fawns and buck fawns. Though fawns provide excellent table fare, some hunters prefer to target adult deer. Taking 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.

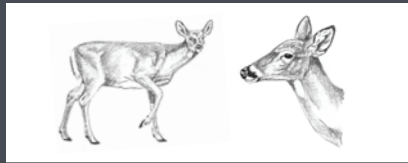
Hunting Tips

- 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

STRAP UP BEFORE YOU GO UP



HuntSafeNY

Always inspect and adjust your gear before use.

Buckle your full body harness securely.

Connect to the tree before your feet leave the ground and stay connected.



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Hunter Education Program

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X-Bolt 2 Speed Dark Maple

2025 SHOT Show Special – Features a stabilized dark maple stock with an oil finish. Redesigned receiver and bolt. Fluted sporter-weight barrel with radial muzzle brake. Durable Tungsten Cerakote finish on the barreled action.



Instant \$25 OFF coupon ~ pg 32!

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Photo by Gary K.

Tree Selection Matters!

Know the health and species of the tree you choose for your stand. The following NYS tree species are currently impacted by non-native pests and pathogens, and should be avoided for tree stand use: Ash species (*Fraxinus spp.*), Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), and American elm (*Ulmus americana*).

Never use a dead, dying, crooked, or leaning tree.

HUNTERS: Want Older Bucks in New York?

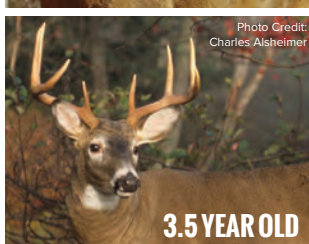
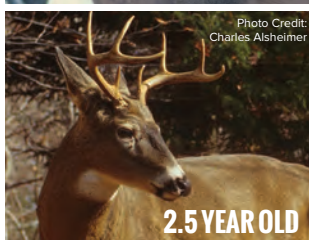
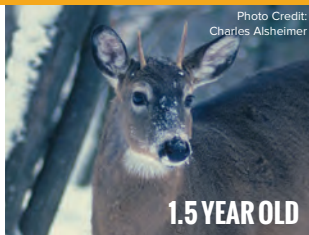
It's Your Choice

You can increase the availability of older bucks by choosing to pass up shots at young bucks.

- Older bucks create more rubs and scrapes, vocalize more, and yield more meat – all things that create unforgettable hunting experiences.

You can boost deer condition and body and antler size by balancing the deer population with the habitat:

- Take a doe if permits are available in your area.
- Create young forest to enhance natural forage and cover for deer.



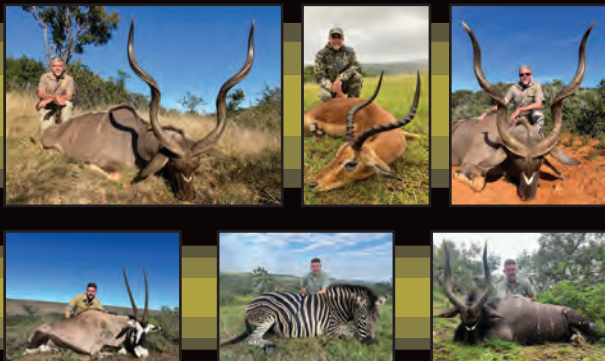
Let YOUNG BUCKS go and watch them GROW

YOUR CHOICE MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

NEW YORK STATE Department of Environmental Conservation

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10 Days - 12 Animals 1x1 - \$8,500

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Big Game Season Dates

Future Big Game Season Dates			
Northern Zone			
Bear	Adirondacks (WMUs 5A, 5C, 5F, 5G, 5H, 5J, 6C, 6F, 6H, and 6J)	Regular	First Saturday after the second Monday in Sept. through the Sunday immediately following the first Saturday in Dec.
	Western Periphery (WMUs 6A, 6G, 6K, 6N)	Early Bowhunting	First Saturday after the second Monday in Sept. through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season (crossbows can be used during the last 10 days of this season).
		Early Muzzleloading	7 consecutive days beginning on the first Saturday after Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day.
		Regular	Second Saturday after Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day through the Sunday immediately following the first Saturday in Dec.
Deer		Early Bowhunting	Sept. 27 through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season (crossbows can be used during the last 10 days of this season).
		Early Muzzleloading	7 consecutive days beginning on the first Saturday after Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day.
		Regular	44 consecutive days beginning on the second Saturday after Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day.
		Late Bow and Muzzleloading (some WMUs)	7 consecutive days immediately following the regular season.
Southern Zone			
Bear		Early Firearms (some WMUs)	16 consecutive days beginning the first Saturday after Labor Day.
		Early Bowhunting	Oct. 1 through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season (crossbows can be used during the last 14 days of this season).
		Regular	23 consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in Nov.
		Late Bow and Muzzleloading	9 consecutive days immediately following the regular season.
Deer		Early Firearms (some WMUs)	9 consecutive days beginning the second Saturday of Sept.
		Early Bowhunting	Oct. 1 through the Friday immediately preceding the regular season (crossbows can be used during the last 14 days of this season).
		Regular	23 consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in Nov.
		Late Bow and Muzzleloading	9 consecutive days immediately following the regular season and Dec. 26 through Jan. 1.
Northern & Southern Zone			
Deer & Bear	Youth (ages 12–15)	3 consecutive days beginning on the Saturday of Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day Weekend.	
Westchester County			
Deer & Bear	Regular (bowhunting only)	Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.	
Suffolk County			
Deer	Regular (bowhunting only)	Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.	
	Special Firearms Season	First Sunday in Jan. through Jan. 31.	

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Bear Hunting



Doug H. with his successful harvest in Franklin County.



Ed K. with his successful harvest in Rensselaer County.

Bear Hunting

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

Attention Hunters and Taxidermists

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

To find a bear taxidermist in NYS please scan this QR code:

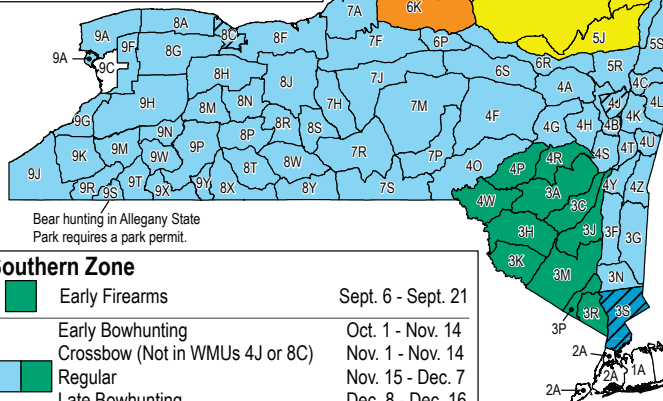


Black Bear Hunting

Hunting Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset

Northern Zone

Regular	Sept. 13 - Dec. 7
Bowhunting	Sept. 13 - Oct. 24
Crossbow	Oct. 15 - Oct. 24
Muzzleloading	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24
Regular	Oct. 25 - Dec. 7



Bear hunting in Allegany State Park requires a park permit.

Southern Zone

Early Firearms	Sept. 6 - Sept. 21
Early Bowhunting	Oct. 1 - Nov. 14
Crossbow (Not in WMUs 4J or 8C)	Nov. 1 - Nov. 14
Regular	Nov. 15 - Dec. 7
Late Bowhunting	Dec. 8 - Dec. 16
Late Muzzleloading	Dec. 8 - Dec. 16
Westchester County (3S) Regular - Bowhunting Only	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31

	Bowhunting Only WMUs
	Closed

Youth Firearms

Season Dates
Oct. 11 - 13, 2025

Area Open

All open areas, except bowhunting only WMUs

Eligible Hunters
Youth 14-15 yrs

Crossbows

- May be used to hunt bear during the early bear seasons, muzzle-loader seasons, and the regular firearms seasons.
- May not be used to hunt bear anytime in WMUs 3S, 4J or 8C.

*See map on page 26 for information on legal implements during the early and regular bear seasons.

New York State Bear Management Cooperator Program

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

Hunters who harvest a bear in New York State are required to report their harvest through the DECALS telephone system at 1-866-426-3778 (1-866-GAMERPT), the mobile app, or the online Harvest Reporting System at www.dec.ny.gov. Successful bear hunters are also asked to submit a premolar tooth from the bear for DEC to determine the bear's age and to record the dressed weight of the bear (see dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/report-your-harvest/black-bear-tooth-collection for more information). Successful bear hunters will be sent a tooth collection packet with premolar removal and submission instructions. Hunters may be contacted by a DEC wildlife biologist to examine your bear and extract a premolar tooth for aging.

Report your bear and return a bear tooth to receive a commemorative 2025 NYS Black Bear Cooperator Patch. Samples will be aged in the summer of 2026. Cooperating hunters will receive patches and letters indicating the age of their bear in early fall 2026.



Be BearWise

In 2022, DEC became a cooperating partner of BearWise®, a multistate campaign focused on educating people on how to live responsibly with black bears. The campaign provides sound information and smart solutions that help homeowners, businesses, and communities coexist with black bears. Visit <https://bearwise.org/> to learn the BearWise basics, bear safety tips, and to download educational resources. Be BearWise to help keep New York State's black bears healthy and safe.





Department of Environmental Conservation

2025-26 Hunting & Trapping Seasons Summary

For complete rules and regulations see Official New York Hunting and Trapping Regulations Guide



Regular & Bowhunting Deer Seasons

Hunting Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset

Northern Zone	
Early Bowhunting	Sept. 27 - Oct. 24
Crossbow	Oct. 15 - Oct. 24
Regular	Oct. 25 - Dec. 7
Late Bowhunting (WMUs 5A, 5G, 5J, 6A, 6C, 6G, and 6H only)	Dec. 8 - Dec. 14

Southern Zone	
Early Bowhunting	Oct. 1 - Nov. 14
Crossbow (not in 4J or 8C)	Nov. 1 - Nov. 14
Regular	Nov. 15 - Dec. 7
Late Bowhunting	Dec. 8 - Dec. 16 Dec. 26 - Jan. 1
Westchester County (3S)	
Regular - bowhunting only	Oct. 1 - Dec. 31
Suffolk County (1C)	
Regular - Bowhunting Only	Oct. 1 - Jan. 31
Special Firearms (Permit Req.)	Jan. 4 - Jan. 31
Early Antlerless Season	
Tags: DMP and DMAP Vertical Bow-Only, 1C, 3S, 4J, 8C Firearms, Bow, & Crossbow: 3M, 3R, 8A, 8F, 8G, 8J, 8N, 9A, and 9F	Sept. 13 - Sept. 21

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

Youth Firearms

Season Dates

Oct. 11 - 13

Area Open

All open areas, except bowhunting only WMUs

Eligible Hunters

- Youth 14-15 yrs

- Youths 12-13 yrs (select counties, see dec.ny.gov)

Bag Limit

One deer

Tags

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

Muzzleloading Deer Seasons

Hunting Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset

Northern Zone

	Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24 Dec. 8 - Dec. 14
	Deer of Either Sex	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24
	Antlered Deer Only	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24

A map of Maryland divided into counties, each labeled with a two-letter code. The map is color-coded into three main regions: a large blue area covering the western and central parts of the state, a yellow area in the north-central part, and an orange area in the northeast. A black silhouette of a deer is positioned in the upper right corner of the map area.

Southern Zone

Deer of Either Sex

Dec. 8 - Dec. 16
Dec. 26 - Jan. 1

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

Closed

0707-0707



Crossbows may be used to hunt deer and bear during their respective firearms seasons (early bear, regular and muzzleloading deer & bear seasons). Crossbows may not be used to hunt deer during the youth firearms season, or anytime in WMUs 1C, 3S, 4J or 8C.

Black Bear Hunting

Hunting Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset

Northern Zone

	Regular	Sept. 13 - Dec. 7
	Bowhunting	Sept. 13 - Oct. 24
	Crossbow	Oct. 15 - Oct. 24
	Muzzleloading	Oct. 18 - Oct. 24
	Regular	Oct. 25 - Dec. 7

Oct. 11 - 13, 2025

Area Open

All open areas,
except bowhunting
only WMUs

Eligible Hunters

Youth 14-15 yrs

Bear hunting in Allegany State
Park requires a park permit.

Southern Zone

Early Firearms

Sept. 6 - Sept. 21

Early Bowhunting

Oct. 1 - Nov. 14

Crossbow (Not in WMUs 4J or 8C)

Nov. 1 - Nov. 14

Regular

Nov. 15 - Dec. 7

Late Bowhunting

Dec. 8 - Dec. 16

Late Muzzleloading

Dec. 8 - Dec. 16

Westchester County (3S)

Regular - bowhunting Only

Oct. 1 - Dec. 31

Bowhunting Only WMUs

Closed

Youth Firearms

Season Dates

Oct. 11 - 13, 2025

Area Open

All open areas, except bowhunting only WMUs

Eligible Hunters

Youth 14-15 yrs

Fall and Spring Turkey Seasons

Fall and Spring Turkey Seasons

Fall Season 2025

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Season Dates:

Statewide Bag:

Oct. 1 - Oct. 14

1 bird of either sex

Oct. 18 - Oct. 31

Nov. 15 - Nov. 28

Closed

Spring Season 2026

Hunting Hours: 1/2 hour before sunrise to noon

Season Dates:

Statewide Bag:

May 1 - May 31
in all open areas

- 2 bearded birds, no
more than 1 per day.
- No more than 1
in WMU 1C.

Closed

Youth Turkey Season Spring 2026

Hunting Hours:
1/2 hour before sunrise to noon

Season Dates:
April 25 - 26, 2026

Statewide Bag Limit
1 bearded bird

Open Areas:
Same as regular spring season



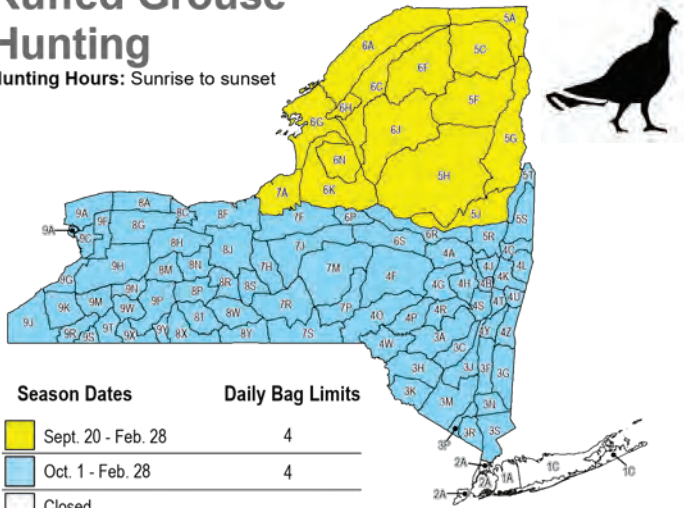
Remember to Report Your Game Harvest

HuntFishNY Mobile App * 1-866-426-3778 * www.dec.ny.gov

Most regulations are in effect Sept. 1, 2025 through Aug. 31, 2026

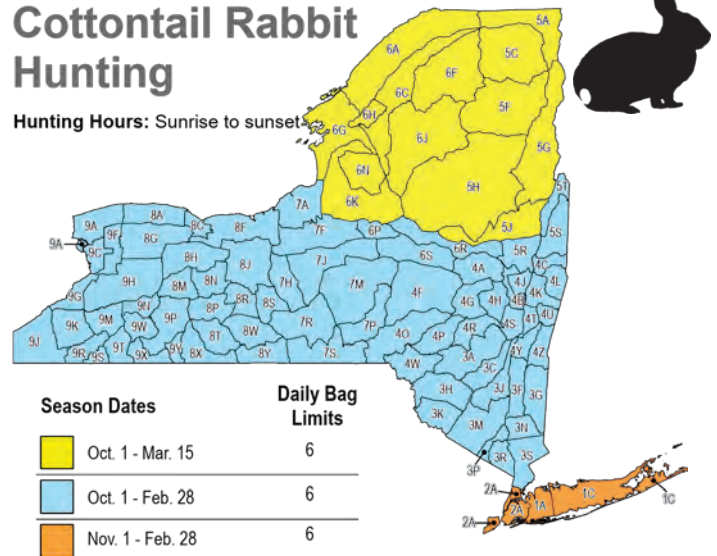
Ruffed Grouse Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



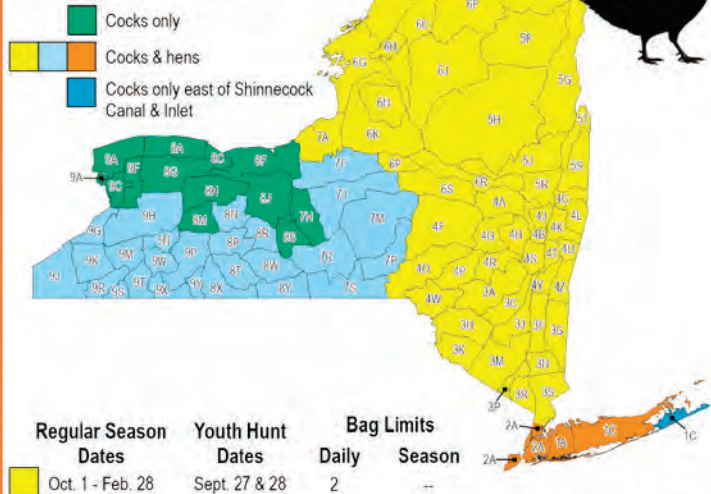
Cottontail Rabbit Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



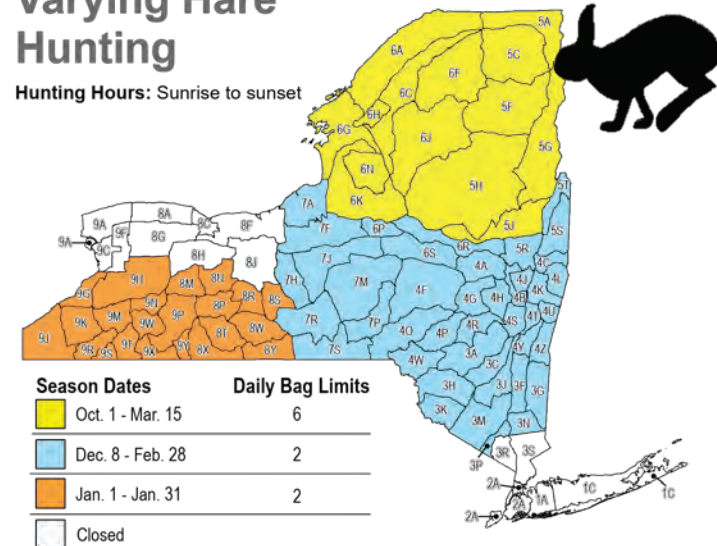
Pheasant Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



Varying Hare Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



Bobwhite Quail Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



Raccoon, Fox, Skunk, Opossum & Weasel Hunting

Long Island & NYC: Nov. 1 – Feb. 25

All other areas of New York: Oct. 25 – Feb. 15

There are no bag limits for these species. They may be hunted during the day or night, except weasel, which may only be hunted from sunrise to sunset.

Coyote Hunting

Statewide except Long Island & NYC: Oct. 1 – Mar. 29

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

Gray, Black & Fox Squirrel Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset

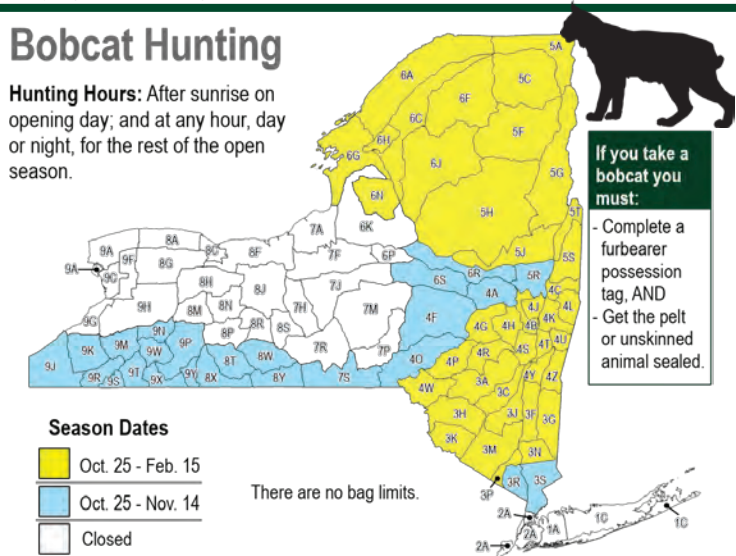
Long Island & NYC: Nov. 1 – Feb. 28

All other areas of New York: Sept. 1 – Feb. 28

Daily bag limit of 6 total, regardless of species

Bobcat Hunting

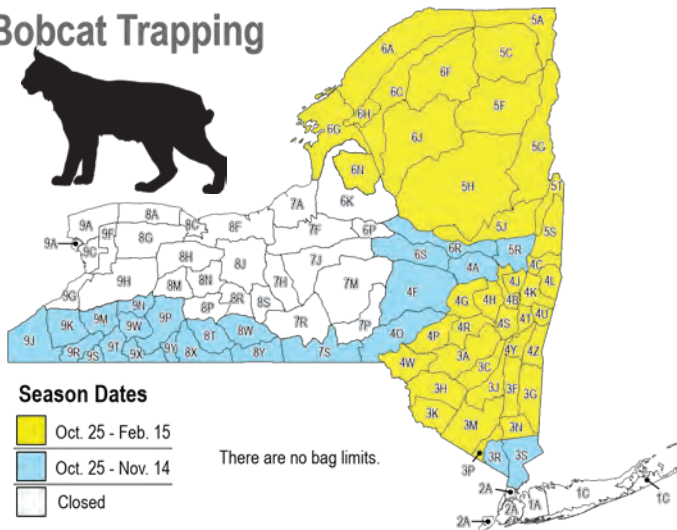
Hunting Hours: After sunrise on opening day; and at any hour, day or night, for the rest of the open season.



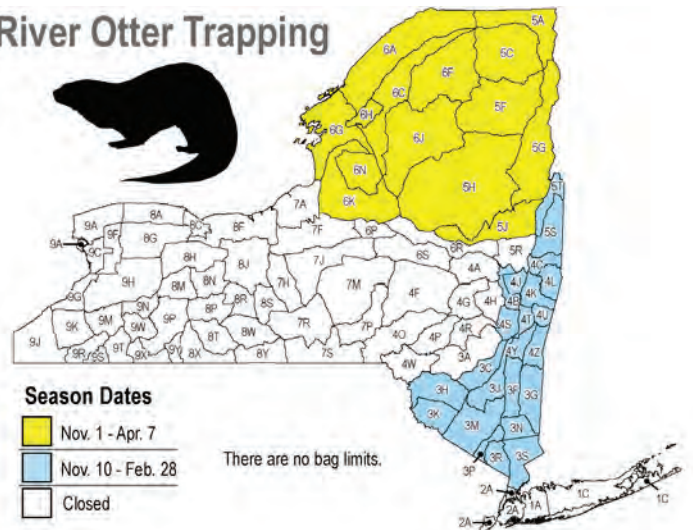
If you take a bobcat you must:

- Complete a furbearer possession tag, AND
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.

Bobcat Trapping



River Otter Trapping

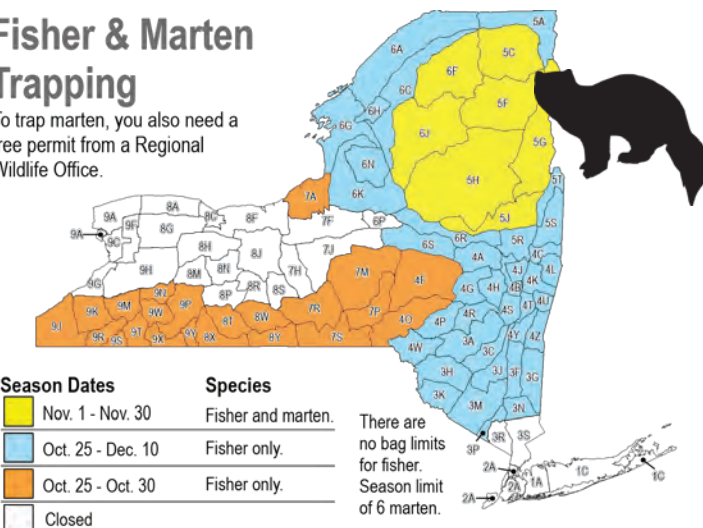


If you take a bobcat, otter, fisher, or marten, you must:

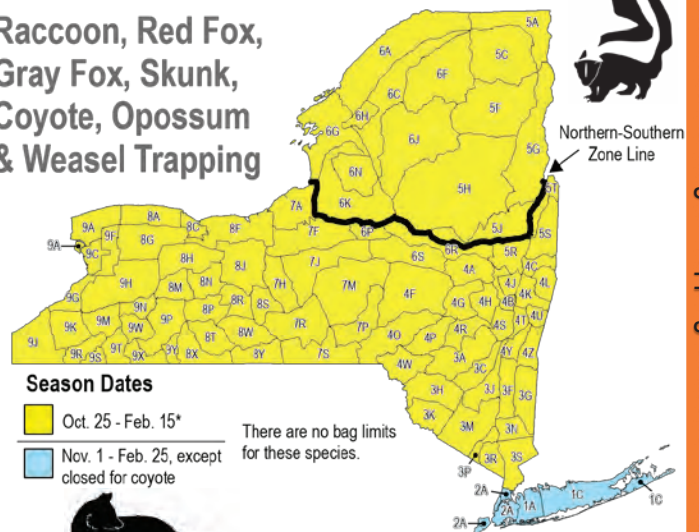
- Complete a furbearer possession tag, AND
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.

Fisher & Marten Trapping

To trap marten, you also need a free permit from a Regional Wildlife Office.

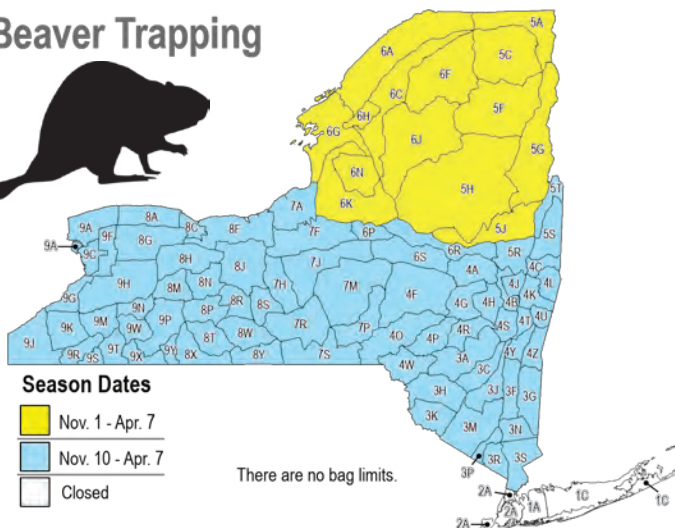


Raccoon, Red Fox, Gray Fox, Skunk, Coyote, Opossum & Weasel Trapping

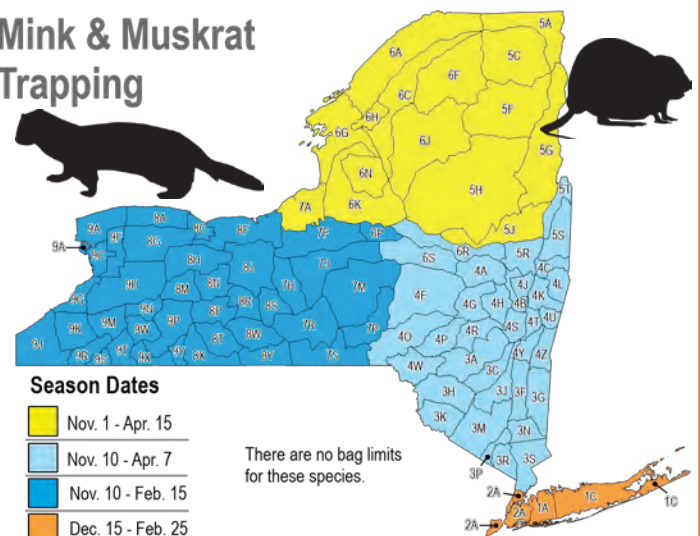


*In the Northern Zone, body-gripping traps set on land may not be set with bait or lure if the fisher and marten season is closed.

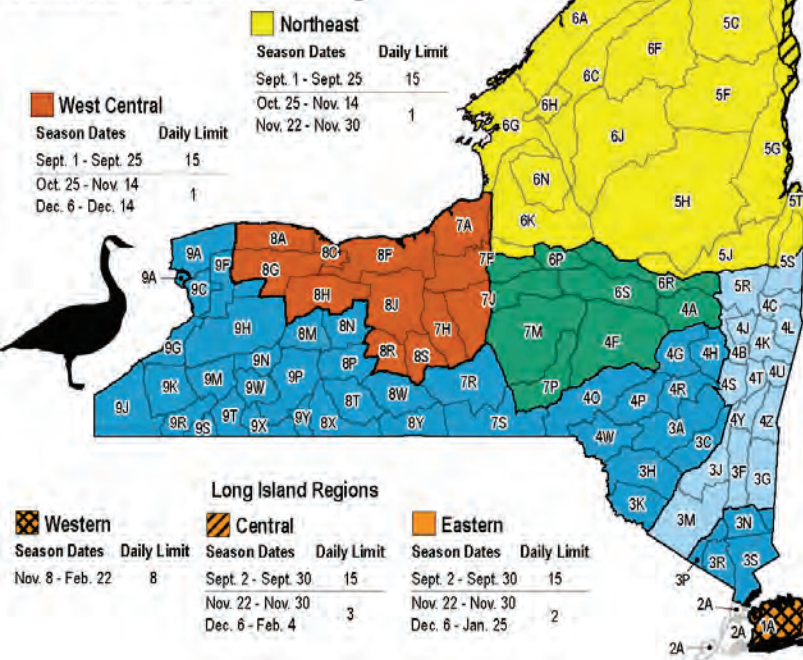
Beaver Trapping



Mink & Muskrat Trapping



Canada Goose Hunting



WOODCOCK

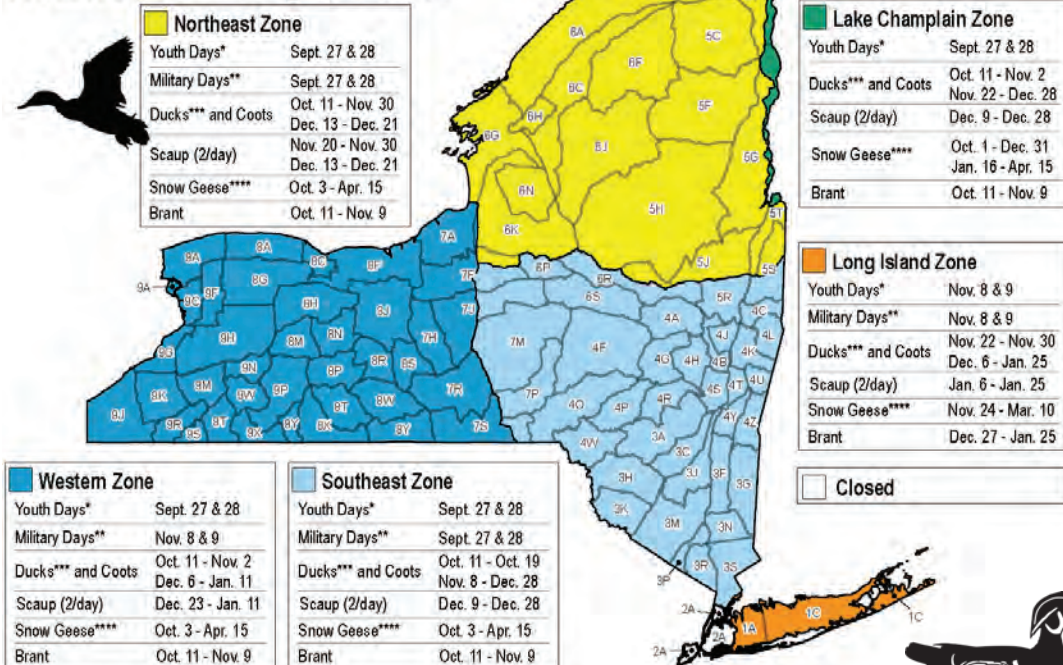
- Oct. 1 - Nov. 14
- Closed



CROW

- Sept. 1 - Mar. 31 (Fridays, Saturday, Sundays & Mondays Only)
- Closed

Waterfowl Hunting Seasons



SNIPE, RAILS AND GALLINULES

- Sept. 1 - Nov. 9
- Closed



A migratory duck stamp is not required to hunt these three groups of birds.

HIP registration is required for each of these species except crow.



Bag Limits

- * Youth days are additional days for junior hunters only. Young hunters, 12 to 15 years of age, possessing a junior hunting license may hunt ducks, coots, mergansers, Canada geese, and brant on 2 special days in each zone. Daily bag limits for all species are the same as those allowed during the regular season for all species (excludes September Canada goose bag limits). Youth hunters must be accompanied by a licensed (including current HIP registration and duck stamp) adult hunter, and the mentor may not carry a firearm. This prohibition does not apply to other hunters in the party that are not mentoring the youth.
- ** Any person who meets the definition of active military or veteran (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code) can participate. Daily bag limits for all species during the military hunting days are the same as those allowed during the regular season for all species.
- *** Crippled sea ducks may be taken under power in the special sea duck area, only.
- **** Snow goose seasons include both the regular hunting season and the Conservation Order that runs from Jan. 16 - Apr. 15 in all zones (except Long Island).

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 ^a	6	18
Coot	15	45
Canada Geese ^b	See Map	3 times the daily limit
Snow Geese ^b	25	No Limit
Brant	1	3

- 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 4 mallards (2 of which may be hens), 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks, 3 pintail, 1 scaup (2 scaup are allowed during the 20 days specified above for each zone), 2 redheads, 2 canvasback, or 4 sea ducks (including no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks, or 3 eiders and no more than 1 female eider). For all other duck species, 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.

HPAI and Hunting: What Waterfowl Hunters Need to Know

Avian influenza, or bird flu, is caused by an influenza type A virus, which are often carried by wild birds, such as ducks, geese, gulls, and shorebirds. Generally, influenza viruses can infect some wild species without causing signs of disease, but new strains can emerge that cause illness with high mortality in both wild and domestic birds. These strains are designated as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

In early 2022, HPAI was detected in wild birds across several eastern states. In February 2022, the first case of HPAI in New York was found in Suffolk County. At present, HPAI has been detected across the entire country including much of New York State. Some infected wild birds carry the virus without getting sick, which allows the virus to continue to circulate in bird populations. Some mammals, especially carnivores and scavengers that may eat infected birds, have become ill and died from HPAI. Dairy cattle in some states have also been infected with HPAI. The USDA tracks all detections across the country in both wild and domestic birds and mammals and offers guidance on how to protect yourself from infection H5N1 Influenza.

NYSDEC is working with the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, U.S. Department of Agriculture, NYS Department of Health, and the Cornell Wildlife Health Lab to monitor HPAI in New York State. If you observe a large die off of birds or sick birds, please report your observations to DEC: <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/wildlife-health/animal-diseases>.

The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention states that HPAI detections in birds pose a low risk to the public. That said, as hunters, you

are more likely to come in direct contact with wild, potentially infected birds, as compared to the general population. There are some simple precautions you should take to minimize the risk to yourself and your hunting companions (both human and canine):

- Harvest only game that appears to be healthy.
- Do not handle sick game—report to your state wildlife agency.
- Use personal protective equipment like masks, gloves, and eye protection when handling and cleaning game
- Field dress game outdoors or in a well-ventilated area.
- Do not feed carcass parts to pets or leave behind for other wild animals to scavenge. Seal carcass and unwanted organs in plastic bags for disposal in trash.
- After handling game, wash your hands thoroughly, and clean and disinfect all equipment and surfaces that came into contact with game.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke when handling game.
- Properly cook any game meat you eat to an internal temperature of 165° F to kill the virus.



Photo courtesy Christina Hoh

Special Seasons Designated for Young Hunters



Cooper B. after a successful harvest this past bear season



Vincent T. with his successful harvest in Columbia County

Introducing a New Generation to the Outdoors—Take a Youth Hunter Afield This Fall

Once again, DEC is providing a special youth deer season over the three-day Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day weekend. Junior hunters (ages 12–15) are eligible to take one antlered or one antlerless deer with a firearm and 14- and 15-year-old junior hunters may also take a bear with a firearm during this season. Rules of the Junior Hunter Mentoring Program (page 45) 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 supervising adult must also have a federal duck stamp. During the youth pheasant, turkey, and big game hunts, adult hunters are not allowed to possess a firearm, crossbow, or bow, or to harvest an animal while accompanying a junior hunter. During the youth waterfowl hunt the adult hunter supervising the junior hunter may not carry a firearm, longbow, or crossbow afield, but the prohibition does not apply to other hunters in the party that are not mentoring the junior waterfowl hunter.

Crossbows may be used by 12- and 13-year-old hunters only to take deer. Hunters ages 14 and 15 may use a crossbow to take deer, bear, and other game for which crossbows may be used.

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	Sept. 27–28, 2025
Western New York	Oct. 11–12, 2025
Long Island	Oct. 25–26, 2025

Youth Waterfowl Hunt

Waterfowl Hunting Zone	Dates
Northeastern	Sept. 27–28, 2025
Southeastern	Sept. 27–28, 2025
Lake Champlain	Sept. 27–28, 2025
Western	Sept. 27–28, 2025
Long Island	Nov. 8–9, 2025

Youth Wild Turkey Hunt

Upstate NY (north of Bronx-Westchester Co. boundary) and Suffolk County	Apr. 25–26, 2026
-------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------

Youth Firearms Deer and Bear Hunt

Upstate NY (north of Bronx-Westchester Co. boundary; excluding bowhunting-only WMUs)	Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day Weekend; Oct. 11–13, 2025
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------

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: hunter@dec.ny.gov

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 518-402-8855 or
katelyn.ritzko@dec.ny.gov



Junior Big Game Hunting

12- and 13-year-old can hunt deer with a gun or crossbow in counties that opt in

A law adopted in 2021 reduced the age for hunting deer with firearms and crossbows:

- Counties must pass a local law allowing the activity. See DEC website (dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/junior-big-game) for a map of counties that have opted in.
- 12- and 13-year-olds can hunt deer with a rifle, shotgun, or muzzleloader during the youth deer hunt or regular season, and hunt deer with a muzzleloader during the early or late muzzleloading season.
- 12- and 13-year-olds can hunt deer with a crossbow during the crossbow portion of the early bow season, the regular season, and late muzzleloading season.
- The new law does not authorize bear hunting.

12- and 13-year-old hunters must meet the same requirements as 14- and 15-year-olds hunting deer with a firearm.

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

- They have completed a course in both Hunter Education and Bowhunter Education.
- They have purchased a Junior Bowhunting License.
- They are 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).

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:

dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/hunting-trapping-photo-gallery



- 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:

- They have completed a course in Hunter Education.
- They have purchased a Junior Hunting License.
- They are 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 big game 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 NYS's Trapper Education Program whether they will be trapping alone or with an adult licensed trapper.

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 _____
(Print today's date above.)

Telephone Number _____
(Print phone number above.)

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

Small Game Hunting

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

Please read the general hunting regulations first on page 16.

General Regulations

- You may not use a rifle or handgun to hunt pheasant or migratory game birds. See page 50 for more information on turkeys.
- See pages 53–55 for additional information on migratory game birds.
- Air guns (see page 16) may be used to hunt squirrels, rabbits, hares, ruffed grouse, furbearers that may be hunted (e.g., raccoons and coyotes), and unprotected species (see page 17). Air guns may not be used to hunt waterfowl, pheasant, wild turkey, or big game.
- Crossbows may not be possessed afield in the Northern Zone when hunting small game (except coyotes) with the aid of a dog or when accompanied by a dog. Crossbows may be used to take any other small game or game birds during their respective open seasons except in Westchester and Suffolk counties.
- In WMU 2A, hunting is permitted by falconry only.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Frogs—"Frogs" are defined as eastern spadefoot toad, eastern American toad, Fowler's toad, northern cricket frog, northern gray treefrog,

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

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

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

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

You may not take or possess diamondback terrapins at any time.

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

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

Reptile and Amphibian Hunting Seasons

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

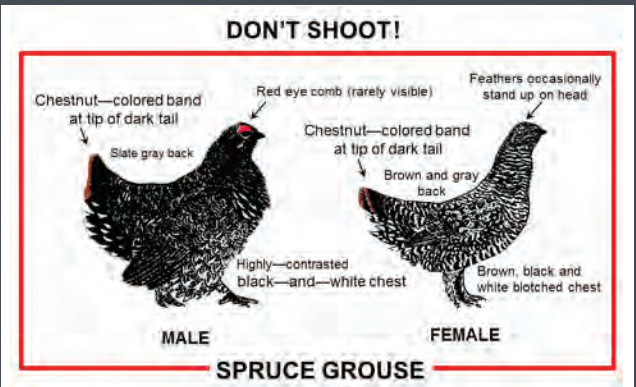
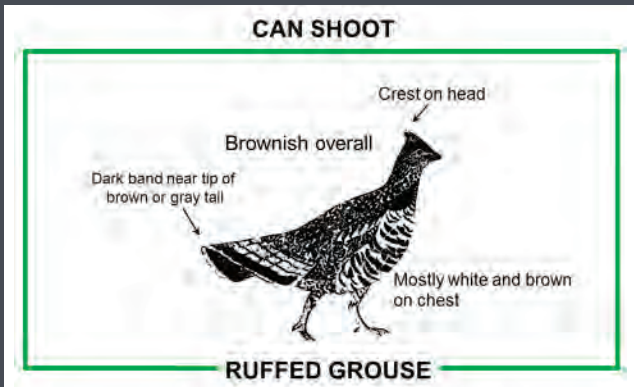
Possession and Release of Game Birds

It is illegal to possess or release migratory game birds and upland game birds without the proper license(s) from DEC. Before you take possession of any captive-reared or wild

Spruce Grouse vs. Ruffed Grouse

In New York State, the spruce grouse is endangered and is not legal to hunt. Spruce grouse occur in evergreen forests in the Adirondacks in WMUs 5C, 5F, 6F, and 6J. During the fall, spruce grouse frequently make their way to roads to eat gravel and often travel into upland hardwood forests where ruffed grouse occur. Small game hunters in the Adirondack region must be able to distinguish between these species so that spruce grouse are not shot by mistake.

Spruce grouse are similar in size and color to ruffed grouse, making distinguishing between them difficult. One notable difference is that spruce grouse have an orangish-brown band at the tip of their tails, which contrasts with ruffed grouse's black tail band. By noting the differences in the images here, small game hunters can avoid accidentally shooting a spruce grouse. The loss of a single female spruce grouse could be a significant setback for a small local population.



game birds, contact the DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752; call 518-402-8985; or email speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov.

Falconry Seasons

To hunt small game species with trained raptors, you must possess a Falconry License and a hunting license. Licensed falconers may take small game from Oct. 1 through Mar. 31 in any area of the state open to hunting these species except:

- Common crow may only be taken during the open firearms season.
- A licensed falconer may take both male and female pheasants anywhere in the state when hunting under a Falconry License.

Waterfowl may be taken via falconry during the following seasons:

- **Northeast, Southeast, and Western Waterfowl Zones:** Oct. 1–Jan. 13
- **Long Island Waterfowl Zone:** Nov. 1–Feb. 13
- **Lake Champlain Waterfowl Zone:** Only during the regular hunting season for each species (see map on page 56).

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

Protect Rabbits and Hares from RHDV2

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus 2 (RHDV2) is highly lethal to rabbits and hares. It is easily transmitted through direct contact between rabbits or contact with contaminated objects. RHDV2 is extremely hardy, remaining contagious on surfaces for 3 months. If it enters NYS's wild rabbit and hare populations, it will be impossible to control and could result in significant population declines. To protect these species:

- Avoid contact with domestic rabbits.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling rabbit and hare carcasses.
- Properly dispose of rabbit carcasses in trash that's taken to a landfill or by burying deep enough to prevent scavenging.
- Disinfect all hunting gear after out-of-state travel with a 10% bleach solution (1 part household bleach, 9 parts water).
- Avoid travel to states that have confirmed RHDV2 outbreaks, and do not bring rabbit carcasses killed in other states to New York.
- Avoid transporting rabbits or hares to train hunting dogs.
- Although dogs cannot get sick from RHDV2, they can transmit the virus, so minimize contact between dogs and rabbit carcasses.
- Immediately report sick rabbits or unusual rabbit mortalities to DEC's Wildlife Health Program (518-478-2203; wildlife@dec.ny.gov).



Photo by John Mack

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Gun Dog training for retrievers, flushing dogs, and pointers. Pre-season tune-ups and fitness training, live bird work, hunt test and field trial preparation for spaniels, pointers and retrievers. Boot camp training program for gun dogs, all-breed obedience and behavior problems. Private lessons are available.

265 N Society Rd, Canterbury, CT • 860-546-2116 • QKDogs.com

Small Game Hunting

Use of Hunting Dogs

Dogs may be used to hunt small game, except:

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

Training

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

Control

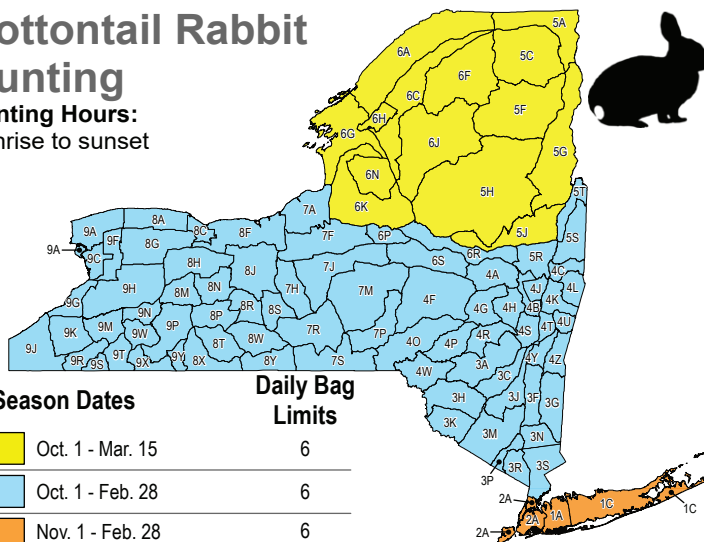
Hunting dogs should remain under control of the hunter or trainer, especially on lands inhabited by deer. Do not allow your dogs to pursue game on any posted land without the landowner's permission. Do not shoot dogs; report stray dogs to a local Environmental Conservation Officer (ECO) or your local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

Hunters: You Can Help Combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade

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

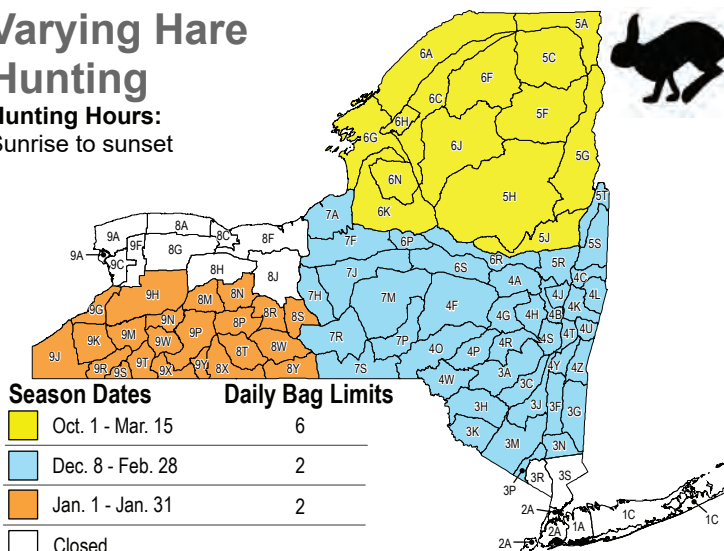
Cottontail Rabbit Hunting

Hunting Hours:
Sunrise to sunset



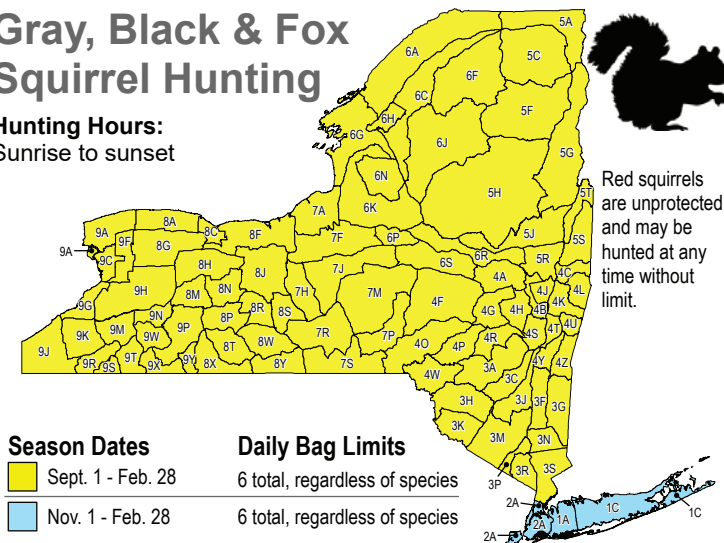
Varying Hare Hunting

Hunting Hours:
Sunrise to sunset



Gray, Black & Fox Squirrel Hunting

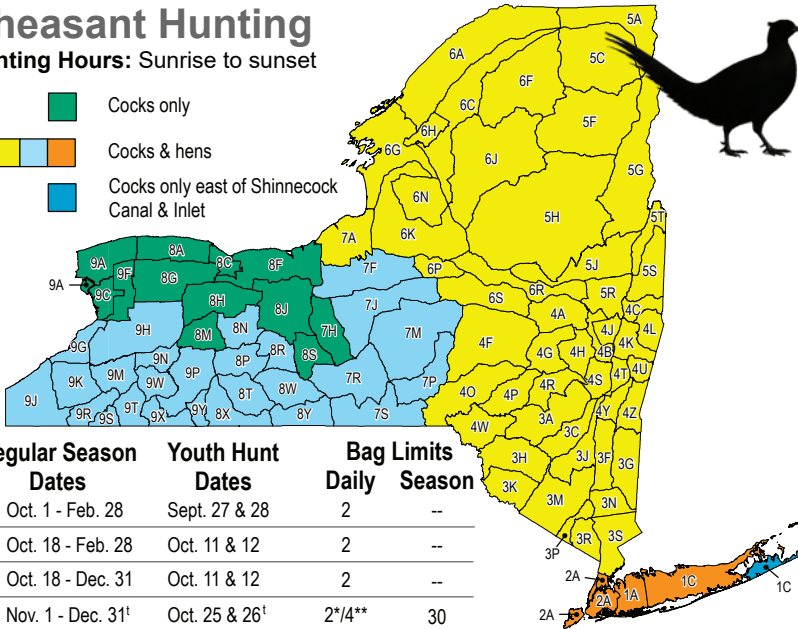
Hunting Hours:
Sunrise to sunset



Pheasant Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset

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

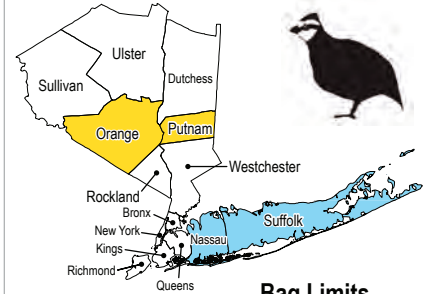


Regular Season Dates	Youth Hunt Dates	Bag Limits Daily	Season
 Oct. 1 - Feb. 28	Sept. 27 & 28	2	--
 Oct. 18 - Feb. 28	Oct. 11 & 12	2	--
 Oct. 18 - Dec. 31	Oct. 11 & 12	2	--
 Nov. 1 - Dec. 31 [†]	Oct. 25 & 26 [†]	2*/4**	30
 Nov. 1 - Dec. 31	Oct. 25 & 26	2*/4**	30

[†]In WMU 2A no youth hunt; hunting is by falconry only ^{*}Youth hunt ^{**}Regular season

Bobwhite Quail Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



Season Dates	Bag Limits Daily	Season
 Oct. 1 - Feb. 28	4	10
 Nov. 1 - Dec. 31	6	40
 Closed		

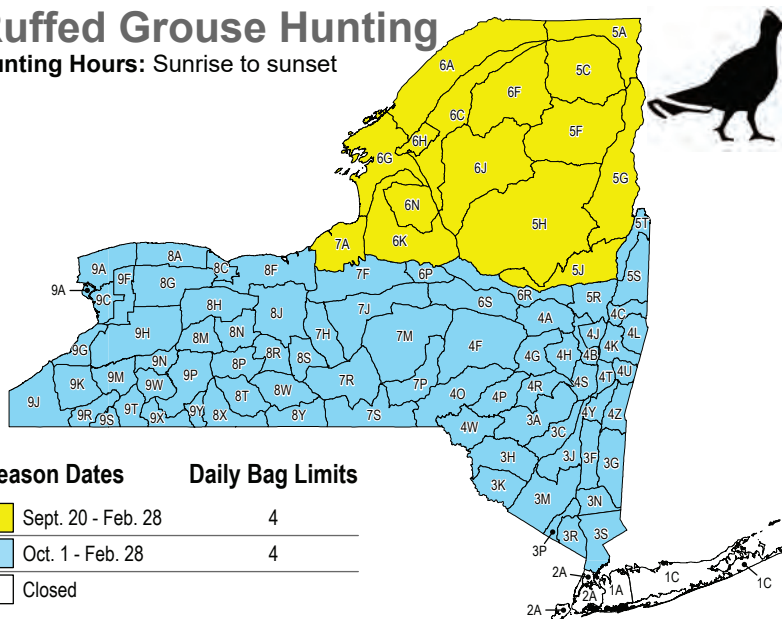
Where does DEC stock pheasants?

DEC introduced an interactive mapping tool to display the locations where pheasants are released throughout the state. Approximately 50,000 pheasants are released annually, thanks to the cooperation and interest of private and public landowners. Whether on public or private property, it's essential to adhere to any special rules and respect the land. Scan the QR code to find locations using the interactive mapping tool:



Ruffed Grouse Hunting

Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset



Season Dates	Daily Bag Limits
 Sept. 20 - Feb. 28	4
 Oct. 1 - Feb. 28	4
 Closed	

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.

Turkey Hunting

General Regulations

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

Manner of Taking

- You must carry your hunting license and turkey permit while you hunt.
- You may hunt with a bow or crossbow; however, crossbows may only be used by hunters 14 or older and may not be used to take wild turkeys in Westchester or Suffolk counties.
- You may hunt with a shotgun or handgun only when using shot no larger than #2 and no smaller than #9.

- You may not take a turkey with a rifle or air gun, or with a handgun firing a bullet.
- You may use a muzzleloading shotgun.
- You may not hunt with a dog during the spring season. You may hunt with a dog during the fall season.
- You may not use bait to hunt turkey.
- You may not use an electronic calling or amplifying device to locate or hunt turkeys during the open season.
- You may use decoys. You may not use a live decoy when turkey hunting.
- A scope of any type is allowed.

Tagging, Possession, and Reporting

- Immediately after taking a wild turkey, you must fill out the appropriate carcass tag in ink, mark or cut out the date and month of kill, sign the back, and attach it to the carcass.
- The carcass tag must stay attached to the turkey carcass until it is prepared for eating.
- You may give your turkey to another person.
 - » You must attach a tag with the following information to the turkey carcass:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your hunting license number
- Turkey permit carcass tag number
- The recipient's name
- The recipient's address

- You must report your harvest within seven days via phone (1-866-GAMERPT), online (dec.ny.gov), or through our HuntFishNY mobile app (see page 15).

Save a Leg

DEC is requesting successful turkey hunters submit wing, spur, beard, and tail photographs of harvested turkeys. After reporting your harvest, you will be prompted to follow a link where you can submit photographs. This information, in combination fall turkey leg collection data, will be used to help determine the statewide age and sex structure of the turkey population.



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you go.**

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hunting regulations online!**



 **eRegulations.com**

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.
 - 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 1/4 inch. Do not measure to the forward edge of the leg, only to the base of the spur.
 - 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 1/4 inch.
 - Record the weight of the turkey to the nearest pound.



Reward

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

The National Wild Turkey Federation is offering a \$200 reward to anyone giving information and testimony leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone illegally hunting or killing a wild turkey in New York State. 1-844-DEC-ECOS

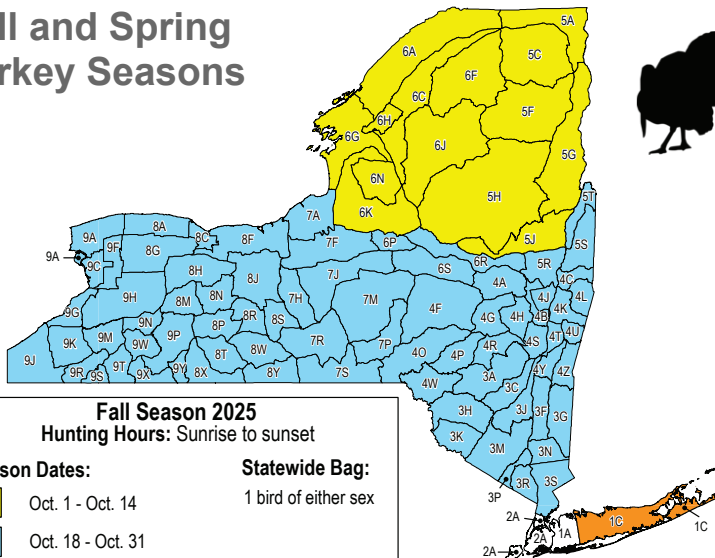
Turkey Hunters Needed for Grouse Survey

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

For more information:

- Email us at wildlife@dec.ny.gov and type "Grouse Drumming Survey" in the subject line, or
- Call 518-402-8883, or
- Visit www.dec.ny.gov and search for "drumming survey."

Fall and Spring Turkey Seasons



Fall Season 2025 Hunting Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Season Dates:	Statewide Bag:
 Oct. 1 - Oct. 14	1 bird of either sex
 Oct. 18 - Oct. 31	
 Nov. 15 - Nov. 28	
 Closed	

Spring Season 2026 Hunting Hours: 1/2 hour before sunrise to noon

Season Dates:	Statewide Bag:
 May 1 - May 31 in all open areas	- 2 bearded birds, no more than 1 per day. - No more than 1 in WMU 1C.
 Closed	

Spring 2026 Youth Turkey Season

Hunting Hours:
1/2 hour before sunrise to noon

Season Dates:
April 25 - 26, 2026

Statewide Bag Limit:
1 bearded bird

Open Areas:
Same as regular spring season

NYS 4-H Shooting Sports



Cornell Cooperative Extension
50 West High Street
Ballston Spa, NY 12020
518-885-8995

4-H Shooting Sports is a statewide youth development program focusing on the safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment. Six disciplines are offered:

Archery, Muzzleloading, Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun & Hunting

All disciplines are taught by certified instructors. Youth gain knowledge and understanding while developing valuable vocational and life-long recreational skills. Contact Saratoga County Cornell Cooperative Extension or visit NYS 4-H Shooting Sports on the web for more information.

<http://www.NYS4HShootingSports.org>

Turkey Hunting Tips

DON'T

- Wear red, white, blue, or black.
- Stalk turkeys.
- Shoot at the sound of turkeys.

DO

- Wear blaze orange on the way to and out of your hunting spot.
- Sit and call turkeys to you.
- Make sure of your target and what is beyond it.

If you see another hunter:

- Speak up clearly and say "STOP."
- Don't move, wave, or nod.
- Don't make turkey or animal sounds.

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

Avoid using a turkey reaper fan.



Turkey Hunting

Spring Youth Hunt

Eligible youth 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 44 and 45).

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.



Photo provided by Scott F.

Another successful mentored youth turkey hunt at the Cassety Hollow Rod and Gun Club in Oriskany Falls.



Leah D.

Why Do We Have a May 1 Opener?

Research has found that the optimal start date for the spring season is the median date of incubation (when about half of hens are on nests). In New York State and much of the Northeast this is around May 1. A May 1 opener provides the best opportunity to pursue gobblers when they are vocal and responsive to calling while minimizing disruption to reproduction. An earlier season start can disrupt breeding behavior and nesting, negatively affecting long-term turkey abundance and hunt quality.

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.

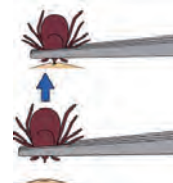


QUESTIONS?

- 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/

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.



Photo courtesy of Doug Holland

Migratory Game Birds

Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Migratory game bird hunting regulations are set by the federal government in consultation with state agencies.

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 health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/advice_on_eating_game.htm.

Waterfowl Hunting in Populated Areas

Some excellent waterfowl hunting opportunities occur in shoreline areas of New York State that are becoming more populated and developed. Waterfowl hunters have special privileges in New York State, 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 dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/regulations/avoiding-conflicts-between-hunters-property-owners.

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 State. For a copy, call 518-402-8883 or email wildlife@dec.ny.gov.

General Regulations

Following is a summary of State and federal rules that apply to the taking, possessing, shipping, transporting, and storing of all migratory game birds in New York State. 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 dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/migratory-game-bird.

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 must register annually with New York State's Harvest Information Program (HIP) and carry proof of compliance whenever going afield. If you are 16 years or older and you hunt waterfowl, then you also need a federal migratory game bird hunting stamp (duck stamp).



E-STAMP

- E-Stamp is valid for legal hunting requirements and supports vital wildlife habitat conservation.
- After July 1, your E-Stamp purchase will include either a bar code or printable receipt license as your immediate and only permit for the entire 2025-26 hunting season.
- Paper receipt or digital copy must be carried at all times when hunting.
- Physical stamp mailed after March 10, 2026.
- To purchase a stamp: <https://duckstamp.com/e-stamp/>

Image © Adam Grimm, used by USFWS with permission

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 State:

- 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 State'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.

Migratory Game Birds

Harvest Information Program (HIP) Registration

All migratory game bird hunters must register annually for HIP through DECALS, DEC's licensing system. Information from this survey helps the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and state wildlife agencies monitor the harvest of migratory game birds and is needed to establish hunting regulations. HIP registration is valid from Aug. 1–Jul. 30 annually. There are two options for registering:

- **Option 1 – Online HIP Registration:**
 - » Go to the DEC Hunting License website: dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/decals
 - » Click on the header at the top of the main page that says “Report Game Harvest/ Register for HIP”
 - » A DECALS login is not required, but you will be prompted to provide your DEC ID and Date of Birth
 - » Click “Search”
 - » The system will then list all previous HIP registrations you have associated with your
- **Option 2 – HIP Registration via the automated phone system:**
 - » Call 1-866-933-2257
 - » Select the option for “HIP registration”

DEC ID, indicating whether they have been submitted or are still pending.

- If no results return after pressing the “Search” button, it means you currently do not have a current/valid hunting license and are ineligible for HIP registration.

» Once you find the current HIP year registration survey, select the dropdown arrow on the right-hand side, and select “Register for HIP”

- You will be prompted to answer a series of questions pertaining to your hunting activities last year.

» After answering all required questions, press “Submit.” The system will then save your data and provide your HIP number. This number completes the registration process and proves your participation in HIP. You are required to carry this number with you in some form while migratory bird hunting.

• **Option 2 – HIP Registration via the automated phone system:**

- » Call 1-866-933-2257
- » Select the option for “HIP registration”

» Follow automated instructions.

» At the end of the call, you will be given your HIP registration number. Migratory game bird hunters are required to carry this number in some form while hunting.

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. E-stamps, validated as defined in the federal Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2013, are also permitted. Duck stamps are not required to hunt coot, rails, gallinules, woodcock, or snipe. Duck stamps are not required of minors 12–15 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 each. They may also be ordered by calling 1-800-852-4897. 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 Sept. seasons, when all other waterfowl hunting seasons are closed. Otherwise, shooting hours end at sunset. Snow geese may be taken until one-half hour after sunset during Jan. 15–Apr. 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, or other shot approved by the USFWS 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 Mar. 15 annually.

MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTERS: PROTECT THE GAME, DON'T SKIP HIP

The Harvest Information Program (HIP) is a legally required registration for migratory bird hunters of all ages that helps biologists manage migratory birds.









Migratory game birds include ducks, geese, brant, rails, coots, gallinules, woodcock, and snipe.

<https://dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/sporting-and-use/sporting/hunting-license/harvest-information-program>



Report band recoveries online at:
WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV

Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

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.
- 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 Sept., when all other waterfowl seasons are closed. However, semiautomatic shotguns may not exceed six shells in the magazine and chamber combined, at any time when waterfowl hunting.
- 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 DEC, 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 furlled, and its progress 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 Sept., 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, 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, or grain crops properly shocked on the field where grown or grains are found scattered solely as a result of the normal agricultural planting or harvesting.

Military and Veteran Hunting Days

Military veterans or active duty hunters possessing the necessary licenses, HIP registration, and duck stamp, may hunt migratory game birds during two (2) special days in each zone. The daily bag limit is the same as those allowed during the regular hunting season.

In addition to the previously mentioned license requirements for adults hunting migratory game birds, participants must carry one of the following forms of identification afield:

- Active military identification card
- Actively participating Guard or Reservist identification card
- Retired military identification card
- New York State driver's license with Veteran Status
- Form DD214, Certificate of Discharge
- Form DD215, Corrected Certificate of Discharge

Wanton Waste and 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 previously.

Caution/Dual Violation

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

Woodcock, Crow, Snipe, Rail, and Gallinule Hunting Season Dates, Bag Limits, and Regulations for 2025–2026

Regulations	Woodcock	Crow	Snipe	Virginia & Sora Rails	Gallinules	Clapper & King Rails
Upstate New York ^{1,3}	Oct. 1 – Nov. 14	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Sept. 1 – Nov. 9	Closed
Long Island ^{2,3}	Oct. 1 – Nov. 14	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Bag Limit	3/day 9 in possession	None	8/day 24 in possession	8/day 24 in possession	8/day 24 in possession	n/a
Shooting Hours	Sunrise to Sunset	Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	1/2-Hr Before Sunrise to Sunset	n/a
Non-Toxic Shot	NOT Required	NOT Required	Required	Required	Required	n/a
HIP Registration	Required	NOT Required	Required	Required	Required	n/a
Other	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

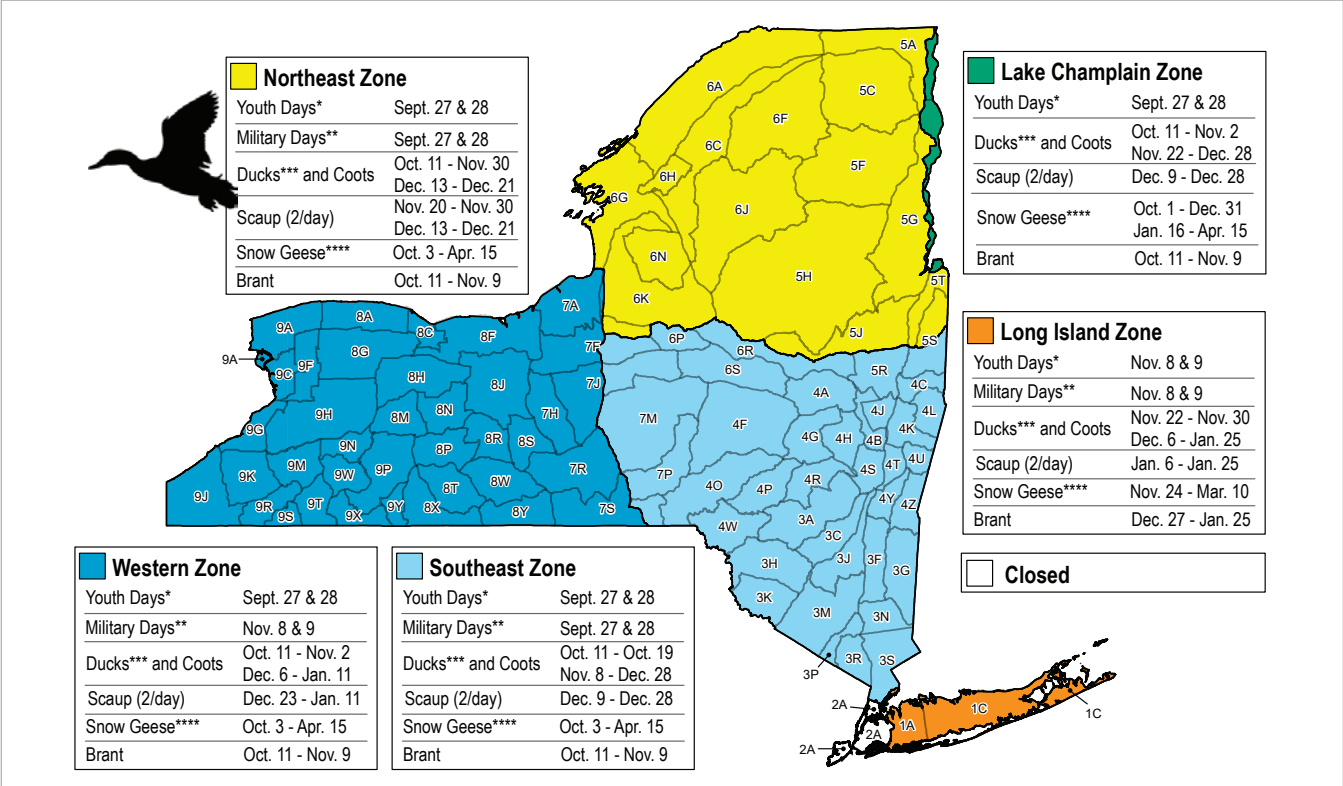
1 Upstate New York includes all of New York State north of the Bronx-Westchester County boundary.

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).

Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

2025–2026 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 ^a	6	18
Coot	15	45
Canada Geese ^b	See map	Three times the daily limit—see map page 58
Snow Geese ^b	25	No limit
Brant	1	3

- 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 4 mallards (2 of which may be hens), 3 wood ducks, 2 black ducks, 3 pintail, 1 scaup (2 scaup are allowed during the 20 days specified above for each zone), 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, or 4 sea ducks (including no more than 3 scoters, 3 long-tailed ducks, or 3 eiders and no more than 1 female eider). 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.
- * Youth Days are additional days for Junior Hunters only. Young hunters, 12–15 years of age, possessing a junior hunting license may hunt ducks, coots, mergansers, Canada geese, and brant on 2 special days in each zone. Daily bag limits for all species are the same as those allowed during the regular season for all species (excludes Sept. Canada goose bag limits). Youth hunters must be accompanied by a licensed (including current HIP registration and duck stamp) adult hunter. The licensed adult hunter serving as a mentor to a junior hunter participating in the special youth migratory game bird hunt days may not carry a firearm, longbow, or crossbow afield. The prohibition does not apply to other hunters in the party who are not mentoring the youth.

- ** Any person who meets the definition of active military or veteran (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code) can participate. A list of identification requirements can be found in the migratory game bird regulations and license requirements (dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/migratory-game-bird/regulations). Federal regulations require Lake Champlain zones to have the same dates in both Vermont and New York; Vermont does not offer special military days, thus no dates can be selected. Daily bag limits for all species during the military hunting days are the same as those allowed during the regular season for all species (excludes Sept. Canada goose bag limits).
- *** 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 Jan. 16–Apr. 15 in all zones (except Long Island).

PROTECT YOUR WATERS

Clean, Drain, and Dry Your Boat and Gear

Attention boaters: you are required by New York State law to clean, drain, and dry your boat and equipment before using them in a new water body—to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

When you pull your boat out of the water:

- **CLEAN** all visible plant and animal material from your boat, trailer, and other equipment;
- **DRAIN** your boat's bilge, livewell, baitwell, and other water-holding compartments; and
- **DRY** everything completely for five to seven days. If drying isn't possible, visit a decontamination station to disinfect boats and other equipment with hot water that is at least 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

Boaters operating motorized watercraft in the Adirondack Park or within 10 miles of the Blue Line must also possess certification that their vessel has undergone Clean, Drain, and Dry procedures before launching.



To learn more about Clean, Drain, Dry and obtaining certification, visit on.ny.gov/cleandraindry or scan the QR code.

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 Keeseeville, 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.



Youth hunters show off harvests during youth waterfowl and pheasant hunt in St. Lawrence Co.

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 56).

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

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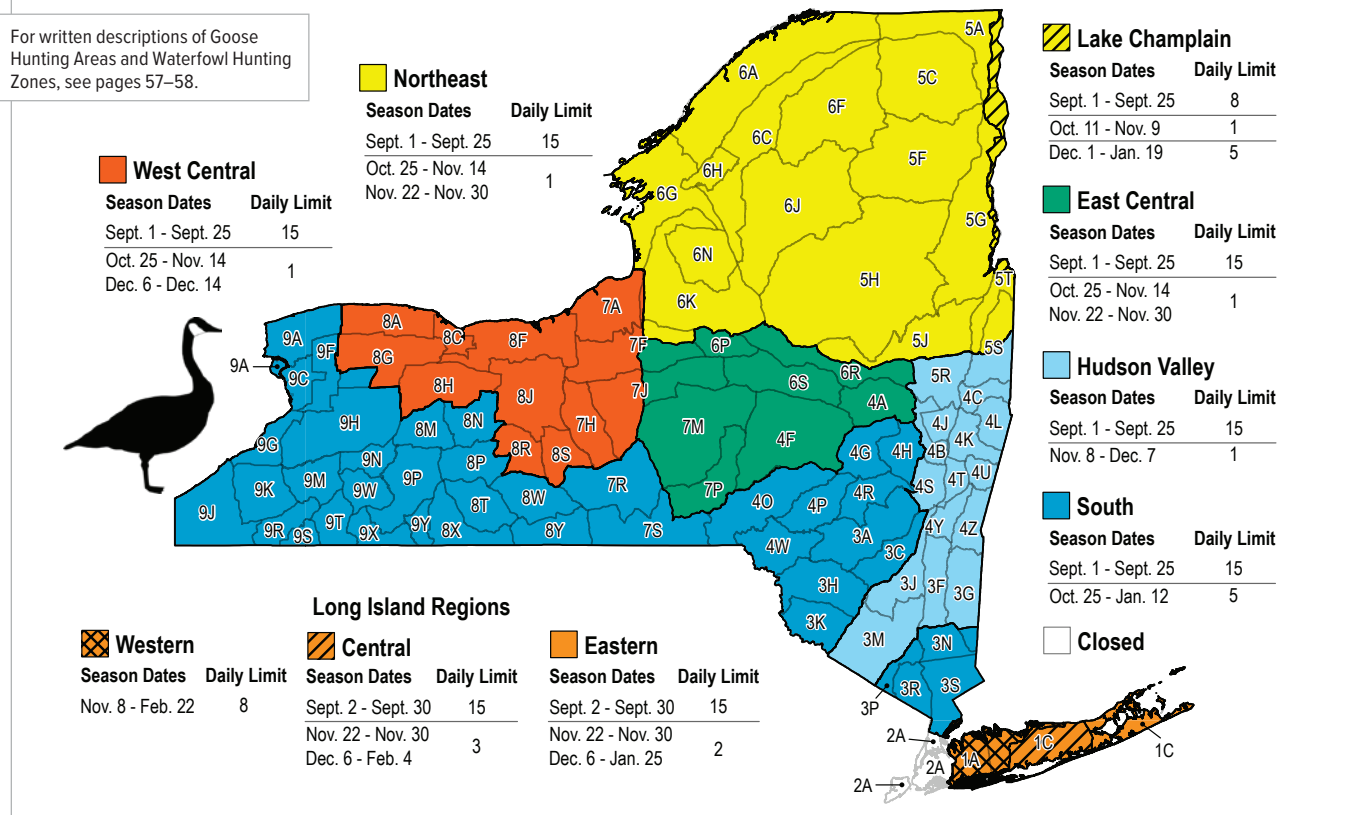
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Waterfowl Hunting Zone Descriptions

2025–2026 Canada Goose Seasons

For written descriptions of Goose Hunting Areas and Waterfowl Hunting Zones, see pages 57–58.



New York State Goose Hunting Areas

See road boundaries at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/migratory-game-bird/zone-boundary-descriptions.

- The Lake Champlain Goose Hunting Area is the same as the Lake Champlain Waterfowl Hunting Zone (see page 57).
- The Northeast Goose Hunting Area is the same as the Northeastern Waterfowl Hunting Zone (see page 57).
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 I-95.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Furbearer Hunting

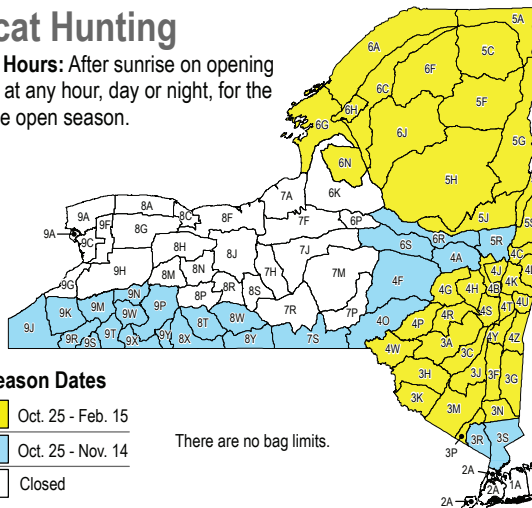
General Regulations

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

- You may hunt red and gray fox, coyote, bobcat, raccoon, skunk, weasel, and opossum anywhere in the state with an open season.
- If you take a bobcat, it must be tagged and sealed.
- You may use a call, including an electronic call.
- Mink may only be hunted in the Southern Zone with a firearm not larger than .22 caliber during their open trapping season. Mink may not be hunted with a firearm in the Northern Zone.
- Muskrat may only be hunted on Lake Champlain during the open trapping season with a firearm not larger than .22 caliber.
- You may not hunt from any motor vehicle, including an ATV or snowmobile.
- Except as noted above, you may hunt furbearers using any handgun, shotgun, muzzleloading rifle, bow, crossbow, or air gun.

Bobcat Hunting

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



If you take a bobcat you must:

- Complete a furbearer possession tag, **AND**
- Get the pelt or unskinned animal sealed.

Weasel, Opossum, Skunk, Raccoon, and Fox Hunting

Long Island and NYC: Nov. 1–Feb. 25

All other areas of New York: Oct. 25–Feb. 15

There are no bag limits for these species. Hunting Hours: After sunrise on opening day; and at any hour, day or night, for the rest of the hunting season. Weasel may only be hunted from sunrise to sunset.



Coyote Hunting

Statewide except Long Island and New York City: Oct. 1–Mar. 29

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



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Furbearer Hunting



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Possession and Use of Rifles for Hunting Furbearers

- Is **any deer season open** in the location you wish to hunt (including archery, muzzleloading, regular, late, and Focus Area)? (pg. 27)
 - If **NO**, you may use any caliber rimfire or centerfire rifle for hunting furbearers.
 - If **YES**, can deer be hunted with rifles in that location during the regular season? (pg. 26)
 - If **YES**, you may use any caliber rimfire or centerfire rifle for hunting furbearers during any open deer season.
 - If **NO**, you may only possess afield rimfire rifles .22-caliber or smaller, or centerfire rifles **LESS THAN** .22 caliber (.204, .17, etc.) during any open deer season. Once all deer seasons are closed, the restriction ends, except:
- You may **NEVER** possess a rifle afield in Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties.
- In the Northern Zone, it is illegal to carry a rifle larger than .22 caliber rimfire (or .22-caliber or larger centerfire rifles) at any time if accompanied by a dog, except when coyote hunting.

Hunting Furbearers at Night

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

Report Your Furbearer Sightings!

DEC wants to learn more about the occurrence of various furbearers throughout New York State. Reporting any observations of bobcats, otters, fishers, weasels, gray foxes, and snowshoe hare help DEC biologists better understand the distribution and behavior of these elusive mammals. Go to <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/animals-fish-plants/biodiversity-species-conservation/citizen-science/furbearer-sighting-surveys> or click on the 'Furbearer Public Sighting Survey' link in the Info section of the HuntFishNY app to report your sightings. You can even upload pictures and videos. Thank you for your help!

Distinguishing Wolves from Coyotes

Wolves

Wolves are very rare in New York State, with only three confirmed in the past 25 years, including one harvested by a coyote hunter in 2021. Wolves are protected in NYS as an endangered species. They can be distinguished from coyotes by their larger size, typically weighing between 70–100 pounds and measuring over 2 feet tall at the shoulder. Wolves have proportionally small, rounded ears and a shorter, blockier snout than coyotes. Their feet are larger, with tracks measuring about 5 inches long by 4 inches wide.

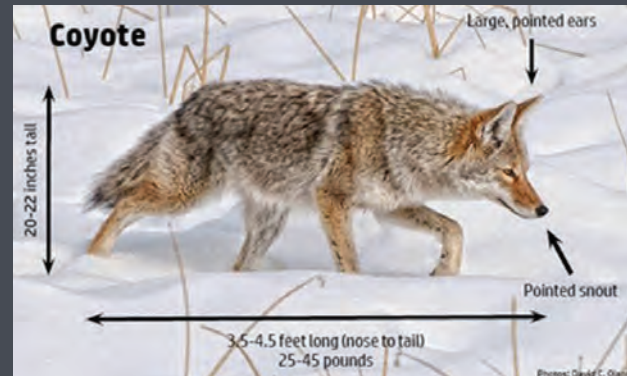
Gray Wolf



Coyotes

Eastern coyotes are common in New York, found throughout the State. There are regulated hunting and trapping seasons for coyotes in NYS. Eastern coyotes have a mix of coyote, wolf, and dog ancestry and are larger in size (about 40 pounds, on average) than coyotes west of the Mississippi. They are smaller than wolves, rarely weighing more than 50 pounds and standing less than 2 feet tall at the shoulder. Coyotes have long, narrow snouts that end in a point. Their ears are large relative to the head and are pointed in shape. Coyotes have smaller feet than wolves; their tracks typically measure 3 inches long by 2 inches wide. If you have a canine in a trap that is over 4.5 ft in length and is over 50 pounds, contact DEC law enforcement (1-844-332-3267) before dispatching the animal.

Coyote



Furbearer Trapping

Definition of Trapping

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. You do not need a hunting license to shoot a trapped animal.

Other Definitions

- **Public Highway:** The traveled portion of a public highway. Culverts, drainage ditches, and the area under bridges are not considered the traveled portion of a public highway.
- **Carcass:** The body or parts thereof, meat, organs or viscera of an animal, including fish. Feathers (including feathers with attached skin or entire bird wings), hair (with or without skin or hide), and bones that include no attached meat, organs or viscera, are excluded from this definition.
- **Suspension:** This term applies to animals fully suspended in the air by means of the trap anchoring system (typically a chain, cable, or wire). It does not apply to traps set in water or to traps that are directly and firmly attached to an elevated structure, such as a tree.
- **Restraining trap:** A device used to capture and restrain a mammal. These traps include leg-gripping traps (foothold traps), foot encapsulating traps, and cage or box traps.
- **Foot encapsulating trap:** A trap with the following mechanical attributes: The triggering and restraining mechanisms are enclosed within a housing; the triggering and restraining mechanisms are only accessible through a single opening when set; the opening does not exceed 2 inches in diameter; and the trap has a swivel-mounted anchoring system.
- **Cage or box trap:** A type of restraining trap that fully encloses a captured animal within wood, wire, plastic, or metal.

Legal Traps

- You must put your name and address or your DEC customer identification number (see your hunting or trapping license) on all your traps.
- Foothold traps larger than 4" set on land must have a pan tension device and be covered when set.
- Teeth are not allowed on foothold traps.
- On land, foothold traps must be 5¾" or smaller (inside jaw spread). For information on how to correctly measure traps, see page 63.
- During beaver or otter season, foothold traps up to 7¼" are allowed if set under water.
- When the beaver or otter season is closed, foothold traps set in water may not be larger than 5¾".
- A foothold trap larger than 7¼" is never legal to use.
- Body-gripping traps more than 7½" may never be used on land.
- Body-gripping traps more than 7½" may only be used in water during an open beaver or otter season.
- Snares may not be used for trapping.
- Box or cage traps are legal for all species.
- You may not use a cage trap that is designed to take more than one muskrat at a setting.

Place your name and address or Customer ID # on all your traps.



Trapping Methods

Checking traps

- In the Southern Zone: You must check traps once in each 24-hour period.
- In the Northern Zone, follow these rules:
 - » **WMU 5C, 5F, 5G, 5H, 5J, 6F, 6J, and 6N:** Visit once in each 48-hour period
 - » **WMU 5A, 6A, 6C, 6G, 6H, and 6K:**
 - Traps set in water during the open season for beaver, otter, mink and muskrat: Visit once in each 48-hour period
 - Body-gripping traps set on land: Visit once in each 48-hour period
 - Restraining traps: Visit once in each 24-hour period

Use of carcasses as bait

Any carcass, as defined above, used as bait and placed or used in conjunction with a foothold trap shall be completely covered at the time the trap is set or visited. Coverings shall include but not be limited to brush, branches, leaves, soil, snow, water, or enclosures constructed of wood, metal, wire, plastic, or natural materials, and must completely cover the carcass so that it is not visible from directly above.

Reminders on Pelt Sealing

All bobcat, fisher, otter, and marten need to be sealed within 10 days after the close of the season in the WMU where the fur was taken. Some things to keep in mind to make the pelt sealing process go smoothly:

- Contact your local wildlife office to make pelt sealing arrangements prior to showing up.
- When freezing an unsealed pelt, make sure that the face is on the outside and easily accessible.
- If freezing an animal whole with the intention of mounting it, you can insert a stick or similar object through a pre-made hole prior to freezing for

easier sealing. Otherwise, the animal will need to be thawed enough to insert the seal through the foot or eye. Completely frozen carcasses cannot be sealed.

- For more tips on sealing, review the second page of the Furbearer Possession Tag: <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/trapping/regulations#Furbearer> or contact your regional office.



Furbearer Trapping

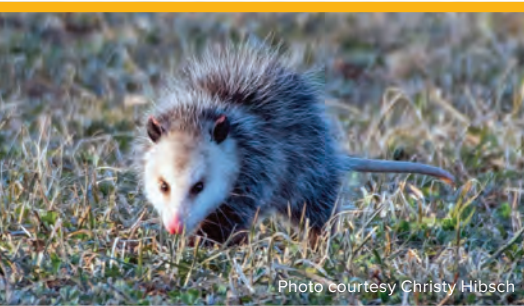


Photo courtesy Christy Hibschi

Land trapping

- You may not set a trap in such a manner that it causes a captured animal to be fully suspended in the air.
- In the Northern Zone, body-gripping traps set on land may not be set with bait or lure when the fisher and /or marten seasons are closed.

Water trapping

- You may set a trap in a permanent body of water only when the mink, muskrat, otter, or beaver season is open.
- You may not disturb a muskrat house or den.
- You may not set a trap on or within 5 feet of a muskrat house.

Land or water trapping

- You may use any legal method to kill a trapped animal. You do not need a hunting license to use a firearm to kill a legally trapped animal if you are 16 years or older. Junior trappers (ages 12-15) can only use a firearm if they also possess a hunting license and are accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or person with written permission from a parent or legal guardian.
- You may not set or stake a trap prior to 7:00 AM on opening day.
- You are not allowed to set a trap within 100 feet of a house, school, playground, or church unless you have permission from the owner of the land where the trap is set.
- You may not set a trap on a public road. You are allowed to set a trap in a culvert or ditch unless the property is posted or the landowner does not allow trapping.

Trapping near beaver dams and lodges

- You may not disturb a beaver lodge or beaver dam.
- You may not set a trap on or within 15 feet of a beaver dam, den or house, measured at ice or water level, except under the following conditions:
 - » during an open otter season, traps of any legal size may be set on or within 15 feet of a beaver dam, but not on or within 15 feet of a beaver den or house;
 - » during an open or closed otter season, any of the following traps may be set on or within 15 feet of a beaver dam, den, or house:
 - body-gripping trap that measures less than 5.5 inches;
 - foot-encapsulating trap
 - foothold trap that measures 4¾ inches or less;
 - cage or box trap.

By limiting the trap sizes that are usable on beaver dams, this regulation provides opportunities for trappers while minimizing the accidental capture of otter.

Pelt Sealing

Otter, bobcat, fisher, and marten must have a plastic seal attached to the pelt or unskinned animal before:

- It is sold or ownership is transferred to another person, or
- It is mounted or tanned, or
- It leaves New York State, or
- Ten days have passed since the close of the season where the fur was taken

The plastic pelt seals can be removed when the pelt is processed for taxidermy, tanning, or manufacturing.

How to get your pelts sealed: a two-step process

- **Step 1:** Fill out your furbearer possession tag.
 - » A possession tag must be filled out for each animal you take.
 - » Possession tags must be filled out immediately after you reach your motor vehicle, camp, or home, whichever comes first.
 - » Possession tags must stay with the animal or pelt at all times, but they do not need to be attached to the pelt.
 - » Furbearer possession tags can be obtained from your Regional Wildlife Office (see page 6) or at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/trapping/regulations#Seals.
- **Step 2:** Get your pelt sealed (see below).
 - » A completed furbearer possession tag must be submitted to obtain a plastic pelt seal.
 - » You can give your pelts to another person (other than a taxidermist) so he or she can get the pelts sealed or get them skinned. You must give that person your trapping license or a copy of your license and your completed possession tags while he or she has your pelts.
 - » Only authorized DEC representatives can attach the plastic pelt seals to otter, bobcat, fisher, or marten.
 - » Call a Regional Wildlife Office (see page 6) to make arrangements to get your otter, bobcat, fisher, or marten sealed. Seals for these species cannot be sent through the mail.
 - » If the plastic pelt seal is broken or damaged, contact your Regional Wildlife Office for a replacement seal.

Buying and Selling Fur

- Species requiring a pelt seal cannot be bought or sold or given to another person unless they have the plastic pelt seal attached to the animal. All other species may be bought, sold, and transported without restriction.
- Furbearers may be bought or sold either skinned or unskinned.
- People who buy fur do not need a fur buyer's license in New York State.

Rights of Trappers

- No one may disturb a trap lawfully set by another person.
- No one may remove a lawfully trapped animal from another person's trap.
- No one may harass a trapper while he or she is trapping.

License Responsibilities

- A license is not transferable and can be used only by the person to whom it was issued.
- A license to trap does not give the holder any right to go on private property without permission of the landowner.
- 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.

Trapping License Exceptions

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

- Resident owners primarily engaged in farming, lessees, and members of their immediate families do not need a trapping license when trapping on farm lands they are occupying and cultivating, for bobcat, coyote, fox, mink, muskrat, raccoon, opossum, weasel, skunk, and unprotected wildlife that may be lawfully taken by trapping. (**Note: beaver, otter, fisher and marten are not included.**)
- Indigenous Peoples living on a reservation do not need a trapping license while trapping on reservation lands.

Incidental and Accidental Captures of Trapped Animals

There are no provisions in the Environmental Conservation Law allowing trappers to possess animals that are taken outside of the open trapping season.

You must attempt to release any animals that are accidentally captured when the season is closed or if the area is not open for trapping that species.

If the animal is injured to the extent you believe it will not survive, humanely dispatch it. If you are not sure, contact a DEC Regional Wildlife Office or ECO for assistance.

When you find an unintentionally captured animal dead in the trap, or when you must dispatch an unintentionally captured animal due to a serious injury, you may remove it and lay it in the vicinity of the trap. There are no legal provisions for you to keep it, and you may not possess it even to take it back to your vehicle without permission from DEC.

DEC seeks information on all accidentally taken bobcat, otter, fisher, and marten, as well as other species of unusual nature. If the animal is dead, a DEC biologist will want to collect the carcass. Using the location and carcass data,

biologists will be able to track the status of these species and study the age and reproductive data from the individual. The pelts from these carcasses will also be utilized in our trapper education classes.

Remember, you must contact the Regional Wildlife Office or an ECO as soon as possible to report the catch. You will receive instructions on what to do and information to provide.

Possession of Road-Killed Furbearers

If the trapping or hunting season is open for the species in a WMU, you may keep a dead furbearer found on roads within that WMU. The requirements for possessing road-killed furbearers are the same as for trapping and hunting. For example, if you find a road-killed bobcat in an area with an open bobcat season, you can possess it if you have a hunting or trapping

license, but you must fill out a furbearer possession tag and have the pelt sealed.

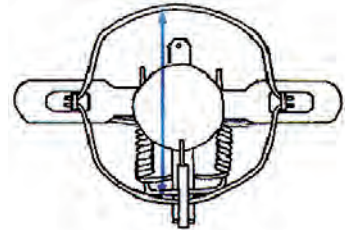
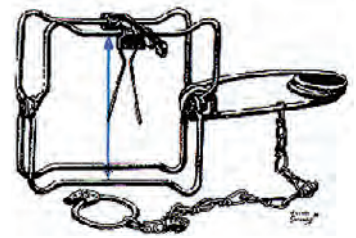
How to Measure a Trap

How to measure a body-gripping trap:

Measure the inside distance between the outer frames of the trap. The addition of one or more bars to the inside of the frame does not change the way these traps are measured. The measurement is still the MAXIMUM distance as shown in the top picture.

How to measure a foothold trap:

Measure the inside distance between the jaws excluding the gripping surface as shown. If the jaws have inside laminations, the measurement is the inside distance between the laminations. If the trap has double jaws, measure the inside distance between the outer jaws.



5¾" or less on land, 7¼" or less under water

Trigger Regulations for Beaver Trappers

This regulation applies if you:

- Trap in a WMU in the Southern Zone during a closed otter season; and
- Use a body-gripping trap larger than 8½ inches (these are "330" size traps).

1. **Body-gripping trap with off-set parallel trigger:**
2. **Example of non-legal vs. legal trigger brackets:**

Non-legal: V-notch, four-way trigger
Legal: square-notch, two-way trigger



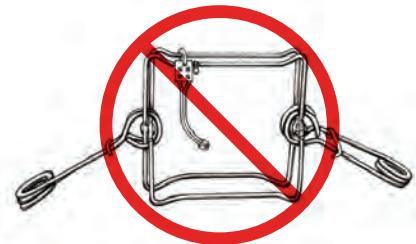
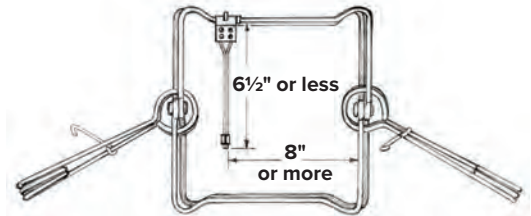
Two-way
tension
adjustable
(legal)



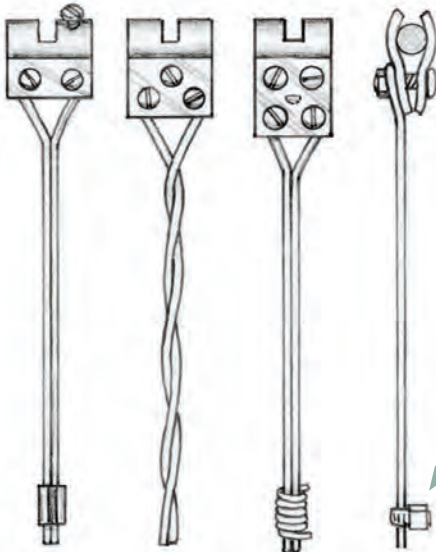
Two-way
non-tension
adjustable
(legal)



Four-way
trigger
(not legal)



3. **Examples of acceptable parallel triggers:**



4. **Tension-adjustable triggers and trigger stops are no longer required.**

The trigger must be 6½" or less.

Recommended tension: 8 to 12 oz.

Trigger wires must be joined together.

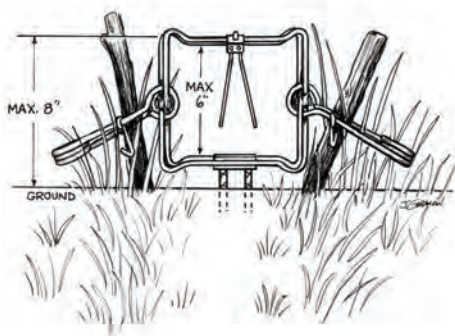
NOTE:

1. You can bait these traps in any manner. However, the trap must have all of the features noted above.
2. There is no exception for traps set under ice; traps set under ice, whether baited or not, must have all of the design features noted above.
3. There is no tension requirement. However, DEC research showed that 8 to 12 oz. of tension works best for protecting otter and catching beaver.

Furbearer Trapping

Regulations for Body-Gripping Traps Set on Land

Body-gripping traps set on land shall not be within 100 feet of a public trail except on Wildlife Management Areas.



A body-gripping trap measuring less than 5½ inches may be set in any manner **with or without the use of bait**. Body-gripping traps measuring 5½ inches to 6 inches, set without the use of bait, must be set so that no part of the trap is 8 inches or more above the ground. Body-gripping traps measuring more than 6 inches to 7 1/2 inches may never be set in this manner.

NOTE: During a closed season for fisher and/or marten in the Northern Zone, body-gripping traps set on land may not be set with bait or lure.

Body-gripping traps 5½ inches to 7½ inches set **with the use of bait, lure, or other attractants** may only be used as follows:

- ✓ Four or more feet off the ground

OR

- ✓ In a container of the following design:

- Trap recessed minimum of 18 inches
- Opening height and width 10 inches or less

OR

- ✓ In a container of the following design:

- Only one entrance, facing the ground
- Container set so entrance is no more than 6 inches from ground
- Trap recessed minimum of 4 inches

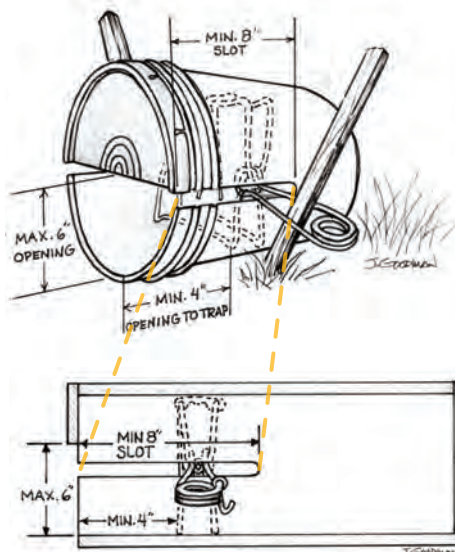
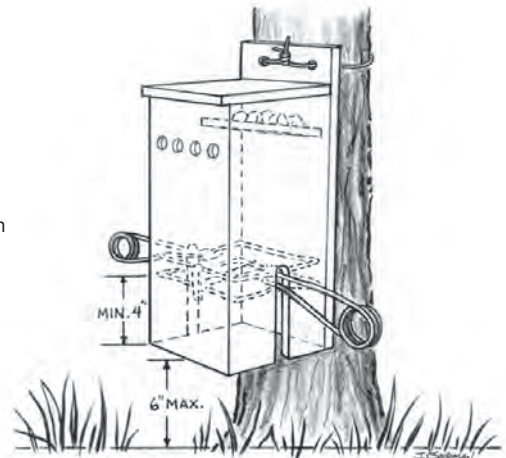
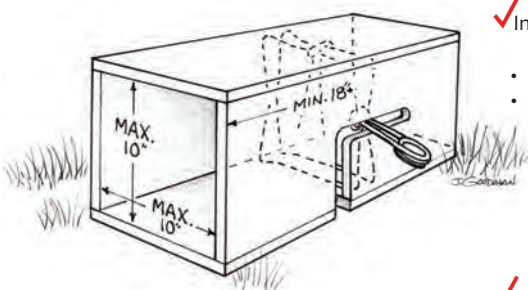
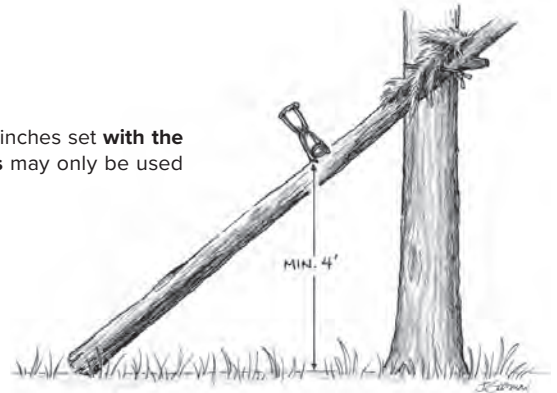
OR

- ✓ In a container of the following design:

- Opening height 6 inches or less
- Eight-inch minimum spring notches
- Trap recessed minimum of 4 inches

You may also build an enclosure of natural materials (e.g., logs or rocks)

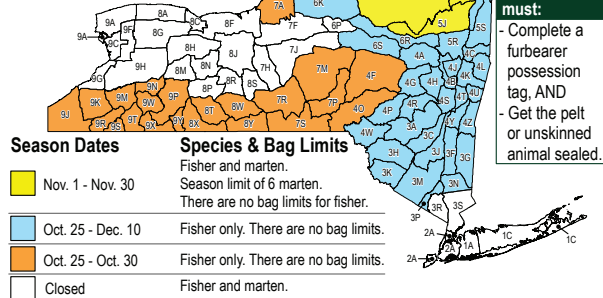
- Opening height 6 inches or less
- Trap recessed minimum of 8 inches



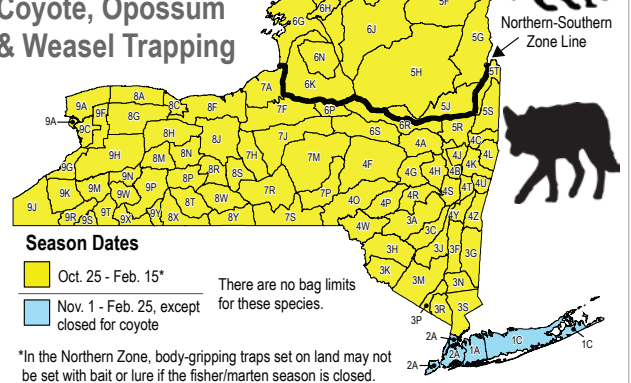
Fisher & Marten Trapping



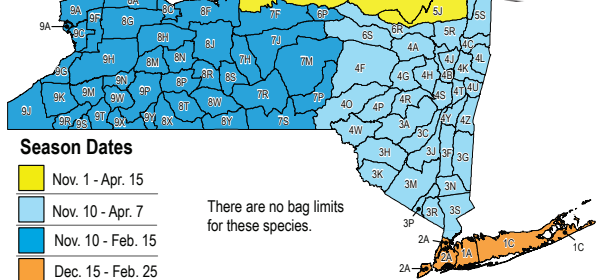
To trap marten, you also need a free permit from a Regional Wildlife Office.



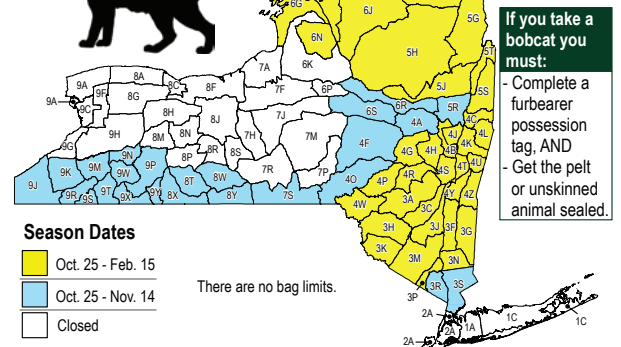
Raccoon, Red Fox, Gray Fox, Skunk, Coyote, Opossum & Weasel Trapping



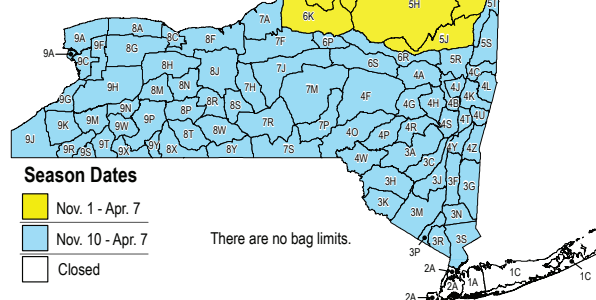
Mink & Muskrat Trapping



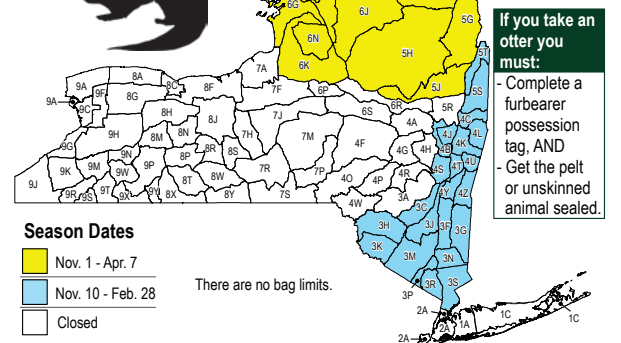
Bobcat Trapping



Beaver Trapping



River Otter Trapping



Don't Eat the Mice! Rodenticides in Furbearers



DEC Seeking Harvested Fisher and Gray Fox Carcasses

Have you ever used rodenticides to get rid of pesky mice on your property? If so, you're not alone. The use of rodenticides to control rodents has become increasingly common, with anticoagulant rodenticides (ARs) being the most frequently used. These compounds inhibit the blood clotting abilities of rodents, leading to internal bleeding and death. But other animals aren't immune to the impacts. Anything that ingests ARs is at risk. Exposure can be through directly ingesting the poison or feeding upon another animal that was exposed. Since rodents that consume ARs do not die right away and often exhibit slow, abnormal behavior prior to death, they make easy prey for hungry wildlife. Large doses of ARs can kill wildlife directly by causing them to bleed excessively from relatively minor trauma. Smaller doses may not kill them directly, but likely has sublethal impacts like making animals more susceptible to diseases or impacting reproduction.

How common is AR exposure in wildlife? As it turns out – very common. Anticoagulant rodenticides have been documented in a wide variety of birds and mammals across the U.S. In New York State, researchers at SUNY-ESF and Cornell University tested over 100 trapper-harvested fishers for the presence of ARs. Over 80% of the fishers were exposed to at least one AR compound, with over 50% being exposed to multiple compounds. Foxes also seem to be particularly vulnerable, with 100% of red and gray fox samples from New Hampshire testing positive for AR presence.

How can you help?

DEC has partnered with neighboring state agencies and researchers to better understand the impacts of anticoagulant rodenticides and other toxins on our wildlife. We will be collecting fresh carcasses of fishers and gray foxes to conduct comprehensive health screenings on this fall. If you have a fresh carcass that you are willing to contribute to this study, please reach out to your Regional Wildlife Office or e-mail wildlife@dec.ny.gov for more information. Anyone who contributes to the study is eligible to receive a Furbearer Management Cooperator patch!



Photo courtesy Jack N.



Photo courtesy Eric P.

Interested in other furbearer-related work DEC is doing? Check out our annual Furbearer Newsletter by scanning the QR code.



Permit Requirements for Marten

A free special permit is still required to trap marten in New York State. To receive a permit, scan the QR code below or visit dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/trapping/regulations#Marten. You will need the following information:

- Name
- Mailing Address
- DEC ID # (from your trapping license)
- Phone number of email address

You can also apply by phone at 518-623-1240.



Adopt Trapping Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Trapping BMPs are scientifically-researched recommendations for traps and trapping systems used to capture furbearers in the U.S. Benefits of using BMPs include:

- Using devices that improve efficiency, selectivity, and the welfare of trapped animals.
- Instill public confidence in and maintain public support of trapping.

To view species-specific BMPs and to view a searchable database that provides information on traps that meet BMP criteria, scan the QR code or visit dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/trapping/best-management-practices.



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New York State & Environmental Conservation Police

Q: I'm using an app that shows land owned by New York State — can I hunt on that land?

A: State lands are owned by DEC, DOT, SUNY, NYS Parks, Thruway, and others. It's your responsibility to check the rules for each property, as even some DEC lands are off-limits to hunting. You can always contact your local ECO to determine legality (page 69).

Q: What documentation must I carry when hunting?

A: You must carry your hunting license, plus carcass tags (deer, bear, turkey), any special permits (e.g., turkey permit), and a duck stamp with HIP# (if hunting migratory game birds). "Hunting license" means the printed license listing privileges or a lifetime license card or NY driver's license with an "Adventure" hunting icon. You may also use your HuntFishNY app for proof of a hunting license.

Q: Are deer urine scents legal in NY?

A: Yes, but DEC strongly urges hunters not to use natural deer urine products to protect NY deer from Chronic Wasting Disease. Hunters who want to use deer attractant scents should only use synthetic products.

Q: Can I hunt small game with a rifle in counties where deer hunting with a rifle is prohibited?

A: Yes, but if any deer season is open, you cannot use a rifle larger than .22 caliber. You may not possess rifles afield on Long Island or in Westchester County.

Q: If the trapping season is open, can I hunt for that species?

A: It depends on the season and species. Some furbearers may only be trapped, while some can also be hunted, but during different seasons. Coyote is a good example of a species that can be hunted and trapped, but season dates for hunting and trapping this species are different, so be sure to check the guide before going afield.

Q: I own a camp and property in New York. Can I purchase a resident hunting license?

A: Residency is a fixed, permanent, and principal home to which a person always intends to return. Simply owning land or paying taxes does not make one eligible for resident license fees. More information on residency is found on page 11.

Q: Can our hunting party share Deer Management Permits (DMPs) on a deer drive?

A: No, only the person possessing the DMP may take an antlerless deer. DMPs may be consigned from one hunter to another, but this needs to happen before the deer is harvested. See the DMP consignment rules (page 31) for more info.

Q: Can I target shoot on DEC lands?

A: Yes, on some DEC lands. Many DEC state lands, including State Forests and Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) have specific rules prohibiting target shooting in some or all areas — call ahead. If a portion of a DEC property is posted as being open to target shooting, you may not damage live trees and must remove all litter.

Q: Can I carry a handgun while bowhunting deer/bear during the special bowhunting seasons?

A: No, you may not possess a firearm of any type while bowhunting during those seasons. Possession of a handgun in NY requires a NY Pistol Permit. NY does not recognize any permits from other states.

Q: When do tree stands have to be removed from state-managed lands?

A: On DEC-managed lands, tree stands (including scaffolds, raised platforms, ladders, steps, and other devices to assist in climbing) labeled with a name and address or DEC ID number may be left overnight but must be removed at the end of the hunting season. Tree stands (including ladders and steps) may not injure the tree.

Q: When do duck blinds have to be removed?

A: Hunting blinds placed in navigable waters must be labeled with the owner's name and address then removed from navigable waters no later than Mar. 15 each year.

Q: When waterfowl hunting, how far offshore are you allowed to anchor down? Is this considered trespassing?

A: Where a waterfowl hunter can anchor varies depending on the location. Ultimately, it is the hunter's responsibility to ensure they can legally anchor and hunt where they are discharging their firearm. In most non-tidal areas, the property boundary is the mean low water mark and hunters can legally anchor below this mark. However, the hunter should confirm the underwater lands are within the public domain. Most counties now have publicly accessible property boundary maps online. In tidal areas, the public domain typically extends to the mean high-water mark.

Q: May I use a remote camera on public land to monitor wildlife activity?

A: No. Remote cameras may not be left on State Forests or Wildlife Management Areas unless specifically authorized by DEC.

Q: Can I use a remote camera to meet the trap check guidelines?

A: No, you need to physically check the traps within the trap check time regulations.

Q: Can I waterfowl hunt on a stream designated and posted as a NYSDEC "Public Fishing Stream"?

A: No, Public Fishing easements are for fishing only. Access for other recreational activities would require landowner permission.

Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact

New York State is a member of Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (IWVC), which is an agreement between 47 states to share information regarding hunting, fishing, and trapping convictions.

The IWVC gives members the capability to honor each other's license revocations so a violator convicted in one state may be barred from hunting, fishing, or trapping in all member states, at the discretion of each state.

Call NYSDEC Law Enforcement at 518-402-8816 or visit wildlifecrimetoppers.org.



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dec.ny.gov/about/website-usage-and-policies/language-assistance

Kathy Hochul, Governor |

www.dec.ny.gov

Translation Available. Don't see your language? Ask!

English

To have sections of this document translated into a language you can understand, use the contact information below. There is no charge for the translation.

**Español
Spanish**

Si necesita la traducción de este documento a un idioma que pueda entender, utilice la información de contacto indicada abajo. La traducción es gratis.

Call: 518-402-8044 or email: public@dec.ny.gov

Contact an Environmental Conservation Officer (ECO) — 1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

Scan QR code for an up-to-date
list of ECOs in each region.



ECOs Manns, Bohling, and Bevis with an illegally harvested buck dubbed as "King Louie" by the locals in Montgomery County due to his enormous size.

Report All Poachers and Polluters



1-844-DEC-ECOS (844-332-3267)

Approximately 250 field ECOs patrol the entire state. Their job includes enforcement of fish and wildlife laws and state environmental quality laws. ECOs rely on the eyes and ears of our dedicated members of the sporting community to report suspected violations. Poachers and other violators are stealing from you, your children, and our environment.

As soon as possible, call the hotline to report suspected violations. Dispatchers will assist you in filing a complaint. You may ask to have your name kept confidential or file anonymously.

Complaints are forwarded to an ECO for investigation. The sooner you call and the more detailed information you provide, the more likely the violator will be apprehended. Try to remember the "who, what, when, where, and how" of the event.

Keep your distance.

Do not approach or confront suspects. They may be dangerous, destroy evidence, or simply evade officers if forewarned.

Who did it?

Provide names, age, sex, height, weight, clothing, or vehicle descriptions, etc.

What occurred?

What exactly is the nature of the violation? Examples — taking deer using bait, over limit, shooting from roadway, trespass, using tags of another, after hours, non-resident buying a resident license.

When did it occur?

Dates and times. Has it already happened, is in progress, or yet to happen?

Where did it occur?

Provide exact street addresses, town/county, GPS locations, or other ways the officer can locate the scene, suspects, and evidence.

How did it occur?

What were the exact circumstances or actions associated with the violation?



A photo of the first annual woman's pheasant hunt sponsored by The Washington County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs and the NYS Conservation Officers Association organized by Lt. Gonyeau.

JOIN THE THIN GREEN LINE

Become an
**Environmental
Conservation
Police Officer**



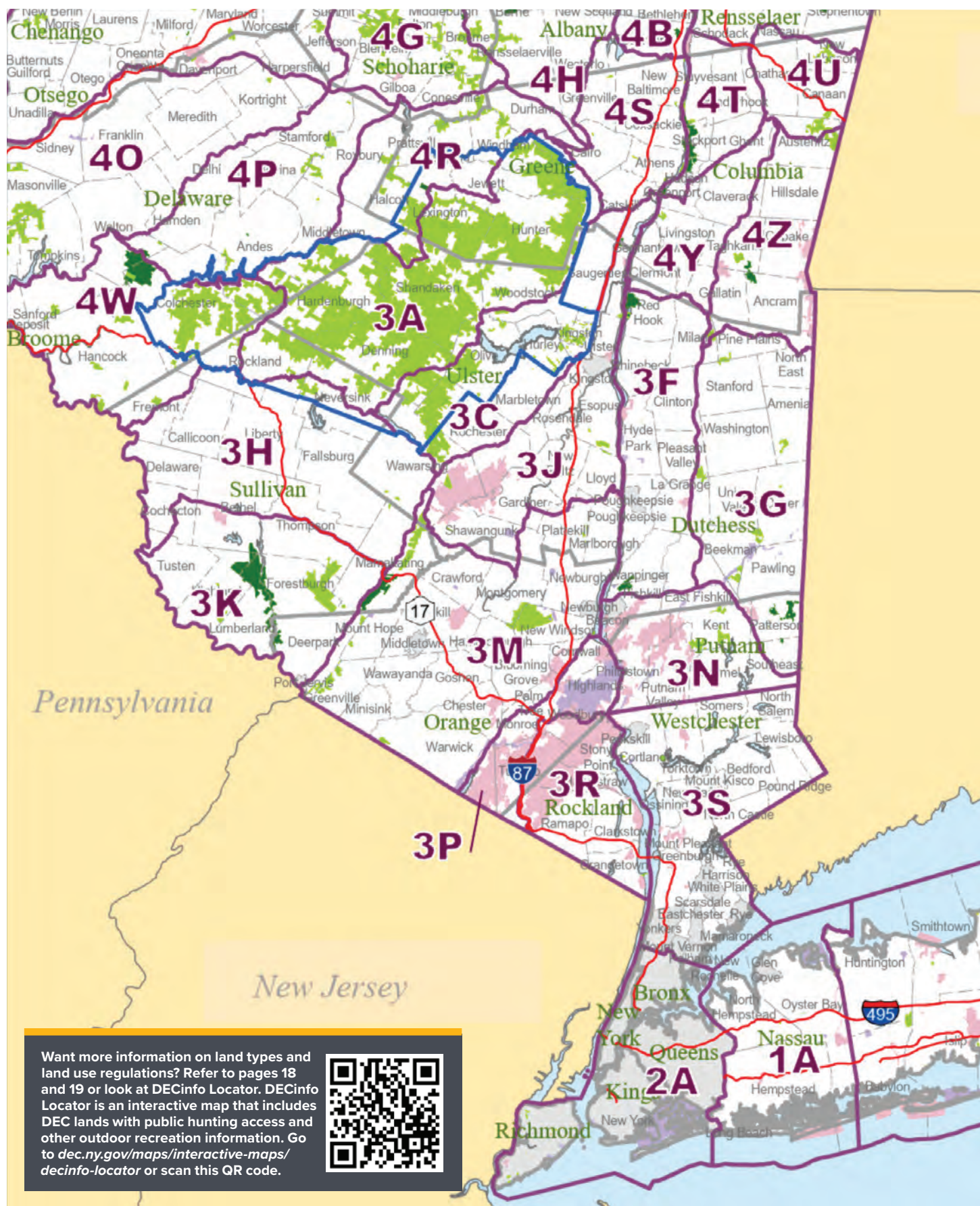
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LEARN MORE AT:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/746.html>

Regional Maps



WMA Accessible Features for Regions 1 and 3

Suffolk

Otis Pike Preserve (Riverhead, Brookhaven)

- Parking, blind

Randall Pond, Ridge Conservation Area (Ridge)

- Parking, fishing access, permit station, viewing area, viewing platform, 2.1 mi foot trails, restroom

Sullivan/Orange

Bashkill WMA (Mamakating, Deerpark)

- Parking, blind, fishing access

Mongaup Valley WMA (Forestburgh, Highland, Lumberland, Deerpark)

- Parking, eagle blind, restroom

* CP-3 - Motorized Access Program for People with Disabilities. Go to dec.ny.gov/places-to-go/accessible-recreation/mappwd for application instructions and forms.



Did you know, in 2024 DEC Forest Rangers

- Patrolled 30,781 miles of trails by foot,
- Patrolled 2,034 miles of interior boundary line,
- Participated in 417 public outreach events,
- Conducted 362 search and rescue missions.

dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/public-safety/forest-rangers

1-833-NYS-RANGERS (1-833-697-7264)



PROTECT YOUR WATERS

Clean. Drain. Dry.
Boating and Fishing Equipment

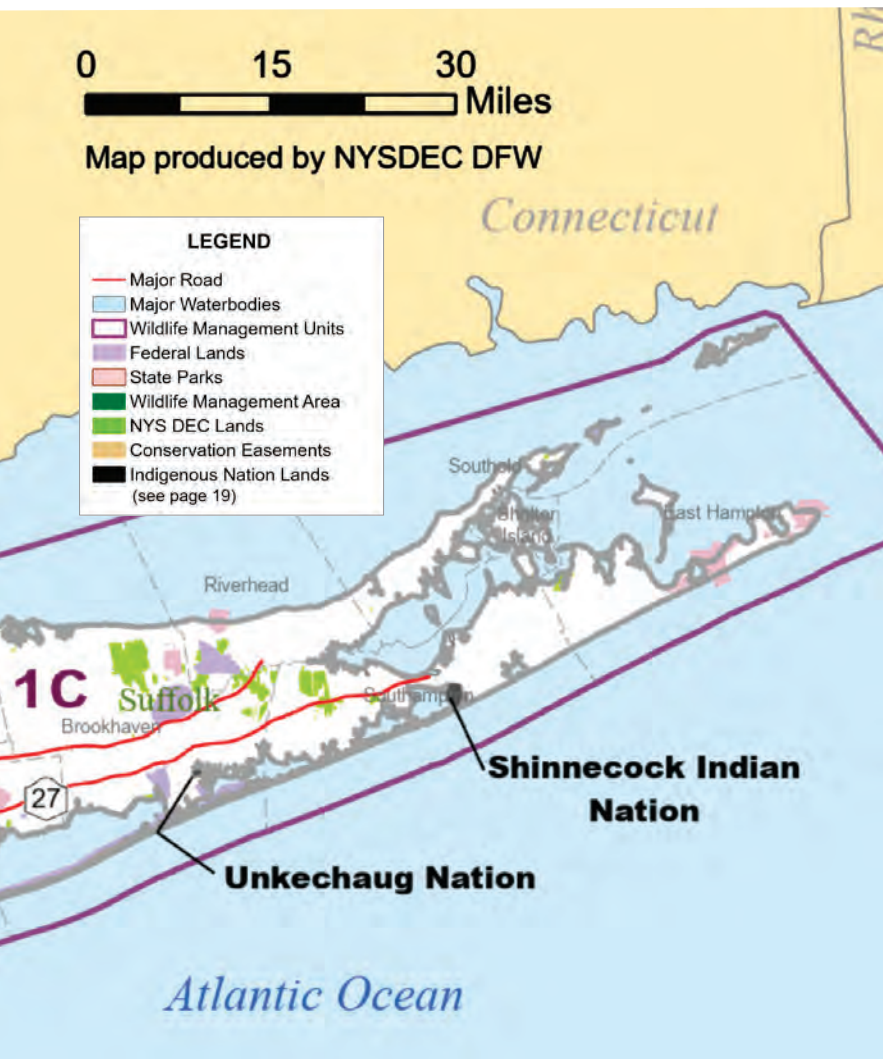


0 15 30 Miles

Map produced by NYSDEC DFW

LEGEND

- Major Road
- Major Waterbodies
- Wildlife Management Units
- Federal Lands
- State Parks
- Wildlife Management Area
- NYS DEC Lands
- Conservation Easements
- Indigenous Nation Lands (see page 19)



10 HIKING ESSENTIALS

Carry these essentials on all hikes for a safe and enjoyable experience.

- 1 NAVIGATION** – map, compass, GPS system, extra batteries
- 2 INSULATION** – waterproof/windproof jacket, hat, gloves, thermals, wool socks. Pack extra in case you get wet.
- 3 LIGHT** – headlamp, flashlight, lanterns, extra batteries
- 4 FIRST-AID SUPPLIES** – use a pre-made kit or build your own.
- 5 EMERGENCY KIT** – whistle, signal mirror, duct tape, pocket knife/multi-tool, etc.
- 6 FIRE** – matches in waterproof container, lighter, fire starters
- 7 NUTRITION** – choose high-protein and high-calorie items, and be sure to pack extra food.
- 8 WATER** – carry more than you think you need and a water filtration system.
- 9 SUN PROTECTION** – sunglasses, sunscreen, hat
- 10 EMERGENCY SHELTER** – tent, space blanket, tarp

★ CARRY OUT WHAT YOU CARRY IN!



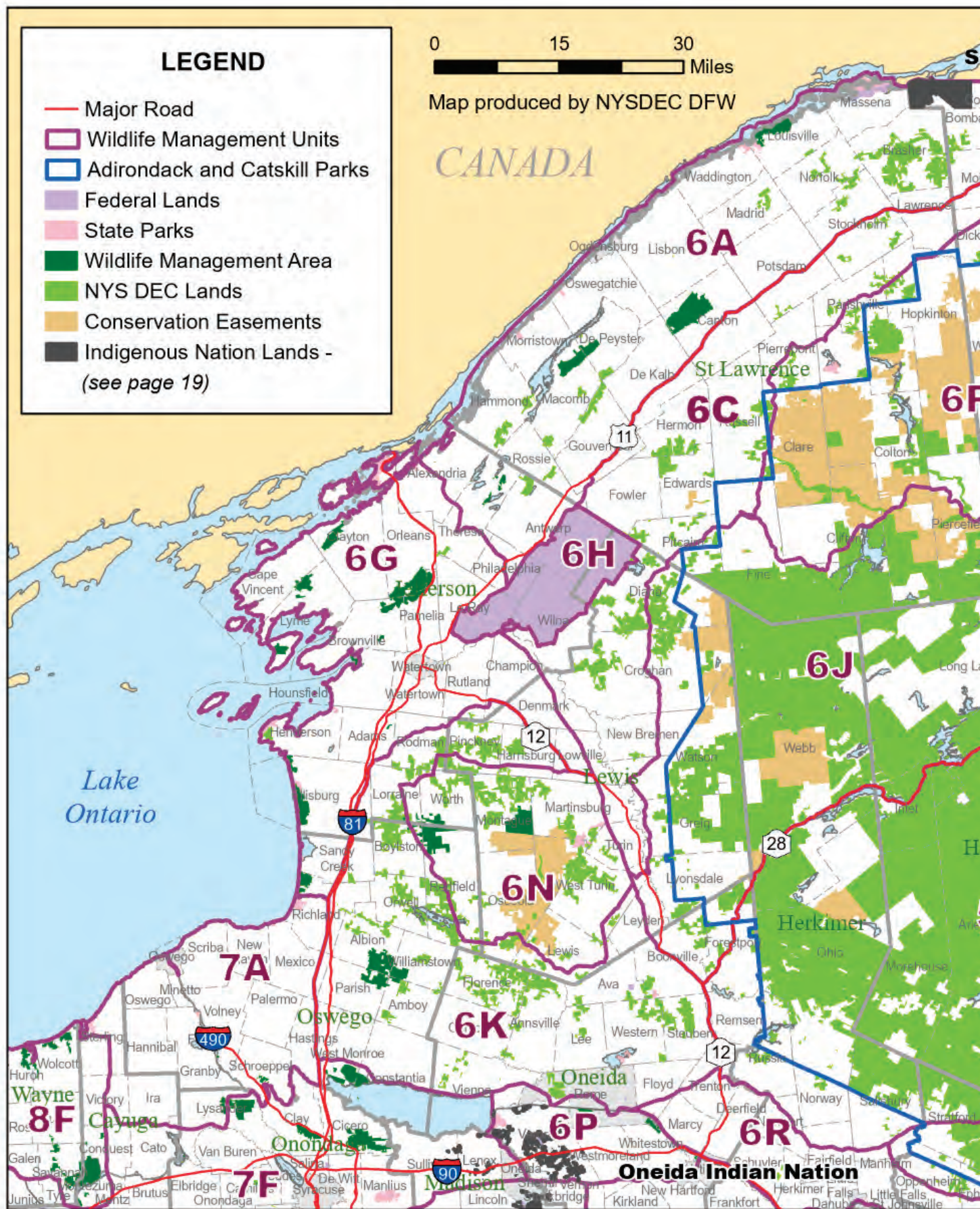
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IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL: 911

833-NYS-RANGERS (833-697-7264)
<http://on.ny.gov/NYSForestRangerRoster>
Cell service not available in all areas.

Regional Maps





WMA Accessible Features for Regions 5 and 6

Clinton
Ausable Marsh WMA (Peru)
• Parking, viewing platform
Kings Bay WMA (Champlain)
• Parking, 150 ft path, viewing platform
Lake Alice WMA (Chazy)
• Parking, 2 blinds, fishing access, nature trail, 0.4 mi CP-3 trail*
Essex
Wickham Marsh WMA (Chesterfield)
• Parking, viewing platform, 0.1 mi foot path
Jefferson
Ashland Flats WMA (Lyme)
• Parking, observation tower
Black Pond WMA (Ellisburg)
• Parking, fishing platform, viewing platform, 0.3 mi foot trail, 0.88 mi CP-3 trail*
French Creek WMA
• Parking
Lakeview WMA (Ellisburg)
• Parking, fishing platform, 0.6 mi foot trails, restroom
Lewis
Tug Hill WMA
• Parking
Oneida
Oriskany Flats WMA (Rome)
• 1.16 mi CP-3 trail
Saratoga
Saratoga Sand Plains WMA Archery Range (Wilton)
• Parking, path
St. Lawrence
Upper & Lower Lakes WMA (Canton)
• Parking, portable blind pads, 0.5 mi foot trails, viewing area
Wilson Hill WMA (Louisville)
• Parking, blind, boardwalk, viewing platform, 1.2 mi foot trails
Washington
Carters Pond WMA (Greenwich)
• Parking, viewing platform, 0.2 mi foot trail
East Bay WMA (Whitehall)
• Parking, 0.1 mi path, viewing platform
Washington Co. Grasslands WMA (Fort Edward)
• Parking, viewing platform

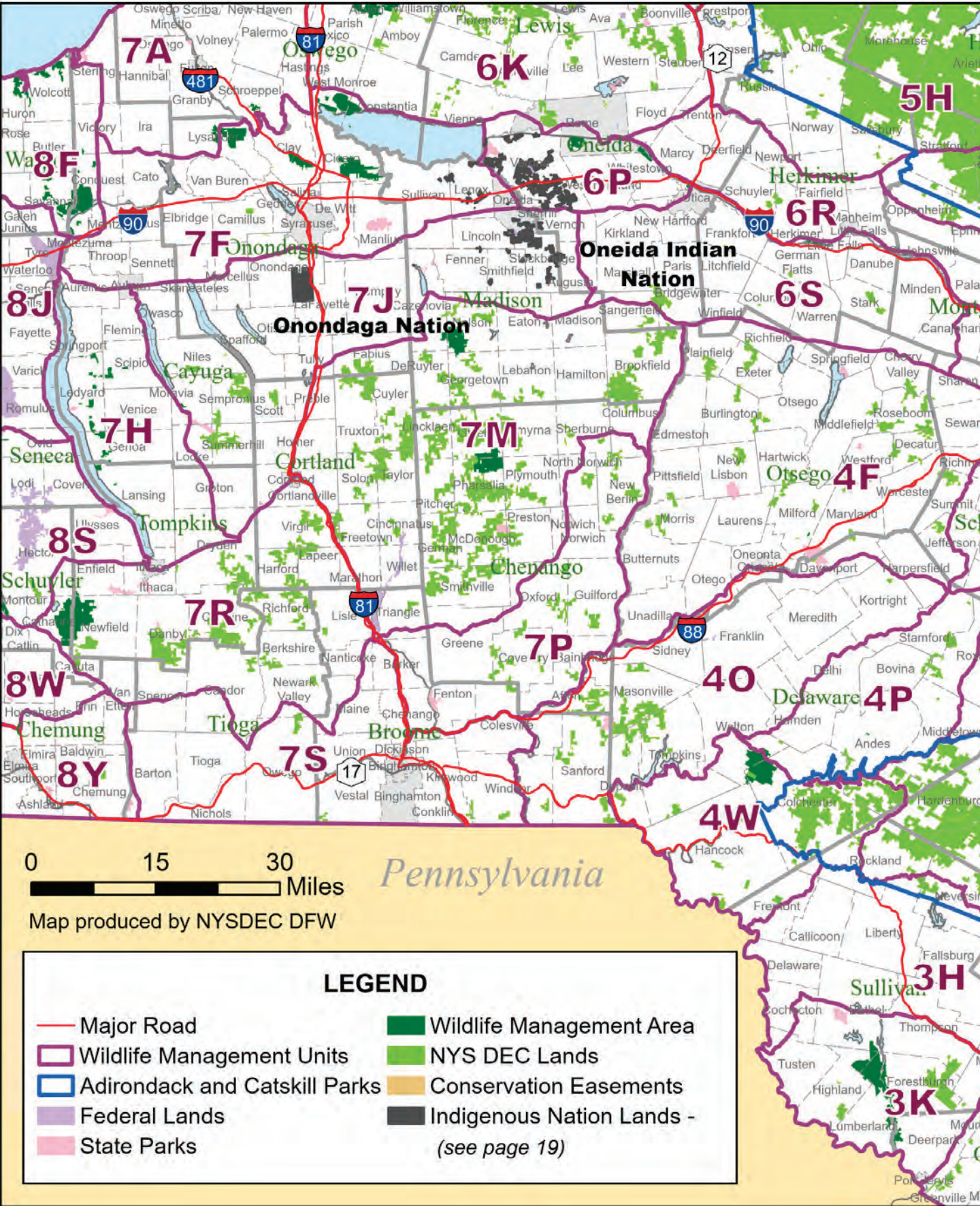
* CP-3 - Motorized Access Program for People with Disabilities. Go to dec.ny.gov/places-to-go/accessible-recreation/mappwd for application instructions and forms.

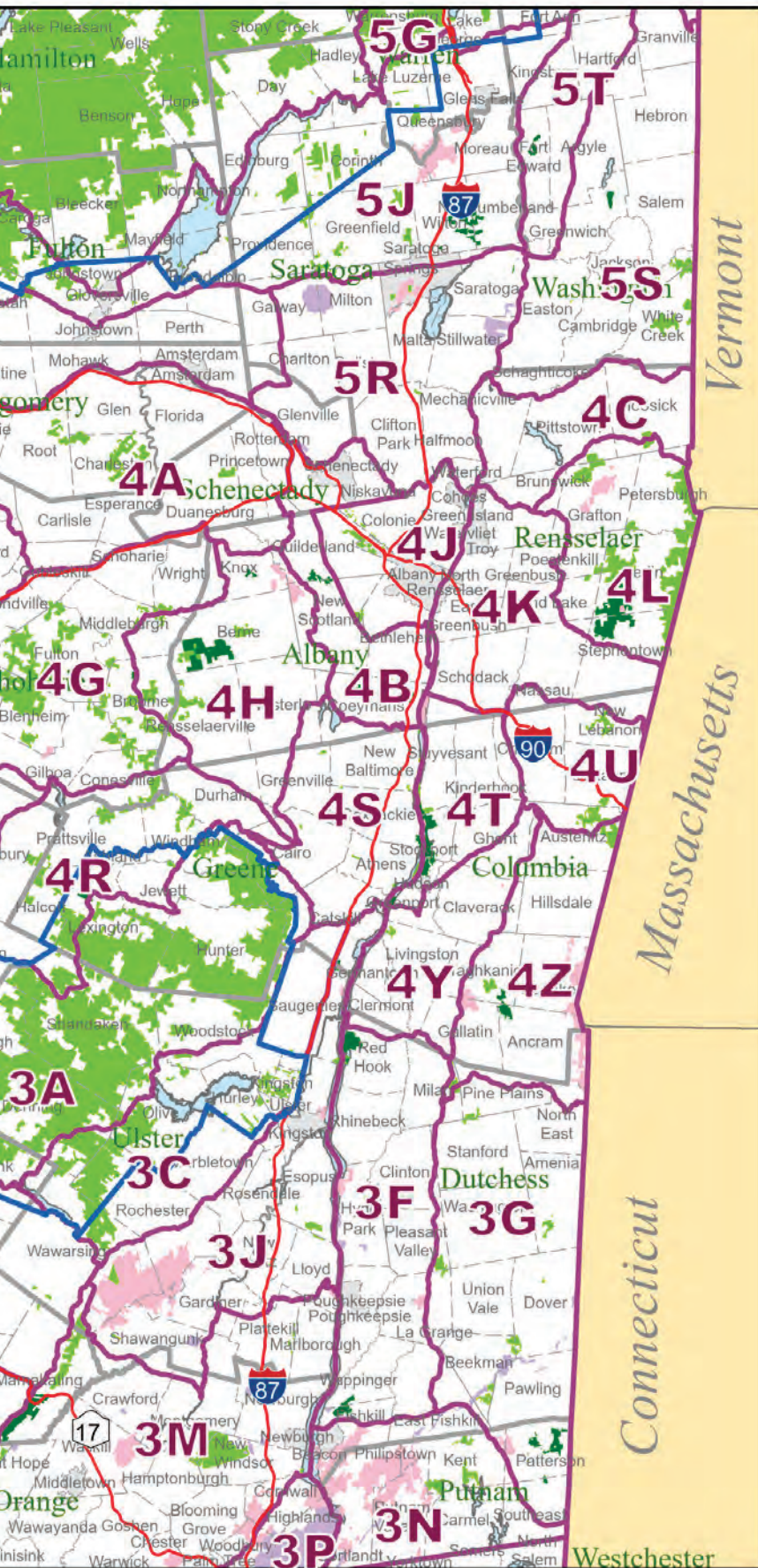
Conservation Easements

Public hunting and trapping is allowed on the conservation easements shown on these maps, but because rules and regulations are different for each conservation easement, members of the public wishing to hunt or trap on a particular easement property are strongly encouraged to contact the local DEC office (see page 6) before planning a trip.

For more information on conservation easements, visit: dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/conservation-easements.

Regional Maps





WMA Accessible Features for Regions 4 and 7

Albany
Partridge Run WMA (Berne)
• Parking, observation tower/ADA trail, CP-3 trails*
Delaware
Bear Spring Mountain WMA (Walton)
• CP-3 trails*
Greene
Vosburgh Swamp WMA (Coxsackie, Athens)
• Parking, boardwalk, waterfowl hunting/viewing blind
Onondaga
Hamlin Marsh WMA (Clay)
• Parking, boardwalk, blind, viewing platform, 0.1 mi foot path
Three Rivers WMA (Lysander)
• Parking, viewing platform, 0.2 mi gravel foot path to hunting blind
Oswego
Deer Creek Marsh WMA (Richland)
• Parking, 0.1 mi foot path
Rensselaer
Capital District WMA (Stephentown and Berlin)
• CP-3 trails*
Schoharie
Franklinton Vlaie WMA (Broome)
• Parking, viewing pavilion, fishing/viewing access

FIREWOOD WARNING

Your firewood may be hiding invasive pests that are killing our trees and forever changing the forests we love. Protect our trees.

Buy Local, Burn Local.

- It is illegal to bring untreated* firewood into New York State
- It is illegal to transport untreated firewood more than 50 miles from its source or origin
- When transporting firewood, you must carry proof of source (receipt from a vendor), origin (self-issued certificate from DEC website), or treatment (label showing treatment method)

* Treated firewood has been heated to 160°F for 75 minutes to eliminate pests living inside the wood. Treated firewood can be moved without restriction.

Failure to follow these regulations may result in a ticket.

For questions, call toll-free:

1-866-640-0652

State and federal quarantines exist that further restrict the movement of firewood. For more information, visit www.dec.ny.gov and search for "invasive insects".



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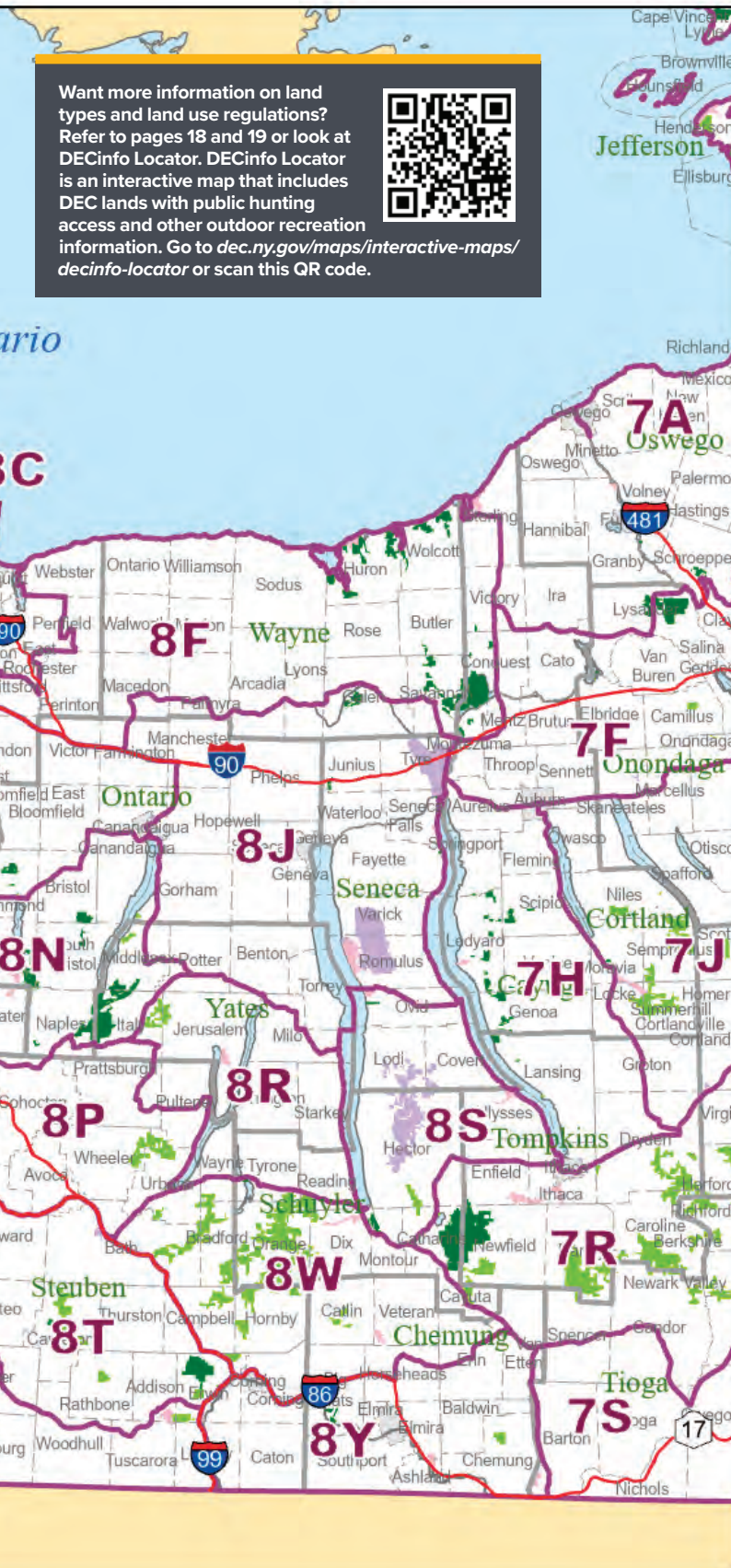
ASIAN LONGHORNED
BEETLE

EMERALD
ASH BORER

Regional Maps



Want more information on land types and land use regulations? Refer to pages 18 and 19 or look at DECinfo Locator. DECinfo Locator is an interactive map that includes DEC lands with public hunting access and other outdoor recreation information. Go to dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator or scan this QR code.



WMA Accessible Features for Regions 8 and 9

Allegany
Hanging Bog WMA (New Hudson)
• 0.14 mi CP-3 trail*
Cattaraugus
Birch Run Ponds FWMA (Allegany)
• Parking, fishing access, 0.3 mi foot trail, seasonal restroom
Cayuga/Wayne/Seneca
Northern Montezuma WMA (Victory, Conquest, Mentz, Montezuma, Butler, Savannah, Seneca Falls)
• Parking, viewing platform, 1.4 mi foot trails, restroom
Chautauqua
Chautauqua Lake FWMA (Ellery, North Harmony)
• At Stow Farm: parking, blind/viewing platform, 0.2 mi foot trail
Watts Flats (Harmony)
• Parking, viewing platform
Erie
Spicer Creek WMA (Grand Island)
• Parking, 2 blinds, 0.4 mi foot trail
Genesee
John White WMA (Alabama)
• Parking, blind, 0.62 mi CP-3 trail*
Livingston
Conesus Inlet WMA (Conesus)
• Parking, 0.1 mi foot trail, viewing area, 1 mi CP-3 trail*
Livingston/Allegany
Rattlesnake Hill WMA (Nunda, Ossian, Grove)
• Parking, viewing platform, 9.3 mi CP-3 trails*
Monroe
Braddock Bay WMA (Parma, Greece)
• Parking, fishing access, viewing platform, kayak launch
Ontario
Honeoye Creek WMA (Richmond)
• 2.8 mi CP-3 trails*
Ontario/Yates
High Tor WMA (Naples, Italy Middlesex)
• Parking, fishing access, hand launch, 8.4 mi CP-3 trails*
Orleans/Erie/Niagara/Genesee
Tonawanda WMA (Shelby, Newstead, Royalton, Alabama)
• Parking, blind, 0.16 mi foot trail
Orleans/Genesee
Oak Orchard WMA (Barre, Shelby, Oakfield, Alabama)
• Parking, viewing platform, pavilion, 0.14 mi foot trails, 3.2 mi CP-3 trails*
Schuyler
Catharine Creek WMA (Dix, Montour)
• 2 mi CP-3 trails*
Waneta-Lamoka WMA (Tyrone)
• Parking, hand launch
Steuben
Erwin WMA (Erwin)
• Parking, 5.38 mi CP-3 trails*
Wayne
Galen WMA (Galen)
• 2.2 mi CP-3 trails*
Lake Shore Marshes WMA (Rochester, Oswego)
• Parking, fishing access, hand launch, seasonal restroom
Wyoming
Carlton Hill MUA (Middlebury)
• 0.6 mi CP-3 trails*

* CP-3 - Motorized Access Program for People with Disabilities. Go to dec.ny.gov/places-to-go/accessible-recreation/mappwd for application instructions and forms.



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you go.**

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SHOOTERS & HUNTERS: HELP PREVENT WILDFIRES.

The target shooting and hunting community prides itself on being safe and responsible with firearms in all situations—from using them outdoors to storing them safely at home. Sometimes, however, unusual conditions such as extremely dry environments require an extra level of awareness and safety on the part of shooters.

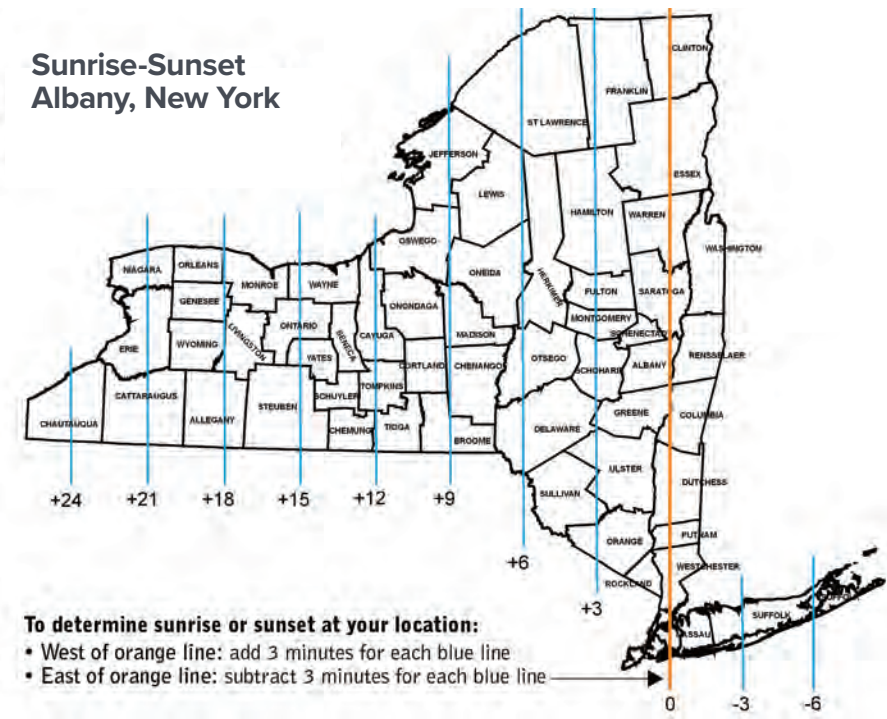
Wildfires have many possible causes. The National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearms and ammunition industry, reminds all shooters that during dry and hot weather conditions their use of certain ammunition and targets could accidentally ignite a wildfire. NSSF reminds all target shooters and hunters, as well as other outdoor enthusiasts, to consider the potential consequences of their activities in fire-prone environments.

- **Make it a point to know the regulations and rules related to shooting in areas experiencing dry and hot conditions, whether on public or private land or at shooting ranges. Many national forests, for example, do not allow recreational shooting when fire restrictions are in effect.**
- **Consider the type of ammunition and targets you are using. Minimize the risk of fires by not using steel-jacketed ammunition, ammunition with steel-core components, tracer rounds or exploding targets in fire-prone areas.**
- **Remember that equipment, such as cars and ATVs, can have extremely hot exhaust systems that could ignite dry vegetation, so park only in designated areas.**
- **Extinguish and dispose of smoking materials safely.**
- **Follow guidelines to extinguish campfires.**
- **Warn others of potential dangers and behaviors for starting wildfires.**
- **Report any wildfire you see to authorities.**
- **Spread this message to other target shooters, hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.**



NSSF.ORG



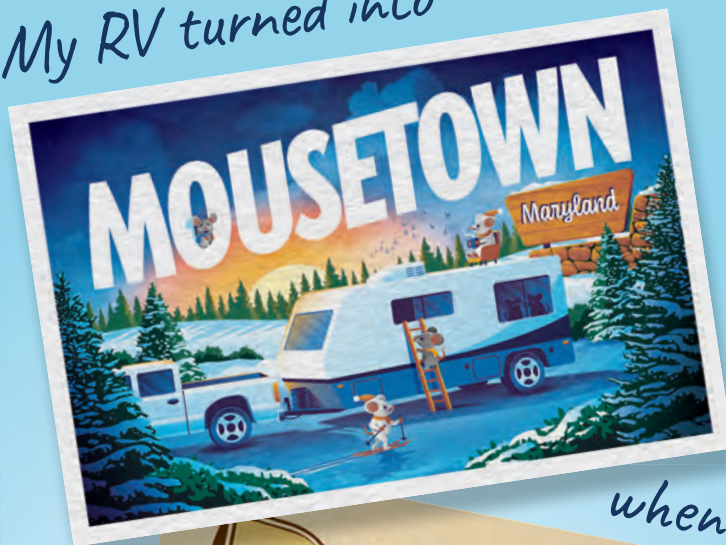


When Hunting for Wildlife, All Shooting Hours are Sunrise to Sunset, Except:

- Unprotected wildlife — any hour.
- Furbearers — after sunrise on the opening day of each respective season, bobcat, raccoon, skunk, red fox, gray fox, opossum, and coyote may be taken at any time of day or night.
- For most migratory game bird species, including ducks, geese, snipe, rails — ½ hour before sunrise to sunset.
- Spring turkey — ½ hour before sunrise to noon.
- Big game — ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.

Day	SEPT		OCT		NOV		DEC		JAN		FEB		MAR		APR		MAY	
	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM
1	6:20	7:28	6:52	6:35	7:29	5:47	7:05	4:22	7:25	4:32	7:09	5:08	6:30	5:44	6:37	7:21	5:49	7:55
2	6:21	7:27	6:53	6:34	6:30	4:46	7:06	4:22	7:25	4:33	7:08	5:09	6:28	5:45	6:35	7:22	5:48	7:56
3	6:22	7:25	6:54	6:32	6:31	4:44	7:07	4:21	7:25	4:34	7:06	5:11	6:27	5:47	6:33	7:23	5:46	7:57
4	6:23	7:23	6:55	6:30	6:33	4:43	7:08	4:21	7:25	4:35	7:05	5:12	6:25	5:48	6:32	7:24	5:45	7:58
5	6:24	7:21	6:57	6:28	6:34	4:42	7:09	4:21	7:25	4:36	7:04	5:13	6:23	5:49	6:30	7:25	5:44	7:59
6	6:25	7:20	6:58	6:27	6:35	4:41	7:10	4:21	7:25	4:37	7:03	5:15	6:22	5:50	6:28	7:26	5:42	8:00
7	6:26	7:18	6:59	6:25	6:36	4:40	7:11	4:21	7:24	4:38	7:02	5:16	6:20	5:51	6:26	7:27	5:41	8:02
8	6:27	7:16	7:00	6:23	6:38	4:38	7:12	4:21	7:24	4:39	7:01	5:17	7:18	6:53	6:25	7:29	5:40	8:03
9	6:28	7:14	7:01	6:22	6:39	4:37	7:13	4:21	7:24	4:40	6:59	5:19	7:17	6:54	6:23	7:30	5:39	8:04
10	6:29	7:13	7:02	6:20	6:40	4:36	7:14	4:21	7:24	4:41	6:58	5:20	7:15	6:55	6:21	7:31	5:38	8:05
11	6:30	7:11	7:03	6:18	6:41	4:35	7:15	4:21	7:23	4:42	6:57	5:21	7:13	6:56	6:20	7:32	5:37	8:06
12	6:31	7:09	7:05	6:17	6:43	4:34	7:16	4:21	7:23	4:43	6:55	5:23	7:12	6:57	6:18	7:33	5:35	8:07
13	6:33	7:07	7:06	6:15	6:44	4:33	7:16	4:21	7:23	4:44	6:54	5:24	7:10	6:59	6:16	7:34	5:34	8:08
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30	6:51	6:37	7:26	5:49	7:04	4:22	7:24	4:30	7:11	5:05			6:40	7:18	5:50	7:54	5:20	8:24
31			7:28	5:48			7:25	4:31	7:10	5:07			6:38	7:19			5:20	8:25

My RV turned into



when I left the



open, causing a



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ALL - NEW

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WHERE ABSTRACT MEETS REALITY.

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