

BUREAU OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

**MONTHLY REPORT
NOVEMBER 2023**

**NEW JERSEY WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT
GRANT NO. W-68-R**

STUDY PLAN I. WHITE-TAILED DEER

Jodi Powers, Principal Wildlife Biologist
Megan Mills, Assistant Biologist (Northern Region)
Megan McCafferty, Assistant Biologist (Southern Region)
Brian Schumm, Assistant Biologist

Annual Deer Harvest (Job I-A)

Deer Project Team tested edits to the Automatic Harvest Reporting System to help fix any potential errors for reporting a harvest date.

Deer Project Team received calls regarding harvest report errors as fall bow season ended and the permit bow season began, leading to harvest report corrections and transfers.

Deer Project Team continues to download weekly harvest database and make corrections and edits.

J. Powers provided preliminary harvest results for the NJ Farm Bureau Convention and to AD Barno for a meeting.

Objective 2 – To coordinate a statewide Suburban Deer Management Program for management in areas of high human density where standard hunting practices are not feasible.

J. Powers has received CBDMP applications from Princeton, Essex County Parks, Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst, and Bernards Twp. B. Schumm has received the application for Mercer County Parks. Applications are currently under review and if complete, will be presented to the Fish and Game Council at the December meeting.

B. Schumm created a suburban deer management brochure entitled “Deer Management in Your Community”. The brochure was distributed at the League of Municipalities Convention. It will be distributed at future meetings, conventions and conferences.

Objective 3 - To participate in business meetings and monitoring programs of the Northeast Deer Technical Committee, and other related meetings and conferences.

J. Powers provided feedback to the NEDTC regarding CWD Herd Certification Program Standards, Baiting, and the SE Deer Study Group.

Objective 4 - To conduct one white-tailed deer research study.

Effects of White-tailed Deer Herbivory on Atlantic White Cedar

This study began in 1989 in cooperation with Stockton University with the objective of measuring the long-term effects of deer herbivory on vegetation in the Pine Barrens of southern New Jersey.

Nothing to Report.

Objective 5 – To disseminate accurate and appropriate information on white-tailed deer and habitat management to sportsmen, public, local, and state agencies, and other organizations.

The Deer Project Team started compiling questions for hunter surveys on APR and the potential Game Code changes.

M. McCafferty and M. Mills met with central region Law Enforcement to discuss potential Game Code changes and enforcement concerns regarding the current harvest.

M. McCafferty met with southern region Law Enforcement to discuss potential Game Code changes, APR in the southern zones, and enforcement concerns regarding the current harvest.

J. Powers spoke with S. Fox from NJ DEP Parks and Forestry about changes to the Monmouth Battlefield State Park Deer Management Program. Harvest data was provided.

B. Schumm spoke to M. Mason from NJ Conservation Foundation.

Objective 6 – Develop, maintain, and make adaptive changes to a white-tailed deer Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Response Plan.

The Deer Project Team had a new seasonal technician start, J. Bower, who assists with CWD sampling in the Southern and Central regions.

M. McCafferty and G. Canale continued CWD sampling in the southern region, with a total of 183 deer sampled and approximately 281 aged.

M. Mills and J. Gyurcsak continued CWD sampling in the central region, with a total of 61 deer sampled and aged.

M. Mills and the pathology seasonals continued CWD sampling in the northern region, with a total of 168 deer sampled and approximately 183 aged.

Extension Activities

The Deer Project Team has received reports for injured or sick deer from the public and continues to work with USDA Animal Control to decide best course of action for these deer.

M. McCafferty and B. Schumm attended the League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City to answer the public's questions regarding deer management within local communities and government.

J. Powers and B. Schumm attended the NJ Farm Bureau Annual Convention. J. Powers presented regulation change considerations and harvest results from the prior year as well as an update on the Black Bear Segment A harvest results.

J. Powers and B. Schumm reviewed a request from Rutgers University to move deer carcasses for a research project on scavengers.

Following a meeting in September discussing deer management options, B. Schumm, J. Powers and M. Mills began preparing for a site visit with Edison Township.

J. Powers spoke with Fair Haven, Monmouth County; Ocean Township, Monmouth County; Manchester Township, Ocean County;

J. Powers met with P. Woerner, AD Barno and AD Kopkash to discuss a potential joint project with Warren County Community College.

Other Activities

B. Schumm and J. Powers completed a survey for the National Deer Association.

STUDY PLAN III. UPLAND WILDLIFE AND FURBEARERS

Ted Nichols, Supervising Biologist
James Sloan, Senior Biologist
Joseph R. Garris, Wildlife Technician I
Peter Stark, Biologist Trainee
Alexandrea Nickel, Seasonal Technician
Shelby Gravatt, Seasonal Technician

Objective 1 – Conduct annual or periodic monitoring programs of the upland game and furbearer resource, their users, and the habitats on which they depend.

Coyote Harvest

A total of 14 coyote mortalities were reported through the Automated Harvest Reporting System (AHRS) for the segment. Twelve of the 14 coyotes were harvested incidental to hunting for deer during the archery deer seasons, 1 was harvested by shotgun while small game hunting and 1 was harvested by cable restraint. Coyotes were harvested from the following counties: Cape May (1), Cumberland (4), Gloucester (1) Hunterdon (2), Middlesex (1), Morris (1), Ocean (1), Salem (1), Sussex (2). By sex, the harvested coyotes were: Male (5), Female (9). Seven of the coyotes were of typical pelage and 7 were blonde color phase. None of the reported coyotes had mange.

One gray fox harvest was reported via the AHRS from Burlington County and was harvested incidental to hunting deer during the fall bow season.

River Otter Trapping

Northern Bobwhite

No report.

American Woodcock

Ruffed Grouse

No report.

Wild Turkey

Fall Either-Sex Turkey Season Harvest

Year	Harvest	Male	Female
2023	75	50	25
2022	111	55	56
2021	68	39	29
2020	96	46	49

J.Sloan met with Kevin Lamp, Penn State University, on November 2nd to set up the database for the upcoming hen research study. Penn State will be doing all the analysis of data, but information needs to be centralized.

J.Sloan met with Kevin Lamp, Penn State University, and Seasonal Technicians to discuss the new database and data management for the upcoming hen research study on November 21st.

Beaver and River Otter Incidents and Sightings
No report

Fisher
No report

Objective 2 – To participate in business meetings and monitoring programs of the National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC), Northeast Fur Resources Technical Committee (NEFRTC), Northeast Upland Game Bird Technical Committee (NEUGBTC), and Short-leaf Pine Initiative (SPI).

National Bobwhite and Grassland Initiative (NBGI)
No report.

Northeast Upland Game Bird Technical Committee (NEUGBTC)

J.Sloan met with other members of the Steering Committee for the Eastern Grouse Working Group to work on the Strategic Plan on November 2nd, 9th, and 14th. Weekly meetings will be held until February to complete this Strategic Plan.

National Wild Turkey Federation Technical Committee
No report

Northeast Fur Resources Technical Committee (NEFRTC)

Objective 4 – To provide technical guidance to landowners interested in providing wildlife habitat on their lands.

No report.

Objective 5 – To disseminate accurate and appropriate information on upland game and furbearer programs to sportsmen, public, state, and local agencies, and other organizations.

J.Sloan attended a Bureau of Wildlife Management meeting on November 17th to discuss the federal aid budget, program updates, and agency vacancies.

Staff answered numerous questions and provided input to identify various species of wildlife and scat from pictures/videos/audio and conversations with constituents.

Other

R. Ferraro, J. Garris, and P. Stark requalified with .22 rimfire and shotgun along with other members of the Wildlife Control Unit.

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WATERFOWL - STUDY PLAN IV

Ted Nichols, Supervising Biologist

Lisa Clark, Senior Biologist

Austin Dammingier, Assistant Biologist

Objective 1 – Migratory game bird monitoring programs

Atlantic Brant Recruitment

Program staff conducted recruitment surveys for Atlantic brant. Recruitment is measured on the wintering grounds because brant nest in remote arctic wilderness. Productivity surveys are done by examining flocks of birds with spotting scopes and discerning plumage differences between young and adult birds. Plumage differences in brant are subtle in that juveniles have light-edging on wing coverts whereas adults have uniform-colored wing coverts. Productivity surveys measure the proportion of young in the fall flight and are used in the Atlantic brant integrated population model. Ancillary data also include the mean number of young in family groups surviving from hatching through migration to the wintering grounds. Results will be reported in the next monthly segment.

Objective 2 – To participate in programs of the Atlantic Flyway Council and Joint Ventures

T. Nichols participated in an online meeting to determine Atlantic Flyway Council harvest management objectives for pintails using a swing-weighting exercise.

Objectives 3 and 4 – Research studies

American Black Duck Productivity Study

T. Nichols participated in a 2024 field season planning call with cooperators including 9 other Atlantic Flyway states from VA to ME, CWS, USFWS, and lead investigator Mitch Weegman (University of Saskatchewan) and his PhD student Ilsa Griebel on a study funded by the Black Duck Joint Venture entitled: *Quantifying the influence of environmental conditions and American black duck behavior and movements throughout the full annual cycle on subsequent productivity using state-of-the-art tracking devices*. During winter 2024, New Jersey will be marking 27 female specimens with telemetry units.

Objective 5 – To provide technical guidance for enhancement and acquisition of migratory game bird habitats.

No report.

Objective 6 – Outreach

No report.

Extension Services/Other

Draft 2024-25 migratory game bird season dates were developed.
T. Nichols and A. Damminger participated in a Bureau staff meeting.

Black Bear Research Project

Mike Madonia, Principal Wildlife Biologist
Joe Burke, Wildlife Technician
Emilia Topp, Biologist Trainee
Michael Patrick, Wildlife Technician
Peter Stark, Biologist Trainee
Maureen Kinlan, Biologist Trainee
Ryan Ferraro, Biologist Trainee
Benjamin Laubach, Senior Wildlife Worker
Christian Nitko, Senior Wildlife Worker
Amy DeCheser, Wildlife Technician
Grace Johnson, Senior Wildlife Worker

Bear Control: Lethal and Non-Lethal

The black bear unit received a total of 107 bear calls from October 20, 2023 to November 21, 2023; this compares with 194 calls from the same time period in 2022.

The black bear unit received 9 Category I calls, 47 Category II calls and 51 Category III calls for the time period October 20, 2023 to November 21, 2023; this compares to 30 Category I calls, 94 Category II calls and 69 Category III calls for the same time period in 2022.

The black bear unit received a total of 1313 bear calls from January 1, 2023 to November 21, 2023; this compares with 2170 calls from the same time period in 2022.

The black bear unit received 112 Category I calls, 578 Category II calls, and 615 Category III calls for the time period January 1, 2023 to November 21, 2023; this compares to 233 Category I calls, 1001 Category II calls and 919 Category III calls for the same time period in 2022.

As of November 21, 2023, the total number of calls received by the Division decreased 39.4 percent from the same time period in 2022. Category I incidents decreased 51.9 percent, Category II calls decreased 42.2 percent and Category III calls decreased 33.0 percent for the same time period in 2022. This data does not include calls made to local police departments.

Research

Project personnel continue to edit and input research data into the bear database.

Damage/Nuisance Control

Project personnel continue to provide technical advice for damage complaint incidents and set traps for Category 1 behavior.

Cooperative Research

Project personnel continue to work on cooperative research projects with East Stroudsburg University.

Wildlife Nuisance Complaints/ Technical Guidance (Federal Aid Project)

BREAKDOWN OF COMPLAINTS BY SPECIES

Beaver	24	Mountain Lion	2
Bobcat	1	Pigeon	1
Chipmunk	1	Duck	1
Coyote	38	Rabbit	1
Deer	90	Raccoon	4
Fisher	1	Turkey	17
Fox	60	Woodchuck	2
Goose	1	Unknown	8
Skunk	1	Snake	1
Vulture	2	Squirrel	1
Bear	108		

256 calls for the Federal Aid Project.

Total calls: 364 (*black bear calls are not included in this project).