

# RHODE ISLAND Hunting & Trapping

2025-2026 REGULATION GUIDE

## Prescribed Fire:

How Burning Supports  
Wildlife Conservation  
and Hunters

See page 15



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**24hr Violation Line: (401) 222-3070**

Dean Hoxsie, Chief

**On the Cover:**

Scott Marcinko ignites Carolina WMA  
burn unit for habitat management!

Photo by Desmos Photo

# RHODE ISLAND Hunting & Trapping

2025-2026 REGULATION GUIDE



Photo by Maddie Proulx

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## Welcome Letter



On behalf of Governor Dan McKee, I'm excited to share the twelfth annual **Rhode Island Hunting and Trapping Regulation Guide**. Whether you're a seasoned outdoors enthusiast or just beginning your journey into hunting and trapping, we hope this guide provides the information and resources you need to enjoy Rhode Island's wildlife and natural beauty safely and responsibly.

Hunting plays a meaningful role in Rhode Island by supporting family traditions, providing a sustainable local food resource, connecting people with nature, and contributing to tourism. While I'm not an active hunter myself, I recognize and respect the rich history of hunting in our state, the way knowledge and skills are passed down through generations,

and the critical role hunting plays in wildlife management and funding conservation efforts through DEM.

Thanks to the support of Rhode Island hunters and trappers, DEM acquires and protects wildlife habitat, studies local species, and educates the public on the importance of conservation. With funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Office of Conservation Investment (formally the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program), DEM recently conserved the 942-acre Buck Hill property in Burrillville – it's the largest acquisition since 2014 – plus the 151-acre St. Angelo property, totaling over 1,093 acres for habitat and public recreation, including hunting and trapping. DEM appreciates the contributions of USFWS, hunters, trappers, and target shooters, whose support makes projects like this possible.

Starting July 1, 2025, fees for licenses, permits, and tags will gradually increase. These revenues are matched 3:1 by federal funds, supporting conservation and outdoor recreation statewide. This user pay, public benefit model drives DEM's mission to protect Rhode Island's natural resources.

Although Rhode Island is the smallest state, DEM manages over 60,000 acres of public land - much of it open to hunters and trappers. Thanks to partnerships with towns and private organizations, hunting and trapping access is available in every county meaning your next adventure is never far away. We're proud of these partnerships and count on respectful hunters to help keep these lands open for future use.

This guide, funded through your contributions to the Pittman-Robertson Act, is here to support your experience and promote responsible outdoor recreation. Enjoy the beauty of Rhode Island and thank you for playing a vital role in conservation efforts that will provide benefits for generations to come!

Terrence Gray, PE  
Director

### Hunting Abstract

This hunting abstract is a summary of the rules, regulations, seasons and bag limits for the 2025–2026 Rhode Island hunting and trapping seasons. For more detailed information, see the General Laws of Rhode Island, obtainable at most public libraries. A complete copy of the Hunting and Trapping Regulations for the 2025–2026 Season can be viewed online at: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/documents/regulations/index.php#hunting-fishing>

Copies are also available by contacting the Division of Fish and Wildlife, 401-789-0281.

### Report Game Violations

RIDEM Environmental Police Officers have broad responsibilities associated with the statewide enforcement of various state environmental laws and regulations, including those associated with hunting, freshwater fishing, and marine fisheries. Officers are always present and on guard to protect these valuable natural resources for all of our citizens.

You can assist them by reporting wildlife violations to the 24 hour hotline at DEM.

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## About This Guide

This high-quality reference guide is brought to you by the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife 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.

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## Significant Regulation Changes & Highlights 2025–2026

1. Hunting guides are now required to obtain a free Guide Permit for anyone engaging in the act of guiding for game species. See page 28.
2. New Deer Check Station at Buck Hill WMA at 704 Buck Hill Rd, Pascoag. Durfee Hill is now permanently closed.
3. Small game hunting now allows air rifles to use calibers from .177 to .30 caliber.
4. Hunting violations may now result in a revocation or suspension in your hunting, trapping or fishing license.
5. Tree stands must be removed by March 31st.
6. Pintail bag limit has increased to three (3).
7. Simmons Mill WMA no longer requires decoys to waterfowl hunt.
8. Prudence Island no longer has a restriction on waterfowl hunting more than 10' above mean high tide.
9. Crossbows are now a legal method of take for turkeys during the spring and fall hunting seasons.
10. License and permit fees have increased, effective July 1, 2025.
11. The Nature Conservancy has opened the Harrington Preserve for all methods of deer hunting.
12. Youth pheasant weekend now includes the following Monday, which usually falls on Columbus Day.
13. Youth hunting seasons now include 12–17 year olds.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure that the Freshwater, Marine, and Wildlife resources of the State of Rhode Island will be conserved and managed for equitable and sustainable use.

## Definitions

**Antlerless deer** – deer having no antlers or antlers less than three (3) inches in length.

**Bearded turkey** – a wild turkey that carries a visible beard, i.e., a tuft of stiff filament-like feathers projecting outward and downward from the center of the chest.

**Client** – means a person who receives services from a guide.

**Daily bag limit** – the maximum number of game of a single species or combination (aggregate) of species permitted to be taken by one person in any one day during the open season.

**Field possession limit** – the maximum number of game of a single species or combination of species permitted to be possessed by one person while in the field, in one's vehicle, boat, trailer or other means of transportation when traveling between the field and one's personal abode.

**Guide** – is defined as a person paid a fee, or in-kind compensation, in exchange for transport, directly aiding, assisting, advising, showing the way to, or directing another person in the hunting of wildlife in the state of Rhode Island.

**Humane dispatch** – means the death of an animal that seeks to minimize pain, distress, and negative effects while resulting in death

as quickly as possible. All methods of humane dispatch must comply with Rhode Island General Laws.

**Junior Hunter** – any person 12–14 years of age who possesses a hunter safety education certificate. Junior hunters may only hunt in the immediate company of an adult 21 years of age or older, who possesses a current RI hunting license.

**Personal abode** – one's principal or ordinary home or dwelling place, as distinguished from one's temporary or transient place of abode or dwelling, such as a hunting club, or any club house, cabin, tent or trailer house used as a hunting club, or any hotel, motel or rooming house used during a hunting, pleasure or business trip.

**Possess or Possession** – to exercise dominion or control over any wild animal, commencing at the time at which a decision is made not to return the wild animal to the immediate vicinity from which it was taken and lasting up until its ultimate disposition. The decision to possess or return the animal must be made at the first practical opportunity.

**Season bag limit** – the maximum number of game of a single species permitted to be taken by one person over the duration of the open season.

**Tidal Waters** – waters of the State extending from mean high water to the seaward limit of three (3) miles.

**Tracking** – means following the trail of an animal in an effort to recover it.

## Environmental Police Chief's Message:

Welcome to the hunting and fishing abstract for the State of Rhode Island. You will find all the necessary information within this document, and a list of resources, locations and programs that are offered. Rhode Island, while small, has a great deal to offer for outdoor enthusiasts such as whitetail deer, waterfowl, small game, upland game hunting, along with a tremendous trout stocking program for our freshwater bodies of water. Saltwater anglers can fish the many miles of shoreline, take a charter boat fishing, or use recreational boating to access some of the best fishing on the east coast.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife offers hunter education courses and operates a state-of-the-art shooting range at the Great Swamp and provides many other programs for you to learn from and explore. All the programming is provided to ensure that those hunting and fishing in our state, do so in an ethical manner with the greatest

regard for the outdoor environment, and the wildlife inhabitants. Fish and Wildlife has a highly educated and dedicated staff that work to provide ever improving wildlife habitat, game management, and trout and salmon stocking programs to benefit the outdoorsmen.

The Environmental Police work together with all divisions of the department, to provide resource protection through conservation law enforcement. Our officers are highly educated and trained to provide a diverse and thorough knowledge of natural resources. Officers are responsible for all state lands, private lands for hunting and fishing oversight, as well as the marine environment. Hunting, fishing, and boating safety and enforcement are the primary functions of the division. Officers are provided with an incredible assortment of tools to insure the protection of our natural resources for future generations.

Please venture into the great outdoors that Rhode Island has to offer. While we are called the Ocean State, our other natural resource properties and features are as impressive as our water side vistas. We ask that you visit and enjoy in a manner that is respectful to the outdoor environment, lands and waters of our state and maintain these areas in a pristine condition so that others can enjoy them as you have.

As Chief, I welcome you to Rhode Island and ask that everyone do their part to protect the natural resources of this small but incredibly diverse state. Go out and explore, enjoy and take in all that Rhode Island has to offer.

Sincerely,

**Dean Hoxsie, Chief**  
RI Environmental Police  
(401-222-3070)



# General INFORMATION

License & Permits License year: March 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026	Fee (online)	Fee (at vendor)
<b>Resident Hunting License</b> (must be 15 years old) <sup>1</sup>	\$24.00	\$26.00
<b>Resident Combination License</b> (Hunting & Fishing)	\$43.00	\$45.00
<b>Resident Junior Hunting License</b> (12–14 years old) <sup>2</sup>	\$14.00	\$16.00
<b>Permanent Resident Combination License</b> (over 65 or disabled)	No Fee <sup>3</sup>	No Fee
<b>Resident Trapping License</b>	\$20.00	\$22.00
<b>Non-Resident Hunting License</b> (must be 15 years old) <sup>1</sup>	\$65.00	\$68.00
<b>Non-Resident Tourist Hunting License (3-day)</b>	\$20.00	\$23.00
<b>Non-Resident Junior Hunting License</b> (12–14 years old) <sup>2</sup>	\$40.00	\$43.00
<b>Non-Resident Trapping License</b> (if reciprocal privileges allowed)	\$75.00	\$78.00
<b>Active Military Personnel Hunting License</b>	\$24.00	\$26.00
<b>Resident All Outdoors Deer Package Permit<sup>4</sup></b>	\$84.00	\$87.00
<b>Resident Deer Permit<sup>5</sup></b>	\$14.00	\$14.50
<b>Non-Resident Deer Permit<sup>5</sup></b>	\$27.50	\$28.50
<b>Resident Turkey Permit</b>	\$9.00	\$9.50
<b>Non-Resident Turkey Permit</b>	\$23.00	\$24.00
<b>RI Game Bird Permit</b>	\$18.50	\$19.00 <sup>6</sup>
<b>State Waterfowl Stamp</b>	\$9.00	\$9.50 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Migratory Bird (HIP) Permit</b>	No Fee	No Fee

- All hunters under the age of 18 **using firearms** must be under the supervision of a parent, guardian, or qualified adult. That adult DOES NOT need to be a licensed hunter in all cases (RIGL 11-47-33). See more details on page 14.
- Junior hunters must hunt in the immediate company of an adult, 21 years of age or older, holding a valid RI hunting license.
- Any resident 65 years or older or with a permanent disability may obtain a free permanent license through the online system, at any license vendor, or at the DEM Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.
- The All Outdoors Deer Permit Package consists of two (2) antlered deer permits and five (5) antlerless deer permits that may be used in any combination during the open deer seasons in Zones 1 and 2 in accordance with the zone bag limits.
- Deer permits are antler, weapon, and zone specific.
- Non-Residents pay a \$1.00 Enhanced access fee (\$19.50 Game Bird Permit and \$10.00 State Waterfowl Stamp).

## Licenses & Permits

No person shall hunt, pursue, take or kill any wild bird or animal in the state without first having obtained a Rhode Island hunting or trapping license (RIGL 20-13-1, RIGL 20-16-1). Hunters must have a signed paper copy of their license and permits in possession, on their person, at all times and shall present it for inspection on demand by any authorized person. Failure to present a license shall make a person liable to the same penalties as if he or she was hunting without a license (RIGL 20-2-9). Licensed hunters and trappers are subject to inspection of any boat, vehicle, game bag,

blind, stand, or other paraphernalia used in conjunction with licensed activity (RIGL 20-2-32). Licenses may be suspended or revoked because of violations of hunting rules and regulations (RIGL 20-2-13).

The possession of a valid Rhode Island hunting license, or combination hunting and fishing license, shall serve as a permit to hunt state management areas (RIGL 20-18-2 and 20-18-3), as well as on some TNC, and state co-op hunting areas, except when special permits are required for deer, waterfowl, or turkey hunting on state lands. These permits shall be valid only from the first day of season to the last day in February. The carrying of firearms on state management areas at any other time is prohibited.

Hunting licenses are available online at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov), at the DEM Office of Boating Registration and Licenses at 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908 (401) 222-3576, and from some sporting goods stores. Reprints of lost or damaged licenses are free through the online system. Purchases made at a full service vendor carry an Enhanced Access Fee (EAF) to offset the cost of administering the licensing system. The enhanced access fees are as follows:

- **Resident:** \$2 per license and \$0.50 per permit
- **Non-Resident:** \$3 per license and \$1.00 per permit
- No EAF for Recreational Saltwater Fishing or No Cost Licenses and permits.

## Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP)

All migratory bird hunters are required to obtain a HIP certification and answer a short survey. HIP permits are available free of charge through the online system, at license vendors, DEM Providence headquarters and the DEM Great Swamp Field Office. The HIP program provides state agencies and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agencies with better data that improves their ability to manage our nation's migratory bird resources.

## Hunter Safety Course Requirements & Licensing

Persons applying for a hunting license or archery permit for the first time or not having been a member of the armed forces must complete a course in safe hunting or archery practices and have been issued a Hunter Education Certificate to obtain a license. License applicants must present a valid hunter safety certificate from Rhode Island or other state, or possess a previous hunting license from RI or other state, or present proof of current or honorably discharged military status. Applicants for an archery deer permit or fall archery turkey permit must provide proof of successful completion of an Archery Safety Education course. A list of hunter safety classes, dates, and locations is available from the Hunter Safety Office: (401) 539-0019 or on the web: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/huntereducation>.

An online hunter education course is available at <https://www.hunter-ed.com/rhodeisland/> and an online bow hunter education course is available at <https://www.bowhunter-ed.com/rhodeisland/>.

## License Suspension

Any person who is convicted of violating any provision of R.I. Gen. Laws Title 20 or any Rule or Regulation may have license(s) to fish, hunt, and or trap, suspended by order of the Director, or his/her designee.

Hunting Licenses and Permits	Deer	Turkey	Pheasant & Quail	Small Game (Coyote <sup>1</sup> , Fox, Squirrel, Rabbit, and Raccoon)	Mourning Doves, Crows <sup>3</sup> , Woodcock, Snipe and Rails	Waterfowl
<b>Hunting License</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Deer Permit<sup>2</sup></b>	•					
<b>Turkey Permit<sup>2</sup></b>		•				
<b>Game Bird Permit</b>			•			
<b>HIP Permit</b>					•	•
<b>Federal Duck Stamp</b>						•
<b>State Duck Stamp</b>						•

- Deer permit required during deer seasons and turkey permit required during turkey season.
- Each deer and turkey harvested requires an individual permit.
- Crow hunters are not required to obtain a HIP Permit.

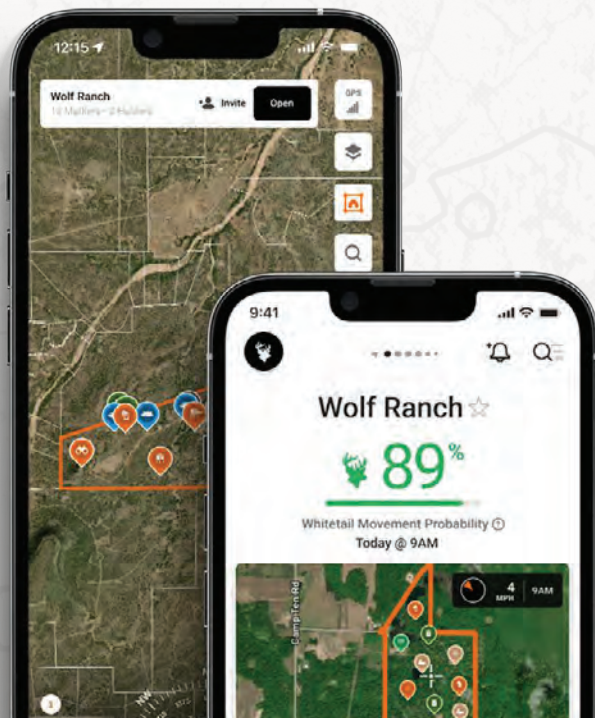
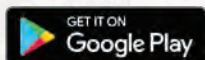




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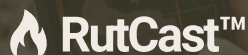
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**John Dudley**  
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## Prohibited Activities

- No loaded rifles or shotguns in or on vehicles (RIGL 20-13-8).
- The sale of game, except as provided (RIGL 20-13-14).
- No shooting at, hunting, or pursuing game along, upon, or across a public highway (RIGL 20-13-9).
- It is a violation of law, punishable by a fine and imprisonment, to fire “into” land for which one does not have landowner permission.
- No hunting on posted land without landowner permission (RIGL 11-44-4,5).
- No hunting in state parks, with the exception of undeveloped state parks as denoted in the regulations (RIGL 11-44-4,5).
- No more than five (5) persons to hunt in unison (RIGL 20-13-11).
- No hunting while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs (RIGL 20-13-10).
- The use of drones or other remotely operated unmanned aircraft systems and devices to drive or disturb wildlife or aid in the take of wildlife for the purpose of hunting is prohibited (RIHR 9.17 N).
- Spotlighting for wild animals and birds is prohibited (statewide and islands) from September 15 through the last day of February (RIHR 9.7.2.F).
- Shooting at any animal at anytime while such animal is on a telephone or electric line, pole, or tower or any communication device (RIHR 9.17.H).
- Taking of birds by any method other than shotgun, bow and arrow, or falconry without permit (RIGL 20-14-7).
- Feeding and baiting wildlife in the state of Rhode Island is not permitted at any time for any purposes except as defined (RIHR 9.17.J).

## Discharge and Firearm Restrictions

- It is unlawful to carry a loaded firearm (RIGL 11-47-2) or archery equipment outside legal shooting hours. Provided the hunter is stationary, his / her firearm or archery equipment may be loaded within fifteen (15) minutes prior to legal shooting hours (RIHR 9.17.L).
- The use or possession of laser sights that project a beam or night-vision equipment while hunting is prohibited (RIHR 9.7.2.G).
- No lead shot larger than No. 2 at any time (RIGL 20-13-13).
- No rifles larger than .22 caliber rimfire at any time; however, from Apr. 1 to Sept. 30, (both dates inclusive), centerfire rifles no larger than .229 caliber may be used during daylight hours (RIGL 20-13-13).
- Discharge of a firearm within 500 feet of an occupied dwelling without written permission is prohibited (RIGL 20-13-7, RIGL 20-15-1). Archery hunting within 200 feet of an occupied dwelling without written permission is prohibited (RIGL 20-15-1).

## Important Laws & Regulations Pertaining to Wildlife

The Lacey Act of 1900, the first federal game law, regulates interstate and international commerce in wildlife. The term “wildlife”, for the purposes of the act, means any wild animal, wild bird, amphibian, reptile, mollusk, or crustacean, or their dead bodies, parts, eggs, or offspring, but does not include migratory birds for which protection is afforded under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Briefly, action can be taken against anyone who transports, ships, or sells wildlife in interstate or foreign commerce contrary to state or foreign laws, or transports any package not properly labeled or tagged.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is an international agreement that was signed in 1918 for the protection of migratory bird populations. Migratory birds are protected by the federal government with provisions allowing state regulation. All birds, their parts, nests, and eggs are protected, except as provided by open hunting seasons.

## Fluorescent Orange Requirements

All users of State Management Areas, designated undeveloped State Parks and Co-op units are required to wear 200 square inches of solid daylight fluorescent orange from the second Saturday in September to the last day of February and the third Saturday in April to the last day in May. All hunters and users must wear **500 square** inches during all portions of shotgun deer seasons. Orange must be worn above the waist and be visible in all directions. Examples: a hat covers 200 square inches. A combination of hat and vest covering 500 square inches. Fluorescent camouflage does not meet the requirement. Fluorescent orange is not required in areas limited to archery-only hunting by regulation.

### Exceptions:

- Raccoon hunters when hunting at night; crow hunters while hunting over decoys; spring turkey hunters; first segment dove hunters; waterfowl hunters while hunting from a boat or a blind, when done in conjunction with decoys; and archery deer hunters during archery season outside of the muzzleloader and shotgun deer seasons.
- Once in an elevated stand, archery deer hunters are exempt from the orange requirement during the muzzleloader season.
- Hunters using pop-up blinds during the firearms deer season must display 200 square inches of fluorescent orange on the outside of the blind, visible from all directions. Hunters in the blind must also wear orange in accordance with the rules for the season.



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## Deer Hunting Seasons

Season	Dates
<b>Archery (includes Crossbow)</b>	September 13–14 ( <b>Youth only, Zone 1</b> ) September 27–28 ( <b>Youth only, Zone 2</b> ) September 15–January 31, 2026 ( <b>Zone 1</b> ) October 1–January 31, 2026 ( <b>Zone 2</b> )
<b>Archery: Patience &amp; Prudence Islands (Zone 3)</b>	October 25–26 ( <b>Youth only</b> ) November 1–January 31, 2026
<b>Archery: Block Island (Zone 4)</b>	October 16, 17, 20–24, 27–31 ( <b>Check local ordinance</b> )
<b>Muzzleloader</b>	October 25–26 ( <b>Youth only Zones 1, 2</b> ) November 1–30 ( <b>Zones 1, 2</b> ) December 26–January 2, 2026 ( <b>Zones 1, 2 Private land only, antlerless deer only</b> )
<b>Shotgun</b>	December 6–21 ( <b>Zone 1</b> ) December 6–14 ( <b>Zone 2</b> ) December 26–January 2, 2026 ( <b>Zones 1, 2 - Private land only, antlerless deer only</b> )
<b>Archery, Muzzleloader, Shotgun (Zone 4)</b>	November 3–7, 10, 12–14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25 December 1, 2, 4, 5, 8–12, 15, 16, 18, 19 January 2, 5–9, 12–16, 20–23, 26–30, 2026 February 2–6, 9–13, 2026
<b>Special Season for Disabled Hunters: Patience &amp; Prudence Islands (Zone 3)</b>	October 28–31

### 2025–2026 Season Bag Limits

<b>Statewide (all zones &amp; methods combined)</b>	2 Antlered Deer, (Zone 3: no more than 1 Antlered Deer)
<b>Zone 1</b>	3 Antlerless Deer*
<b>Zone 2</b>	2 Antlerless Deer*
<b>Zone 3</b>	2 Antlerless Deer*
<b>Zone 4</b>	Unlimited Antlerless Deer

\* Antlerless limits are per zone and hunters may harvest each limit within in each zone in a hunting year cumulative across all weapons/seasons.

## RI Deer Management:

Deer management zones (see map on page 16 and 17) have been established for harvesting deer in accordance with specific management goals for RI. The need to reduce auto strikes and address nuisance deer complaints are important deer management issues in addition to DEM's goal to preserve and maintain quality deer hunting.

**Note:** All deer wounded, but not recovered, must be reported to DEM within 24 hours.

### Our goal is to:

- Provide a deer management program that maintains a healthy deer population that is sustainable and ecologically appropriate.
- Maintain quality deer hunting opportunities recognizing the strong tradition of hunting in Rhode Island and the important role hunting plays in wildlife conservation.

## Deer Hunting Methods

Please note: Only one firearm or bow may be possessed in the field per individual hunter while hunting deer. Check local ordinances for further restrictions in specific towns.

### Shotgun

- No person shall hunt, pursue, shoot or attempt to shoot any deer with a shotgun capable of holding more than five shells, unless it is plugged with one-piece filler, which is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
- Ammunition permitted for shotgun deer season is limited to a single lead or alloy projectile, including rifled slugs or sabot round. Buckshot is prohibited at all times.
- Shotguns of 10, 12, 16, or 20-gauge are allowed.
- Muzzleloaders will be permitted during the shotgun season provided hunters possess a current shotgun deer permit and comply with muzzleloader restrictions. Hunters taking a deer must tag the deer with the shotgun deer tag immediately after taking. All shotgun deer season fluorescent orange requirements will be enforced.

### Muzzleloader

- Firearms for muzzleloader deer season are limited to .45 caliber or larger using percussion caplock, flintlock, and in-line ignition systems using percussion caps, rifle, or shotshell primers. Only single barrel or double barrel firearms that must be loaded from the muzzle are permitted.
- Ammunition for muzzleloader deer season is limited to a single projectile, including round ball, maxi ball type, or sabots. Powder is limited to manufacturers' specifications. Telescopic sights are permitted. Possession of modern shotgun shells while hunting with a muzzleloader is prohibited.
- A muzzleloader is considered unloaded when the percussion cap, primer or pan powder is removed.

### Archery

- Archers may use a long bow, re-curve bow, compound bow or cross-bow for hunting deer.
- Long bow, re-curve bow and compound bow must be set at not less than forty (40) pounds for archers using fixed blade broadheads, and a minimum of fifty (50) pounds for archers using mechanical broadheads.
- Only broadhead tipped arrows with at least two (2) metal cutting edges are allowed. All broadheads must be seven eighths (7/8) of an inch or greater at the widest point including mechanical broadheads measured in the "open" position.
- Crossbows must be set at not less than one hundred twenty five (125) pounds minimum draw weight. Expandable broadheads are permitted.
- All archery deer hunters must have taken and successfully completed bow hunter education classes or hold a prior year archery deer permit in order to obtain a current year archery deer permit.

### Dogs

Upon shooting a deer, a hunter with a current valid hunting license and deer permit may use one (1) dog or engage a second party to use one (1) dog to recover a wounded and lost or un-recovered deer within seventy-two (72) hours of shooting the deer provided that they comply with the following restrictions.

1. There shall be no firearms or archery devices carried by the hunter, dog handler, or any individual present at the time of tracking.
2. The dog shall be maintained under physical control of the dog handler at all times by the means of a lead no longer than fifty (50) feet that shall be attached to the collar or harness of the dog.



3. The hunter shall be present at all times.
4. All parties involved in recovering a deer with a dog shall wear 500 square inches of fluorescent orange.
5. If it is determined that the deer is still alive all parties will back away immediately and the dog will be taken out of the area. Once the dog is removed from the hunting area, the hunter may return with a legal weapon.

### Adaptive Aids

Special archery adaptive aids for use with vertical held bows may be used by all hunters without a special permit.

### Decoys

Deer decoys may be used on private lands and state-owned Wildlife Management Areas (excludes State Parks, Public Reservations, Cooperative properties and Federal properties) during the archery only deer seasons while archery hunting only. This excludes youth muzzleloader and shotguns seasons. However, deer decoys may be used throughout the extent of the open archery season on private lands in towns where hunting with a firearm is prohibited but use of archery equipment is permitted. When transporting deer decoys for the purpose of hunting, persons must wear 500 square inches of fluorescent orange visible from all sides.

### Tree Stands

- Tree stands may not be set on State-owned property prior to August 15 and must be removed prior to March 31 annually.
- All tree stands set on public land or cooperative hunting units must be legibly marked with the hunters Customer ID number or Sportman's Equipment ID number (both can be found on [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov)).

## Prohibited Deer Hunting Activities

- The use or possession of deer scents/lures that contain natural cervid (including deer, moose, elk) urine, gland oil, feces, tissue, blood or any other bodily fluids.
- The use of electronic calls.
- The construction and use of permanent tree stands, or the use of nails, spikes, bolts, or climbing devices, which may damage trees on state or co-op properties.
- Hunting deer on private property without the permission of the landowner.
- Hunting, pursuing, or molesting deer in tidal waters or while deer are swimming in any waters of the state.
- Feeding or baiting: the act of using, placing, giving, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering any material, or any act to maintain the availability of such material that attracts deer to feed on such material.
- Driving deer by parties of over five (5) people.

## Written Permission

Annual written landowner permission is required for deer hunting on private land (RIGL 20-15-1) during the deer season. It is not required that deer permits (tags) be signed by the landowner, provided the hunter has other written permission in possession. Deer permits (tags) must be carried while hunting. Annual written permission must be shown to any authorized person upon demand, and must be presented when checking a deer. A valid hunting license constitutes written permission on state owned/managed land and applicable hunting cooperative properties for which a permit is not required.



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## Landowner Rights & Liability

Written landowner permission is required to hunt deer on private property. Hunters are urged to gain a landowner's permission prior to hunting for all other hunting activities as well. To maintain good landowner - hunter relations, always treat the landowner's private property with respect, and know and respect the property boundaries. It is also unlawful to shoot upon the land of another without their permission. Hunting on private land is a privilege not to be taken lightly.

To encourage landowners to make their lands available for recreational purposes, RI General Law (32-6-3) limits the liability of persons making private land available for recreational activities, including hunting and fishing.

**Liability of Landowner:** An owner of land who either directly or indirectly invites or permits without charge any person to use that property for recreational purposes does **not** thereby:

- extend any assurance that the premises are safe for any purpose;
- confer upon that person the legal status of an invitee or licensee to whom a duty of care is owed; nor
- assume responsibility for or incur liability for any injury to any person or property caused by an act of omission of that person.

### Limitations (RI General Law 32-6-5)

(a) Nothing in the law limits in any way any liability which, but for this chapter, otherwise exists:

- (1) For the willful or malicious failure to guard or warn against a dangerous condition, use, structure, or activity after discovering the user's peril; or
- (2) For any injury suffered in any case where the owner of land charges the person or persons who enter or go on the land for the recreational use thereof, except that in the case of land leased to the state or a subdivision thereof, any consideration received by the owner for that lease shall not be deemed a "charge" within the meaning of this section.

(b) When the Coastal Resources Management Council designates a right-of-way as part of its designation process as specified in § 46-23-6(5), or when the Coastal Resource Management Council stipulates public access as a condition of granting a permit, the landowner automatically will have "limited liability" as defined in this chapter, except as specifically recognized by or provided in this section.

## Local Ordinances

Some towns restrict hunting or the discharge of firearms and, therefore, it is important to check town ordinances before hunting. Local municipalities may not prevent hunting on State-owned land. Towns closed to Sunday hunting on private lands include Portsmouth, Little Compton, Middletown, and Barrington. Some towns require written permission of the landowner, and/or local police department. For local and

Sunday hunting regulations, check with the town police department or town clerk.

### Patience and Prudence Islands

The only legal method of deer hunting on Prudence and Patience Islands is by archery, including crossbows, except for during the special hunting season (see page 14). Proficiency testing is required for all archery deer hunters on Prudence and Patience Islands. Archery deer hunting is permitted at the Heritage Property from December 1–15 only. Proficiency cards must be carried while hunting. All deer taken must be reported to DEM within 24 hours using the harvest reporting website [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) or be reported to an Environmental Police Officer as prescribed. The antlered deer (buck) bag limit is one (1).

### Block Island (New Shoreham)

Written permission from a landowner must be obtained before hunting on private land and presented to and countersigned by the Block Island Chief of Police. Proficiency testing is required of all archery hunters that are hunting deer on Block Island. All deer taken must be reported to DEM within 24 hours using the harvest reporting website [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) or be reported to an Environmental Police Officer.

## Cooperative and Special Hunting Areas

See map and table on pages 16–19.

### Block Island State Land (Black Rock / Rodman Hollow)

Deer hunting is allowed by special permit only, selected by lottery. Applications are found on [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) to hunt Black Rock/Rodman Hollow, and must be submitted by September 15th, 2025.

### Block Island, John H. Chafee, Ninigret, and Trustum Pond National Wildlife Refuges

Four National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) in the state are open for hunting on designated units with season and weapon restrictions. Hunters must possess and carry a signed refuge hunting brochure valid for the current season while hunting at Block Island, Ninigret, and John H. Chafee NWRs. Trustum Pond NWR is by lottery permit only. Archery proficiency certification is required to hunt at Block Island, John H. Chafee, and Trustum Pond NWRs. All State DEM, federal, and refuge regulations apply. For detailed information, regulations, locations and dates please visit, [www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret) [fws.gov] or contact the USFWS at 401-364-9124.

To enter the Trustum Pond NWR lottery please visit <https://rhodeislandpermits.recaccess.com/> by September 15.

### The Nature Conservancy Deer Hunting Co-Op

- **Deer hunting only**, the hunting and/or take of other species of wildlife is prohibited
- **No Special Permits Required**, a valid hunting license constitutes as written permission.
- No vehicles of any kind are allowed on the property, except in designated parking areas.
- The construction or use of permanent treestands is prohibited. The use of nails, spikes, bolts, or devices that may damage trees is prohibited. Climbing tree stands are permitted.
- Treestands may not be installed on TNC property prior to August 15th and must be removed by March 31st.

### Beavertail (Jamestown)

No hunting prior to 11/1/2025. Archery hunting only (11/1/25–1/31/26) no hunting on weekends prior to 12/31/2025. Proficiency certification is required and cards must be carried while hunting. Permits must be returned by February 15 regardless of activity or success, to be eligible for next year's hunt. Permits are available at the Jamestown Police Department. Ten (10) hunters are allowed per day on a first-come first-served basis. Limit of 5 slots per week reserved no more than twenty (20) days in advance.

## Photo Submissions

Want to share your story or photo of a successful hunt in next year's magazine? If so, we want to know everything: time of day, location, target species, weight, length and any other animal specific data you wish to provide. We would love to share your success with everyone! That is, if you want to give up your secrets!

Send your photo of deer, turkey, pheasant, etc. to [DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov](mailto:DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov) and if space allows, it may be used in next year's edition.



Photo by Josh Fuller



# How to Tag and Report Your Deer

All deer must be tagged and reported to the Division of Fish and Wildlife

## TAG IT:

Once you harvest a deer, you must notch your tag (day, hour and month of harvest) before moving the deer for photos, field dressing or to leave the woods. Per RIGL 20-15-2, the notched tag must be affixed to and remain with the carcass. Use care to securely affix the tag so that the tag will not be lost when removing the deer from the woods or transporting to a check station, butcher or your home. The notched tag must remain affixed to the deer at all times until the deer has been prepared for taxidermy or consumption.



Photo by Bobby Tappero

## REPORT IT:

**You must report your deer harvest within 24 hours.** You can report it online or over the phone. Use your smart phone or desktop computer to report your harvest at <https://rio.ri.gov/>. If you do not have internet or cellular data access to report your deer harvest, you may call the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (401) 789-0281 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday to report your harvest.

When you are finished reporting your deer online or over the phone, you will be given a harvest report confirmation number. This number confirms that you have reported your harvest. Write the number on your tag and keep the tag affixed to the deer until prepared for taxidermy or consumption.



Photo by Jake Sylvia

## Deer Check Stations

All deer taken during the first two days (**Saturday & Sunday, Nov. 1 & 2**) of the Muzzleloader Deer Season, and the first two days (**Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 6 & 7**) of Shotgun Deer Season, including deer taken with archery equipment, must be physically checked at a state operated biological check station, except those deer taken on Patience, Prudence, and Block Island, which must be reported using the online licensing system. **Hunters bringing their deer to a check station DO NOT need to report their harvest online prior to going to the check station.**

## Operating Hours

November 1 & 2: 8:00 A.M. until **8:00 P.M.**

December 6 & 7: 8:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M.

## Check Stations

- **NEW Buck Hill Management Area:** 704 Buck Hill Rd, Pascoag, (41.97484, -71.77922)
- **Smithfield Sportsman Club:** 14 Walter Carey Rd, Smithfield, (41.8786, -71.5346)
- **Arcadia Management Area:** Rt. 165, Ten Rod Road, at Wood River, Exeter, (41.57305, -71.72163)
- **Carolina Management Area:** Pine Hill Road, Richmond, (41.46618, -71.68860)
- **Great Swamp Management Area:** 277 Great Neck Road, West Kingston, (41.47374, -71.57533)
- **Tiverton Rod and Gun Club:** 1529 Fish Rd, Tiverton, (41.62681, -71.18825)
- **Durfee Hill Management Area:** CLOSED Permanently

Deer check stations are a vital tool used by the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to monitor and manage the state's deer population. These stations allow biologists to gather important information—like a deer's age, weight, antler size, and tissue samples for Chronic Wasting Disease



Photo by Jasper Coutu

testing—that can't be collected through online or phone harvest reports.

This data is essential for understanding the health and size of the deer herd and helps ensure responsible wildlife management across the state.

Reminder: If you harvest a deer during the first weekend of muzzleloader or shotgun season, you are required by regulation to bring it to a check station. Deer checked in person do not need to be reported online.

## Check Station Update

After reviewing the Durfee Hill Check Station and with a new, suitable facility now available on the newly acquired Buck Hill property, the Durfee Hill Check Station will be permanently closed. The structure will be removed, and the parking area will be upgraded to improve public access.

The new check station will now be located at:

## Buck Hill Check Station

704 Buck Hill Rd, Pascoag, RI  
Coordinates: 41.97484, -71.77922

Thank you for helping us protect and manage Rhode Island's wildlife!



Scan to view Deer Check Station Map



# Turkey HUNTING

## Wild Turkey

Season	Dates	Season Limit
Fall Archery	October 1–31	1 either sex bird
Youth <sup>1</sup>	April 20–26, 2026	2 bearded birds <sup>2</sup>
Paralegic <sup>1</sup>	April 25–26, 2026	
Spring	April 30–May 24, 2026	

<sup>1</sup> See page 14 for more information on Youth & Paralegic Hunt Opportunities.

<sup>2</sup> No more than one (1) turkey may be taken on state lands during the spring season. Each turkey harvested requires an individual permit.

## General Rules and Regulations

- The hunting of wild turkey is permitted statewide. Check local ordinances for firearm discharge restrictions. Firearms are permitted for turkey hunting during the Spring, Youth, and Paralegic seasons only.
- Shooting hours are one half (1/2) hour before sunrise to 1:00PM for Spring, Youth and Paralegic seasons.
- **Authorized firearms and archery equipment:** methods of take are limited to,
  - » **Shotguns:** No larger than ten (10) gauges with shot sizes no larger than four (4).
  - » **Archery equipment:**
    - Only broadhead tipped arrows with at least two (2) metal cutting edges are allowed. All broadheads must be seven eighths (7/8) of an inch or greater at the widest point including mechanical broadheads measured in the “open” position.
    - Long bow, re-curve bow, and compound bow must be set at not less than forty (40) pounds for archers using fixed blade broadheads, and a minimum of fifty (50) pounds for archers using mechanical broadheads.
    - Crossbows must be set at not less than one hundred twenty-five (125) pounds minimum draw weight. The trigger unit must have a working safety. One (1) field point arrow may be carried in the quiver for the safe discharge of the crossbow; the field point arrow must be made distinguishable from broadhead tipped arrows by a color difference.
- Hunters must carry a turkey-calling device (non-electric) while hunting.
- The use of decoys while hunting is allowed.
- Each year, after the end of the spring turkey season, online surveys are issued to Rhode Island turkey permit holders who have a valid email address within the online licensing system. The completion of this survey is vital to the turkey management program in Rhode Island and assists DEM biologists in maintaining a successful wild turkey season for our hunters. The Division requests your cooperation in filling out the survey, regardless of success or participation in that year's hunt.

### Permits and Tagging

- A hunter may purchase, possess and use one (1) all lands turkey permit and one (1) private land only turkey permit for the taking of one (1) bearded turkey on each permit during the spring seasons.
- Hunters may take two (2) turkeys on the same day or one (1) each on separate days provided they purchase two (2) spring turkey permits and at least one (1) turkey is taken on private land.
- A hunter may purchase, possess and use one (1) fall either sex archery permit, valid on both public and private property.
- A person killing a wild turkey must immediately notch the month, day, hour of kill and type of property taken on (private or public). The carcass and notched tag must remain in the possession of the hunter after the kill and while removing the carcass from the field. Should the

hunter leave the carcass prior to removal from the field, the notched tag must be attached to and remain with the carcass. After removal from the field, the notched tag must be attached to and remain with the carcass until prepared for consumption or taxidermy.

### Prohibited

- The use of any unauthorized firearm, live decoy(s), dog(s), baiting, cooperative drive(s).
- Electric calling devices, or any other devices, to capture or ensnare turkeys.
- The shooting of turkeys while roosting.
- Stalking or attempting to sneak up on a turkey to get a shot.
- The hunting, killing, taking, or attempting to take or possess, any wild turkey by any individual unless they possess a permit to do so. However, a person having a valid Rhode Island hunting license may call turkeys for individuals with a valid turkey permit.
- Possession of more than one firearm or archery implement while turkey hunting.
- Possession of a firearm while hunting for wild turkey during the fall archery season.

## Safe Turkey Hunting Is No Accident!

When compared to other sports activities (baseball, basketball and swimming--injuries per hundred thousand participants) hunting is a relatively safe activity. These comparisons should not cause any hunter to take accident-free hunting for granted. Each and every hunter must make safety the top priority of the hunt.

Very few hunting experiences compare with the exhilaration of turkey hunting. A chance to spend a day afield in the turkey woods, enjoying not only the hunt but also the splendor of the outdoors in spring makes this experience worthwhile to sportsmen and sportswomen. This is a privilege not to be taken for granted. Be sure that your turkey hunting experience is an enjoyable one by observing these key ingredients for a safe hunt:

## Turkey Hunting Safety

- NEVER crowd another hunter working a bird and avoid high-pressure areas.
- “Mistaken for game” accounts for 87% of all turkey hunting accidents — Be sure of your target and what's beyond.
- Use proper setup techniques — Sit against a wide tree to shield head, neck and back. A tree is an effective blind as it breaks your outline.
- Never wear the colors red, white or blue while turkey hunting. These colors mimic the colors of a male turkey's (gobbler's) head and can draw fire. Be totally camouflaged.
- Never stalk turkey sounds or turkeys — it's unsafe and illegal. Never use the sounds of a turkey to warn approaching hunters.
- Avoid using gobbling calls — which draw more hunters than game.

## How to Tell the Sex & Age of a Turkey

Determination of the sex and age of a wild turkey is vital to the hunter, since only bearded wild turkeys are “legal birds” in the spring season. Proper identification of your target before shooting protects vulnerable hen turkeys from accidental shooting during the spring nesting season. The composition of the harvest provides biologists with information about the flock and is important for making conservation and management decisions.

Hunters are reminded they should use a variety of characteristics to identify a legal bird, including behavior (strutting, gobbling) and color (black body coloration, bright red, white and blue head color).



# How to Tag and Report Your Turkey

All turkeys must be tagged and reported to the Division of Fish and Wildlife

## TAG IT:

Once you harvest a turkey, you must notch your tag (day, hour and month of harvest) before moving the turkey for photos or to leave the woods. The notched tag and turkey must remain in your possession when removing the turkey from the field. If you must leave the field prior to removing the turkey (to return gear to your vehicle or dwelling); the notched tag must be attached to and remain with the carcass.

## REPORT IT:

**You must report your turkey harvest within 24 hours.** You can report it online or over the phone. Use your smart phone or desktop computer to report your harvest at <https://rio.ri.gov/>. If you do not have internet or cellular data access to report your deer harvest, you may call the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (401) 789-0281 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday to report your harvest.

### Measure the beard and spurs:

- Beard less than 6" and spurs less than 0.5" = Jake
- Beard longer than 6" and spurs longer than 0.5" = Tom
- No beard or spurs = Hen (fall archery season only!)

When you are finished reporting your turkey online or over the phone, you will be given a harvest report confirmation number. This number confirms that you have reported your harvest. Write the number on your tag and keep the tag affixed to the turkey until prepared for taxidermy or consumption.



Photo by Ryan Gilman



Photo by Chris Kagey

## Wild Turkey Banding Program

The Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife is continuing their turkey banding program to gather scientific information on the state's turkey population. Please report any encounters with banded turkeys, including harvesting, finding a dead banded turkey, or observing a live one. You can report online in our Survey 123 form at <https://arcg.is/XTHjW0>, or by calling (401) 789-0281. When reporting, include the band number, date and location of encounter, and age/sex if known. For harvested turkeys, remember to report through the Rhode Island Outdoors system as well.

Contact Lizzi Bonczek, Upland Game Bird Biologist at [elizabeth.bonczek.ctr@dem.ri.gov](mailto:elizabeth.bonczek.ctr@dem.ri.gov) with questions.





# Special HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

## Youth Hunting Opportunities

Season	Locations	Dates
Youth Deer Archery	Zone 1	September 13–14
	Zone 2	September 27–28
	Zone 3	October 25–26
Youth Deer Muzzleloader	Zones 1 & 2	October 25–26
Youth Waterfowl	Statewide	October 25–26
Youth Pheasant	Great Swamp WMA, South Kingstown Durfee Hill WMA, Gloucester Eight Rod Farm WMA, Tiverton	October 11–13
Youth Turkey	Statewide	April 20–26, 2026

- All youth hunting seasons are open to hunters ages 12–17.
- All youth hunters ages 12–14 must be in possession of a **resident or non-resident Junior hunting license** in order to hunt in RI.
- All youth hunters ages 15–17 must possess a **resident or non-resident hunting license**. Licenses can be purchased after the completion of a Hunter Safety course.
- All youth hunters ages 12–14 must hunt in the immediate company of an adult, 21 years of age or older, holding a valid RI hunting license.
- All hunters 15–17 using firearms must be under the supervision of a parent, guardian, or qualified adult. (RIGL 11-47-33). That adult DOES NOT need to be a licensed hunter, except for youth waterfowl hunting..
- An adult may accompany no more than two youth hunters at any one time. Adults are prohibited from hunting or carrying archery equipment/firearms during the youth-only hunting days.
- All other hunting permit requirements and hunting regulations per season pertain to youth hunters.
- For more information on hunting, contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife at 401-789-0281 or by emailing DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov.

- For more information about youth hunting opportunities or our Hunter Education program, call 401-539-0019 or email charles.tappero@dem.ri.gov.

**Youth Deer Hunting:** Dates vary depending on Season and Zone. All other regulations and permit requirements apply. Please see page 8 for more deer hunting information.

**Youth Waterfowl Hunting:** Youth hunters may take ducks, sea ducks and geese following daily bag and possession limits for the regular seasons. All youth hunters (12–17) must have a current HIP Permit and RI Hunting License. The adult must also possess a current HIP Permit, state and federal duck stamp, and RI Hunting License.

**Youth Waterfowl Training and Mentored Hunt:** For the 10th consecutive year, the Division of Fish and Wildlife is partnering with Ducks Unlimited to offer a youth waterfowl training day (September date TBA) and mentored hunt opportunity on youth waterfowl weekend for those youths that attend the training. Space is limited for the training and mentored hunt.

**Youth Pheasant Hunting:** Youth Pheasant Hunt to be held on October 11–13 at Great Swamp, Durfee Hill, and Eight Rod Farm Wildlife Management Areas.



Photo by Jack Ragosta

**Youth Turkey Hunting:** Youth hunters may take up to two (2) bearded turkeys during the spring season, provided they purchase a spring turkey permit for each bird. No more than one (1) bearded turkey may be taken on state lands during the spring season. All stipulations, permit requirements, and pertinent regulations apply. Accompanying adult may assist the youth hunter in calling the bird.

**Youth Turkey Training and Mentored Hunt:** For the 5th consecutive year, the Division of Fish and Wildlife is partnering with the Light Foundation to offer the youth turkey training and hunt (April date TBD). It is open to minors 12–15 years of age. The goal is to create the next generation of conservation leaders by providing youth with an enjoyable and memorable outdoor experience that introduces them to safe and responsible hunting and teaches them fundamental leadership & life skills. Space is limited. For more information or to apply, visit [matlight72.com](http://matlight72.com)!

For more information about youth and/or disabled hunting opportunities, please contact our Hunter Education office by emailing [charles.tappero@dem.ri.gov](mailto:charles.tappero@dem.ri.gov) or by calling 401-539-0019.

## Disabled Hunting Opportunities

Season	Locations	Dates
Special Deer Season for Disabled Hunters	Zone 3	October 28–31
Paralegic Hunter Turkey Season	Statewide	April 25–26, 2026

### Patience and Prudence Islands (Zone 3)

#### Special Deer Season for Disabled Hunters:

The taking of deer will be limited to paralegic and double amputee hunters only.

- A special hunting permit must be obtained through the RI DEM Office of Boat Registration and Licensing Division, 235 Promenade St. Providence, RI 02908 (401) 222-3576

by each applicant prior to the hunt. None will be issued on the island. An application signed by a physician for a first-time hunter, or a photocopy of a previous paralegic/double amputee hunting license, is required.

- None of the hunter's assistants will be allowed to hunt or carry loaded firearms at any time. No license is required of the assistants.

- All deer taken must be checked using the online harvest reporting system [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov).
- Disabled hunters may use shotgun or muzzleloader with ammunition and caliber restrictions consistent with regular deer season (see page 8).

**Paralegic Hunter Turkey Season:** Spring turkey permit required. Hunting in this season is limited to paralegic hunters only as evidenced by possession of a permanent disability hunting license. Bag limit is two (2) provided no more than one (1) is taken on state land.

# Prescribed (Rx) Fire

By Ben Arnold, Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2 (RXB2)



In recent years, RI DEM has begun to increase its use of prescribed fire (Rx fire) as a land management tool on state-owned lands. The use of Rx fire has many benefits, including hazard fuel reduction; reducing the amount of dead woody fuel available to burn in a given area, thus reducing the intensity of a wildfire were one to start. Rx fire can also reduce tick populations in a burn unit area and improves wildlife habitat for early successional species. In addition, Rx fire provides valuable training opportunities to firefighters, to better prepare them for wildfire response.

All Rx fire that occurs on RI state lands and management areas, managed by the Divisions of Forest Environment or Fish & Wildlife, includes specific habitat goals for management as one of the many objectives outlined in the respective burn plan. Aging forests, insect infestations and invasive species are some of the many issues that affect RI's wildlands. Rx fire is a tool that can improve these habitats for both wildlife, and the hunter. Fire can maintain and create open, grassy habitats for wild turkeys, while reducing dense and woody vegetation that predators can use to ambush them. Fire can stimulate new growth

of grasses, plants and forbs providing whitetail deer with nutritious forage. Rx fire promotes a wider variety of plant species which provides a more diverse habitat for upland game birds, while also encouraging the growth of shrubs and young trees which can provide cover and nesting sites. Rx fire improves habitat in fields stocked with pheasant as well as reducing invasive plants, making the fields easier to access.

Rx fire "burn plans" are written for specific areas, typically by state management areas. These burn plans are a detailed document outlining ignition strategies, staffing and equipment requirements, weather and environ-

mental parameters, fire behavior calculations, and area maps and smoke effect mitigations, among other topics applicable to implementing a Rx fire operation. These burn plans will typically outline "sub-burn units" within a state management area. A Rx burn crew may complete one or more sub-units in each operational period depending on crew size, weather conditions and burn objectives. Advance notice is usually given by DEM via social media posts. Property owners closely adjacent to burn units will be directly notified.

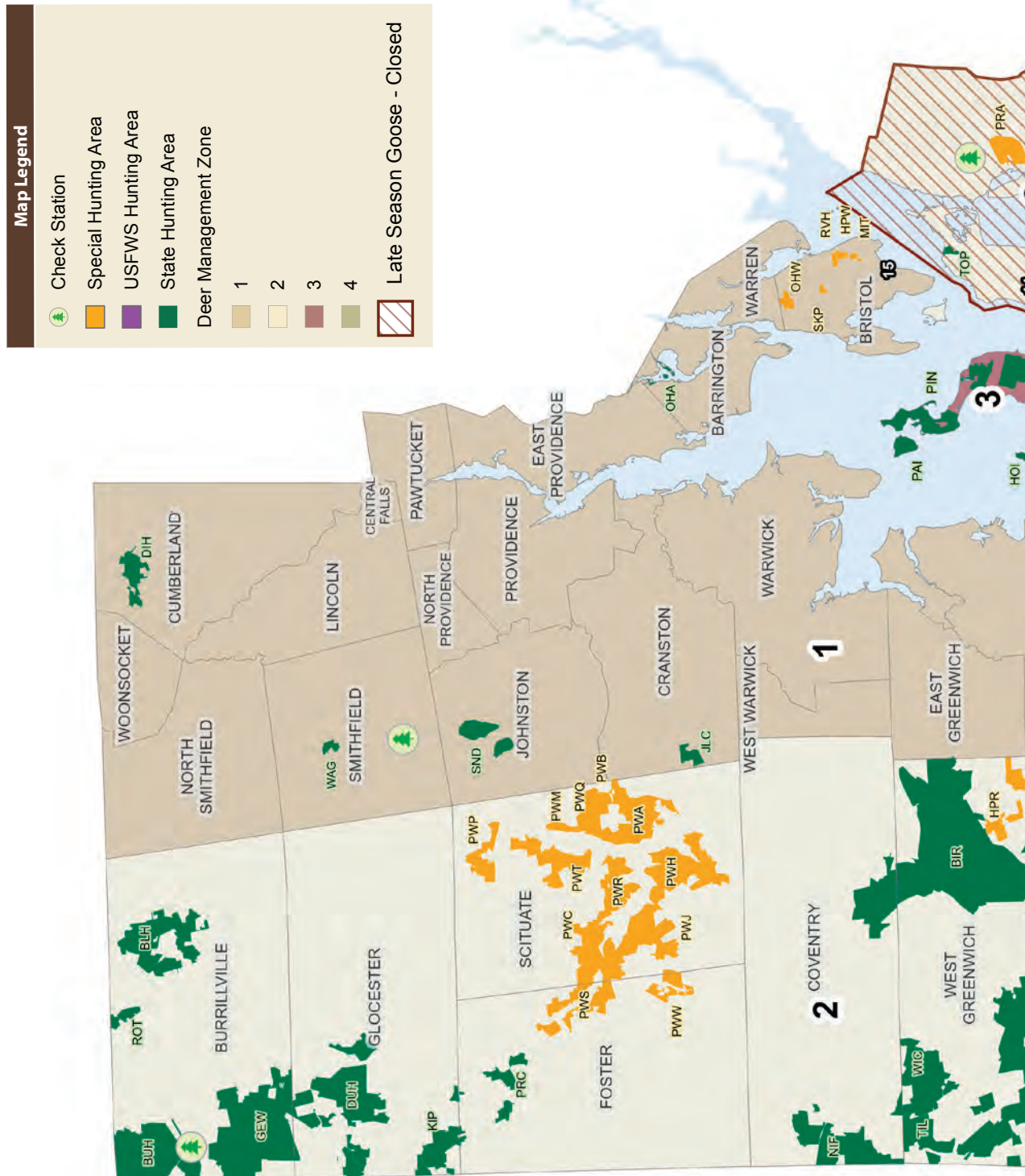
Rx fire requires specific weather conditions and environmental parameters to meet burn objectives. These conditions can potentially occur anytime of year, even during hunting seasons. Precautions are taken to minimize the impact to users of state lands. Notifications are posted on social media prior to burn days. Signs are posted on roadways and trails leading to burn areas. Burn units are typically gridded, or "swept" by burn crew members to find and remove any wildlife that may be impacted by fire. These sweeps are also utilized to locate tree stands, ground blinds, trail cameras and other equipment used by hunters. Preparations can then be taken to protect this equipment. Fuel around the equipment can be removed or wet down. Ignition tactics can be altered or adjusted to minimize impact from heat and flames. If these methods don't work, the equipment may be removed from the unit if possible.

RI's biologists and land managers are continuously looking for opportunities to improve habitat for both wildlife and hunters alike. Rx fire is an effective way to meet these improvement goals while reducing the amount of hazard fuels in our state management areas. Improved habitat means a better environment for wildlife, safer and more diverse management areas, and a better experience for hunters.





# State Lands MAP







# Public Lands AND HUNTING AREAS

Initials	Property Name		Town	Type	Acres	Deer	Deer Mng Zone	Turkey	Pheasant & Quail	Small Game	Migratory Birds	Waterfowl	Permit Required	Archery Proficiency Card Required	Notes	
ADV	Adamsville		Tiverton	WMA	270	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
ARC	Arcadia		Hpktn, Extr, Rchmd, Wst Gnch	WMA	14,692	✓	2	✓	◊	✓	✓	✓			1	
BRP	Beaver River Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Richmond	Co-op	271	O	2	X	X	X	X	X				
BEA	Beavertail		Jamestown	SP	169	O	1	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	2	
BIR	Big River		Wst Gnch, Cvntry, Extr	WMA	8,496	✓	2	✓	◊	✓	✓	✓				
BLF	Black Farm		Hopkinton	WMA	312	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			1	
BLH	Black Hut		Burrillville	WMA	1,682	✓	2	✓	◊	✓	✓	✓				
BIB	Block Island National Wildlife Refuge	Beane Point	New Shoreham	NWR	22	✓	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3	
BIG		Grove Point	New Shoreham	NWR	10	O	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3	
BIS		Sandy Point	New Shoreham	NWR	42	✓	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3	
BII		Skippers Island	New Shoreham	NWR	17	O	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3	
BIW		Wash Pond	New Shoreham	NWR	38	O	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3	
MIT	Town of Bristol	Minturn	Bristol	Co-op	35	O	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓		
HPW		Hopeworth	Bristol	Co-op	41	O	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓		
SKP		Skaters Pond	Bristol	Co-op	26	O	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓		
OHW		100 Acre Woods	Bristol	Co-op	104	O	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓		
BUH	Buck Hill		Burrillville	WMA	3,192	✓	2	✓	◊	◊	✓	✓				
BUR	Burlingame		Hopkinton, Charlestown	WMA	1,779	✓	1, 2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
BNC	Burlingame North Camp		Charlestown	SP	884	✓	1	✓	X	X	X	X			2	
CAN	Camp Nokewa		North Kingstown	WMA	84	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
CAP	Canonchet Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Hopkinton	Co-op	710	O	2	X	X	X	X	X				
CAR	Carolina		Richmond	WMA	2,151	✓	2	✓	◊	✓	✓	✓				
COP	Cocomussoc Park		North Kingstown	SP	420	✓	1	✓	X	✓	X	X				
CBN	Cuttyhunk Brook Preserve	North <b>TNC</b>	Exeter, West Greenwich	Co-op	361	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X				
CBS		South <b>TNC</b>	Exeter, West Greenwich	Co-op	428	O	2	X	X	X	X	X				
DKP	Dave King Preserve <b>TNC</b>		North Kingstown	Co-op	161	O	1	X	X	X	X	X				
DIH	Diamond Hill		Cumberland	PR	408	✓	1	X	X	✓	✓	X				
DUH	Durfee Hill		Glocester	WMA	2,011	✓	2	✓	◊*	✓	✓	✓			1	
-	Dutch Island		Jamestown	WMA	102			Closed to All Hunting								10
EAB	East Beach		Charlestown	SP	214	O	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			12	
ERF	Eight Rod Farm		Tiverton, Little Compton	WMA	419	✓	2	✓	◊*	✓	✓	✓				
FCP	Francis Carter Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Richmond, Charlestown	Co-op	1,089	O	1, 2	X	X	X	X	X				
GAB	Galilee Bird Sanctuary		Narragansett	WMA	135	O	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
GEW	George Washington		Burrillville, Glocester	WMA	3,503	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
GOI	Gould Island		Jamestown	WMA	38			Temporarily Closed to All Access/Hunting due to Remediation								
GPR	Grass Pond Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Richmond	Co-op	174	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X				
GRS	Great Swamp		Richmond, S. Kingston	WMA	3,615	✓	1, 2	✓	◊*	✓	✓	✓			11	
GR1	Grills Preserve I		Westerly	Co-op	514	#	1	✓	X	X	X	X				
GR2	Grills Preserve II		Hopkinton	Co-op	163	#	2	✓	X	X	X	X				
-	Hillsdale		Richmond	WMA	1,825			Closed to All Hunting								
HOI	Hope Island		Portsmouth	WMA	72	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
HDP	How Davey Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Hopkinton	Co-op	71	#	2	X	X	X	X	X				
HPR	Harrington Preserve <b>TNC NEW</b>		West Greenwich	Co-op	178	✓	1	X	X	X	✓	X			2, 4	
JLC	J. L. Curran		Cranston	SP	296	@	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			2	
JCC	John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge	Congdon Cove	South Kingstown	NWR	50	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	✓	✓	✓	3	
JCF		Foddering Farm	Narragansett	NWR	130	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	✓	✓	✓	3	
JCM		Middlebride	Narragansett	NWR	100	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	✓	✓	✓	3	
JCS		Sedge Island	Narragansett	NWR	6	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	3	
JCR		Starr Drive	Narragansett	NWR	31	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	✓	✓	✓	3	
JCD		Stedman	South Kingstown	NWR	134	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	✓	✓	✓	3	
KIP	Killingly Pond		Foster, Glocester	WMA	767	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
MDM	Mary Donovan Marsh		Little Compton	WMA	15	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
NEW	Newton Swamp		Westerly	WMA	84	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
NIF	Nicholas Farm		Coventry	WMA	1,682	✓	2	✓	◊	✓	✓	✓			1	
NBB	Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge	Barrier Beach Unit	Charlestown	NWR	32	✓	1	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓		3	
NKP		Kettle Pond Unit	Charlestown	NWR	114	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	X	✓		3	
NLU		Lewis Unit	Charlestown	NWR	332	✓	1	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓		3	
NSP		Salt Pond Unit	Charlestown	NWR	348	O	1	O, Fall	X	O	X	X	✓		3	
OHA	One Hundred Acre Cove		Barrington	WMA	47	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			2	
PAI	Patience Island		Portsmouth	WMA	203	O	3	X	X	O	X	X		✓	2, 9, 5	
PRA	Pocasset Ridge Conservation Area <b>TNC</b>		Tiverton	Co-op	488	O	2	X	X	X	X	X			2, 9, 5	

Initials	Property Name		Town	Type	Acres	Deer	Deer Mng Zone	Turkey	Pheasant & Quail	Small Game	Migratory Birds	Waterfowl	Permit Required	Archery Proficiency Card Required	Notes
PRC	Ponagansett River Corridor		Foster, Gloucester	WMA	486	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
PWA	Providence Water Supply	Ashland	Scituate	Co-op	942	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWB		Betty Pond	Scituate	Co-op	173	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWC		Cork Brook	Scituate	Co-op	346	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWJ		Joslin Farm	Scituate	Co-op	1,188	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWP		Peepthead	Scituate	Co-op	186	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWQ		Quonopaug	Scituate	Co-op	457	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWR		Riverview	Scituate	Co-op	731	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWS		Swamp Brook	Scituate, Foster	Co-op	482	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWT		Trimtown	Scituate	Co-op	985	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWH		Tunk Hill	Scituate	Co-op	1,065	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWM		Waterman	Scituate	Co-op	412	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWW		Westconnaug	Scituate, Foster	Co-op	678	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PIN	Prudence Island	North	Portsmouth	WMA	688	O	3	X	X	✓	X	✓		✓	2,9,5
PIS		South	Portsmouth	WMA	740	O	3	X	X	✓	X	✓		✓	2,9,5
QRP	Queens River Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Exeter	Co-op	187	O	2	X	X	X	X	X			
RIV	Rhode Island Veterans Home		Bristol	Co-op	50	O	1	X	X	X	X	X			
ROC	Rockville		Hopkinton	WMA	998	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
ROH	Rodman Hollow		New Shoreham	WMA	119	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
ROT	Round Top		Burrillville	WMA	182	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
-	Sachuest		Middletown	NWR	242	Closed to All Hunting									
SAM	Sapowet Marsh		Tiverton	WMA	322	O	2	✓	◇	✓	✓	✓			7
SPP	Silver Spring		North Kingstown	WMA	125	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
SIM	Simmons Mill		Little Compton	WMA	433	✓	2	✓	◇	✓	✓	✓			8
SND	Snake Den		Johnston	SP	480	O	1	X	X	X	X	X			
SS1	South Shore Wildlife Management Area	Area # 1	South Kingstown	USFWS	21	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SS2		Area # 2	South Kingstown	Co-op	40	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓		2
SS3		Area # 3	South Kingstown	WMA	29	O	1	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SS4		Area # 4	South Kingstown	WMA	25	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓		2
SS5		Area # 5	South Kingstown	WMA	54	#	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SS6		Area # 6	South Kingstown	WMA	64	✓	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SUM	Succotash Marsh		South Kingstown	WMA	162	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
TNB	Taney Brook		Richmond	WMA	243	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
TIL	Tillinghast		West Greenwich	WMA	1,566	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
TOP	Town Pond		Portsmouth	WMA	54	X	2	X	X	✓	X	✓			
TRU	Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge		South Kingstown	NWR	358	O	1	X	X	O	X	X	✓	✓	3
WAG	Washington Grove		Smithfield	SP	86	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
WIC	Wickaboxet		West Greenwich	WMA	669	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
WOH	Woody Hill		Westerly	WMA	735	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Legend	
✓	All legal methods for that species as defined in regulations/required
O	Archery Only
#	Archery or Muzzleloader
@	Archery or Shotgun
◇	Pheasants stocked
◇*	Youth pheasant hunt
X	Closed to hunting/not applicable
<b>TNC</b>	The Nature Conservancy
Small Game	rabbit, squirrel, coyote, raccoon and fox
Migratory Birds	doves, crows, woodcock, snipe and rails (not waterfowl)
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
PR	Public Reservation
Co-op	Cooperative hunting property
SP	State Park

Notes	
1	Dog training area and field trials by permit.
2	See regulations for additional information.
3	See USFWS brochure for additional regulations. fws.gov/refuge/trustom-pond/visit-us/activities/hunting fws.gov/refuge/ninigret/visit-us/activities/hunting
4	Closed to dove hunting.
5	Special Deer Season for Disabled Hunters. Taking of deer is limited to paraplegic and double amputee hunters.
6	Permit through Providence Water Supply.
7	Old Main Road Babot Unit safety zones and private land off Sapowet Avenue closed to hunting.
8	Waterfowl hunters must have (a) waterfowl decoys; (b) retrieving breed of hunting dog and/or a motorless boat/canoe.
9	Paraplegics may use shotguns.
10	Closed to the public.
11	All waterfowl hunters must have with them a method of retrieval including but not limited to; a retrieving breed of hunting dog or a non-motorized vessel.
12	Open for hunting from October 1st through the last day in February, except that, archery deer hunting is open during the archery deer season.



## State Lands

There are over 55,000 acres of land designated as state management areas in Rhode Island. Maps of management areas are available from the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife at the Great Swamp Field Office or online at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/maps/>. Regulations are designed and enforced to promote conservation of the state's natural resources for their future enjoyment and to ensure human safety in the outdoors. Hunting and trapping is allowed during the open seasons. In order to effectively

manage and safeguard these open areas for people, wildlife, and habitat, the following regulations are to be followed:

- Except for fishing, hunting, launching, and/or mooring of boats, all management areas are closed 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise, except by written permit (250-RICR-100-00-9).
- Camping is prohibited on all areas with the exception of portions designated at Arcadia and George Washington Management Areas. Contact the Division of Forest Environment for camping information (401) 539-2356.
- The use of motorcycles is prohibited except in designated portions of Arcadia Management Area.
- The use of ATVs is prohibited statewide.
- The blocking of any gate, road, or access in state management areas is prohibited and subject to fines (250-RICR-100-00-7).
- Horseback riding is prohibited in the Great Swamp Management Area during small game and shotgun deer season (250-RICR-100-00-9).
- Groups consisting of 10 or more persons must obtain a special use permit available from the DEM Management Area Stewardship Committee, (401) 539-2356, <https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/initiatives/special-use-and-event-policyprocess>.
- Target or trap shooting on state lands is only allowed on provided ranges (RIGL 32-2-4).

Management Area Stewardship Committee, except in specified dog training areas (below). Walking of dogs on a leash of not more than twenty-five (25) feet in length shall be permitted on roads and trails only. All dogs being utilized in hunting or training activities must wear a collar bearing the name and address of the owner and the handler must hold in possession a valid dog license or tag but it does not need to be on the dog.

### Special Dog Training Areas

Dog training is allowed in designated areas located within Arcadia Management Area (Midway Trail) in Exeter, Nicholas Farm Management Area (north of Trestle Trail) in Coventry, and Black Farm Management Area in Hopkinton open January 1–September 30, from sunrise to sunset. The use of live birds is by special permit only. A hunting license is required when training dogs on wild game on state management areas, except when participating in state sanctioned field trials.

## Bay Islands

### Prudence Island

Written permission of the landowner, countersigned by the Portsmouth police chief, must be obtained to hunt private property on Prudence Island. Small game hunting is allowed on Prudence Island except on the Heritage Property during the open archery deer season. North Prudence is located north of the State gate, at the northern terminus of Neck Farm Road. Raccoon open hunting season for Prudence Island is the first day of January through the last day of February with written permission of the landowner. Bow hunters with a valid archery deer permit may take raccoon on Prudence Island during legal deer hunting hours beginning on the first day of November and ending on the last day of January.

The special deer season for disabled hunters is limited to paraplegic and double amputee deer hunters by special permit only. Permits are available at the RI DEM Office of Boat Registration and Licensing (401-222-3576).

### Other Restrictions

**Dutch Island:** Closed to hunting and all other access.

**East and West Island:** No trespassing April 1–August 15, for nesting birds.

**Dyer Island and Hope Island:** No trespassing April 1–August 15, for nesting birds. All domestic animals prohibited except hunting dogs during small game, migratory upland game bird and waterfowl seasons.

**Gould Island:** Temporarily closed to all access and hunting due to remediation.

**Patience Island:** Closed to small game and upland game bird hunting, except for coyote. All domestic animals prohibited except hunting dogs during the waterfowl season.

### Undeveloped State Parks and Other Public Reservations

Hunting is permitted in the following:

- Galilee Bird Sanctuary is open to hunting. Deer hunting is limited to archery equipment only.
- Cocumcussoc and Washington Grove
- Burlingame State Park North Camp is open to deer and turkey hunting only
- Snake Den is open to archery deer hunting only.
- Ninigret Conservation Area/East Beach is open for hunting from October 1st through the last day in February, except that, deer hunting is open for archery September 15th through the end of archery deer season. No firearm deer hunting allowed.
- J.L. Curran is open to shotgun and archery hunting only, within the posted designated areas; this area is closed to mourning dove hunting.

### Dogs on Management Areas

No dogs shall be trained, run, exercised or be permitted to run at large on state management areas from March 15–August 15, inclusive, without written permission of the

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# State Land Spotlight: SIMMONS MILL WMA

Located in the East Bay, a part of the state not commonly associated with large tracts of hunt-able public open space, Simmons Mill Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Little Compton is worth the trip over a bridge or two. The property, owned by the RI Division of Wildlife, provides fishing access at five individual ponds/impoundments, as well as opportunities for hunting deer, turkey, pheasant (stocked), migratory birds, small game, and waterfowl.

The original acquisition consisted of the 400-acre Fort Church Property, purchased on March 14, 1995. Funding for the purchase was provided by the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program and Rhode Island Waterfowl Conservation Stamp Program, the State Capitol Budget, and a partnership/grant through the Nature Conservancy and Champlin Foundation. An additional 55-acre parcel located to the south, known as the Orton Property, was acquired in 1997.

The Simmons Mill WMA is predominantly maritime oak-holly forest interspersed with red maple swamps and impounded ponds. Oak forests host a variety of wildlife and provide an important food source for game species, including turkey and deer. Additional canopy species include beech, red maple, birch, cherry, and white pine. The understory varies, some areas are dense with tree saplings, mountain laurel, sweet pepperbush, highbush blueberry and green briar, while other areas are more open, with scattered lowbush blueberry, huckleberry, and hay-scented fern. The three



Photo by Kim Justham

fields on the property are managed to provide native grassland habitat for game birds; the largest and western-most field is stocked with pheasants during the season. Simmons Mill Pond, at approximately 30-acres, is the largest of the five water bodies and supports warm water fish species including bass, pickerel, and sunfish. The waterfowl habitat is an outstanding feature of the property. The impoundments and associated vegetative communities offer excellent nesting and feeding opportunities for a variety of native species.

Parking lots are located off of Coldbrook Road and John Dyer Road, with an additional access point on Amesbury Road. The rolling topography and network of grassy cart track trails makes for an easy walk to the ponds and hunting spots.



Photo by Kim Justham

## See Something, Say Something

By Scott Buchanan

One of the great joys of spending time outdoors is an unexpected close encounter with wildlife. Whether a young fawn with spots still visible, or an ambling box turtle, crossing paths with any one of the many thousands of species that occur in Rhode Island can create a memory that lasts a lifetime. This emotional response can be so powerful that the temptation to collect the animal arises, whether to possess as a pet, or because of the perception that the animal may be in danger because it is alone. But it is important for all Rhode Islanders to remember that our native wildlife belongs in the wild.

Rhode Island has strict laws that govern the possession and take of native species. While many species can be fished, hunted, trapped, or harvested under certain conditions and times of year, these laws protect all native species from undue collection. As per Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife Regulations (250-RICR-40-05-3), all native wildlife are expressly prohibited from importation and ownership without a state-issued permit.

While it may disappoint some to learn that wildlife laws restrict most collection, there are ways that you can ensure your encounter with wildlife has lasting meaning. The illegal collection of wildlife is a problem in Rhode Island, and because wildlife are a shared resource among all members of the public, it should be viewed as a shared responsibility to report violations. If you encounter someone actively collecting or in possession of native wildlife, it should be reported to RIDEM Law Enforcement by calling (401)-222-3070. And finally, you can report wildlife observations to the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife (<https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/wildlife-hunting/report-wildlife-observations>) using one of six taxa-specific apps. These reports by community scientists can have great significance by helping to identify a new population of threatened or endangered wildlife, or to identify a road mortality hotspot.

The conservation of wildlife in Rhode Island is a big task that requires the help of the public. Please remember that you can play a big part — if you see something, say something!

## DON'T TAKE ME HOME!



Possession or removal from the wild of any native reptile or amphibian is **illegal**\* (RIDEM Regulations 250-RICR-60-00-9)

Rhode Island's amphibians and reptiles face pressure from many threats. For many species, even the loss of a *single adult individual* can lead to local extinction.

**HELP PROTECT WILDLIFE BY KEEPING IT WILD!**

\*Hunting/fishing permits are offered, with restrictions, for snapping turtles, green frogs, and bullfrogs. Scientific Collectors permits are also available for valid research purposes. No native amphibian or reptile can be kept as a pet under any circumstances.



Report violations to the RIDEM Environmental Police by calling 401-222-3070 (24 hr. hotline)





# Migratory Bird HUNTING

## Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits

Season	Dates	Daily Bag Limit	Restrictions
<b>Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days*</b>	October 25–26	Same as regular season, listed below	Open to youth hunters age 12–17 accompanied by a licensed adult 21 years of age or older*; may take ducks, sea ducks, geese, and brant.
<b>Canada Goose Early Season</b>	September 1–30	15	Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset for September season only.
<b>Canada Goose Regular Season</b>	November 22–30 and December 6–January 25, 2026	2	Special permits are required for the South Shore Management Area and may be obtained through the online licensing system or the DFW. Field reservations are required. See page 26 for more information.
<b>Canada Goose Late Season</b>	January 31–February 14, 2026	5	Limited to Providence, Bristol and Kent counties and portions of Washington County as described in RIHR §9.11(B)(3)(d). A map depicting the area open to hunting is found on page 16 and 17 and also available on the Department of Environmental Management's website.
<b>Snow Goose (Including Blue Goose)</b>	October 11–January 25, 2026	25	No possession limit
<b>Brant</b>	December 27–January 25, 2026	1	-
<b>Ducks</b>	October 10–13, November 26–30, December 6–January 25, 2026	6	The daily bag limit shall contain no more than: Mallard ..... 4 (2 hens) Black Duck ..... 2 Canvasback ..... 2 Pintail ..... 3 Redhead ..... 2 Wood Duck ..... 3 Scaup ..... see below Sea Ducks ..... see below Other Duck Species ..... 6
<b>Scaup</b>	October 10–13, November 26–30, December 6–January 5, 2026	1	The daily bag limit of scaup is part of the duck daily bag limit of 6.
	January 6–25, 2026	2	
<b>Sea Ducks</b>	Same as ducks	4	The daily bag limit is 4, singly or in aggregate, but not to exceed 3 Scoter, 3 Eider ( <b>1 hen</b> ), or 3 Long-tailed Ducks. The daily bag limit of sea ducks (4) is part of the duck daily bag limit of 6.
<b>Mergansers</b>	Same As Ducks	5	-
<b>Coots</b>	Same As Ducks	15	-
<b>Swans</b>	No Season	-	-
<b>Harlequin Duck</b>	Closed	<b>Caution:</b> Harlequin ducks are found in sea duck hunting areas along rocky coastal shores, specifically in the vicinity of Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge, Middletown and Beavertail Pt., Jamestown. The female Harlequin duck is similar in appearance to female Bufflehead, Goldeneye, or Scoter, and can be mistaken for these species.	

The possession limit shall contain no more than three (3) times the daily bag limit listed above.

\* See page 14 for more information on Youth and Disabled Hunter Opportunities.

## Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Season	Dates	Bag Limits
<b>Crow</b>	August 8–September 28 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only) October 18–December 8 (inclusive) December 19–April 4, 2026 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only)	Unlimited
<b>King/Clapper Rail</b>	September 1–November 9	1
<b>Sora/Virginia Rail</b>	September 1–November 9	3
<b>Snipe</b>	September 1–November 9	5
<b>Mourning Dove</b>	September 1–30 October 18–December 16	15
<b>Woodcock</b>	October 18–December 1	3

The possession limit shall contain no more than three (3) times the daily bag limit listed above.

## 2025–2026 Waterfowl Highlights:

1. Youth hunters 12–17 using a firearm must be accompanied by an adult.
2. Pintail daily bag limit has been changed to three (3) per day.
3. Simmons Mill WMA no longer requires hunter to use decoys.
4. The brant season remains 30 days and the brant bag limit remains one (1).
5. Sea Duck changes:
  - a. There is no longer a special sea duck season. The sea duck season is now the same as the duck season.
  - b. Sea duck daily bag limit is now 4. Species restrictions include no more than 3 scoters, 3 eider (1 hen), and 3 long-tailed ducks.
  - c. Sea ducks are now part of the daily duck bag of 6.
6. Permit and reservations are required to hunt geese at the South Shore Management Area during the regular season. Permits will be issued online and at the DFW Great Swamp Field office (see page 26 for details).
7. Goose and other waterfowl harvest reporting is not required for South Shore Management Area.
8. All migratory bird hunters must possess a Rhode Island Harvest Information Program (HIP) Permit, available through the online licensing system.
9. Discharge of a firearm within five hundred (500) feet of an occupied dwelling is prohibited.
10. Cripples may be pursued, shot and retrieved from a boat under power in tidal waters seaward of the first upstream bridge; crippled birds must be immediately killed.
11. All regulations pertaining to migratory bird hunting also pertain to falconry hunting (special permit required, contact the DFW for more details).

12. Non-toxic shot is required per Federal regulation for all dove, duck and goose hunting in Area 1 at South Shore Management Area.

## Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp

The law requires that each waterfowl hunter sixteen (16) years of age and over must carry on his or her person a valid Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (“Federal Duck Stamp”) signed in ink across the face. Waterfowl hunters must also possess a RI State Waterfowl Stamp, signed in ink across the face, or a State Waterfowl Stamp Certification obtained through the web-based online licensing system [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov). Those wishing to obtain a RI waterfowl stamp (\$9.00) in person may do so at the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Great Swamp Field Headquarters: 277 Great Neck Rd, West Kingston, RI 02892, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A limited number of “hunter” edition stamps will be printed and available for purchase.

## Harvest Information Permit - HIP

All migratory bird hunters are required by Federal Law to obtain a RI Harvest Information Program (HIP) Permit, obtainable through the online licensing system at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov), and at hunting license vendors, DEM headquarters in Providence, and participating town clerks statewide.

For more information, call 401-789-0281 or email [dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov](mailto:dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov). A HIP certification must be included on your license document to hunt migratory birds.

## RI Duck Stamp: About The Artist

My name is Sadie Ray and for almost 18 years I have been an avid enjoyer of nature. My appreciation for wildlife and animals has come from being surrounded by nature during my upbringing, in Exeter, Rhode Island. I have participated in the duck stamp contest at my school since I was a child, and have continued to do so during my first three years of high school. Every year I have looked forward to the

creation of my duck stamp as it is a combination of some of my greatest passions, nature and art.



## Non-Toxic Shot Requirements

No shot other than non-toxic may be used to hunt, pursue, or attempt to take waterfowl, rails, or snipe within the State of Rhode Island including any jurisdictional tidal water extending from mean high water out seaward to three miles. Non-toxic shot includes steel, bismuth-tin, tungsten-iron, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-matrix, and tungsten-nickel-iron-shot or any other shot as approved by United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Tin shot is prohibited. All shot larger than BB is prohibited; including duplex loads containing shot larger than BB.

## Hunting Restrictions

No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, crossbow, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fish-hook, 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.
- From a sink box (a low floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of water).

## Contribute to the RI Waterfowl Programs

You can contribute to the RI waterfowl programs by investing in a limited edition stamp set for your home or office. Order forms for collector and signed governor edition 2025–2026 Rhode Island Waterfowl Stamps may be obtained by contacting the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife at 277 Great Neck Rd., West Kingston, RI 02892, 401-789-0281. The RI Division of Fish and Wildlife thanks waterfowl stamp and print collectors for your past support in funding our Waterfowl and Wetland Conservation Programs, and hope you contribute by adding RI's 2025–2026 stamp to your collection.

If you are concerned about the future of waterfowling, the best way to support adequate waterfowl populations is to:

- Purchase federal and RI waterfowl stamps.
- Join and participate in private conservation organizations.
- Educate and train youth hunters and introduce them to waterfowling.
- Learn to identify ducks and proper shooting distances to eliminate skybusting (shooting too soon and preventing birds from decoying) and crippling losses.



# Migratory Bird HUNTING

- 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 take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance.
- From or by means of any motor boat or sail boat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress has ceased.
- 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 records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls.
- By driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sail boat 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/over a baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation.
- Dual Violation: Violation of state migratory bird regulations is also a violation of Federal regulations.

## Closed Areas

**Providence, East Providence, Pawtucket** – That portion of the Seekonk River north of the railroad bridge to a line across the Seekonk River running between the intersection of Gulf Road and River Drive (Providence side) to the southerly abutment of the railroad bridge at the outlet of Omega Pond (East Providence

side), shall be closed to waterfowl hunting. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting on the Seekonk River is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Warwick** – Brush Neck Cove, so-called, in its entirety. Mill Cove, so-called, in its entirety, including the beachfront. Buttonwoods Cove, so-called, in its entirety.

**North Kingstown** – Mill Cove, Wickford, so called, in its entirety. Fishing Cove, Wickford, area west of a line to be determined bisecting Cornelius Island. All discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge in an easterly direction from the above line. The Division of Fish and Wildlife will establish the line of demarcation.

**Charlestown** – Watchaug Pond and Poquiant Brook, or hunting within 100 yards upland of the shore or bank of same.

**Tiverton** – That unnamed estuary in Tiverton, north of Seapowet Avenue and east of Jack's Island, bounded on the west, south, and east shore by the Audubon Society of RI's Emile Ruecker Wildlife Refuge, and as posted by Audubon Society of RI and Department of Environmental Management signs. The affected area includes the inlet of this estuary and marshland on the north side of this outlet.

**Middletown** – Sachuest Point (NWR) shoreline below mean high water to mean low water surrounding the National Wildlife Refuge property is closed to all hunting: No hunting along shoreline.

**Lincoln/Central Falls** – Pursuant to RIGL 11-47-49.1, discharge of a firearm within the Blackstone Valley Flood Plains or Marshes, also known as "Valley Marshes" is prohibited.

## Additional Restrictions

Area can be viewed online [here](#), by viewing the "Hunting - Restricted Waterfowl Area" layer in the Outdoor Recreation Layers.

**Barrington** – The Barrington River between Central Bridge at Massasoit Avenue and Barrington Bridge #123 at County Road is closed to hunting, except for that section on the river east of Puritan Avenue (41.745873° N, -71.309876° W) and west of the point southwest of Seabrook Court (41.744189° N, -71.306622° W). Hunting shall be restricted to the water areas below the vegetation line. Discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Bristol** – Walker Island – discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open waters (seaward).

**East Providence** – Check local ordinances for restrictions. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Warwick** – Rock Island and its adjacent groin extending northward off Narragansett Parkway. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Cranston** – Washouset Point (Pawtuxet Cove) north to Fields Point, including Stillhouse Cove; the discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge towards open water (seaward). No hunting from the shoreline or from a watercraft within five hundred (500) feet of occupied buildings (RIGL 20-13-7).

**Little Compton** – All waterfowl hunters must have the following to hunt the Simmons Mill Pond only in the Simmons Mill Management Area: (a) waterfowl decoys; (b) retrieving breed of hunting dog, and/or a boat without motor, or canoe without motor.

**North Kingstown** – Waterfowl hunting on Belleville Pond is restricted to the northwest segment of the large pond as designated by DEM signs. The discharge of firearms is restricted toward open waters. Waterfowl hunting is permitted after November 15 by town ordinance. Firearms must remain cased until individual reaches hunting area (blind or boat).

**Check local ordinances for shooting or hunting restrictions.**

## Wanton Waste

All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.

## Tagging

No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

1. The hunter's signature
2. The hunter's address
3. The total number of birds involved, by species
4. The dates such birds were killed

No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another unless such birds are properly tagged.



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## Possession of Live Birds

Wounded and recovered birds shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

## Dressing

No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird (except doves and band-tailed pigeons) and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one fully feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported from the field to one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility.

## Shipment

No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species contained in the package.

## Importation

For information regarding the importation of migratory birds killed in another country, hunters should consult 50 CFR 20.61 through 20.66. One fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all migratory birds being transported between the port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility. No person shall import migratory game birds killed in any foreign country, except Canada, unless such birds are dressed (except as required in 20.63), drawn, and head and feet are removed. No person shall import migratory game birds belonging to another person.

## Reference

Federal regulations related to migratory game birds are located in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.

## Hunting on National Wildlife Refuges

More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting. For additional information on Federal regulations, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agent, 401-364-9124.

"It is the policy of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to offer its services and accommodations to all orderly persons, and, as required, to all properly licensed persons, without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, or disability." If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, facility, or if you desire further information, please write to the Office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Washington, D.C. 20240.

## Proper Harvest Care

Most wild animals in Rhode Island are healthy. However, diseases and viruses can be present with any wildlife species as well as associated parasites (e.g., ticks). Some wildlife diseases can be transmitted to humans, pets, domestic and other wild animals. The DFW monitors for diseases in multiple species, such as Chronic Wasting Disease and Epizootic Hemorrhagic disease (EHD) in deer, Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease 2 (RHDV2) and Tularemia in rabbits, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in waterfowl and a variety of other diseases in game and non-game animals.

If you do harvest an animal that is or seems sick, contact DFW (401-789-0281 or [dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov](mailto:dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov)). The DFW strongly advises hunters to adhere to the following procedures when handling harvested game:

- Do not handle or butcher game animals that are obviously sick or are found dead.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning game.
- Wear rubber gloves or cover hands with plastic when cleaning game.
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds after handling game.
- Carry disinfecting wipes or an alcohol-based gel into the field with you for immediate use after handling game.
- Wash tools and working surfaces with soap and water, then disinfect with a 10% solution of chlorine bleach.
- Cook game meat thoroughly, reaching an internal temperature of 165° F.
- Clean birds in an area that poultry and pet birds cannot access. There should be a solid barrier between your game cleaning area and where birds are housed.
- Keep a separate pair of shoes to be worn only in the game cleaning area. Clean and disinfect all footwear when coming in and out of the cleaning area.
- Use dedicated tools for cleaning game; do not mix tools that you use around domestic animals or pets.
- Double bag carcass parts, tying both bags shut.
- Place bags in a container that children, domestic animals, and wildlife cannot access.
- Tick-borne diseases pose a hazard to both hunters and their dogs. Use tick repellents and always conduct tick checks after returning from the field.

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# Goose HUNTING

## South Shore Management Area (SSMA) Goose Hunting Cooperative

### Permits

- Required for all goose hunters during the regular Canada goose season (November 22–30, and December 6–January 25, 2026).
- Must be obtained from the online licensing system at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) or from the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Great Swamp Field Headquarters, 277 Great Neck Rd., West Kingston.
- License document with SSMA permit certification must be carried while goose hunting at the SSMA and must be shown to any DEM Environmental Police Officer or Division of Fish and Wildlife employee upon request.

### Field Reservations

- Required for Canada goose hunting during the regular goose season (November 22–30, and December 6–January 25, 2026). See SSMA packet for more information.

### Harvest Reporting

- Goose and other waterfowl harvest reporting is no longer required for South Shore Management Area.

### Additional SSMA Goose Hunting Regulations

- See information packet provided with the goose hunting permit or online (<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pdf/waterfowlab-ssma.pdf>) for additional rules and regulations for goose hunting in the SSMA.
- SSMA is CLOSED during the late goose season: January 31–February 14, 2026.

### Additional Hunting Restrictions at SSMA

**Dove hunting** is allowed in Areas 1, 3, 5 and 6 except during the regular goose season. Doves may be taken by permitted goose hunters while goose hunting when the field reservation system is in place during the open dove season. Possession of lead shot for taking doves while goose hunting is prohibited.

**Upland game** hunting is allowed only in Areas 5 and 6 during the upland game season except during the regular Canada goose seasons. All upland game hunting is prohibited during regular goose season, including Youth Waterfowl Weekend.

**Deer and Turkey** hunting is allowed as follows, but discharge of firearms and archery equipment are only allowed within the wooded section of the Areas; however, deer and turkey may be in the field when harvested.

- Deer hunting during the archery season is allowed only in Areas 3, 5, and 6 including during the regular Canada goose season when the field reservation system is occurring.
- Deer hunting during the muzzleloader season is allowed in Areas 5 and 6, except during the regular Canada Goose season when the blind reservation system is occurring.
- Turkey hunting is allowed in Areas 3, 5, and 6 during the spring and fall turkey season.

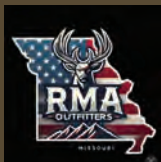
**Waterfowl hunting** is allowed outside of the regular Canada goose season but within legal waterfowl seasons and without special hunting permits, reservation, or decoy restrictions, once crops are harvested. The taking of ducks during legal duck seasons is permitted while goose hunting.

Non-toxic shot is required per Federal regulation for all dove, duck (including coot and merganser), and goose hunting in Area 1 at South Shore Management Area.

Violations of any SSMA regulations, state management area regulations, and/or any state or federal hunting laws will result in loss of hunting privileges on the SSMA for a period of one year, beginning from the date of the violation.

For additional information, see the RI Hunting Regulations or call the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (401) 789-0281.

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## Attention Migratory Bird Hunters

**Reminder: Report ALL bird bands ONLINE!**

[www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov)

Since June 2017, band reports are no longer taken over the phone via the 1-800 number.  
Band reports may also be mailed to: USGS Bird Banding Lab  
12100 Beach Forest Rd, Laurel, MD 20708



**Your band reports are important for migratory bird conservation!**

## Small Game Hunting

Species	Dates	Daily Bag Limit
<b>Coyote – State Land</b>	September 15 – February 28, 2026 April 30 – May 24, 2026	unlimited
<b>Coyote – Private Land</b>	No closed season	unlimited
<b>Youth Pheasant*</b>	October 11–13	2
<b>Raccoon</b>	October 1 – February 28, 2026	unlimited
<b>Cottontail Rabbit</b>	October 1 – February 28, 2026	3
<b>Gray and Red Squirrel</b>	September 13 – February 28, 2026	5, singly or in aggregate
<b>Pheasant</b>	October 18 – February 28, 2026	2
<b>Bobwhite Quail</b>		3
<b>Red, Gray Fox</b>		unlimited
<b>Ruffed Grouse</b>	CLOSED	

\* See page 14 for more information on Youth Hunt Opportunities

Method of take for small game hunting is limited to: rimfire rifle not larger than .22 caliber (except coyote, see in coyote hunting section below), shotgun, bow and arrow, muzzleloader, crossbow, and air rifle as specified below:

- Hunters may use shotgun with shot not larger than No. 2.
- A muzzleloader, not to exceed .40 caliber, may be used to hunt small mammals during the established season for these species.
- Air rifles are permitted to hunt the following small mammals: gray squirrel, red squirrel, woodchuck, and cottontail rabbit provided that the air rifles are a minimum of .177 caliber and not larger than .30, and produce a minimum of seven hundred fifty (750) FPS velocity with pellets seven and one half (7.5) grain or larger.
- Hunters may use archery equipment meeting the minimum draw weight required for deer hunting with arrows tipped with field points, small game blunts, or judo points. Hunters using broadhead arrows during the archery deer season must possess a valid archery deer tag.
- Hunters may use crossbow to take small game mammals; however, no birds may be taken with a crossbow. See R.I. Gen. Laws § 20-14-7(d).
- Hunters using archery equipment including crossbow to take small game must have taken and successfully completed a bow hunter education course.

### Pheasant and Quail Hunting

A Game Bird Permit is required to hunt ring-neck pheasant and bobwhite quail. The daily limit for pheasant is two (2) either sex birds and the daily bag limit for quail is three (3). No physical tag required. Pheasants are stocked prior to opening day, then twice weekly, at most locations, until December. Birds are stocked once per week in December based on weather and available stock. Pheasant stocking does not occur in January and February. Stocked management areas are: Arcadia, Black Hut, Big River, Buck Hill, Carolina, Durfee Hill, Eight Rod Farm, Great Swamp, Nicholas Farm, Sapowet Marsh, and Simmons Mill Pond. For up to date stocking information see the department's Pheasant page at [dem.ri.gov/pheasant](http://dem.ri.gov/pheasant).

### Block Island Pheasant Hunting

Pheasant hunting is open on Block Island, with written landowner permission, on November 19 and 26, December 3 and 17 and January 7, 2026. Only male pheasants (roosters) may be taken from Block Island with a daily bag limit of 2 per day.

No person shall take pheasant on Block Island while possessing shells loaded with any shot other than steel shot, or other legally approved non-toxic shot.



Photo by Katharine Work

### Additional Regulations

The small game hunting season remains OPEN during the December shotgun deer season. This allows small game hunting on state management areas during the shotgun deer season.

## Reptiles & Amphibians

A current Rhode Island hunting, fishing, or trapping license is required to take green frogs, bullfrogs and snapping turtles. The possession, removal from the wild, or killing, for any purpose, of any other native reptile or amphibian (including their nests and eggs) is prohibited except by special permit (RIHR 9.15.B).

The snapping turtle season is closed May 15–July 15. The season bag limit is six (6) turtles, and at any time shall be limited to turtles with a minimum carapace length of thirteen (13) inches. Take is allowed by turtle trap, hand, hand-held dip net, snagging, and bow and arrow. Traps must include a tag with name and address of trapper and be set in a manner that allows all turtles within access to the surface to breathe air (RIHR 9.15.C). Take for the purpose of sale or any other purpose other than personal consumption is prohibited.

The green frog and bullfrog season is closed June 1–July 31. The daily bag limit is 20 frogs (both species combined). Take is allowed by hand, hand-held dip net, spearing, hook and line, and bow and arrow.

For any non-lethal method of take, trapped animals must either be released alive into the waters from which they were taken, or humanely dispatched at the site of capture with an active, and valid trapping or hunting license.

## Coyote Hunting

Coyotes season on state lands is from September 15 until the last day in February, and during the open spring turkey hunting season, April 30–May 24, 2026. There is no closed season for coyote hunting on private lands.

Coyote hunters on state lands must wear a minimum of 200 square inches of fluorescent orange during the small game hunting season. During the shotgun deer season, 500 square inches is required. The placement or use of carcasses or meat parts is allowed on private property for the purposes of hunting coyotes but is prohibited on state lands.

Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset. Legal methods of take for coyote hunting include shotgun (no lead shot larger than No. 2), bow and arrow and crossbow; however, on private lands from April 1 to September 30 (both dates inclusive), centerfire rifles not larger than .229 caliber may be used (RIGL 20-13-13) and by any means allowed during any concurrent hunting season.

The bag limit for coyote is unlimited and electronic calls may be used.



# NEW Hunting Guide Permit

**No person shall engage in the act of guiding without first obtaining a guide permit from the DEM.**

Guiding is defined as any person paid a fee, or in-kind compensation, in exchange for transport, directly aiding, assisting, advising, showing the way to, or directing another person in the hunting of wildlife in the state of Rhode Island.



## Reporting:

- All persons possessing a guide permit are required to complete and submit harvest reports, found here at <https://arcg.is/1eD0rL2>, by no later than the last day in March annually.



Scan QR Code for  
Harvest Reports

## Valid dates:

- Guide permits shall be valid March 1st through midnight of the last day of February.

## Renewals:

- Permits must be renewed annually and are only valid after receipt of a completed renewal application. Permits that are not renewed after a period of 5 years shall be considered inactive. Applicants who have allowed their permit to become inactive must reapply for a new permit.

## Applications for guide permits may be denied when:

- The applicant has been convicted of a hunting, trapping or fishing violation or currently has a disposition filed before a state, federal or municipal court or administrative tribunal of competent jurisdiction anywhere in the United States or Canada within three (3) years preceding the application date.
- The applicant fails to provide all required information on the application and all additional information required above or to provide truthful information.

## Revocation criteria:

- The applicant or permittee has been convicted of a hunting, trapping or fishing violation in any state.
- The applicant or permittee failed to provide all required information on the application or to provide truthful information.
- The failure of the permittee to ensure that all persons in their hunting party are in compliance with all federal and state license, permit, stamp, and equipment requirements.
- The failure of the permittee to ensure that all persons in their hunting party are in compliance with daily bag limits and possession limits outlined in these regulations.
- A guided client violates laws under R.I. Gen. Laws § Title 20, or regulations in this part, and the violation is not immediately reported to a DEM environmental police officer by the guide.
- An applicant fails to submit their annual reports prior to applying for a renewal.

## Reminder

- Clients are not allowed to harvest animals under their guides bag limit or tags.
- Each person must harvest his/her own bag limits.
- A guide can gift his birds to his client if he harvested them himself, but not in the field. They have to be correctly annotated on tags and the gifted birds cannot place the hunter over the aggregate bag limit depending on what day of the season the hunt takes place.

## Eligibility:

- To obtain a guide permit, guides must apply to DEM. The form can be found at <https://dem.ri.gov/online-services/applications-forms>. The following information must be submitted with a completed application form:
  - » Proof of being 21 years of age or older.
  - » A copy of a current Rhode Island hunting license.
  - » Proof of having completed a hunter education course as required by the guided party(s).
  - » A copy of a valid CPR and First Aid certification.

## Testing requirements:

- Required for guiding deer, turkey, and waterfowl.
- All initial applicants applying for a guide permit must take an in person written examination administered by the DEM. A person must attain a passing grade of 80 percent.
- A person who fails the written examination may retake the examination one additional time after sixty (60) days but not again for one (1) year if failing to pass the test the second time.

## Additional information required when using a vessel to carry passengers:

- A current copy of the operator's United States Coast Guard license to carry passengers for hire.
- A current copy of the vessel's "Certificate of Documentation" certifying that the vessel is documented "Coastwise", or if the vessel is under five (5) net tons, a copy of the vessel's State registration.
- Proof that the operator and crew are currently enrolled in a random drug testing program that complies with the Federal Government's 46 C.F.R. § 16.101 et seq. "Drug Testing Program" Regulations.

## Trapping

Species	Dates	Season Bag Limit	Pelt Tagging
Gray Fox, Red Fox, Mink, Muskrat, Opossum, Rabbit, Squirrel, Raccoon, Skunk, Weasel	November 1–January 31, 2026	none	no
Coyote – Private	no closed season	none	no
Coyote – State Land	November 1–February 28, 2026		
Beaver – Private*	November 1–March 14, 2026	Resident: 40	yes
Beaver – State Land*	December 1–February 28, 2026	Non-resident: 20	
Fisher*	December 1–24	1	yes

\* Special permit required in addition to RI trapping license, which may be obtained at Fish and Wildlife's Great Swamp Field Headquarters (401) 789-0281 or email DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov

### General Regulations

- No person shall set, maintain, or tend any trap without first obtaining a trapping license from the Department of Environmental Management. A resident of this state may set traps on property which they own and on which they are domiciled without obtaining a trapping license (RIGL 20-16-7). All season restrictions, bag limits, tagging requirements, and other trapping laws and regulations apply.
- Every holder of a trapping license shall make a report of the number and species of all furbearing animals taken by him or her on forms provided by the Department within thirty (30) days of the end of the trapping season and before the expiration of the holder's license. No renewal of a trapping license shall be granted unless the report has been made (RIGL 20-16-12).
- Traps may not be set, staked, or placed prior to sunrise on opening day.
- All traps must be labeled with the trapper's current RI trapping license number attached by a metal tag or embedded or cut into the trap (RIGL 20-16-7).
- Written landowner permission is required to trap on private land (RIGL 20-16-9).
- All traps must be checked at least once in every 24-hour period (RIGL 20-16-9).
- There is no open season on bobcat or river otter.

## Types of Traps Permitted

Furbearers for which there is an open season may be taken in: box (a.k.a. "cage") traps, body-grip (a.k.a. "conibear") traps, or species specific traps, with the following restrictions:

### Body-grip Traps

**Private land:** Body-grip (a.k.a. smooth wire or "conibear") type traps up to six and one half (6.5) inch jaw spread (i.e. "110, 120, 160" or equivalent) are permitted on land or in water on private land. Body-grip type traps greater than six and one half (6.5) inch but not exceeding eight (8) inch jaw spread ("220") may only be set if completely submerged in water or set no less than six (6) feet above the surface of the ground. Body-grip traps greater than eight (8) inch but not exceeding ten (10) inch jaw spread ("330") may only be set completely submerged in water.

**State land:** Body-grip traps up to six and one half (6.5) inch jaw spread are only permitted in water sets (i.e. all or a portion of the trap in water)

or if placed six (6) feet above the ground. Body-grip traps with a jaw spread greater than six and one half (6.5) inches but not exceeding ten (10) inches ("220-330") may only be set if completely submerged in water.

### Box Traps

The use of box traps is permitted on private and state lands.

### Species Specific Traps

The use of species specific traps is permitted on private and state land. A species specific trap is characterized by all of the following: triggering and restraining mechanisms are enclosed within a housing; triggering and restraining mechanisms are only accessible through a single opening when set; access opening does not exceed 2 inches in diameter; triggering mechanism can only be activated by a pulling force; has a swivel mounted anchoring system.

### Permit to Trap State Lands

All trappers harvesting furbearers from state management areas must first obtain a Permit to Trap State Lands (no fee), issued by the Division of Fish & Wildlife by calling 401-789-0281 or by emailing DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov, in addition to their current R.I. trapping license, obtained through the online licensing system: [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov).

### Prohibitions

- The use of poisons or snares (RIGL 20-16-6).
- The use of steel-jawed leghold traps (RIGL 20-16-8).
- No person shall disturb, tend, or possess a trap of another, or take an animal from the traps of another unless specifically authorized to do so (RIGL 20-16-11).
- The setting of traps within ten feet of a beaver lodge or bank den or within eight feet of a muskrat lodge unless authorized by special permit.
- The taking or possession of a road-killed furbearer (RIGL 20-16-1), unless with a current R.I. trapping license and during the open season for that species or as provided for under a current RI Scientific Collectors Permit (RIGL 20-1-18) or otherwise permitted by the Division.
- The relocation of beaver.
- The use of deadfalls, pitfalls, fish hooks, treble hooks, or other similarly sharpened instruments to catch, capture, or injure furbearers is prohibited.



Photo by Jim Tappero



# Photo SUBMISSIONS



Photo by Mark Mezzini



Photo by Jason Garrett



Photo by Tom Fetherston



Photo by Patrick Vigneau



Photo by Shane Hollands



Photo by Katharine Work



Photo by Olivia Gauthier



# Hunting SEASONS SUMMARY

For further information regarding specific bag, possession, and season limits please visit the pages noted in the table below.

## Deer Hunting (see page 8 for bag/season limit information)

Season	Dates
Archery (includes Crossbow)	September 13–14 (Youth only, Zone 1) September 27–28 (Youth only, Zone 2) September 15–January 31, 2026 (Zone 1) October 1–January 31, 2026 (Zone 2)
Archery: Patience and Prudence Islands (Zone 3)	October 25–26 (Youth only) November 1–January 31, 2026
Archery: Block Island (Zone 4)	October 16, 17, 20–24, 27–31
Muzzleloader	October 25–26 (Youth only Zones 1, 2) November 1–30 (Zones 1, 2) December 26–January 2, 2026 (Zones 1, 2 Private land only, antlerless deer only)
Shotgun	December 6–21 (Zone 1) December 6–14 (Zone 2) December 26–January 2, 2026 (Zones 1, 2 - Private land only, antlerless deer only)
Archery, Muzzleloader & Shotgun: Block Island (Zone 4)	November 3–7, 10, 12–14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, December 1, 2, 4, 5, 8–12, 15, 16, 18, 19, January 2, 5–9, 12–16, 20–23, 26–30, 2026, February 2–6, 9–13, 2026
Special Season for Disabled Hunters: Patience and Prudence Islands (Zone 3)	October 28–31

## Migratory Game Bird Hunting\* (page 22 for bag/possession limit information)

Season	Dates
Crow	August 8–September 28 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only), October 18–December 8, December 19–April 4, 2026 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only)
King/Clapper Rail and Sora/Virginia Rail	September 1–November 9
Snipe	September 1–November 9
Mourning Dove	September 1–30, October 18–December 16
Woodcock	October 18–December 1
Canada Goose (Early Season)	September 1–30
Canada Goose (Regular Season)	November 22–30, December 6–January 25, 2026
Canada Goose (Late Season)	January 31–February 14, 2026
Snow Goose (including blue goose)	October 11–January 25, 2026
Ducks, Sea Ducks, Mergansers and Coots**	October 10–13, November 26–30, December 6–January 25, 2026
Brant	December 27–January 25, 2026
Youth Waterfowl	October 25–26

## Wild Turkey Hunting (see page 12 for bag/season limit information)

Season	Dates
Fall Archery	October 1–31
Youth	April 20–26, 2026
Paraplegic	April 25–26, 2026
Spring	April 30–May 24, 2026

## Small Game Hunting (see page 27 for bag/season limit information)

Season	Dates
Coyote – State Land	September 15–February 28, 2026 April 30–May 24, 2026
Coyote – Private Land	No Closed Season
Youth Pheasant	October 11–13
Raccoon	October 1–February 28, 2026
Cottontail Rabbit	October 1–February 28, 2026
Gray and Red Squirrel	September 13–February 28, 2026
Pheasant	October 18–February 28, 2026
Bobwhite Quail	
Red, Gray Fox	
Ruffed Grouse	CLOSED

\*Season dates are subject to regulatory changes occurring at the time of printing. Please refer to the complete Hunting and Trapping Regulations for the 2025–2026 season.

\*\*See new scaup, sea duck and merganser regulations on page 22.



# Shooting Hours & SUNRISE/SUNSET

## Legal Shooting Hours

Season	Hours
Small Game & Pheasant	Sunrise until Sunset
Deer	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset
Coyote	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset
Raccoon	6:00 PM October 1 until 11:59 PM of the last day of February
Waterfowl	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
Canada Goose, September season only	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset
Spring Turkey	½ hour before Sunrise until 1:00PM
Fall Turkey	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
Dove	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
Woodcock, Snipe & Rails	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
Crow	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset

## Sunrise / Sunset Table at Providence, RI

Darker cells indicates Daylight Savings Time

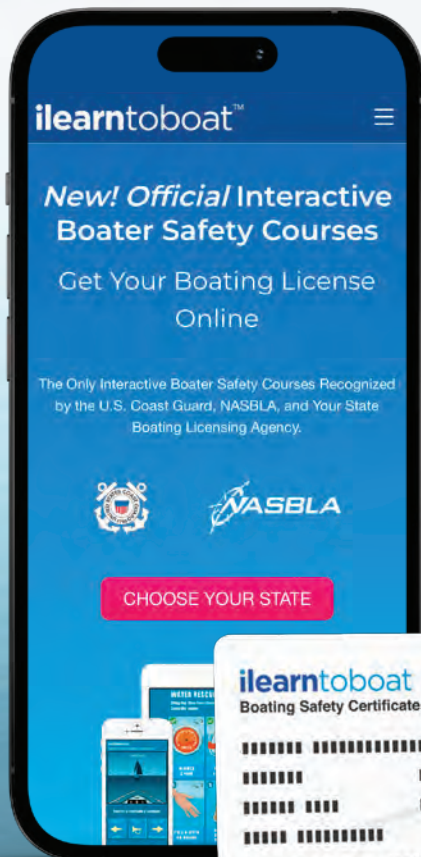
Day	August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		April		May	
	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set
01	5:39	8:03	6:11	7:18	6:42	6:26	7:18	5:39	6:53	4:15	7:13	4:25	6:57	5:01	6:20	5:36	6:28	7:11	5:41	7:44
02	5:40	8:02	6:12	7:16	6:43	6:25	6:19	4:38	6:54	4:15	7:13	4:26	6:56	5:02	6:18	5:37	6:26	7:12	5:40	7:45
03	5:41	8:01	6:13	7:15	6:45	6:23	6:20	4:37	6:55	4:15	7:13	4:27	6:55	5:03	6:17	5:38	6:25	7:13	5:39	7:46
04	5:42	7:59	6:14	7:13	6:46	6:21	6:22	4:35	6:56	4:14	7:13	4:28	6:54	5:04	6:15	5:39	6:23	7:14	5:38	7:47
05	5:43	7:58	6:15	7:11	6:47	6:20	6:23	4:34	6:57	4:14	7:13	4:29	6:53	5:06	6:14	5:40	6:21	7:15	5:36	7:48
06	5:44	7:57	6:16	7:10	6:48	6:18	6:24	4:33	6:58	4:14	7:13	4:30	6:52	5:07	6:12	5:41	6:19	7:16	5:35	7:49
07	5:45	7:56	6:17	7:08	6:49	6:16	6:25	4:32	6:59	4:14	7:12	4:31	6:51	5:08	6:10	5:43	6:18	7:17	5:34	7:50
08	5:47	7:54	6:18	7:06	6:50	6:15	6:26	4:31	7:00	4:14	7:12	4:32	6:50	5:09	7:09	6:44	6:16	7:18	5:33	7:51
09	5:48	7:53	6:19	7:04	6:51	6:13	6:28	4:30	7:01	4:14	7:12	4:33	6:48	5:11	7:07	6:45	6:15	7:19	5:32	7:52
10	5:49	7:52	6:21	7:03	6:52	6:11	6:29	4:29	7:02	4:14	7:12	4:34	6:47	5:12	7:05	6:46	6:13	7:21	5:30	7:53
11	5:50	7:50	6:22	7:01	6:53	6:10	6:30	4:28	7:03	4:14	7:12	4:35	6:46	5:13	7:04	6:47	6:11	7:22	5:29	7:54
12	5:51	7:49	6:23	6:59	6:54	6:08	6:31	4:27	7:04	4:14	7:11	4:36	6:45	5:15	7:02	6:48	6:10	7:23	5:28	7:55
13	5:52	7:48	6:24	6:58	6:56	6:06	6:33	4:26	7:04	4:15	7:11	4:37	6:43	5:16	7:00	6:49	6:08	7:24	5:27	7:56
14	5:53	7:46	6:25	6:56	6:57	6:05	6:34	4:25	7:05	4:15	7:11	4:38	6:42	5:17	6:59	6:51	6:06	7:25	5:26	7:57
15	5:54	7:45	6:26	6:54	6:58	6:03	6:35	4:24	7:06	4:15	7:10	4:39	6:41	5:18	6:57	6:52	6:05	7:26	5:25	7:58
16	5:55	7:43	6:27	6:52	6:59	6:02	6:36	4:23	7:06	4:15	7:10	4:41	6:39	5:20	6:55	6:53	6:03	7:27	5:24	7:59
17	5:56	7:42	6:28	6:51	7:00	6:00	6:37	4:23	7:07	4:16	7:09	4:42	6:38	5:21	6:53	6:54	6:02	7:28	5:23	8:00
18	5:57	7:40	6:29	6:49	7:01	5:59	6:39	4:22	7:08	4:16	7:09	4:43	6:36	5:22	6:52	6:55	6:00	7:29	5:22	8:01
19	5:58	7:39	6:30	6:47	7:02	5:57	6:40	4:21	7:08	4:17	7:08	4:44	6:35	5:23	6:50	6:56	5:59	7:31	5:21	8:02
20	5:59	7:37	6:31	6:45	7:04	5:56	6:41	4:20	7:09	4:17	7:07	4:45	6:34	5:25	6:48	6:57	5:57	7:32	5:21	8:03
21	6:00	7:36	6:32	6:44	7:05	5:54	6:42	4:20	7:09	4:17	7:07	4:47	6:32	5:26	6:47	6:59	5:56	7:33	5:20	8:04
22	6:01	7:34	6:33	6:42	7:06	5:53	6:43	4:19	7:10	4:18	7:06	4:48	6:31	5:27	6:45	7:00	5:54	7:34	5:19	8:05
23	6:02	7:33	6:34	6:40	7:07	5:51	6:45	4:18	7:10	4:19	7:05	4:49	6:29	5:28	6:43	7:01	5:53	7:35	5:18	8:06
24	6:03	7:31	6:35	6:38	7:08	5:50	6:46	4:18	7:11	4:19	7:05	4:50	6:28	5:30	6:42	7:02	5:51	7:36	5:17	8:07
25	6:04	7:29	6:36	6:37	7:09	5:48	6:47	4:17	7:11	4:20	7:04	4:52	6:26	5:31	6:40	7:03	5:50	7:37	5:17	8:08
26	6:05	7:28	6:37	6:35	7:11	5:47	6:48	4:17	7:11	4:20	7:03	4:53	6:25	5:32	6:38	7:04	5:48	7:38	5:16	8:09
27	6:06	7:26	6:38	6:33	7:12	5:46	6:49	4:16	7:12	4:21	7:02	4:54	6:23	5:33	6:36	7:05	5:47	7:39	5:15	8:10
28	6:07	7:25	6:39	6:31	7:13	5:44	6:50	4:16	7:12	4:22	7:01	4:55	6:21	5:34	6:35	7:06	5:46	7:40	5:15	8:11
29	6:08	7:23	6:40	6:30	7:14	5:43	6:51	4:16	7:12	4:23	7:00	4:57			6:33	7:07	5:44	7:41	5:14	8:11
30	6:09	7:21	6:41	6:28	7:15	5:42	6:52	4:15	7:12	4:23	6:59	4:58			6:31	7:08	5:43	7:43	5:14	8:12
31	6:10	7:20			7:17	5:40			7:13	4:24	6:58	4:59			6:30	7:10			5:13	8:13

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