



R3 HUNTING AND SHOOTING SPORTS NEWS



New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife

Spring 2025

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5th Annual Women's Mentored Turkey Workshop



From Sunday, April 27 through Tuesday, April 29, eight female novice turkey hunters participated in the 5th Annual Women's Mentored Turkey Workshop. The participants arrived excited and eager to learn, ready to dive into the world of spring turkey hunting.

Day one focused on building connections and laying the groundwork for success in the field. Attendees got to know one another and received an introduction to the Eastern Wild Turkey. Instruction covered key topics such as scouting, calling, planning strategies, and

essential gear. Participants also had the opportunity to pattern their 12- and 20-gauge shotguns under the guidance of certified Hunter Education Instructors.

Day two delivered an unforgettable field experience. All hunters heard gobbles echo through the woods, and two participants successfully harvested birds—one Tom and one Jake. Spirits were high, and camaraderie filled the camp as hunters celebrated the milestones of their peers.

On the final day, the group headed back into the field with renewed determination. Although no additional birds were harvested, each hunter walked away with new skills, lasting memories, and a growing passion for the pursuit. Friendships were formed, confidence was built, and the fire to keep learning and hunting was truly ignited. We wish each of these new turkey hunters continued success in seasons to come!

Special thanks to our valued partners:

Landis Sewerage Authority, Parvin State Park, Good Sports Gunning Club, and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) for their generous support and commitment to mentoring the next generation of hunters.

"Everyone worked so hard to make this a great program. Every aspect of the program was informative and helpful. I will definitely recommend it to any woman interested in hunting without experience. I would love to have reunions to review and hear how everyone has progressed. This is a very much needed program to help women get into hunting and harvesting. A huge thank you to all involved!" – Participant

Talkin' Turkey Seminars Inspire New Hunters

Another round of our popular Talkin' Turkey seminars proved to be a great success! Hunters from across the state attended with excitement and anticipation for the spring turkey season. These informative sessions were designed especially for new and inexperienced turkey hunters, and we were thrilled to welcome so many eager participants. The first seminar took place on March 1 at the Pequest Trout Hatchery and drew 33 attendees. Wildlife Biologist Bob Erikson and National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) President Scott Hill delivered engaging presentations and answered a wide range of questions from participants.



The second seminar was held on March 15 at historic Batsto Village. Presenters included NJ Fish and Wildlife Wildlife Biologist Joe Leskie and NWTf Board of Directors member Lou Gambale. Together, the team provided valuable information and answered participant questions, helping new hunters feel confident and prepared for the season ahead.

We wish all these hunters the best of luck this spring and look forward to seeing even more faces at next year's Talkin' Turkey seminars!

Pull! Take Your Best Shot! Introduction to Shooting Sporting Clays



NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's R3 Hunting & Shooting Program, in partnership with the Freehold Fin, Fur & Feather Sportsmen's Club of New Jersey is offering an Introduction to Shooting Sporting Clays Workshop, which will take place on Sunday, June 8, 2025. This workshop is designed for new recreational shooters 18 years or older, providing them with an introduction to recreational shooting through a fun and informational day at the range.

All ammunition for this workshop will be provided. Applicants must have completed [Hunter Education](#) prior to the event and must have their own 12- or 20-gauge shotgun.

When/Where: 10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m. at Freehold Fin, Fur and Feather Club Sportsmen's Club of New Jersey (Freehold-Monmouth County).

Registration will end at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 5, 2025. You will be notified by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 6, 2025, if selected.

There are only a few days left to register-Act now, availability is limited!

[Introduction to Shooting Sporting Clays Workshop](#)

Featured Recipe: Pulled Turkey Sandwiches

Some of the best parts of your wild turkey harvest are the legs and thighs and if you throw these away, you're missing out. Try this slow-cooking crock-pot recipe for, great, tender pulled BBQ that is tasty and very easy.

Ingredients:

2 Wild Turkey Drumsticks and Thighs

1 tsp Salt

2 tsp Garlic

1 tsp Black Pepper

1 cup Chicken Stock

Pepper Jack Cheese

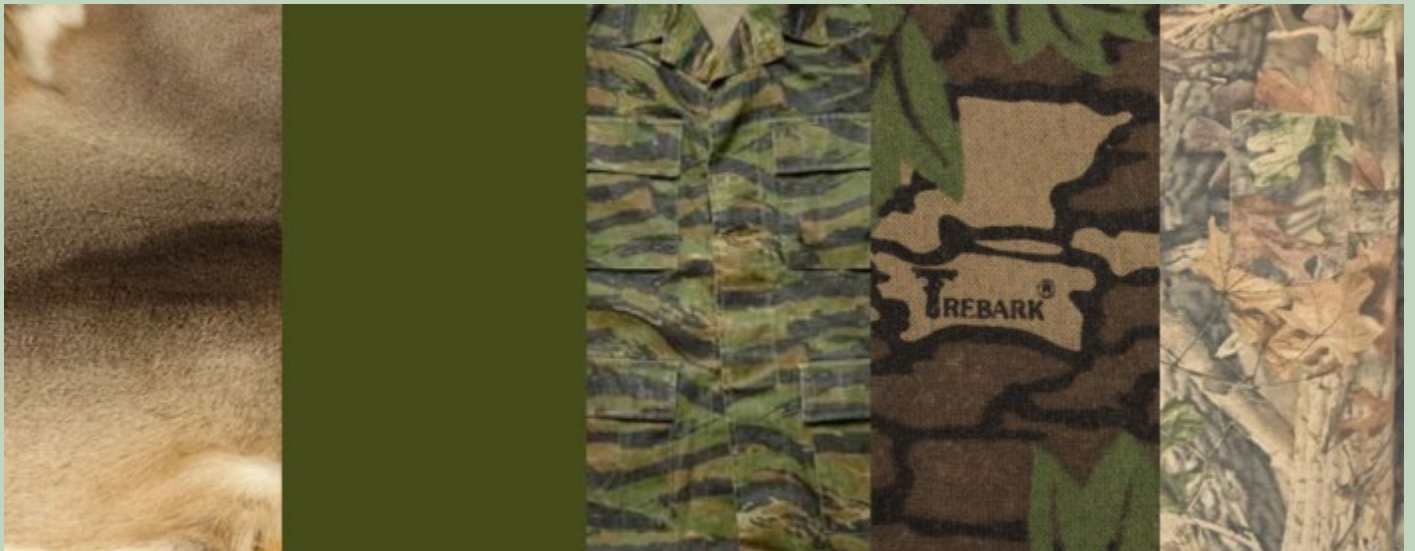
BBQ Sauce



1. In a slow cooker, add all ingredients and cook on low for 7-8 hours until meat shreds off easily. Contrary to popular belief, even wild turkey legs will break down in a crock pot.
2. Remove legs from the crock pot, pull out the leg tendons. Shred off meat and then add back to the liquid and add your favorite BBQ sauce (Sweet & Tangy recommended) until warm.
3. Assemble your sandwich with your turkey meat, after you lay on a slice or 2 of pepper jack cheese and a slice or two of dill pickle and enjoy!

There's nothing like consuming the most out of your harvest.

Did You Know? The History of Camouflage



When you think about the origins of camouflage, where does your mind go? Military tactics? Native Americans? Early humans? In truth, camouflage has existed far longer than any human civilization—our wildlife have always been the true masters of blending in. Animals have relied on camouflage for survival for hundreds of years, and early humans learned to mimic them—wearing pelts and using natural materials to disappear into the environment they shared.

So how did we get from primitive concealment to today's high-tech patterns?

The military played a key role in the evolution of modern camouflage, especially beginning in World War I, when artists helped develop the first patterns designed to deceive the human eye. After the war, hunters began purchasing surplus military gear, adapting it for the field. The Army introduced its signature green uniform in 1954, followed by the Tigerstripe pattern in the 1960s. By the late 1970s, Jim Crumley developed Trebark, and in the early 1980s, Toxey Haas launched Mossy Oak—names that still resonate with hunters today.

But effective camouflage isn't just about color—it's about shapes, shadows, and movement. How we blend into the wild depends on much more than fabric. And with advancing technology, who knows what the future holds for the next generation of hunters?

Statewide Fall Turkey Season is Closed

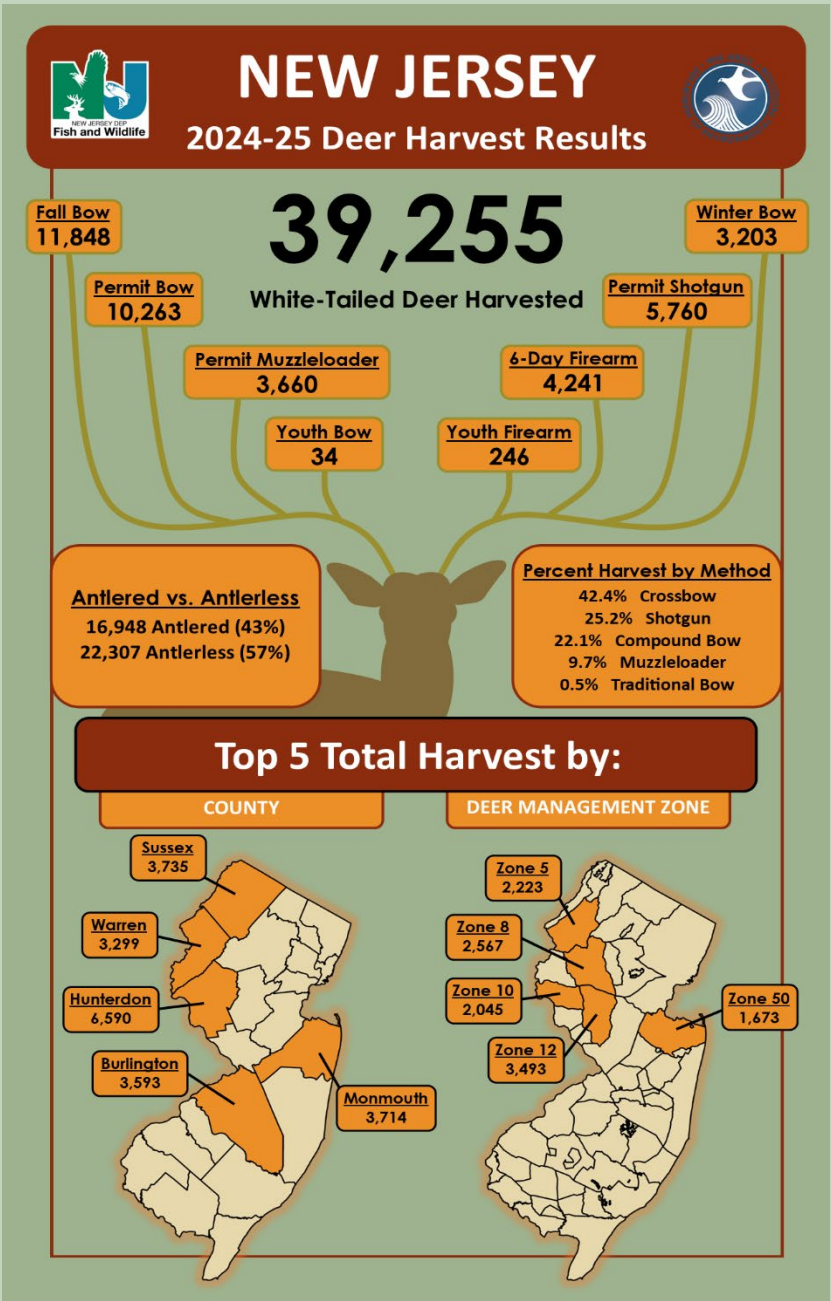
On March 11, 2025, the NJ Fish and Game Council made the difficult decision to close the Fall Either-Sex Wild Turkey Hunting Season statewide, effective immediately.

We know this news will be disappointing to many in our hunting community. However, after careful review of harvest data and long-term population trends, it's clear that action is needed. Wild Turkey numbers have been steadily declining since the early 2000s. Though hunting is not the primary cause, factors like habitat loss and predation are contributing to the drop—and the population can no longer sustain a season that includes hen harvest.



By closing the fall season, we aim to support hen survival and help the population rebound. This decision is rooted in our commitment to science-based management and ensuring healthy, sustainable wildlife populations for future generations.

2024-25 Deer Harvest Numbers



Please Note for the Upcoming 2025-26 Deer Season

Deer Management Zones 45 and 46 will be open for deer hunting during the 2025 Fall Bow, Youth Archery Day, 6-Day Firearm, and Youth Firearm Day **ONLY**.

ALL other deer seasons for those zones are CLOSED.



Migratory Bird 2025 Dates



2025-26 PRIMARY SEASONS

NORTH ZONE

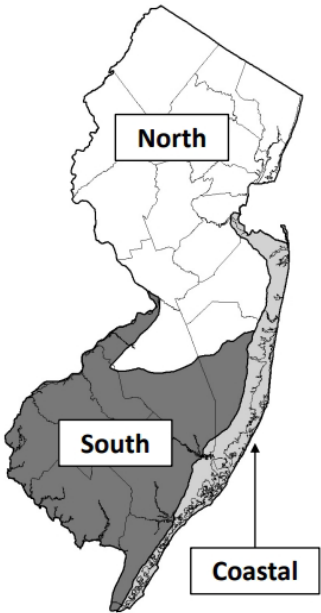
Ducks:	Oct. 18 – Oct. 25	Nov. 22 – Jan. 22
Brant:	Nov. 22 – Nov. 29	Dec. 13 – Jan. 8
Canada Goose:	Nov. 27 – Nov. 29	Dec. 23 – Jan. 22

SOUTH ZONE

Ducks:	Oct. 18 – Oct. 25	Nov. 22 – Jan. 22
Brant:	Nov. 22 – Nov. 29	Dec. 13 – Jan. 8
Canada Goose:	Nov. 27 – Nov. 29	Dec. 23 – Jan. 22

COASTAL ZONE

Ducks & C. Goose:	Nov. 22 – Jan. 30	
Brant:	Nov. 22 – Nov. 29	Dec. 24 – Jan. 19



Contact Us

Looking for information on something we didn't cover this month? Reach out to us!

Email: R3mentoredhunt@dep.nj.gov

THIS PROJECT WAS SUPPORTED BY: State Wildlife Grants administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fishing Restoration Program: Partnering to fund conservation and connect people with nature

