

Take A Kid Hunting



Keith Griglak/NJDEP Fish & Wildlife

Deer, Waterfowl, and Turkey Youth Hunt Days

Take this great opportunity to introduce youths to hunting!

All youth hunters must have a valid youth hunting license. See *Youth Licenses*, page 8.

♦ **Supervision:** The youth hunter **MUST** be under the direct supervision of a person who is at least 21 years old and who has a valid firearm or bow and arrow license corresponding to the season hunted. Direct supervision is defined as both the youth hunter and the adult mentoring hunter set up together at the same location, hunting as a

unit, not hunting independently. The adult does not need a zone or area permit to supervise, only their valid license. The adult **CANNOT** hunt on any youth days but may call for the youth. **Youth hunters do not need a harvest number to report harvests during youth hunts or non-permit deer seasons.**

For additional harvest reporting requirements, see page 32.

YOUTH DEER HUNTING

See table below.

Tori Hull, age 13, smiling from ear to ear with an 8 point buck, her first deer harvested with a firearm during the 2023 Six-day Firearm week. The experience she and her dad, Trevor, had sitting together that day will be one they will never forget!



Trevor Hull

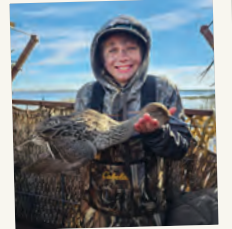
TAKE A KID HUNTING!

| Who can hunt? | Youth hunters aged 10 to 16, accompanied by an adult at least 21 years of age with valid license appropriate to firearm used. Youth farmers are exempt from the license requirement when hunting on the property on which they reside. Properly licensed adult MUST be set up together with Youth Hunter (same tree, blind, etc). Direct supervision only. See <i>Youth Licenses</i> , page 8. ADULTS MAY NOT HUNT ON DESIGNATED YOUTH DAYS | | |
|-----------------|--|--|---|
| What do I need? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A valid Youth Hunting License (see <i>Youth Licenses</i>, page 8.) • A valid Rifle Permit if using a muzzleloader (adult also; see <i>Permits</i>, page 11) • A HIP Number if hunting waterfowl • A Youth Turkey Permit if hunting Youth Turkey Day (see <i>Permits</i>, page 11) Seasons are open Statewide unless otherwise noted. | | |
| | Dates | Bag Limits | Report Your Harvest |
| Deer | September 21, 2024 | 1 deer, either sex ARCHERY ONLY | Antler Point Restrictions and Earn-A-Buck regulations do not apply. Fill in Deer Transportation Tag, page 29, or hand-made card with same info prior to using Automated Harvest Report System. |
| | November 23, 2024 | 1 deer, either sex SHOTGUN or MUZZLELOADER ONLY | |
| Waterfowl | NORTH Zone – Youth ONLY, Oct. 5, 2024 | Bag limits: same as during regular season except 2 scaup. See page 62 for details. | See pages 61–65 for all waterfowl hunting requirements. For FAQs on youth hunts, go to dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/special-youth-and-veterans-active-military-waterfowl-hunting-days-faqs/ . |
| | SOUTH Zone – Youth ONLY, Oct. 12, 2024 | | |
| | COASTAL Zone – Youth ONLY, Oct. 26, 2024 | | |
| | Statewide – Youth Feb. 1, 2025 | | |
| Turkey | April 19, 2025 | 1 male turkey | Fill out Turkey Transportation Card on Permit prior to using Automated Harvest Report System to check-in bird. If no bird is taken this day, Youth Permit may be used during Hunting Period Y. |

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING

See table, left.

On Ava Nordstrom's 11th birthday, she woke up bright and early to go hunting with her dad, Richard at the Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area, through NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's R3 Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Program. Ava's smile says it all, as she made a birthday memory of a lifetime. She harvested her first duck ever and it was a Pintail!



Richard Nordstrom

YOUTH TURKEY HUNTING

See table, left.

Roman holding his second turkey. This big Tom was taken on the first Saturday of the season. He was accompanied by his grandfather and two cousins.



Brian Bartholomew, Jr.

WMA Youth Pheasant Hunt Days

All youth hunters must have a valid youth hunting license. See *Youth Licenses*, page 8.

» Nov. 2 and Nov. 4-8 Rain or Shine!

The NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's R3 and Hunter Education Program's Take a Kid Hunting Pheasant Hunt will allow properly licensed and supervised youth hunters (see table, below) to hunt any of the 10 stocked wildlife management areas (WMAs) on Saturday, Nov. 2 and Monday-Friday, Nov. 4-8.

In a cooperative effort between the NJDEP Fish & Wildlife and the New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, volunteer hunting mentors with trained bird dogs will guide youth hunters on a Saturday, Nov. 2 pheasant hunt. This experience will increase the young hunters' opportunity for harvesting a pheasant in a setting which encourages responsible and safe hunting practices.

All guided morning hunt participants must pre-register and be accompanied to the check-in by a parent or guardian who are welcomed and

encouraged to follow the hunters through the fields. All pre-registered hunters will receive an information packet. One guided hunt session will be offered, starting at 7 a.m.

A limited number of youth hunters will be allowed on each WMA during the guided morning hunts. To register, go to dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/youth-pheasant-hunt-registration-form/ and select one WMA where you wish to hunt. For each WMA, when registration reaches capacity, the WMA will disappear from the online registration and the youth will need to select one of the remaining options. **Priority will be given to first time participants.** Register early; spaces fill quickly!

Online registration for the Nov. 2 guided youth hunt opens Sept. 5 and closes Oct. 15. **Late registrations will not be accepted.** Pheasant hunt information will be emailed to registered youth hunters during the open registration period. For questions, email R3mentoredhunt@dep.nj.gov.



Keith Griglak/NJDEP Fish & Wildlife

Youth hunter enjoying his time in the field. Come join the outdoor experience of NJ's Take a Kid Pheasant Hunting Program!

Selected Wildlife Management Areas for Youth Pheasant Hunting

| WMA | Guided AM Nov. 2 only | Open 1 PM Nov. 2 | Open All Day Nov. 2 | Open All Day Nov. 4-8 |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Whittingham | • | • | | • |
| Black River | • | • | | • |
| Flatbrook | | | • | • |
| Clinton | • | • | | • |
| Assunpink | • | • | | • |
| Colliers Mills | • | • | | • |
| Glassboro | | | • | • |
| Milville | • | • | | • |
| Peaslee | • | • | | • |
| Winslow | • | • | | • |

Guided, Morning Hunt: pre-registration required.

Open, Afternoon Hunt: Any properly licensed and supervised youth hunter (see *Who can hunt?* top of table, page 18) will be permitted to hunt on the listed WMAs on November 2 from 1 p.m. until sunset. **No registration required.**

Open, All Day Hunt: Any properly licensed and supervised youth hunter (see *Who can hunt?* top of table, page 18) will be permitted to hunt on the listed WMAs on Nov. 2 and Nov. 4-8 from 8 a.m. until sunset. **No registration required.**

Semi-wild Preserves Youth Upland Bird Hunt Day

All youth hunters must have a valid youth hunting license. See *Youth Licenses*, page 8.

» Saturday, November 2, 2024

Properly licensed and supervised youth hunters (see *Who can hunt?* top of table, page 18) are permitted to hunt on licensed semi-wild hunting preserves for pheasant, quail and/or partridge on Saturday, November 2 from 8 a.m. to sunset. Take advantage of this great opportunity for hunters belonging to semi-wild preserves to introduce youth hunters to upland bird hunting without competition from adult hunters who may not hunt on this day.

Veteran / Active Military Waterfowl Hunts

Veterans and Active Military are welcome during two statewide, Veterans/Active Military Hunting Days on Nov. 2, 2024 and Feb. 1, 2025.

See page 65 for details.



Instructors NEEDED!

Become an instructor with NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Hunter Education Program.

Our Hunter Education Unit is looking for New Jersey's best sportsmen and sports-women to become instructors at locations where students take the live-fire test after first having completed the online portion.

Call (856) 629-0552

Leave your name and address to receive an application.

Or complete the application form at: dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-content/uploads/njfw/Hunter-Ed-Instructor-App.pdf





Public Hunting Lands

To find endless statewide hunting opportunities for small game, deer, turkey, pheasant, migratory birds and more, check this link!

- dep.nj.gov/njfw/hunting/where-to-go/

For additional NJ public hunting lands, turn to these Digest pages:

Public Deer Hunting Lands, pages 40–43

Public Turkey Hunting Lands, page 52



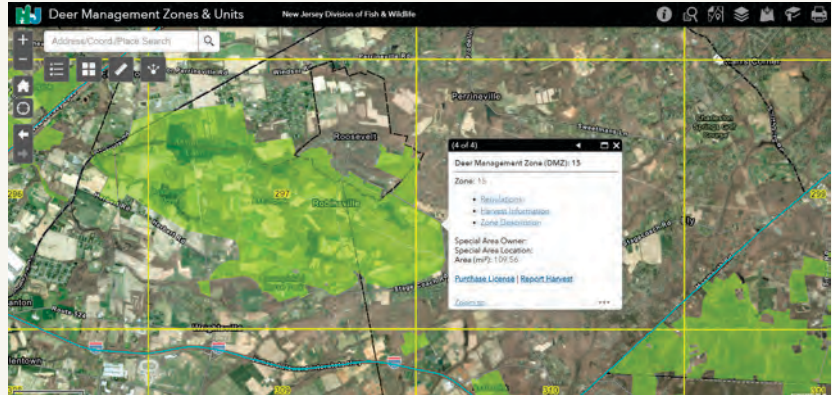
Hunting & Trapping Explorer!

Before heading to your hunting location, use the online **Hunting & Trapping Explorer** to confirm zone boundaries and to determine your hunting zone/area, unit, township and county. This will speed your harvest reporting after a successful hunt!

It's easy, fast and accurate! See page 32 for harvest reporting details.

Hunting & Trapping Explorer

Scan this code or visit NJFishandWildlife.com/hunt.



National Wildlife Refuges: 2024–25 Hunting Seasons

Hunting on National Wildlife Refuges is not permitted unless specifically opened as listed below. Baiting and Sunday hunting are prohibited on all National Wildlife Refuges. Visit the refuge website to confirm that access is open. In addition to required state licenses, hunters must purchase a Refuge hunt permit(s) at <https://wallkillriver.recaccess.com> (Discounts for Senior, Golden Age, Access, or Golden Access pass and youths with a valid New Jersey youth hunting license).

Cape May NWR

24 Kimbles Beach Rd., Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
(609) 463-0994; www.fws.gov/refuge/cape_may/

- ♦ Deer—Contact Cape May NWR.
- ♦ Migratory game birds on refuge lands north of Rt. 550 or west of Rt. 47
- ♦ Turkey, rabbit, and squirrel hunting in select areas only. Special hunting conditions apply. Contact refuge office for information.

Great Swamp NWR

32 Pleasant Plains Rd., Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
<https://greatswamp.recaccess.com/>

- ♦ Deer—See Special Areas Information; page 43.
- ♦ Only non-toxic shot is permitted for migratory game bird, upland game bird, small game, and turkey.

Edwin B. Forsythe NWR

800 Great Creek Rd., Oceanville, NJ 08231-0072;
(609) 652-1665; www.fws.gov/refuge/edwin_b_forsythe/

- ♦ Deer—Contact Edwin B. Forsythe NWR.
- ♦ Waterfowl and rail.
- ♦ Spring Turkey and squirrel hunting in select areas only. Information can be obtained at the refuge, at dispensers, at the headquarters, on the refuge website, or through the mail. An Annual Refuge Hunting Permit is required to hunt all seasons. Go to <https://forsythe.recaccess.com/#> to buy a permit. Interactive and hard copy maps and information can be obtained on the refuge website.

Supawna Meadows NWR

c/o Cape May NWR, 24 Kimbles Beach Rd., Cape May Court House, NJ 08210, (609) 463-0994; www.fws.gov/refuge/supawna_meadows/

- ♦ Deer—Contact Supawna Meadows NWR.
- ♦ Migratory Birds
- ♦ Small Game
Special hunting conditions apply. Contact refuge office for information.
- ♦ Only non-toxic shot is permitted for migratory game bird, upland game bird, small game, and turkey.

Wallkill River NWR

1547 County Rt. 565, Sussex, NJ 07461-4013; (413) 468-0457;
www.fws.gov/refuge/wallkill_river/

- ♦ Deer—Contact Wallkill River NWR.
- ♦ Migratory Birds
- ♦ Turkey, spring and fall (THA 5)
- ♦ Small game—squirrel and rabbit only
- ♦ Additional hunting opportunities
 - » Hunters with Disabling Conditions: A Disabled Hunter Area exists at 119 Owens Station Rd. Sussex, NJ (see map on Refuge website). Hunters must possess a valid NJ Permit to Hunt or Shoot from a Stationary Vehicle in addition to the Disabled Refuge Hunt Permit.
 - » Mentored Hunts: The refuge and partners will host mentored hunts. Registration is required and space is limited. Contact the refuge for dates and details. 🗓️

Regulations in **red** are new this year.

Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Ranges

- ♦ All WMA regulations apply.
- ♦ All ranges, with the exception of the Black River range, are open 8 a.m. to sunset.
- ♦ At least one member of the shooting party must have a current, valid New Jersey hunting license in possession. Apprentice Firearm Licensees must be accompanied by a holder of a regular, current and valid NJ firearm hunting license, over the age of 21.
- ♦ **Shotgun range:** fine shot only. No buckshot or rifled slugs.
- ♦ **Archery range:** target tips only. No broadheads are to be shot into archery backstops provided by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife. Broadheads may be used only with user-supplied bag, foam, 3-D or hay targets.
- ♦ **Centerfire Rifle Range:** muzzleloading firearms, shotguns (rifled slug, buckshot), modern rimfire rifles (.17 and .22 caliber) and air guns in calibers legal for hunting in New Jersey are allowed and centerfire rifles up to and including .30 caliber. No other firearms allowed.
- ♦ **Muzzleloader range:** muzzleloading firearms, shotguns (rifled slug, buckshot), modern rimfire rifles (.17 and .22 caliber) and air guns in calibers legal for hunting in New Jersey are allowed.
- ♦ No handguns are allowed on NJDEP Fish & Wildlife ranges. Centerfire rifles are permitted at the Flatbrook, Clinton, Colliers Mills, Stafford Forge and Millville ranges only.

Range Descriptions

| Range Designation | Allowable Firearm/Archery Equipment | Shot/Projectile Type | Target Type |
|------------------------|--|---|--|
| Archery Range | Crossbow, Compound, Recurve, and Long Bows | Field Tip Only | Bag Target, provided by NJFW |
| | | Broadhead | Bag, foam, 3-D or hay target, provided by user |
| Shotgun Range | All gauges legal for hunting in NJ | Fine Shot Only | Clay birds, patterning boards |
| Muzzleloader Range | Muzzleloader and Shotgun | Rifle/Sabot Slugs, Buckshot, Fine Shot | Paper targets, Patterning Boards |
| | Rimfire Rifles (.17 and .22 Caliber) | Rimfire ammunition | Paper Targets |
| | Air guns (.177 and .22 Caliber) | Pellet | Paper targets |
| Centerfire Rifle Range | Centerfire Rifle ≤ .30 Caliber | Single projectile (e.g. 308, 30-06, 300 Winmag) | Paper targets |
| | Muzzleloader and Shotgun | Rifle/Sabot Slugs, Buckshot, Fine Shot | Paper targets, Patterning Boards |
| | Rimfire Rifles (.17 and .22 Caliber) | Rimfire ammunition | Paper targets |
| | Air guns (.177 and .22 Caliber) | Pellet | Paper targets |

Ranges by Region

| County | Wildlife Management Area | Archery Range | Shotgun Range | Muzzleloader Range | Centerfire Rifle Range** | Location |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Northern Region | | | | | | |
| Hunterdon | Clinton | | | | 100 Yards** | Rt. 173 W, Clinton |
| Morris | Black River | | * | | | Rt. 513 (Dover-Chester Rd.), Chester |
| Sussex | Flatbrook | | | | 75 Yards** | Rt. 615, Layton |
| Warren | Pequest | | | | | Pequest Rd., Oxford |
| Central Region | | | | | | |
| Monmouth | Assunpink | | * | | | Imlaystown-Hightstown Rd., Upper Freehold Twp. |
| | Turkey Swamp | * | | | | Georgia Rd., Freehold Twp. |
| Ocean | Colliers Mills | | | | 100 Yards** | Off Colliers Mills and Hawkin Rds., Jackson Twp. |
| | Stafford Forge | | | | 100 Yards** | Off Rt. 539, south of Warren Grove, Little Egg Harbor Twp. |
| Southern Region | | | | | | |
| Atlantic | Makepeace Lake | | | 100 Yards | | Elwood-Weymouth Road, Weymouth |
| Gloucester | Winslow | | | | | Piney Hollow Rd., Monroe Twp. |
| Cape May | Tuckahoe | | | | | Off Tuckahoe Rd. (Rt.631), Tuckahoe |
| Cumberland | Millville | | | | 50 and 200 Yards** | Ackley Rd. (Rt. 718), Millville |

* See range-specific restrictions below. ** Muzzleloaders can be used on centerfire rifle ranges.

Range-specific Restrictions

NORTHERN REGION

Morris County

BLACK RIVER WMA

- ♦ Shotgun: Closed weekends from the third Saturday in May through the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, as well as on Christmas and Easter. Operating hours are 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. during this summer period, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the rest of the year. Hunter Education classes are not affected by range hours.

CENTRAL REGION

Monmouth County

ASSUNPINK WMA

- ♦ Shotgun range is restricted to the use of non-toxic shot; no lead shot is allowed.

TURKEY SWAMP PARK

Georgia Rd., Freehold Twp.

- ♦ Archery (Special regulations apply; call 732-842-4000.)

STATEWIDE CENTERFIRE

RIFLE RANGE RULES (INCLUDES MAKEPEACE LAKE):

- ♦ All target frames must measure a minimum 30 inches from base to bottom of the paper target held in the frame. Frames must be placed only on top of a target mound located at the 25-yard increments at the range. This minimum target height requirement eliminates the risk of ricochet to ensure all projectiles are collected in the final berm.

WMA Maps

Explore the diverse array of resources at New Jersey's Wildlife Management Areas. Click on any interactive map of the 122 WMAs throughout the state. Each feature displays more information within the popups. You can obtain information on infrastructure assets such as shooting ranges, dog training areas, boat ramps, fishing access sites, roads, parking areas and more.



SAFETY ZONE Awareness: Protecting Your Hunting Privilege

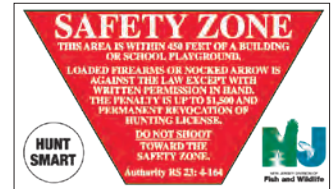
NEW JERSEY HUNTERS enjoy many types of hunting, numerous days afield and generous bag limits. But development and other human encroachment on the forests and fields of the Garden State has changed both wildlife habitat and land suitable for hunting, such that SAFETY ZONE awareness is even more critical for hunters.

What is a SAFETY ZONE?

- ♦ The firearm SAFETY ZONE is the area within 450 feet of a building or school playground, even if not occupied. For bowhunters, the SAFETY ZONE around buildings is 150 feet **but remains 450 feet from a school playground.** See *Safety Zone*, page 24.
- ♦ The SAFETY ZONE is the place where you, the hunter or trapper, cannot carry a loaded firearm or nocked arrow unless you have written permission in hand.
- ♦ The SAFETY ZONE was established by legislation in 1946 as an area to place some physical distance, a buffer, between hunters and homeowners.
- ♦ The SAFETY ZONE could be land where there is suitable wildlife habitat for adaptable species, like the white-tailed deer, cottontail rabbit and Canada goose.
- ♦ The SAFETY ZONE is not a magic shield and cannot stop a misdirected projectile from entering the area around a home.

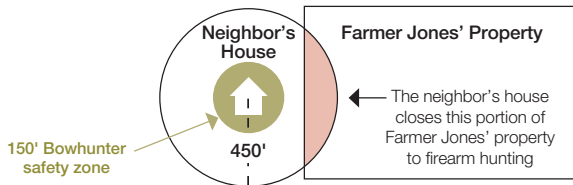
What can you do to heighten your SAFETY ZONE awareness?

1. Post SAFETY ZONE signs.
2. Talk with landowners.
3. Scout hunting property annually to be aware of new construction or other changes.
4. Hunt SMART and remind your hunting partners to Hunt SMART.
5. Know the law. Know the land.



Remember, failure to hunt safely and responsibly is inexcusable. Always be a responsible hunter. Always be aware of your surroundings, the target and what may lie beyond the target. The principles of good conduct learned at your hunter education course are called into practice every time you hunt.

Take special care hunting on “high visibility” property, habitat where our adaptable wildlife species—especially white-tailed deer—are flourishing. Here, hunter conduct will be watched closely; the image we portray can have a great impact on the tolerance for our sport. Hunting these special areas carries added responsibility for you, as a hunter, to exercise restraint and make superior judgment decisions. See page 37 for Hunt SMART card. 🐾



Archery Equipment

“Bow” means any long bow, recurve bow, compound bow or crossbow **capable of firing a single projectile only.** Hand-held release devices are permitted. Air bows are not legal for hunting.

All bows must have a minimum draw weight of 35 pounds at the archer’s draw length, except compounds, which must have a minimum peak draw weight of 35 pounds and crossbows which must have a minimum draw weight of 75 pounds. Crossbows must have a minimum stock length of 25 inches.

Crossbows are legal for bowfishing except for Greenwood Lake. Crossbows are permitted for hunting migratory birds. See below for restrictions when taking game birds in flight.

All arrows used for hunting deer, turkey, coyote, fox or woodchuck must be fitted with an edged head of well-sharpened metal and a minimum width of 3/4 inches.

New Jersey does not regulate arrow/bolt length or weight, broadhead cutting edge length or bow sight magnification.

Arrows fitted with heads other than specified for deer, turkey, coyote, fox or woodchuck may be carried in the woods and fields during the small game season or other seasons which overlap with the bow and arrow deer season except that for taking game birds in flight, arrows equipped with an edged head are prohibited. Also, flu flu arrows are required for taking game birds in flight because

the arrow is designed to fly only a short distance. For the purpose of discharging a cocked crossbow, hunters may carry a judo point, target point or blunt. Canada geese and turkeys which are not in flight may be taken with standard fletched arrows and an edged head as described above.

Archery Hunting

Sunday bowhunting for deer is legal only on private land and state wildlife management areas. See *Safety Zones*, page 24.

It is unlawful to:

- ♦ Use or possess a poison- or drug-containing arrow, dart or device or one with an explosive tip.
- ♦ Use an edged head for taking game birds in flight.
- ♦ Use a bow one-half hour after sunset until one-half hour before sunrise during any hunting season.
- ♦ Discharge a bow from any vehicle, including ATVs, moving or stationary.
- ♦ Discharge a bow on or across a highway or road.
- ♦ Have both a bow and a firearm in possession or under control while hunting.
- ♦ Transport a cocked crossbow in, or on, a motor vehicle or ATV.
- ♦ Cast or project a visible beam or spot onto a game animal.

Baiting

No person shall hunt, shoot or attempt to take any game species from a tree stand or in a structure within 300 feet of a baited area **except for deer.** Hunters targeting deer while elevated in a standing tree or in

HUNTER ALERT — Multi-barrel Bows NOT Allowed for Hunting in NJ

Currently, at least one manufacturer of modern archery equipment is marketing a crossbow with two barrels capable of firing two bolts in rapid succession, much like a multi-barreled shotgun. NJDEP Fish & Wildlife has been contacted by sportsmen about the legality of such a weapon for hunting in New Jersey.

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife and the Fish and Game Council (Council), after much consideration of the original spirit and intent of the archery season, concern for safety in the most populous state in the country and current regulatory language, has determined that archery equipment with multiple barrels — or any bow capable of shooting more than a single projectile — **is not in agreement with current regulations. Therefore, multi-barreled bows are not allowed for use in New Jersey for the purpose of hunting. The Council plans to codify the ban on multi-barrel bows in amendments to the 2025 Game Code.**

Regulations in **red** are new this year.

a structure of any kind may be within any distance of a baited area. A baited area means where agricultural products, salt or edible lures are placed for the purpose of enticing animals. (NJSA 23:4-24 et seq.)

Growing crops and unharvested crops are not considered baiting nor feeding game birds or game animals.

On national wildlife refuges and national recreation areas, no person shall distribute bait and/or hunt over bait.

Concealing Wildlife Identity

The removal of the skin or feathers or mutilation of any wild bird or mammal in the woods or fields for the purpose of concealing sex or identity is illegal.

Deer Carcass Ban

- ♦ Hunters are banned from bringing a whole carcass from any member of the Cervid family such as deer, elk, moose, and caribou (reindeer) into New Jersey from ANY other state or country.
- ♦ Hunters are banned from bringing a nontaxidermied head of any member of the Cervid family harvested into New Jersey from ANY other state or country.
- ♦ ONLY boned-out meat, cleaned skullcaps and hides, shed antlers, and clean upper canine teeth of any member of the Cervid family may be brought into New Jersey. See CWD information on page 44.

Deer Lures Ban

No cervid-derived urine or glandular secretion lures may be sold, possessed or used. Synthetic lures and natural lures derived from species other than cervids are permitted. See CWD information on page 44.

Dogs, Hunting and Training

Allowing dogs to run at large is prohibited. Persons may train dogs without firearms in daylight at any time except during any open firearm deer season.

No person shall train a dog for hunting raccoon or opossum on WMAs other than during the periods of Sept. 1 to Oct. 1 and from Mar. 1 to May 1. Dog training hours shall be one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.

It is illegal to use dogs to pursue or run deer or to track wounded deer. However, a hunter may use the services of a dog handler in possession of a valid NJDEP Fish & Wildlife-issued Tracking Dog Permit with a certified tracking dog for the search and recovery of deer lost during any deer hunting season. See page 15 for certification requirements. Find a dog tracker here: dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/njfw/trackingdogpermittees.pdf

Delaware River, Hunting

Hunting on the Delaware River is restricted by state boundaries. A valid hunting license and any appropriate permit/stamp is required for your location.

Drones, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

Drones or unmanned aircraft are prohibited for the purposes of hunting or trapping and may not be used to harass, scout, drive, track, retrieve or rally wildlife.

Falconry

No person shall use a raptor for hunting without a falconry permit and a valid hunting license. No person under 14 years of age may hunt by means of a raptor. Hunting migratory birds with raptors on Sunday is prohibited.

Falconry permits will be issued only to persons who pass a comprehensive examination and who can provide proper facilities for housing a raptor.

Beginning falconers must be sponsored by an experienced falconer.

No person shall possess a firearm while hunting with raptors.

For additional information call (908) 735-6938.

Firearms and Missiles

For the purpose of hunting in New Jersey, firearms refer to a shotgun, muzzleloader (rifled or smooth-bore), air gun and modern rifle. See sections on specific game animals for permitted firearms and ammunition.

P.L. 2023, c. 330, amending N.J.S.A. 23:4-12, 13, 24, and 44, authorizes the carrying of a handgun while hunting, if the handgun is legally owned and the person in possession has a valid NJ concealed carry permit. Handguns are still not legal for taking/ attempting to take wildlife. N.J.S.A. 2C:58-1 et seq. states that you must have your concealed carry permit on your person while carrying a handgun.

It is unlawful to:

- ♦ Possess or use silencer or noise suppressor on any firearm (NJSA 2C:39-1 g.)
- ♦ Have both a firearm and bow in possession or under control while hunting.
- ♦ Possess or discharge a loaded firearm from in, or on, any vehicle, moving or stationary, including ATVs. **Such possession is considered proof of pursuing or taking wildlife.**
- ♦ Transport an uncased firearm in or on a motor vehicle or ATV.
- ♦ Discharge a firearm on or across a highway or road.
- ♦ Cast or project a visible beam or spot onto a game animal.
- ♦ Hunt for or shoot any wildlife by aid of a light, except when hunting raccoon/opossum or when hunting coyote/fox during the Coyote-Fox Special Permit Season.
- ♦ Hunt or shoot with the aid of a light attached to or carried in a vehicle.
- ♦ Use "smart" rifles or guns equipped with any target tracking system, any electronically-controlled, electronically-assisted or computer-linked trigger or a ballistics computer.
- ♦ Be in the woods or fields with a firearm except during prescribed hunting seasons.



Soggy Bottom Game Preserve

Hunts from Sept. 1st, 2024 to May 1st, 2025

Upland Hunting Duck Hunting Corporate Events

908-914-6253
soggybottomgamepreserve.com



ON THE TRAIL DEER RECOVERY
609-457-4504
Handler: Matthew Williams K-9: Arrow
Tracking counties: Atlantic, Burlington, Monmouth, Ocean, Gloucester, Camden, Salem, Cumberland, Cape May.

Tracking in Eastern PA as well!
New Jersey certified • UBT Certified

- ♦ Possess in the woods or fields shot larger than #4 fine shot except for hunting deer, waterfowl, woodchuck (farmers only) and coyote/fox during the Coyote–Fox Special Permit Season. This shall not apply to the lawful use of ammunition for air guns; see *Air Guns*, below.
- ♦ Use rimfire or centerfire rifles to hunt deer.
- ♦ Use a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells at one time or that may be fired more than three times without reloading except for during the September Canada Goose Season (see page 61) and during a Light Goose Conservation Order season, if any.

Air Guns

“Air gun” means any shoulder-mounted firearm which by the force of a spring, air or other non-ignited compressed gas expels a missile or projectile and has a rifled or smooth barrel, using ammunition no smaller than .177 caliber and no larger than .22 caliber producing projectile velocities of not less than 600 feet per second measured at the muzzle. Title 2C:39-1 f classifies air guns as a firearm. **Air gun BBs are not legal for hunting.** Air guns are now legal for taking cottontail rabbit, hare and gray squirrel. A Rifle Permit is not required.

IMPORTANT: See *Firearms and Missiles*, above, for the law regarding silencing mechanisms that also apply to air guns.

Muzzleloaders

It is unlawful to use smokeless powder in a muzzle-loader while hunting. Only black powder or black powder equivalents, such as Pyrodex and Triple Se7en, may be used to hunt with a muzzleloading firearm.

Properly licensed and permitted hunters 10 years and older may hunt with a muzzleloading rifle. A valid Rifle Permit must be possessed while hunting with a muzzleloading rifle. Permitted action types include percussion, flintlock and inline. Electronic ignitions are not legal. For muzzleloader barrel types and legal hunting ammunition, see regulations for each game species.

It is unlawful to hunt with a muzzleloading rifle on WMAs except when hunting deer, during the Coyote–Fox Special Permit Season or Muzzleloader Squirrel Season.

Rifles, Modern

A valid Rifle Permit must be in possession while hunting with a modern rifle.

Some modern rifles are allowed when hunting certain wildlife. See *Firearms, Bows, and Ammo for Small Game Hunting*, page 58. **NO rifle woodchuck hunting on wildlife management areas or state parks, forests and recreation areas.** Small game hunting with centerfire rifles is limited to not larger than .25 caliber for coyote and fox and .25 caliber or larger for woodchuck. See page 58.

A modern rifle magazine need not be pinned (plugged) but may be loaded with no more than three cartridges. Rifle permit holders of all ages may hunt with all rifle types as allowed by New Jersey laws.

Shotguns

Shotguns larger than 10-gauge are prohibited for hunting. Shotguns may not be capable of holding more than three shells except for September Canada goose hunting and during the Spring Light Goose Conservation Order (see page 65). For information on legal shot sizes, see regulations for each game species to be hunted.

Hunter Harassment

It is illegal to obstruct or attempt to obstruct or annoy a person lawfully taking wildlife as per N.J.S.A. 23:7A-1 et seq. This includes making loud noises or gestures designed to disturb, alarm, drive, attract or affect the behavior of wildlife.

Hunter Orange

Firearm hunters must wear a cap made of solid daylight fluorescent orange or an outer garment containing at least 200 square inches of fluorescent orange material visible from all sides at all times while engaged in hunting. A camo-orange hat alone is not adequate. This applies to all persons while hunting with a firearm for deer, bear, rabbit, hare, squirrel, coyote, fox, railbirds and game birds including while in a tree stand. See exceptions below along with ground blind hunting hunter orange requirements.

Wearing a hunter orange hat is mandatory when firearm hunting for small game on wildlife management areas stocked with pheasant or quail. See list of stocked WMAs, page 55.

Ground blind hunter orange display: All firearm and archery deer hunters utilizing a ground blind when a firearm deer season is open must display 200 square inches of hunter orange atop the blind and visible from all sides or within five feet outside the blind and higher than the blind or at least three

feet off the ground, whichever is higher. Whenever archery and firearms seasons occur at the same time, bowhunters in tree stands also should consider wearing hunter orange.

Exceptions: The hunter orange law does not apply to waterfowl, crow, wild turkey, coyote/fox (during the special permit season) or woodchuck, nor bowhunters except a bowhunter using a deer decoy must wear hunter orange, as above, while transporting a decoy into or out of the woods. During the Six-day Firearm Deer Season, it is recommended that bowhunters wear hunter orange.

National Wildlife Refuges and Recreation Areas

Specifically prohibited:

- ♦ distributing and/or hunting over bait
- ♦ permanent tree stands or screw-in steps
- ♦ possession of a loaded firearm while on any publicly traveled roadway within the area.
- ♦ trapping (Delaware Water Gap NRA)
- ♦ Sunday hunting.

Property Damage

Do not hunt in unharvested crops unless first obtaining permission from the owner. Anyone causing damage to cultivated crops orchards, fences, buildings or livestock may be arrested. Violators are liable for a fine up to \$2,000 and restitution to the property owner in addition to the loss of hunting privileges for five years.

Safety Zones

No firearm hunter or trapper may hunt or carry a loaded firearm within 450 feet of a school playground or any building (even if unoccupied) without written permission, in possession, from the landowner or lessee.

No **bowhunter** may hunt or carry a nocked arrow within 450 feet of a school playground, or within 150 feet of a building (even if unoccupied) without written permission, in possession from the landowner or lessee. Persons authorized to bow hunt within 150 feet of a building must hunt from an elevated position to shoot down toward the ground.

Note: persons authorized to hunt or trap with a firearm within 450 feet or with a bow within 150 feet of a building must be in possession of that written permission while hunting or trapping. Shooting into a safety zone is prohibited. (See *Safety Zone Awareness*, page 22, for diagram and safety zone explanation.)

Stands and Blinds on State Parks, Forests

The State Park Service has modified its policy on the use of hunting tree stands and ground blinds on state parks, forests and recreation areas where hunting is allowed. To view the updated policy, visit the State Park Service website at NJParksandForests.org/stand-blind_policy.htm. See page 40 for more information.

Safety Tips for Crossbow Shooting Success

- Keep fingers and thumb low on the crossbow forearm, below the rail; the flight path of string and cable can cause serious injury.
- Never cock a crossbow while in a tree stand, except for crank-type models.
- Before shooting, check that bow limbs will hit nothing when they flex forward during the release. Crossbow limbs store enough energy to knock a hunter to the ground should the bow contact the tree or your stand.

Regulations in **red** are new this year.

Sunday Hunting

No person may hunt with firearms or carry a gun in the woods or fields or on the waters on Sunday except on semi-wild and commercial shooting preserve lands for the purpose of shooting stocked game or when using a .22 rifle for dispatching trapped animals.

Sunday bowhunting for deer is legal only on state wildlife management areas and private property.

Persons are allowed to hunt raccoon or opossum on Sunday mornings only between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and one hour before sunrise during the prescribed season.

Trespass Law

Hunters and trappers must have permission (oral or written) from the landowner or lessee prior to entering either posted lands or agricultural lands (which are **not** required to be posted).

Hunters must obtain permission to enter **posted land** and agricultural land to recover deer. Hunters and trappers may not enter unposted land after having been forbidden to trespass by the owner, lessee or occupant either by verbal notice or when the land has been conspicuously posted with intervisible signs displayed not fewer than ten to a mile along the exterior boundaries and at all roads, trails and rights-of-way entering such land.

If a hunter or trapper is charged with trespass, they must provide documentation of written permission in court for their defense. See page 37 for the Hunt/Trap SMART Courtesy Card.

Wanton Waste of Game

It is unlawful for any hunter who kills or wounds any white-tailed deer, wild turkey, rabbit, squirrel, pheasant, quail, partridge or waterfowl to refuse or neglect to make a reasonable effort to retrieve and lawfully take into possession that animal. It is unlawful for any hunter to harvest any game animal and remove from the carcass the head, hide or antlers and leave the edible portions of the carcass and meat to waste except for a furbearer, crow or woodchuck. See *Edible Portions Guide* on pages 39 and 56.

It is unlawful for any person to dispose of a game mammal, game bird or wildlife carcass or its parts along or upon a public right-of-way or road or on public or private property without the permission of the owner or tenant or on any wildlife management area or state park. Make every effort to retrieve your harvested game. Entrails may be left discreetly in the field or bagged and properly disposed of in your household trash. Consume all edible portions.

Wildlife, Possession, Sale

No person shall have in possession a deer, migratory game bird or turkey that they did not kill unless it has a label bearing the name, address, phone number, CID and permit numbers of the person who killed the deer, migratory game bird or turkey.

Parts of deer possessed, other than shed antlers, must be from lawfully harvested deer. Proof of

lawful harvest (Confirmation Number or seal) should be retained for verification. Road-killed deer with a permit are intended only for consumption; antler possession from these deer is not legal.

It is illegal to capture, kill, injure or have in possession any wild bird other than a game bird. The sale of wild birds or game animals or parts is prohibited except as described in N.J.S.A. 23:4-27. For more specific information, refer to our website, NJFishandWildlife.com. No one may rob a bird's nest.

All nongame mammals, reptiles, birds and amphibians are protected. Penalties for taking these species range from \$250–\$5,000.

The sale of wild birds and game animals or parts is prohibited in New Jersey with the following exceptions: legally trapped furbearers may be sold plus the sale of white-tailed deer hides, tails and the lower portion of the legs is legal. For questions, contact a regional NJDEP Fish & Wildlife law enforcement office (see page 16 or 76).

Bobcat pelts from animals legally harvested in other states may be possessed or sold provided a CITES tag from the state of harvest is attached. Fishers legally harvested in other states may be possessed or sold.

Wildlife, Protected

There is no open season for wild bobwhite quail, ruffed grouse, bobcat, mourning dove, sandhill crane, king rail or fisher. For more information about bobcat (including incidentally trapped) and fisher, see page 67.

See also *Wildlife, Possession and Sales*, above.

Youth Hunters

A youth hunter is the possessor of a youth hunting license who is at least age 10. Youth licenses are free to youths ages 10–16 upon completion of a hunter or trapper education course. Youth hunters receive a course completion card at the course. See *Hunter and Trapper Education Requirements*, page 13; *Youth Licenses*, page 8. Visit the Take a Kid Hunting section and special youth hunt days, pages 18–19.

Youth hunter status continues until Dec. 31 of the year in which the youth turns 16. Youth hunters age 10 through 13 **MUST** hunt under the direct supervision of a person who is at least 21 years old and who has a valid firearm or bow and arrow license corresponding to the season hunted. Direct supervision means both the youth hunter and parent/guardian set up together at the same location, hunting as a unit, not hunting independently. See also *Youth Licenses*, page 8.

Specifically Prohibited

- Carrying a loaded firearm within 450 feet, or a nocked arrow within 150 feet of a building or within 450 feet of any school playground (whether or not occupied) is prohibited, except the owner or lessee of a building and persons specifically authorized by him in writing may hunt with a firearm within 450 feet or a bow within 150 feet of the building. **Note:** persons authorized to hunt with a firearm within 450 feet or with a bow and arrow within 150 feet of a building must be in possession of that written permission while hunting. (See page 22 for diagram with complete safety zone explanation. See also *Safety Zone*, page 24.)
- Discharging a firearm or a bow and arrow on or across highways or roads.
- Discharging a firearm or a bow and arrow from a motor vehicle, including ATVs.
- Sights which project a spot or light onto the game animal.
- Hunting for or shooting any wildlife by aid of a light, except when hunting raccoon, opossum or when hunting coyote/fox during the Coyote–Fox Special Permit Season.
- Hunting or shooting with the aid of a light attached to or carried in a vehicle.
- On national wildlife refuges, the distribution of bait and/or hunting over bait. Also, no Sunday hunting on these lands.
- Hunting with arrows, darts or any other device propelled by any means that is used for the purpose of injecting or delivering any type of drug into an animal.
- Possessing a loaded firearm in or on a motor vehicle, including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Possession of a loaded firearm in or upon a vehicle is considered proof of pursuing or taking of wildlife.
- Transporting an uncased firearm in or on a motor vehicle or ATV or transporting a cocked crossbow in or on a motor vehicle or ATV.
- Shooting into a squirrel's nest.
- The removal of the skin or feathers or mutilation of any wild bird or mammal in the woods or fields for the purpose of concealing sex or identity is illegal.

In the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the following apply:

- Baiting is prohibited.
- No permanent tree stands or screw-in steps are permitted.
- You cannot possess a loaded firearm while on any publicly traveled roadway within the area.
- Trapping is prohibited.
- No Sunday hunting.