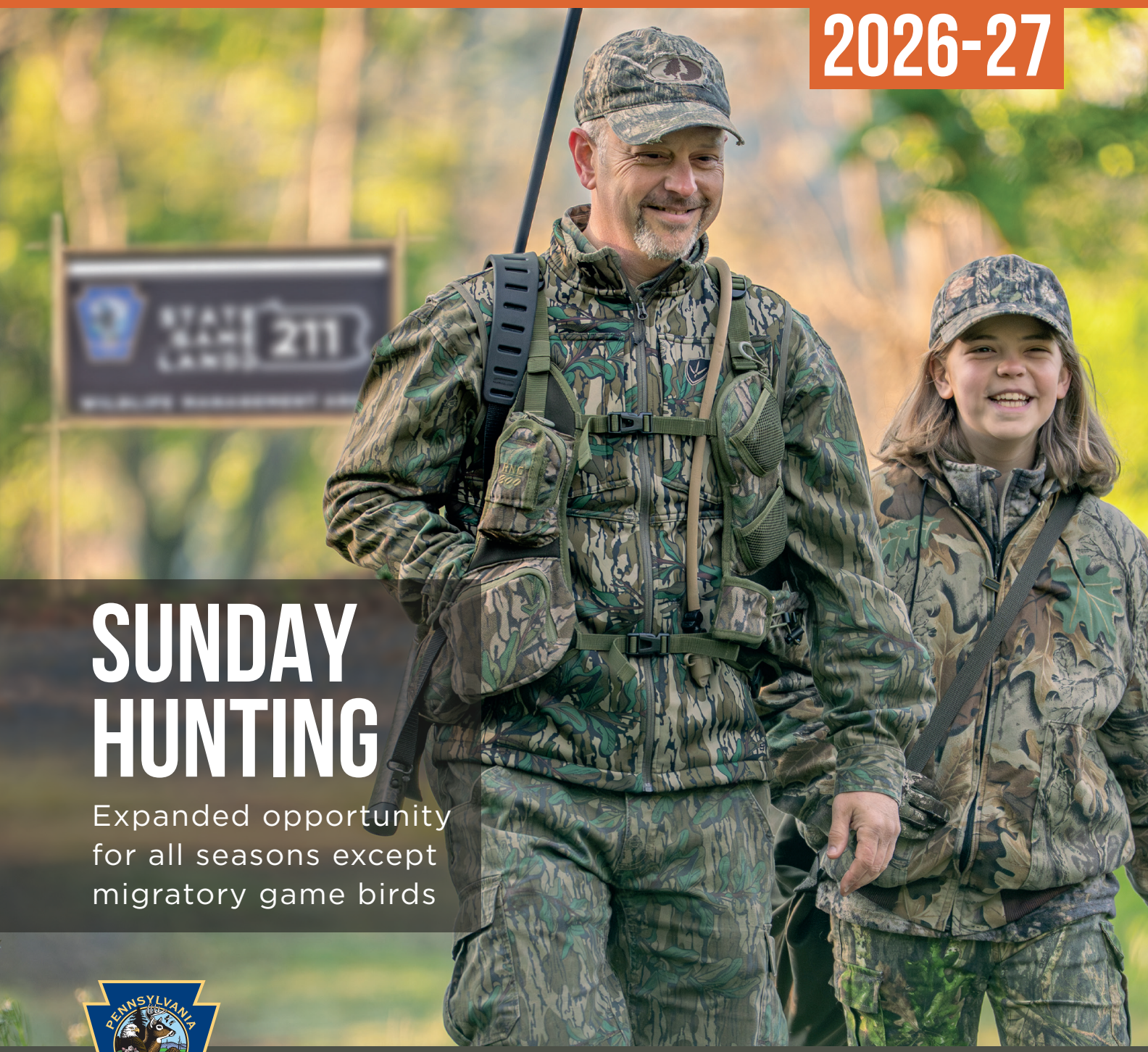
PENNSYLVANIA'S

HUNTING & TRAPPING DIGEST

2026-27



SUNDAY HUNTING

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UPDATES

WELCOME TO HUNTING AND TRAPPING IN PENNSYLVANIA

LICENSE BUYERS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING CHANGES.

- **Sunday hunting has expanded.** All hunting seasons, except for migratory game bird seasons, include all Sundays within them.
- Hunters are no longer prohibited from **transporting deer** between any locations but must properly dispose of high-risk parts.
- **Ag Tag** hunters can use any devices authorized for hunting deer in the regular firearms deer season.
- Regulations for **baiting** in the Southeast Special Regulations Area are changed and now include federal lands.
- The **spring gobbler bag limit** is reduced to one to offset possible additional harvest due to the inclusion of Sundays.
- **Bear check stations** are only open on the first two days of the regular firearms bear season and select days of the extended seasons.
- The black **bear archery season** for WMUs 3C and 3D will be longer in response to bear-human conflicts in these areas.
- A **new elk firearms season** in early October will limit crowding. The late firearms season will be later in January to avoid conflict with major holidays.
- Big-game harvest tags now are issued to **mentored hunters** under 7 years old at the time they purchase a permit.
- Squirrel, ruffed grouse, rabbit, pheasant, bobwhite quail, and woodchuck seasons will remain open during the **regular firearms deer season**.
- The daily bag limit for **Atlantic Population Canada goose** is increased to three for the regular season.
- Trappers can use **snap traps** for weasels and larger body-gripping traps for beavers and river otters.
- WMU 5A will be open to **bobcat** hunting and trapping. WMUs 2G, 3A and 4C will be open to **river otter** trapping.
- Sundays are included in the closed period for non-motorized vehicles, conveyances, and animals on **state game lands**.
- **Non-hunters** must wear fluorescent orange on state game lands from Oct. 1-Jan. 31 and April 20-May 31.

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GREETINGS

I imagine Seth Gordon was feeling pretty good about things 100 years ago. In July 1926, after seven years at the helm, he was wrapping up his first stint as Executive Director of the Game Commission – I say first because he returned to lead the agency for another 12 years in the 1930s and '40s – and everywhere he looked, wildlife was on the rebound.

That was quite the change.

Just 20 years prior, Gordon said, unregulated market hunting and habitat destruction had largely erased the "wonderful heritage of game in Penn's Woods." There was little left to hunt. Hunters had to travel outside the state's borders or content themselves with "listening to the exploits of their more fortunate fellows."

Then, game laws, license revenues, stocking wildlife on habitat-rich game refuges – the precursors of state game lands – and more turned everything around. In 1925, for example, Pennsylvania hunters reported taking 7,287 bucks. That's not many by today's standards, but it was huge then, a 3,453% increase over 1907's harvest of 200 – 200! – deer for the whole state.

As he prepared to walk out the door, believing Pennsylvania supported 10% of all hunting in the nation, Gordon had to be smiling.

History tells us there were bumps to come, of course. Stocking farm-raised turkeys to boost flocks didn't pan out. Elk hunting disappeared for seven decades. Landscape-level habitat changes led to the rise and fall of bobwhite quail and pheasants. Deer populations, meanwhile, exploded, to pose challenges in the big woods, farm country and even in our suburbs and cities in ways no one could have imagined.

Still, borrowing Gordon's perspective, I think we're in a pretty good spot again. Things aren't perfect or easy. We're having to adapt like never before to keep pace with a changing world.

But overall, the "wonderful heritage of game in Penn's Woods" once lost is as rich as ever. That's a good place to start.

- Steve Smith, Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Director

2026-27

HUNTING & TRAPPING

D I G E S T

TRAVIS LAU
Editor

L N MITCHELL
Associate Editor

BOB FRYE
Associate Editor

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WILDLIFE CLASSIFICATIONS

The Game and Wildlife Code protects all of Pennsylvania's wildlife. The code classifies wildlife as follows:

GAME ANIMALS
Black bear, cottontail rabbit, elk, squirrel (red, gray, black and fox), snowshoe hare, white-tailed deer and woodchuck (groundhog)

GAME BIRDS
Brant, bobwhite quail, coot, gallinule, geese, grouse, merganser, mourning and Eurasian collared dove, pheasant, rail, snipe, swan, wild ducks, wild turkey and woodcock

FURBEARERS
Badger, beaver, bobcat, coyote, fisher, mink, muskrat, opossum, otter, pine marten, raccoon, red and gray fox, striped skunk, weasel and porcupine

BIG GAME
Bear, elk, white-tailed deer and wild turkey

SMALL GAME
Game birds and game animals not classified as big game

PROTECTED MAMMALS
Wild mammals not classified as furbearers or game animals (For example, chipmunks are protected)

PROTECTED BIRDS
Wild birds not classified as game birds

Protection is removed from wildlife, except migratory birds, big game and threatened or endangered species, when personal property, other than an agricultural crop, is being destroyed or damaged. Wildlife may be taken only by the owner or person in charge of the personal property affected. Wildlife taken to protect personal property must be surrendered to a Game Commission representative.

This digest is not the Game & Wildlife Code or its attendant regulations, and should not be considered final on legal interpretation. The Game & Wildlife Code can be viewed in full at **pa.gov/pgc** by clicking on "Hunting and Trapping," then "Regulations." Questions about laws can also be directed to the Centralized Dispatch Center at 1-833-PGC-HUNT or 1-833-PGC-WILD.

COMMONWEALTH OF PA

Josh Shapiro, Governor

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David Mitchell ..... Deputy Executive Director
Kelly O'Donnell ..... Deputy Executive Director
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PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

Our Mission: To manage and protect wildlife and their habitats while promoting hunting and trapping for current and future generations.

Contacting the Game Commission is as easy as ever. Callers anywhere in Pennsylvania now can use either of two, easy-to-remember phone numbers to contact the agency's Centralized Dispatch Center, which will direct calls appropriately. Region offices can be contacted through the Dispatch Center, or reached by mail at the addresses below. Hunters reporting big-game harvests by phone should continue to call 1-800-838-4431.

1-833-PGC-HUNT

(1-833-742-4868)

1-833-PGC-WILD

(1-833-742-9453)

Press 1 – Wildlife violation or wildlife emergency
Press 2 – Licensing
All other calls stay on line for a dispatcher

NORTHWEST REGION

Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango & Warren counties
1509 Pittsburgh Road
Franklin, PA 16323

Jesse Bish, Director

SOUTHWEST REGION

Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington & Westmoreland counties
4820 Route 711
Bolivar, PA 15923-2420

Jason D. Farabaugh, Director

NORTHCENTRAL REGION

Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga & Union counties
1566 South Route 44 Highway,
P.O. Box 5038
Jersey Shore, PA 17740-5038

Mark Ternent, Director

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder & York counties
8627 William Penn Highway
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Seth Mesoras, Director

NORTHEAST REGION

Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne & Wyoming counties
3917 Memorial Highway
Dallas, PA 18612

Michael Beahm, Director

SOUTHEAST REGION

Berks, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia & Schuylkill counties
253 Snyder Road
Reading, PA 19605-9524

Peter F. Sussenbach, Director

HARRISBURG HEADQUARTERS

2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797

SUNDAY HUNTING

SUNDAY HUNTING HAS EXPANDED THIS YEAR

Nearly all 2026-27 Pennsylvania hunting seasons include all Sundays within the season, and many seasons that previously ended on Saturday now end on Sunday.

SUNDAYS ARE CLOSED FOR MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

Sunday hunting remains closed for migratory game birds, including waterfowl, mourning doves and woodcock. Migratory game bird seasons are set through federal frameworks with specific rules that apply to Sunday hunting. Seasons would contain the same number of days if Sundays were included, but they'd be more-compact with a greater chance of missing unpredictable, weather-driven migrations. A recent Pennsylvania Game Commission survey indicated a slight majority of migratory game bird hunters wished to keep Sundays closed for 2026-27. The PGC will continue to track hunter preferences and will revisit the decision when setting the 2027-28 seasons. If Pennsylvania opens Sunday hunting for migratory game birds, federal rules prohibit ever going back to seasons without Sundays, so whatever Pennsylvania opts to do will have lasting impacts.

SUNDAY HUNTING IS LIMITED IN SOME STATE PARKS & STATE PRESERVES

Sunday hunting is limited in state parks and state preserves within Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. On these properties, Sunday hunting is limited to Nov. 15, Nov. 22 and Nov. 29 in areas designated open to hunting. Some state parks span county lines, and hunters with questions about hunting there on Sundays should inquire with the park office. Throughout the rest of the state, Sunday hunting is open in state parks and state preserves on all dates authorized by the PGC. Sunday hunting also is open in state forests.

WRITTEN PERMISSION IS RECOMMENDED

When hunting on private land on Sundays, it's recommended hunters carry written permission from the landowner. The requirement within state law for hunters to carry written permission when hunting private land on Sundays has been lifted. It's important for hunters to be aware of property boundaries when hunting, and ensure they have permission to hunt where they are. Obtaining written permission helps in that process, and allows game wardens to quickly verify private-land hunting has been authorized. The permission slip below includes all of the needed information, including the hunter's name, address and CID license number, and the landowner's name, address, phone number and signature. It can be completed and carried in any situation where producing written permission might be advantageous.

PERMISSION TO HUNT AND/OR TRAP

Hunters can clip this permission slip, complete it alongside the landowner and carry it afield.

Hunter Name

Street Address

City | State | ZIP code

CID Number

2026-27

Landowner Name

Street Address

City | State | ZIP Code

Landowner Phone Number | Signature

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DEER

• One antlered deer per license year, and an antlerless deer with each required license or permit.

AG TAG
Antlerless Only

STATEWIDE
Aug. 1-April 15, 2027

ARCHERY
Antlered & Antlerless

STATEWIDE
Oct. 3-Nov. 20 and Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

WMUS 2B, 5C & 5D
Sept. 19-Nov. 27 and Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

MUZZLELOADER
Antlerless Only

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-25

SPECIAL FIREARMS
Antlerless Only

STATEWIDE
Oct. 22-25
Licensed seniors, Junior license holders, mentored permit holders, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind

REGULAR FIREARMS
Antlered & Antlerless

STATEWIDE
Nov. 28-Dec. 13

FLINTLOCK
Antlered & Antlerless

STATEWIDE
Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

EXTENDED FIREARMS
Antlerless Only

DMAP
Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

WMUS 4A, 4C, 4D & 5A
Dec. 26-Jan. 18, 2027

WMUS 2B, 5C & 5D
Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

BEAR

• One bear per license year, with bear license.

ARCHERY

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Oct. 25

WMUS 2B, 5C & 5D
Sept. 19-Nov. 27

WMU 3C, 3D & 5B
Oct. 3-Nov. 20

MUZZLELOADER

STATEWIDE
Oct. 22-25

SPECIAL FIREARMS

STATEWIDE
Oct. 22-25
Licensed seniors, Junior license holders, mentored permit holders ages 7 and older, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind

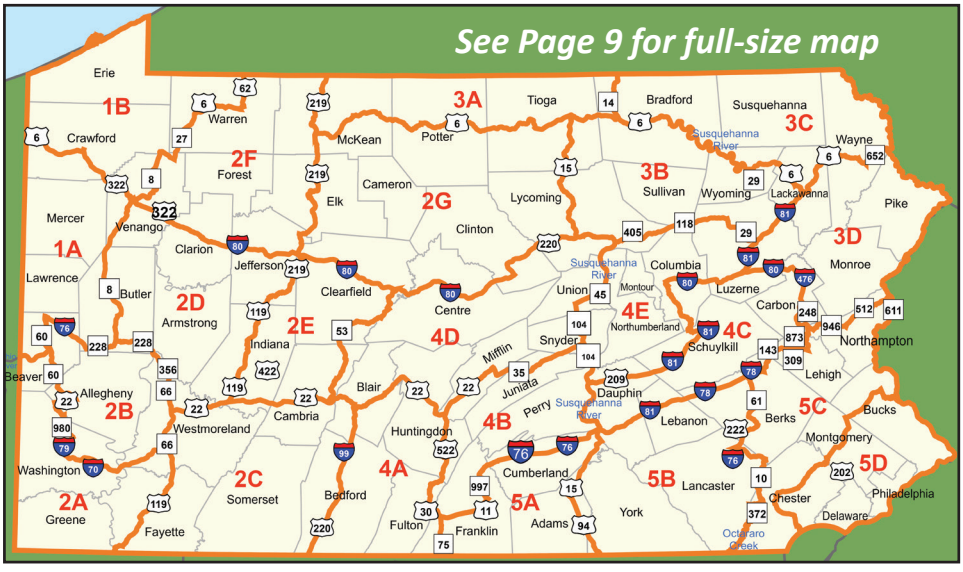
REGULAR FIREARMS

STATEWIDE
Nov. 21-24

EXTENDED FIREARMS

WMUS 2B, 5B, 5C & 5D
Nov. 28-Dec. 13

WMUS 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C, 4E & 5A
Nov. 28-Dec. 6



TURKEY

• One fall turkey per license year, plus one bearded bird in spring.

FALL SEASON

Bearded or unbearded birds.
Season lengths vary by WMU.

WMUS 1A, 2G, 3A, 4A, 4B & 4D
Oct. 31-Nov. 15

WMUS 1B, 3D, 4C & 4E
Oct. 31-Nov. 8

WMUS 2A, 2F, 3B & 3C
Oct. 31-Nov. 15
& Nov. 25-27

WMUS 2B, 2C, 2D & 2E
Oct. 31-Nov. 20
& Nov. 25-27

WMUS 5A & 5B
Oct. 31-Nov. 3

WMUS 5C & 5D
Fall season is closed.

SPRING SEASON

Bearded birds only.

YOUTH HUNT
April 24-25, 2027

STATEWIDE
May 1-31, 2027
Hunting hours vary

ELK

• One elk per license year, with elk license.

ARCHERY
Sept. 12-27

FIRST REGULAR
Oct. 3-11

SECOND REGULAR
Oct. 31-Nov. 8

THIRD REGULAR
Jan. 9-17, 2027

Elk licenses awarded by lottery. Apply by July 12 for the July 25 drawing.

SMALL GAME

SQUIRREL
6 daily, 18 possession
Combined Species

JUNIOR HUNT
Sept. 12-27

STATEWIDE
Sept. 12-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-Feb. 28, 2027

COTTONTAIL RABBIT
4 daily, 12 possession

JUNIOR HUNT
Oct. 3-18

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-Feb. 28, 2027

PHEASANT
2 daily, 6 possession

JUNIOR HUNT
Oct. 10-18

STATEWIDE
Oct. 24-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-Feb. 28, 2027

Pheasant permit required for most pheasant hunters. Male and female pheasants may be taken in all WMUs.

BOBWHITE QUAIL
No Limit

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-March 31, 2027

There is no open season for quail and no release of quail in the Letterkenny Army Depot Bobwhite Quail Recovery Area

WOODCHUCK
No Limit

STATEWIDE
July 1-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-June 30, 2027

CROW
No Limit

STATEWIDE
Aug. 20-March 21, 2027
Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays only

RUFFED GROUSE
2 daily, 6 possession

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Dec. 24

SNOWSHOE HARE
1 daily, 3 season limit

STATEWIDE
Dec. 26-31

NO CLOSED SEASON, NO OPEN SEASON
English sparrows and European starlings may be taken in unlimited numbers, but cannot be hunted during the regular firearms deer season. There is no open season for pine martens or sharp-tailed grouse.

WATERFOWL & MIGRATORY BIRDS
Seasons and bag limits for waterfowl and migratory birds, including doves, also are provided on Page 42.

FURTAKING

HUNTING

BOBCAT
1 per license year

WMUS 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E & 5A
Jan. 9-Feb. 3, 2027
Permit required

SUNDAY HUNTING 2026-27

Sunday hunting no longer is prohibited by state law, meaning the Pennsylvania Game Commission can include Sundays when setting hunting seasons.

Hunting is permitted on any Sunday within the seasons provided here.

Sundays remain closed in all **migratory game bird** seasons, and Sunday hunting is limited within **state parks** in certain counties, as detailed on Page 4.

RACCOON
No Limit
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027
May only be hunted from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise Nov. 28-Dec. 13

FOX
No Limit
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027
May only be hunted from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise Nov. 28-Dec. 13

OPOSSUM, STRIPED SKUNK & WEASEL
No Limit
July 1-June 30, 2027
with certain exceptions

PORCUPINE
3 daily, 10 per season
Oct. 10-Nov. 27
Dec. 14-24
Dec. 26-Jan. 31, 2027

COYOTE
No Limit
No closed season, with certain exceptions during big-game seasons

TRAPPING

RACCOON, OPOSSUM STRIPED SKUNK & WEASEL
No Limit
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027

FOX & COYOTE
No Limit

GENERAL
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027

CABLE RESTRAINTS
Dec. 26-Feb. 21, 2027

MINK & MUSKRAT
No Limit
Nov. 21-Jan. 10, 2027

BEAVER
Limits vary by WMU
Dec. 19-March 31, 2027

BOBCAT
1 per license year

WMUS 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E & 5A
Dec. 19-Jan. 10, 2027
Permit required

FISHER
1 per license year

WMUS 1B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D & 4E
Dec. 19-Jan. 10, 2027
Permit required

RIVER OTTER
1 per license year

WMUS 1A, 1B, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C & 4E
Feb. 13-21, 2027
Permit required

• A porcupine is classified as a furbearer, but like the coyote, it can be hunted with either a hunting or furtaker license. There is no trapping season for porcupines.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Fluorescent orange requirements for Pennsylvania hunters are simpler and easier to follow than ever. In nearly all seasons orange is required, the requirements are identical. And whenever orange is required, it must be **worn at all times** while hunting. When not required, the use of orange is strongly recommended, especially while moving.

Generally, when orange is required, hunters must wear

250

SQUARE INCHES

of daylight fluorescent orange material on the **head, chest and back combined** and it must be **visible from 360 degrees.** An orange hat and vest satisfies this requirement.

This requirement applies to participants in:

- **ALL SMALL GAME SEASONS**
- **DEER, BEAR AND ELK REGULAR FIREARMS SEASONS**
- **OCTOBER MUZZLELOADER ANTLERLESS DEER AND BEAR SEASONS**
- **SPECIAL FIREARMS ANTLERLESS DEER AND BEAR SEASONS**
- **EXTENDED FIREARMS ANTLERLESS DEER AND BEAR SEASONS**

In firearms seasons for deer, bear or elk (regular, special and extended), orange is required, regardless of the sporting arm carried. Hunters using archery equipment must meet orange requirements when participating in these seasons.

Woodchuck hunters must wear a hat made of solid fluorescent orange that's visible from 360 degrees.

When using a **blind or enclosed tree stand** during the regular firearms deer, bear or elk seasons, a minimum of 100 square inches of fluorescent orange material (orange alert band) must be displayed within 15 feet of the blind or stand and visible from 360 degrees. This is in addition to wearing orange while inside. See the turkey section for details on blind use while turkey hunting.

WEARING ORANGE

In **firearms seasons for deer, bear or elk** (regular, special and extended), orange is required, regardless of the sporting arm carried.

When fluorescent orange is required, the **full amount of orange** required for that season must be worn while moving from one hour prior to the start of legal hunting hours and for one hour past the closing of legal hunting hours.

It is unlawful to be on State Game Lands from **Oct. 1-Jan. 31 and April 20-May 31**, including Sundays, without wearing a minimum of 250 square inches of fluorescent orange-colored material on the head, chest and back combined, or a fluorescent orange hat, unless engaged in lawful hunting, trapping or fishing that does not require the use of orange.

Orange Camouflage

Camouflage fluorescent orange may satisfy orange regulations when 250 square inches of safety material is required if the orange content is at least 250 square inches. When a hat containing 100 square inches of orange is specified, the cap must be solid fluorescent orange.

WHEN ORANGE IS NOT REQUIRED

No fluorescent orange is required during **archery seasons when hunting for deer, bear or elk**, or when hunting waterfowl, doves, turkeys, furbearers* or crows.

Hunters participating in the **after-Christmas flintlock season** are not required to wear fluorescent orange (See Special Regulations Areas section on Page 13 for additional information).

Even when orange isn't required, the Game Commission highly recommends the use of orange.

**Fluorescent orange is required when hunting coyotes during any big-game season, if orange is required during that season, including from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.*

Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) are designed to improve wildlife management and, at the same time, simplify hunting and trapping regulations. Pennsylvania uses WMUs to manage all game, except elk, waterfowl and other migratory game birds. When using the Hunting & Trapping Digest, refer to this section whenever an unfamiliar WMU is referenced. See **pa.gov/pgc** for larger WMU maps and turn-by-turn descriptions of their boundaries.

2026-27 HUNTING HOURS TABLE

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

for all small and big game are from

ONE-HALF HOUR BEFORE SUNRISE
TO ONE-HALF HOUR AFTER SUNSET.

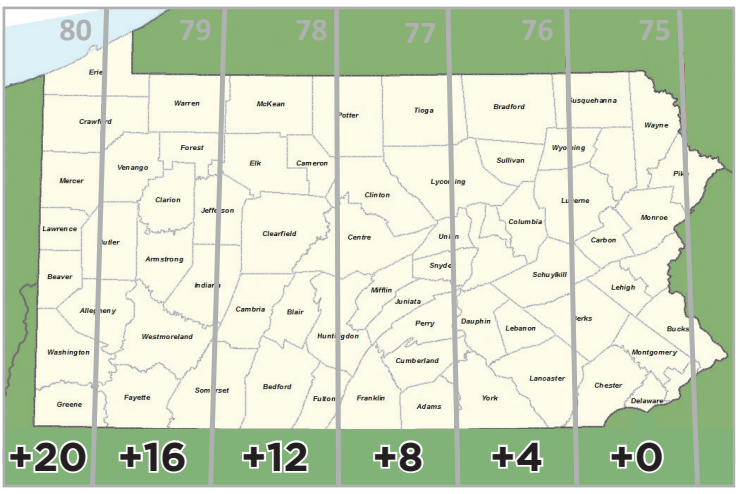
PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS:

1. During the **Regular Firearms Deer Season**, it is unlawful to take or attempt to take other wild birds or mammals, except coyotes*, bears, small game, migratory waterfowl, feral swine, wild boars and game birds on regulated hunting grounds.
2. **Raccoons, foxes, coyotes*, bobcats, striped skunks, opossums** and **weasels** may be hunted any hour, day or night, except during restricted periods noted in Exception 1 (see furtaking section for more detail).
3. Hunting hours during **Spring Gobbler Season** are from one-half hour before sunrise until noon during the youth hunt, and from the opening day of the statewide season through May 15. Beginning May 16, hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.
4. Do not reference the hunting hours table here for the quitting times for waterfowl and other migratory birds; check the migratory game birds hunting hours table on the **Waterfowl & Migratory** page in this digest. Waterfowl, doves, woodcock, snipe, rails and gallinules may be hunted from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset, except during the **September Resident Canada Goose Season** and the **Snow Goose Conservation Season** if held, when geese may be hunted from one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset.
5. Hunting hours for **mourning doves**, which are migratory birds, are from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset during every segment of dove season.

** Note: Outside of any big-game season (deer, bear, elk or turkey), coyotes may be taken with a hunting or furtaker license, and without wearing orange. During any big-game season, coyotes may be taken while lawfully hunting big game (must follow orange requirements), or with a furtaker license.*

MERIDIAN MAP

Hunting hours begin and end 4 minutes later for each meridian west of the 75th.



HUNTING HOURS TABLE FOR MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS APPEARS IN THE WATERFOWL & MIGRATORY SECTION.

	BEGIN A.M.	END P.M.
July 1 - 4	5:07	9:03
July 5 - 11	5:12	9:00
July 12 - 18	5:17	8:56
July 19 - 25	5:23	8:51
July 26 - Aug. 1	5:29	8:44
Aug. 2 - 8	5:36	8:36
Aug. 9 - 15	5:42	8:27
Aug. 16 - 22	5:49	8:17
Aug. 23 - 29	5:56	8:07
Aug. 30 - Sept. 5	6:02	7:56
Sept. 6 - 12	6:09	7:44
Sept. 13 - 19	6:15	7:33
Sept. 20 - 26	6:22	7:21
Sept. 27 - Oct. 3	6:29	7:10
Oct. 4 - 10	6:36	6:58
Oct. 11 - 17	6:43	6:48
Oct. 18 - 24	6:51	6:38
Oct. 25 - 31	6:59	6:29
Nov. 1 - 7**	6:07	5:21
Nov. 8 - 14	6:15	5:15
Nov. 15 - 21	6:23	5:10
Nov. 22 - 28	6:30	5:07
Nov. 29 - Dec. 5	6:37	5:05
Dec. 6 - 12	6:43	5:05
Dec. 13 - 19	6:48	5:06
Dec. 20 - 26	6:51	5:08
Dec. 27 - Jan. 2	6:53	5:12
Jan. 3 - 9	6:53	5:18
Jan. 10 - 16	6:52	5:24
Jan. 17 - 23	6:50	5:32
Jan. 24 - 30	6:46	5:40
Jan. 31 - Feb. 6	6:40	5:48
Feb. 7 - 13	6:33	5:57
Feb. 14 - 20	6:25	6:05
Feb. 21 - 27	6:16	6:13
Feb. 28 - Mar. 6	6:06	6:21
Mar. 7 - 13	5:55	6:29
Mar. 14 - 20*	6:44	7:36
Mar. 21 - 27	6:33	7:44
Mar. 28 - Apr. 3	6:21	7:51
Apr. 4 - 10	6:10	7:58
Apr. 11 - 17	5:59	8:05
Apr. 18 - 24	5:49	8:12
Apr. 25 - May 1	5:39	8:19
May 2 - 8	5:30	8:26
May 9 - 15	5:22	8:33
May 16 - 22	5:15	8:40
May 23 - 29	5:09	8:46
May 30 - June 5	5:05	8:52
June 6 - 12	5:02	8:57
June 13 - 19	5:02	9:00
June 20 - 26	5:03	9:03
June 27 - 30	5:05	9:03

Daylight Saving Time Begins* Ends**

MENTORED HUNTING PROGRAM

Initially open only to youth under 12, the Mentored Hunting Program has expanded incrementally in recent years to offer opportunities to unlicensed hunters of all ages. Mentored hunters are not required to take a Hunter-Trapper Education (HTE) class before obtaining a permit to hunt through the program. Mentored hunters ages 12 or older may participate in the program for a maximum of three license years. After that period, they must obtain a license to hunt. Individuals who participate in the mentored program for at least three years before turning 12 are required to get a license at 12 rather than continuing as a mentored hunter. License buyers must first successfully complete an HTE course.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- A mentor (licensed hunter at least 21 years old) who serves as a guide to a mentored hunter must possess a valid, current hunting license, or otherwise qualify for a license and fee exemptions.
- A mentored hunter must obtain a Mentored Hunting permit, which contains their unique Customer Identification number (CID). A Social Security number is needed for a CID number to be issued. A Mentored Hunting permit can be obtained from any issuing agent or online at **HuntFish.PA.gov**. Other permits and licenses may be required to hunt specific species. Mentored hunters are exempt from requirements to obtain archery and muzzleloader add-on licenses or stamps.
- Mentored Hunting permits include antlered deer, fall turkey and spring turkey harvest tags. Mentored hunters under 7 years old now receive harvest tags with their permit.
- Mentored hunters ages 7 and older who wish to hunt bears must purchase their own **bear license**. Mentored hunters under age 7 are not eligible to hunt bears.
- Mentored hunters each are eligible to purchase **one antlerless deer license**, and as many **DMAP or Ag Tag permits** as other hunters can buy. Mentored pheasant hunters must obtain a **pheasant permit**.
- Mentors no longer may transfer harvest tags to mentored hunters. All mentored hunters must use their own tags, which come with their mentored permits and the other licenses and permits for which they're eligible to apply. In addition to a Mentored Hunting permit, a mentored hunter needs a **migratory game bird license** to hunt doves or waterfowl, and those 16 and older also need a **federal duck stamp** ($28.97) for waterfowl, and a Snow Goose Permit to hunt in the Conservation Season, if a season is held.
- Mentored Hunting permit fees are $2.97 for those under 12; $6.97 for resident applicants 12 to 16; $41.97 for nonresident applicants 12 to 16; $20.97 for residents 17 and older and $101.97 for nonresidents 17 and older.
- A mentored hunter is exempt from requirement to obtain archery and muzzleloader add-on licenses or stamps applicable to hunting archery or muzzleloader seasons for deer, bear or turkey.
- Mentored hunters must report antlered deer or turkey harvests within 10 days, either online at **HuntFish.PA.gov**, by using the harvest report cards in this digest, or by phone at 1-800-838-4431.
- A mentored hunter who participates in any hunting party shall count as a member of the hunting party for maximum allowed numbers.

SPECIES, SEASONS & BAG LIMITS

- A mentored hunter can hunt **squirrels, rabbits, hares, ruffed grouse, bobwhite quail, pheasants, waterfowl, crows, doves, porcupines, woodchucks, coyotes, deer, bears and turkeys** in any of their respective seasons, and must follow daily and season bag limits for each species (one antlered deer, one fall turkey and one bearded turkey in the spring, per license year). Mentored hunters 16 and under may follow the same **deer antler restrictions** as junior license holders, which is one antler at least 3 inches long or one antler with at least two points.
- A mentored hunter 16 or under is eligible to hunt during any special youth hunting seasons. All mentored hunters may participate in the special firearms seasons for antlerless deer and bears held in October, as well as the Junior Pheasant Hunt.

SAFETY & LIABILITY

- A mentored hunter 16 or under must be stationary (still, fixed in place or static, indicated by a cessation of all forward, backward or lateral movement, whether in the standing, kneeling, sitting or prone position) and within arm's reach of the mentor at all times while in possession of any lawful hunting device (any firearm or implement that is lawful to be possessed during the current season and used to harvest the particular species) while engaged in hunting or related activities.
- A mentored hunter 17 or older must hunt within eyesight of their mentor, and at a proximity close enough for verbal instruction and guidance to be easily understood without the aid of electronic communication devices or sound-amplification devices.
- A mentor hunting with a mentored youth now can accompany up to two additional hunters, be they mentored youth, junior hunters or mentored adults. Previously, no additional junior or mentored hunters could accompany a mentor hunting with a mentored youth.
- A mentor and any mentored hunter(s) 16 or under, collectively, may not possess more than one lawful hunting device at any given time while engaged in hunting or related activities. The mentor must carry the device in transit to and from the spot.
- A mentor and mentored hunter must be in compliance with fluorescent orange requirements for the species they are hunting.
- A mentor is responsible and accountable for all actions of the mentored hunter occurring while engaged in hunting or related activities. A mentor who causes or allows a mentored hunter to engage in an unlawful act shall be punishable as the principal offender.

PENNSYLVANIA'S BIG GAME SCORING PROGRAM

Each year, deer, bear and elk that are among the largest ever to be harvested in Pennsylvania are added to the Pennsylvania Big Game Records book. Those hunters and trophy owners who have a listing in the records book also may purchase an Exclusive Member Big Game Records patch.

Patches are $9.43, plus shipping and sales tax. Sales support the state's Big Game Scoring Program. A new records book becomes available each October, and costs $10, plus shipping, and sales tax. To order, call 1-888-888-3459 or visit **HuntFish.PA.gov**.

For more information, call the Game Commission Harrisburg Headquarters.

STATE GAME LANDS REGULATIONS

STATE GAME LANDS

are public hunting grounds.

Lawful hunting and trapping is permitted
on game lands during open seasons.
Many other rules are in place regarding game lands use.

To enable the Game Commission to effectively manage and protect these invaluable land holdings for this and future generations of hunters, trappers and wildlife enthusiasts,

GAME LANDS USERS MAY NOT:

- Camp or use campsites.
- Contaminate, pollute or degrade groundwaters or surface waters or any waterways.
- Graze or permit the grazing of domestic livestock; place or maintain beehives or beekeeping apparatus.
- Solicit or place private advertisements, signs or posters.
- Plant, gather, cut, dig, remove or otherwise injure any plants or parts thereof, including trees, shrubs, vines, flowering plants and cultivated crops. (Mushrooms and fruits of berry-producing plants may be picked.)
- Travel on lands by means of any vehicle or conveyance propelled by motorized power. (Exemption for individuals with Disabled Person Permit for battery-powered motorized wheelchair.)
- Ride a non-motorized vehicle, conveyance or animal, except on roads normally open to public travel, or designated routes as posted, or while lawfully engaged in hunting, trapping or fishing.
- Ride a non-motorized vehicle, conveyance or animal from Oct. 1 through Jan. 31, inclusive, and April 20 through May 31, inclusive, except while lawfully engaged in hunting, trapping or fishing.
- Ride a non-motorized vehicle, conveyance or animal on roads open to foot travel only.
- Drive motor vehicles with or without attachments having a registered gross vehicle weight in excess of 12,000 pounds.
- Use boats propelled by a motor. Battery-powered electric motors may be used on waterways but boat speed must be operated at “slow” or “no wake.”
- Fish from dam breasts posted against fishing.
- Swim in any dam, pond, lake or stream.
- Injure, destroy or cause damage to property, real, personal or mixed.
- Remove or attempt to remove any manmade or natural object, except wildlife and fish lawfully taken. Objects that may not be removed include animals, rocks, minerals, sand and historical or archaeological artifacts.
- Participate in, become part of, contribute to or engage in disorderly conduct.
- Travel on roads open to vehicular travel with vehicle or conveyance propelled by motorized power that is not licensed or authorized for operation on a public highway.
- Violate, fail or neglect to follow instructions posted on signs authorized by the Executive Director.
- Destroy, mutilate or remove any sign or placard.
- Travel by mechanical or motorized conveyance or ride animals on newly constructed, seeded or planted roads, or other areas, when posted against travel.
- Consume, possess or transport any alcohol, liquor, beer, malt or brewed alcoholic beverage.
- Use or possess any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.
- Occupy, use or construct, place or maintain structures or other tangible property, except that portable hunting blinds and stands may be used, provided no damage is caused to trees.
- Feed wildlife or place any food, fruit, hay, grain, chemical, salt or other minerals.
- Release any domestic animals, captive-bred or captive-raised game or wildlife.
- Operate a motor vehicle in willful and wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property or in excess of posted speed limits, or where no speed limit is posted, in excess of 25 mph.
- Target shoot with firearms, bows and arrows, or devices capable of launching projectiles, unless the person is in possession of a valid hunting or furtaker license signed by its holder. Exercise of privileges shall be done in a manner as to not cause injury to persons or property, or on areas not otherwise posted closed to those activities.
- Except as provided on established shooting ranges, discharge any firearm, bow and arrow or device capable of launching projectiles that is not a lawful device to hunt game or wildlife. Shoot clay birds anywhere except areas designated by the Executive Director by signs stating that clay bird shooting is permitted.
- Engage in any activity or event involving more than 10 persons, which may conflict with the intended purposes or uses of property, or poses a potential environmental or safety problem.
- Sell, distribute, deliver, service, guide or rent any equipment, material or commodity or otherwise transact or engage in any commercial activity. Such activity is when a person directly or indirectly accepts consideration of value as compensation for the provision of goods or services, including transportation.
- Use State Game Lands for any personal, organizational or commercial purpose other than the intended use of the property.
- Operate an unmanned aerial vehicle (drone) of any size, design or specification for any purpose whatsoever launched or retrieved from lands or waters designated as state game lands.
- Operate under authority of a contract, lease, agreement or permit and fail to abide by the terms and conditions set forth.
- Be present on State Game Lands from Oct. 1 through Jan. 31, inclusive, and April 20 through May 31, inclusive, when not engaged in lawful hunting, trapping or fishing and fail to wear a minimum of 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined, or, in lieu thereof, a hat of the same colored material. Orange material must be visible 360 degrees. Persons using shooting ranges are exempted.
- Burn open fires. Exception: small fires for cooking or warming purposes are permitted, unless the Fire Index Rating used by the Bureau of Forestry, DCNR, is high, very high or extreme. Fires must be contained and tended at all times.
- Operate snowmobiles. Exception: snowmobiles, as defined in the All Terrain Vehicle Act of 1985, may be driven beginning the third Sunday in January through April 1, only on designated areas, roads and trails marked with appropriate signs. Snowmobiles must display a valid registration decal.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS AREAS

SPECIAL REGULATIONS AREAS INCLUDE:

- In **western Pennsylvania**, all of Allegheny County.
- In **southeastern Pennsylvania**, all of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, and also during special controlled hunts at Ridley Creek and Tyler state parks.

DEER

While hunting seasons generally are set to run statewide or within specific Wildlife Management Units, certain laws and regulations apply in counties within Special Regulations Areas.

DEER & BEAR SEASONS, ARMS & AMMUNITION

- Philadelphia County – Only bows and arrows, including crossbows.
- Remaining Counties – Manually operated rifles and handguns chambered for straight-walled centerfire cartridges, muzzleloading long guns, .44 caliber or larger; manual or semiautomatic shotguns, .410 or larger, using slugs; bows and crossbows. Crossbows must have a minimum draw weight of 125 pounds. Buckshot no longer can be used. When hunting in parks within Special Regulations Areas, the species, arms and ammo allowed vary from park to park. Additional guidance for which state parks allow hunting, as well as contact information can be found on each park's webpage. Go to **pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-parks**.

SMALL GAME, FURBEARERS & CROWS, ARMS & AMMUNITION

Manually operated or semiautomatic shotguns plugged to a 3-shell capacity; manually operated or semiautomatic .22 caliber or less rimfire rifles and handguns; muzzleloading shotguns; single-projectile muzzleloaders .40 caliber or less; bows; crossbows; manually operated or semiautomatic air rifles or handguns that propel a single-projectile pellet or bullet in calibers from .177 to .22 for small game; For woodchucks and furbearers, air guns must be at least .22 caliber. BB ammunition cannot be used. Buckshot is not permitted. Bottlenecked centerfire cartridges are prohibited in Special Regulations Areas. Coyote and woodchuck hunters can use centerfire straight-walled cartridges in rifles and manually operated handguns. In Philadelphia County, only bows, crossbows, air rifles and shotguns are permitted. Centerfire, single-projectile ammunition is prohibited in these areas.

LAWFUL DEER BAITING

The use of bait is permitted while hunting deer in Special Regulations Area counties, but specific requirements must be followed. Baiting is permitted on private, municipal and federal lands, and bait can be distributed via feeder or placed on the ground. Allowable bait includes shelled corn, apples, protein pellets and natural agricultural products intended for human or livestock consumption. The use of mineral blocks and supplements is specifically prohibited. Bait accumulation must not exceed 5 gallons at any time; bait can only be present from two weeks before the opening of the first deer season to the close of the last deer season. A label displaying the full name and address of the person administering bait at that location, or that person's Sportsman's Equipment ID number (which is printed in the lower right corner of each license panel), shall be visible within the immediate vicinity of the bait pile. Landowners and hunters need to ensure bait sites comply with regulations.

LAWFUL WHILE TRAPPING

Manually operated or semiautomatic .22 caliber or less **rimfire** rifles and manually operated .22 caliber or less rimfire handguns. A manually operated or semiautomatic air rifle or manually operated air handgun in calibers from .177 to .22 that propel a single-projectile pellet or bullet. BB ammunition cannot be used.

STATE PARKS

Species, arms and ammo vary from park to park within the Special Regulations Areas. Additional guidance for those that permit hunting, as well as contact information for all parks, can be found on each park's webpage. Go to **pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-parks**, select Explore State Parks, select a park, on the park's webpage click the hunting icon at the top for park specific information. If hunting is not listed as an activity, hunting is not permitted in that park.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Ag Tag Season (antlerless)

- Ag Tag hunters may participate in other deer seasons, such as the archery deer season, but always need to wear fluorescent orange when hunting with Ag Tags. Ag Tag hunters must follow fluorescent orange requirements for the regular firearms deer season – 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined, visible from 360 degrees and worn at all times. This requirement applies to Ag Tag hunters regardless of the sporting arm being carried.

Archery Seasons for Deer and Bear

- No fluorescent orange is required for those hunting archery seasons for deer or bear.

October Muzzleloader Deer Season (antlerless)

- 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, and visible from 360 degrees, is required at all times.

Special Firearms Deer Season (antlerless)

Licensed seniors, Junior license holders, Mentored Hunting permit holders, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind

- 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, and visible from 360 degrees, is required at all times.

Regular Firearms Deer Season (antlered and antlerless)

- 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, and visible from 360 degrees, is required at all times.

Flintlock Deer Season (antlered and antlerless)

- Fluorescent orange is not required. It's not required for archery hunters either, but keep in mind a firearms deer season is open and it is suggested that orange be worn.

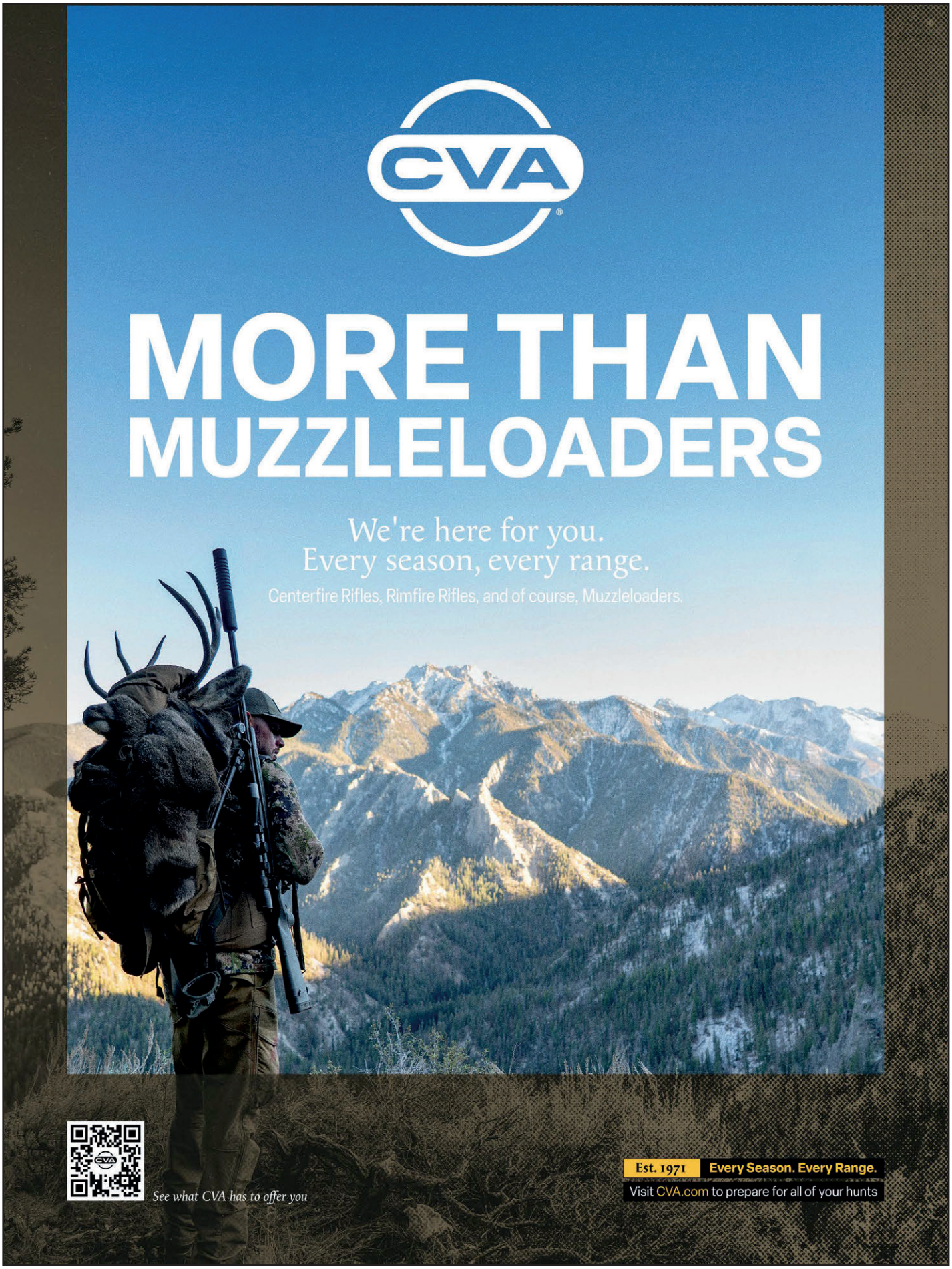
Extended Firearms Deer Seasons (antlerless)

WMUs 2B, 5C & 5D and DMAP

- 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, and visible from 360 degrees, is required at all times.

Small Game Season

- 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, and visible from 360 degrees, at all times is required. Furbearer and crow hunters do not need to wear fluorescent orange. Woodchuck hunters must wear a solid fluorescent cap visible 360 degrees.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GENERAL HUNTING REGULATIONS

BAITING

It is unlawful to hunt in or around any area where artificial or natural bait, food, hay, grain, fruit, nuts, salt, chemicals or minerals, including their residues – regardless the type or quantity – are used, or have been used within the past 30 days, as an enticement to lure game or wildlife. Hunters are responsible for ensuring an area has not been baited before hunting. They should physically inspect the area and question landowners, guides and caretakers. This section does not pertain to hunting near areas where accepted farming or habitat-management practices are taking place (example: hunting near food plots on game lands is legal). The manipulation of crops for dove hunting is permitted. Any natural or manmade nonliving bait can be used to attract coyotes for hunting or trapping. Baiting is allowed conditionally in the Southeast Special Regulations Area. See the Special Regulations Areas section on Page 13.

CULTIVATED LANDS

It is unlawful to 1) hunt in unharvested buckwheat, corn, sorghum or soybean fields without permission from the owner or caretaker; 2) operate a motor vehicle on any private property without the landowner's permission; 3) block lanes to cultivated fields, mailboxes or private property; 4) leave gates open or damage fences; 5) damage real or personal property; or 6) harass or injure livestock.

DECOYS

Decoys simulating food – such as artificial corn to attract turkeys or waterfowl – are considered artificial bait and are illegal. The use of living decoys is prohibited for all hunting and trapping. Electronic decoys can be used for hunting crows, waterfowl and doves.

DISTURBANCE OF GAME OR WILDLIFE

It is unlawful for any person to drive or disturb game or wildlife except while engaged in lawful hunting or trapping. It is unlawful to dig out or take any wild bird or animal from its den or place of refuge.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

It is unlawful to hunt wildlife while under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

It is unlawful to hunt with any electronic contrivance or device, but the following exceptions apply: 1) Electronic callers to hunt bobcats, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, crows and snow geese in the conservation season, can be used. 2) Lighted pins on bow sights and scopes with lighted reticles may be used as long as they don't cast a beam. Any device used as a sight or scope on any firearm, bow or crossbow that projects a light beam of any kind onto the target is unlawful. 3) Electronic illuminating devices that are affixed at the aft end of a bolt or arrow and used solely for the purpose of locating or tracking bolt or arrow flight can be used. 4) Portable, two-way radios and cellphones may be used for general communications with another hunter, but may not be used to direct or alert another hunter to the presence or location of live game or wildlife. Alerting hunters to live game not only is a violation of the Game & Wildlife Code, but violates the concept of fair chase. The use of portable radios does not satisfy the legal requirement of accompanying a junior hunter. The accompanying adult must be close enough to give verbal instructions without the aid of an electronic device. 5) Electronic sound-amplification devices that are incorporated into hearing-protection devices and completely contained in or on the hunter's ear may be used when hunting. 6) Any manually operated firearm that uses an electronic impulse to detonate the primer or main powder charge of the ammunition, unless such firearms are specifically prohibited, can be used. 7) Electronic rangefinders, including handheld devices and those contained within a scope or archery sight can be used. This authorization may not be construed to permit a device that emits any light beam, infrared beam, ultraviolet light beam, radio beam, thermal beam, ultrasonic beam, particle beam or other beam that is visible outside of the device or on the target, with the exception of furbearer hunters who now can use handheld and sporting-arm mounted night-vision and infrared (thermal) optics for hunting coyotes, foxes, bobcats, raccoons, striped skunks, opossums and weasels. 8) Electronic devices used for locating dogs while training and hunting are permitted. 9) Electronically heated scent or lure dispensers, and electronic devices that distribute ozone gas for scent-control purposes may be used. 10) "Ice-eaters," which disturb water to melt and prevent ice formation so waterfowl hunters can use decoys have been approved for use.

FIELD POSSESSION LIMITS

It is unlawful on the opening day of a hunting season to 1) possess more than the daily limit; 2) after the second day, possess more game than may be legally taken in three days. A Field Possession Limit is the maximum number of legally taken wildlife, per species, that a person may legally possess or transport between the place of taking and the person's permanent place of residence.

FIREARMS & DEVICES

It is unlawful to hunt with automatic firearms. Semiautomatic (autoloading) rifles, air- or gas-operated rifles and manually operated handguns may be used for hunting small game and furbearers (Details in those sections). Semiautomatic rifles may not be used for hunting deer, bear or elk. Hunting with semiautomatic handguns is prohibited. Semiautomatic centerfire shotguns that propel single-projectile ammunition can be used while hunting deer, bears and elk. Only shotguns and archery gear can be used for turkey hunting.

FIREARMS – HANDGUNS

A License to Carry Firearms is required to carry a handgun concealed, or have it loaded in a motor vehicle. Licenses to carry firearms are issued by county sheriff or the Philadelphia Chief of Police. While engaged in activities regulated by the Game & Wildlife Code, a License to Carry Firearms only entitles the holder to carry handguns that fall within this classification. Sportsman's Firearms Permits are issued by county treasurers. A person holding a Sportsman's Firearms Permit may not carry a concealed handgun or a loaded handgun in a motor vehicle and may not carry a handgun while bowhunting or spotlighting.

FIREARMS – LOADED IN VEHICLES

A firearm is considered loaded when there is live ammunition in the chamber or attached magazine. It is unlawful to 1) have a loaded firearm in, on or against any motor vehicle (or any attachments to the vehicle), regardless of whether the vehicle is moving or stationary; and 2) have a loaded firearm in watercraft under power, or shoot from a powered watercraft until the motor has been shut off and the craft has come to a complete stop. Holders of a License to Carry Firearms are exempt, but most sporting firearms are not authorized by the permit. It is prohibited to have any muzzleloading firearm that has a live charge of ammunition in its firing chamber and a primer, flash powder or a battery, whichever is applicable, properly positioned in the firing mechanism of the firearm, rendering it capable of discharge, in, on or against any conveyance propelled by mechanical power. Any crossbow that has been cocked and has a bolt affixed onto the string or positioned into the firing mechanism is prohibited in, on or against any conveyance propelled by mechanical power. A loaded muzzleloader or crossbow should be safely discharged before being transported in a vehicle.

FIREARMS – MAGAZINE CAPACITY

Manual or autoloading shotguns to hunt small game, furbearers, turkeys, waterfowl or crows must be limited to a 3-shell capacity in the

chamber and magazine combined. A plug must be a one-piece filler installed so it cannot be removed without disassembling the gun or magazine. There is no restriction on magazine capacity for semiautomatic rifles used to hunt small game and furbearers.

INJURY REPORTS

If you are involved in an incident where someone has been injured by a firearm or archery equipment, either as a victim or the person causing injury (including self-inflicted injuries), you must report the incident to the Game Commission within 72 hours. Obtain the proper forms from a game warden, complete in duplicate and return them to the warden, or mail to the Game Commission's Harrisburg headquarters. Failure to submit a report is unlawful, as is fleeing, or failing to render immediate and full assistance to an injured person.

LICENSE INFORMATION

It is unlawful to hunt or trap wildlife without first obtaining the required hunting or furtaker licenses. All hunters should be sure they have the proper and applicable licenses and tags in their possession for the seasons and species they intend to hunt or trap before heading afield. It's unlawful to carry the license of another person while hunting, or in transit to or from hunting. The possession of expired, fulfilled, revoked, suspended or invalid licenses or harvest tags while hunting or trapping also is unlawful. Hunters also are required to have in their possession additional cards or papers that must be shown to a game warden or landowner upon request to confirm identification.

LITTERING

It is unlawful while hunting or trapping to leave or deposit any garbage, except in a receptacle for that purpose.

LURES & SCENTS

Non-food-source lures and cover scents are legal for deer. Scents and lures that contain any form of natural or artificial food stuff, including, but not limited to, corn, apples or acorns are not legal. It is legal to use drip devices, as well as electronically heated scent or lure dispensers, with legal scents and lures, and electronic devices that distribute ozone gas for scent-control purposes. The use of scents or lures while hunting bears is prohibited.

MISTAKE KILL

Any person who by accident or mistake kills any wildlife while hunting or trapping shall immediately field-dress any edible game and deliver the carcass to a game warden in the county where it was killed. Any person who by accident or mistake kills any big game (Examples: an antlerless deer in mistake for and antlered deer, and antlered deer in mistake for an antlerless deer, or a deer that does not meet antler restrictions) shall immediately but no later than 24 hours after the kill, deliver and surrender the entire carcass, less entrails, to any game warden in the county in which it was killed and make a written statement attesting and explaining when, where and how the mistake occurred. Each licensed person who kills any big game shall immediately, and before moving the carcass, fully complete the proper tag in compliance with printed instructions and attach only the tag to the big-game animal. In the event a tag is not available to meet the above requirements, use the tag in possession that allowed you to hunt legally. The animal will be turned in to the game warden for determination of the mistake-kill suitability. And if accepted, the appropriate restitution shall be paid. Mistake kill restitution for an elk or bear is $100, for deer – $25, for turkey – $20, and for all other species – $15. The hunter may be issued another tag to pursue another big-game animal. Failure to report and deliver any big game killed by accident or mistake is punishable with criminal prosecution and license revocation. For more information on where to deliver an animal killed by accident or mistake, or information about anyone who has failed to report an animal killed by accident or mistake, contact the Game Commission Centralized Dispatch Center (1-833-PGC-HUNT); hunters should have their CID number on hand.

ROAD-KILLED DEER/POSSESSING WILDLIFE

It is unlawful at any time to possess live wildlife, except foxes for which a permit has been issued. In most cases, animals or parts of animals killed on highways may not be possessed. Pennsylvania residents may possess deer or turkeys killed by motor vehicles, for personal consumption only, if they secure a permit number from the Game Commission within 24 hours of picking up the deer or turkey. Call the Centralized Dispatch Center. An individual should keep the head and hide of a roadkill for at least 48 hours, unless directed differently by the local game warden. It is unlawful to give to another person the whole or edible parts of a deer killed on a highway. It is unlawful to keep, for example, antlers from road-killed deer or the beard or spurs from a road-killed turkey. It is unlawful to sell inedible parts from game or wildlife that was lawfully taken (including taxidermy mounts), unless such parts are disposed of by the original owner within 90 days after the close of the season in which the game or wildlife was taken. It is unlawful to take a road-killed deer to use to bait coyotes. Holders of a valid furtaker license may possess a furbearer killed on a highway, except for bobcats, fishers or river otters. Persons taking possession of any furbearer killed on a highway during the closed season for taking that furbearer shall within 24 hours contact the Centralized Dispatch Center to report said possession. A fee will be charged to possess a road-killed furbearer picked up during the closed season.

INJURED WILDLIFE/WOUNDED GAME

It is not legal to kill or "put out of its misery" any injured wildlife. This includes wildlife injured on roadways or initially wounded during legal hunting hours and seasons. Hunters who track wounded game or wildlife after legal hunting hours, or on closed season days, must notify the Centralized Dispatch Center. The Dispatch Center will contact the appropriate game warden. Any other wildlife found to be sick or injured should be reported to the Dispatch Center (1-833-PGC-WILD) as soon as possible.

ROAD HUNTING

It is unlawful to 1) hunt from a vehicle, or assist another while hunting from a vehicle; 2) shoot at wildlife on a public road or right-of-way open to public travel; 3) shoot across a road unless the line of fire is high enough to preclude any danger to road users; and 4) alight from a vehicle and shoot at any wildlife until the shooter is at least 25 yards from the traveled portion of the roadway. **NOTE:** These provisions do not prevent an individual who may not qualify for a Disabled Person's Permit, but who has health concerns or problems, to sit in or near a legally "parked" vehicle and watch for game. **See the Firearms – Loaded In Vehicles section for prohibitions.**

SAFETY ZONES

It is unlawful to hunt for, shoot at, trap, take, chase or disturb wildlife within 150 yards of any occupied residence, camp, outbuilding, industrial or commercial building, farmhouse, barn, stable, farm building, school, day-care center or playground without the permission of the occupants. It is unlawful to shoot into a safety zone, even if you are outside of the zone. Driving game, even without a firearm or bow, within a safety zone without permission is unlawful. For comparison, think of a safety zone as about 1½ football fields. Hunting on hospital and institutional grounds, and in cemeteries, also is prohibited. It is unlawful to discharge

GENERAL HUNTING REGULATIONS

a firearm within 150 yards of a Game Commission vehicle if its occupants are releasing pheasants. The safety zone for **archery hunters** statewide, including those using crossbows, is **50 yards**. But around playgrounds, schools, nursery schools or day-care centers, the safety zone remains 150 yards. Archery hunters carrying muzzleloaders during any muzzleloader season must abide by the 150-yard safety zone regulation.

SPOTLIGHTING WILDLIFE

It is unlawful to 1) spotlight wildlife while in possession of a firearm, bow and arrow, or other device capable of killing wildlife. Individuals who have a License to Carry Firearms are excepted, but only regarding their carrying of firearms authorized by the permit. Most sporting arms are not authorized; 2) spotlight wildlife during the regular firearms deer season; and 3) cast an artificial light upon any building, farm animal or photoelectric cell. Recreational spotlighting is lawful between sunrise and 11 p.m., except as previously noted. Spotlighting closes at 11 p.m. on the day before the regular firearms deer season. Spotlighting is prohibited at all times through the season, and reopens a full day after the season closes. Spotlighting includes handheld lights, accessory spotlights on vehicles and vehicle headlights when intentionally used to locate or view wildlife. A person hunting raccoons, skunks, opossums, bobcats, weasels, foxes and coyotes on foot may use a handheld light, including a gun-mounted light. Furbearer hunters may not use a flashlight or spotlight that projects a laser light beam.

TRACKING GAME AND WILDLIFE

Tracking is a part of hunting as defined by Pennsylvania law. While it's not unusual for hunters to be following blood trails after legal hunting hours, those doing so or otherwise tracking wounded game after hours or on closed season days should call the Game Commission's Centralized Dispatch Center (1-833-PGC-HUNT) so dispatchers can notify the appropriate game warden that tracking is taking place. As of the publication of this digest, it is unlawful to use a drone in any part of hunting, including tracking and recovery of game. Leashed tracking dogs can be used to aid in the recovery of a deer, bear or elk shot lawfully in an open season. No permit is required. The tracking-dog handler must have a valid hunting license and wear the required amount of fluorescent orange clothing for the season, and cannot dispatch wounded game that will be tagged by a hunter. All laws pertaining to the taking of game apply. A tracking-dog handler must abide by hunting hours, and notify the Game Commission if tracking is to occur outside them. Trackers cannot charge for their services on state game lands. Permission is needed before entering private property.

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS & RESTRICTIONS

Many landowners (federal, state and local governments) open areas to hunting and trapping, but apply more restrictive regulations. For example, the Erie National Wildlife Refuge prohibits the use or possession of toxic shot for shotgun hunting for all species, except turkeys and deer. Hunters and trappers are responsible for knowing rules and regulations on lands they intend to hunt or trap.

DOG TRAINING REGULATIONS

- There is no closed season for training dogs, except on state game lands, where all dog-training activities are closed from the Monday prior to the start of youth pheasant season until the opening day of the statewide pheasant season. However, dog training on state forest land, and county owned properties may further be regulated by the agency overseeing the properties.
- A hunting or furtaker license is not required for dog training.
- Dogs may not be trained on private land on Sunday without the landowner's permission.
- A person may not carry a rifle, shotgun or bow and arrows while training dogs, except those who possess a dog training permit, or while hunting chukars or pigeons that are released and shot on State Game Lands for dog training.
- Dogs are not permitted to injure or kill wildlife. When training dogs, handlers need to be aware of and avoid areas, especially wetlands, where birds are nesting. In areas that are identified as woodcock habitat management areas, dogs are prohibited for any reason from April 1 to July 15.
- All hunters are urged to respect dog owners and their sport. Dogs can be attracted by electronic calling devices, as well as turkey calls. Be sure of your target. While the law requires dogs to be under the control of their owner or handler at all times, dogs often are not within sight of their handler while tracking game. Dogs cannot read no-trespassing signs and do not heed fences. If you see a hunting dog running or barking, its handler probably isn't far behind. It is unlawful for dogs to chase or pursue big game, however, the Game Commission recommends that dogs not be shot unless they are actually in the act of attacking a big-game animal and there is no other option. If you see a dog or dogs chasing any deer, bear, elk or turkey (dogs are permitted for hunting turkeys in the fall), please contact the Game Commission and report the violation. Hunting-dog owners have significant amounts of time and money invested in their dogs, and they consider their dogs hunting partners and friends. Please do not shoot hunting dogs just because you do not immediately see their handler.
- There are appropriate penalties in the Game and Wildlife Code to deter owners from permitting their dogs to chase big game. If you shoot a dog that is not attacking a big-game animal you could be subject to prosecution under the Crimes Code as a misdemeanor offense, with penalties of up to $5,000 and two years imprisonment, as well as civil liability for the restitution of the dog. Any person who destroys a dog (licensed or unlicensed) attacking a big-game animal must report the incident to the dog's owner or a game warden within 48 hours, as required by law.
- Electronic devices may be used for locating dogs while training or hunting, including such devices as e-collars, radio-telemetry dog-tracking systems and beeper collars.

Dogs should be handled in a safe and humane manner,
with adequate consideration to temperature and ventilation in transportation cages and compartments.

SGL SHOOTING RANGES

The Game Commission maintains public shooting ranges across the state.

To find out which state game lands have shooting ranges, visit the Game Commission's website, **pa.gov/pgc**.

The online list also shows any ranges that may be closed temporarily for repairs.

Game lands shooting ranges are for use by hunting or furtaker license holders, and those who possess valid shooting range permits.

Range permits now are valid 365 days from the date of purchase and do not follow a license year. Permits can be purchased online at **HuntFish.PA.gov** or at any license-issuing agent.

Each licensed hunter or range permit holder using a shooting range may have one guest.

Range permits are not needed when using archery ranges on state game lands.

Archery ranges are open from dawn to dusk.

Rifle and handgun ranges are open from 8 a.m. until sunset, Monday through Saturday, and from noon until sunset Sundays, unless otherwise posted. On Sundays immediately preceding or within regular firearms deer and bear firearms seasons, hours are from 8 a.m. to sunset.

Shooters may not load or discharge a firearm containing more than six rounds.

A complete list of shooting range rules can be found online.

PURPLE PAINT LAW

A change to the state Crimes Code, gives landowners the option of using purple paint, rather than signs, to post their properties and alert others that lands are private and trespassing isn't permitted.

This law is effective in all but Philadelphia and Allegheny counties.

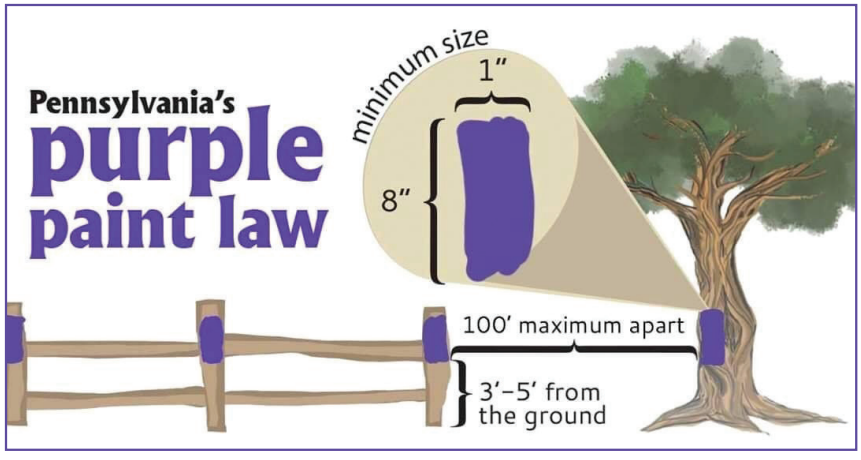
Landowners using purple paint to post their properties use vertical purple lines that are at least 8 inches long and 1 inch wide. The bottom of the mark must be no less than 3 feet or more than 5 feet from the ground. And painted marks are not more than 100 feet apart.

Now that the "purple paint law" is effective, hunters and trappers should know they might encounter purple markings on trees and that these marks are meant to define the boundary of an adjoining private property that's posted against trespassing.

The new law also authorizes unarmed persons to go onto private property for the sole purpose of retrieving a hunting dog.

In Pennsylvania, failure to obey purple painted marks, as well as signs or verbal commands to keep out, is considered defiant trespass, which is punishable by up to a year in jail and $2,500 in fines. If trespassing occurs while hunting, additional game-law violations – and additional penalties and revocation – also might apply.

A legislative act has provided the Game Commission the authority to investigate trespassing complaints and enforce trespassing violations as a primary offense, even if game-law violations aren't alleged, and the agency will do so.



APPALACHIAN TRAIL & DELAWARE WATER GAP RECREATION AREA

Hunters are reminded that hunting or discharging firearms, and use of off-road vehicles, including ATVs, are prohibited on National Park Service (NPS) lands acquired for the protection of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.

Individuals can possess firearms on national park or refuge lands if they are legally permitted to carry a firearm in the state and municipality where they are located.

Sections of the Appalachian Trail that run through State Game Lands are not subject to the listed regulations.

Please be advised that State Game Lands regulations require any group consisting of 10 or more people using the game lands, including trails, to obtain a Special Use Permit.

Maps that show NPS lands where hunting is prohibited can be viewed at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Regional Office in Boiling Springs, Pa. (717-258-5771).

Small open fires for cooking or warming purposes may be kindled, used and maintained by persons exercising the privileges of a valid hunting, furtaker or fishing license and through-hikers within the corridor of the Appalachian Trail.

This exception to the prohibition on fires is applicable only where the small fires are located at places where adequate precautions are taken to prevent the spread of fire, and the index rating used by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is not High, Very High or Extreme for that area.

The Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area (DEWA) is a unit of the NPS. Trapping, hunting over bait, hunting in standing unharvested crops and spotlighting are prohibited. Only portable tree stands can be used and must be removed each day. A PA hunting license is required to hunt in the PA portion of the park. A NJ license is required to hunt in the NJ portion of the park. Most areas of the DEWA are open to hunting. Check the Compendium of Regulations for closures and details at **nps.gov/dewa/learn/management/compendium.htm**.

GREEN MEANS GO

On State Game Lands, the recreational riding of horses and bicycles is allowed **only** on designated trails, marked by the **GREEN** signs above. Trails that are closed are marked with **YELLOW** signs. Recreational off-trail riding is not permitted.

LAWFUL ARMS & AMMUNITION

Deer and Bear, Regular Firearms Seasons

- Manually operated (pump, lever, bolt actions, single-shot) centerfire rifles, and handguns (revolvers or single-shots) with all-lead bullet or ball, or bullet designed to expand on impact;
- Manually operated or semiautomatic centerfire shotguns (shotguns do not have to be plugged) that propel single-projectile ammunition. Buckshot is not legal, except during certain controlled hunts where the Game Commission issues a special permit.
- Muzzleloading long guns of any type, .44 caliber or larger, or a muzzleloading handgun .50 caliber or larger, and;
- Long, recurve, compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds) or crossbows (minimum 125-pound draw weight), with a broadhead that has an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8 of an inch and may not exceed 3.25 inches in length.

Bear Archery Season

- Long, recurve and compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds), or crossbows, with a legal broadhead (see broadhead stipulations that follow).

Deer Archery Seasons

- Long, recurve and compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds), and crossbows, and legal broadheads (an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8 of an inch and may not exceed 3.25 inches in length). Magnifying scopes and sights such as red dot on crossbows can be used.
- Persons hunting deer in the archery seasons may not possess a firearm, except those individuals who have a License to Carry Firearms, and then only those firearms authorized by the permit (most sporting arms are not authorized).
- Muzzleloading firearms also can be carried by bowhunters during any muzzleloading season, providing the hunter has an archery license and a muzzleloader license and meets the fluorescent orange requirements of the muzzleloader season.

Dual-Carry Rules

- Possession of any firearm while archery hunting is prohibited unless the individual possesses a License to Carry Firearms, and then only those firearms authorized by the permit.
- Archery hunters are permitted to carry a muzzleloading firearm only during overlaps of archery deer or bear season with a muzzleloader deer or bear season.

Bow & Arrow Equipment Definitions

- *Arrow* - A projectile shot from a bow with an overall length exceeding the brace height of the bow with fletching designed only for guidance at the aft end and a broadhead mounted on the fore-end. No electronic tracking device shall be part of or attached to the arrow. No device, material or system capable of causing damage or injury to the animal in excess of that inflicted by the cutting edges of the broadhead shall be part of or attached to any arrow. A projectile for a crossbow is known as a bolt.
- *Bow* - A device for launching an arrow, which derives its propulsive energy solely from the bending and recovery of two limbs. The energy used to propel the arrow may not be derived from another source. These limitations shall not exclude the mechanical leverage advantage provided by eccentric wheels or cams so long as the energy stored in the bent limbs of the bow is the sole result of a single, continuous and direct pulling effort by the shooter. The bowstring must be drawn and released as a direct and conscious action by the shooter. Release shall be accomplished by either relaxing the tension of the fingers or triggering the release action of a manually operated release aid.
- *Broadhead* - Must have a fixed or mechanical tip having sharpened cutting edges consisting of metal or naturally occurring stone. The broadhead must have an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8 of an inch, and the length may not exceed 3.25 inches.
- *Crossbow* - Must have a draw weight not less than 125 pounds.

Muzzleloader Deer & Bear Seasons

- *October Muzzleloader Antlerless Deer Season & Bear Season* - Any single-barrel muzzleloading long gun with flintlock, in-line or percussion ignition .44 caliber or larger, or .50 caliber or larger handgun. Scope sights permitted.
- *Flintlock Deer Season* - Flintlock-ignition, single-barrel long guns manufactured prior to 1800, or a similar reproduction of an original muzzleloading single-barrel long gun .44 caliber or larger, or .50 caliber or larger handgun, using a single projectile. It is unlawful to use telescopic sights. Flintlock hunters are permitted to take an antlered deer or an antlerless deer anywhere in the state with their unused antlered deer tag.

Fall Turkey Season

- Manually operated and semiautomatic shotguns limited to no more than three shells in the chamber and magazine combined;
- Muzzleloading shotguns;
- Shotshell pellets no larger than No. 4 lead, No. 2 steel or No. 4 of any other composition or alloy of nontoxic shot approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Possessing or using single-projectile ammunition, rifles, handguns, muzzleloading rifles and slug guns is unlawful.
- Long, recurve, compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds) or crossbows with legal broadheads (defined earlier).

Spring Gobbler Season

- Manually operated and semiautomatic shotguns limited to no more than three rounds in the chamber and magazine combined;
- Muzzleloading shotguns of all types and gauges; and
- Long, recurve, compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds) or crossbows with legal broadheads (defined earlier).
- Shotgun fine shot pellets only, no larger than No. 4 lead, No. 2 steel or No. 4 of any other composition or alloy of nontoxic shot approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Rifle/shotgun combinations may be used if ammunition is confined to shotgun shells.
- Possessing or using single-projectile ammunition, rifles, handguns, dogs, electronic callers or live decoys is unlawful.
- It is unlawful to conduct drives for turkeys. Hunting by calling only.
- Hunting hours during the April 24-25 youth hunt, and from May 1 to May 15 of the statewide season begin one-half hour before sunrise and end at noon. Hunters are asked to be out of the woods by 1 p.m. during those periods. From May 16 to May 31, hunting hours begin one-half hour before sunrise and end one-half hour after sunset.

Elk Regular Seasons

- Manually operated centerfire rifles and handguns at least .26 caliber using all-lead projectiles or bullets of at least 120 grains designed to expand on impact;

Elk Regular Seasons (continued)

- Manually operated or semiautomatic centerfire shotguns (shotguns do not have to be plugged) that propel single-projectile ammunition. Shotguns must be at least 12-gauge;
- Muzzleloading firearms (including handguns) at least .50 caliber propelling a single projectile weighing at least 210 grains;
- Bow with a minimum draw weight of 45 pounds;
- Crossbows with a minimum draw weight of 125 pounds;
- Any arrow or crossbow bolt with a broadhead that has an outside diameter or width of at least 1 inch, and the length may not exceed 3.25 inches.

RESTRICTIONS

Bear Season

- It is unlawful to 1) kill a bear in a den; 2) use a radio to locate a bear to which a radio transmitter has been attached 3) use scents or lures.

Dogs

- It is unlawful to use dogs to hunt elk, bears, deer or spring turkeys.

Organized Drives

- Drives are permitted for deer and bear hunting only. It is unlawful to drive elk or turkeys.
- Drive participants must be in possession of a valid hunting license and comply with all fluorescent orange requirements.
- Unlicensed individuals can accompany a licensed hunter but cannot actively participate in any hunting activity and are strongly encouraged to wear fluorescent orange.

Hunting Parties

- It is unlawful to hunt deer, elk or bears in a party of more than 25 persons.

Tree Stands & Blinds

- It is unlawful while hunting or preparing to hunt to 1) damage any tree on public or private property by constructing a tree stand or using a portable tree stand or device to climb a tree; 2) use or occupy a tree stand that, when constructed, damages a tree. This does not apply to landowners constructing stands on their own property, or persons who have received written permission from a landowner to build or use a tree stand; 3) tree stands and portable hunting blinds on state game lands can be placed out not more than two weeks before the first and must be removed no later than two weeks after the final deer season in that area.
- Placing a tree stand or hunting blind does not reserve the area for its owner; other hunters can hunt there.
- Tree stands and portable hunting blinds left on state game lands and other Hunter Access properties under the Game Commission's management need to be conspicuously marked with a durable and legible identification tag that includes the owner's first and last name and legal home address, or bears the CID number that appears on the owner's hunting license or a number issued by the Game Commission to the stand or blind owner. Sportsman's Equipment ID numbers are assigned to license buyers and found in their customer profiles at **HuntFish.PA.gov**.
- Blinds can be used for big game (see turkey section for specifics for blinds while turkey hunting), however, a minimum of 100 square inches of fluorescent orange material (orange alert band will suffice) must be displayed within 15 feet of the blind and visible in a 360-degree arc during the regular firearms deer, bear and elk seasons. This is in addition to wearing orange while in the blind.

Shooting at Random

- During the open seasons for deer and bears, it is unlawful to shoot at any target other than legal game.
- Target shooting is lawful only when done: 1) on property owned by the shooter or by a guest of the property owner; 2) within 200 yards of a camp or headquarters where the shooter is either quartered or an invited guest; 3) at an established shooting range. The target must be protected by a natural or artificial barrier so that the bullet or arrow cannot travel more than 15 yards beyond it.

UNFIT FOR CONSUMPTION

Any person who legally harvests any big-game animal and discovers the flesh is unfit for human consumption at the time of harvest shall, within 12 hours following the discovery, deliver the entire carcass, less entrails, but including the head and hide, to any Game Commission game warden who, being satisfied that the game was unfit for human consumption at the time of harvest, shall issue written authorization to the person to harvest a second animal or bird of the same species during the unexpired portion of the season for that species.

TRANSPORTING BIG GAME

Deer, bear, elk and turkey under transport, including those taken outside of Pennsylvania, must have an appropriate tag completed and attached. Unmarked parts of a big-game carcass taken in Pennsylvania may be transported. Upon request of any Game Commission law-enforcement officer, the name and address of the person who killed the animal must be furnished, along with other information necessary to properly establish legal possession.

REPORTING BIG-GAME HARVESTS

Each hunter who harvests a deer or turkey must report it to the Game Commission within 10 days (five days for persons required to make a homemade tag) by sending in a postage-paid report card from this digest, or reporting online or over the phone. Be sure to read report cards thoroughly before filling out. Use one report card per animal harvested. For DMAP and Ag Tag antlerless deer, where reporting is required regardless of harvest success, be sure to check the "no harvest" box if no game is harvested. Hunters also can report their big-game harvests online at **HuntFish.PA.gov** by following instructions given there. Hunters and trappers also can report their deer, turkey, bobcat, fisher and otter harvests over the telephone by calling 1-800-838-4431. Hunters will need to have their license and information from the tag used, including the tag number.

Within 24 hours, each person who harvests a bear or elk must have it checked by the Game Commission. Bear check stations are open the first two days of the regular firearms bear season, and on select days of the extended season. Check station schedules are in the Bear section. When bear check stations aren't open, hunters should call 1-833-PGC-HUNT or 1-833-PGC-WILD for instructions on having their bears checked. Those drawn for an elk license will be notified by letter the location and operating hours of the Elk Check Station.

BIG GAME REGULATIONS

TAGGING BIG GAME

- Hunters who harvest a bear, deer, elk or turkey must follow instructions printed on tags supplied with licenses.
- Harvest tags must be filled out with a ballpoint pen.
- Tagging requirements for persons authorized to hunt without a license are identical, except that a homemade tag must be used listing the hunter's name, address, game harvested and date, time, WMU, county and township where it was taken, and the number of antler points if applicable.
- It is unlawful to possess an expired, fulfilled, revoked, suspended or invalid big-game harvest tag or hunting license while engaged in hunting or trapping activities.

BEARS must be tagged immediately after harvest and before the carcass is moved. The harvest tag must be attached to the ear and remain attached until the animal is processed for consumption or prepared for mounting.

DEER must be tagged immediately after harvest and before the carcass is moved. A prior regulation had required a hunter to tag any harvested deer before attempting to take another. That regulation has been rescinded. The harvest tag must be attached to the ear and remain attached until the animal is processed for consumption or prepared for mounting. When submitting a sample for CWD testing, the completed harvest tag should remain with the head being submitted for testing.

ELK must be tagged immediately after harvest and before the carcass is moved. The harvest tag must be attached to the ear and remain attached until the animal is processed for consumption or prepared for mounting.

TURKEYS must be tagged immediately after harvest and before the carcass is moved. Turkey tags must be attached to the bird's leg.

FERAL SWINE

Feral swine have no place in Pennsylvania. They damage wildlife habitats, will kill birds and young mammals, and transmit a host of dangerous diseases. Because feral swine have no natural predators, they can live anywhere, reproduce rapidly, and are difficult to control in the best circumstances.

In some areas of the state, protection may be removed from feral swine by an executive order of the director; however, to increase the efficiency of eradication efforts, protection may be applied to townships or counties where eradication trapping operations actively are being conducted. If you think you may have encountered feral swine, refer to **pa.gov/pgc**, for specific details on townships or counties that may have restrictions on incidental shooting of feral swine.

Feral swine may be hunted during lawful daylight hunting hours, with a hunting or furtaker license. However, feral swine may be taken from the first day to the last day inclusive of any big-game season only by persons who have a valid tag and are lawfully engaged in hunting big game. Those hunting feral swine with a firearm are required at all times to wear 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined.

Firearm and archery equipment is restricted to lawful arms and ammunition identified in the Game & Wildlife Code Sec. 2308. Those killing feral swine, must contact the nearest Game Commission region office within 24 hours, so samples can be collected for disease testing.

SUNDAY HUNTING in state parks is permitted on Sundays approved by the Game Commission, except State Parks and Preserves in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, where Sunday hunting is limited to Nov. 15, Nov. 22, and Nov. 29 in areas designated open to hunting. State forests continue to permit hunting on all Sundays approved by the Game Commission.

STATE PARKS & STATE FORESTS

Firearms and archery equipment may be uncased only in designated hunting areas during the seasons state recreation areas are open to hunting. Target shooting is restricted to designated shooting ranges only. The feeding of wildlife or laying or placing food, fruit, hay, grain, chemical, salt, or other mineral is prohibited on state park and state forest lands.

State Parks

The Bureau of State Parks may restrict hunting and trapping areas or hunting and trapping seasons in state parks. Hunting and trapping by licensed hunters and furtakers is permitted in designated areas in compliance with Game Commission regulations and State Park Rules and Regulations. Contact the park office for hunting and trapping information for each park. In park areas not open to hunting, or during closed hunting season, firearms and archery equipment must be kept in the owner's car, trailer or camp.

The **placement of traps** is prohibited within 50 feet from the edge of all State Parks designated trails, paths, sidewalks, roads and parking lots.

Groundhog hunting is prohibited in state parks. Dog training is permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas.

For more information about hunting in state parks, contact the Bureau of State Parks, 1-888-PA-Parks, visit **pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-parks**, write State Parks, P.O. Box 8551 Harrisburg, PA 17105-8551, or call your nearest state park office.

State Forests

The Bureau of Forestry welcomes hunters and trappers to more than 2.2 million acres of state forests. Only small areas around occupied buildings are posted.

Overnight camping is permitted only in areas designated by the district forester.

Ground blinds and tree stands may be placed on state forest lands subject to following the requirements set forth in the Bureau of Forestry Rules and Regulations.

Required permits are available from local forest offices.

The Bureau opens gated administrative roads annually for hunter access, participates in DMAP and offers an interactive map online.

Current information related to hunting on state forests can be found online at **pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/what-to-do/hunting**.

For more information or maps concerning hunting and recreational activities on state forests, contact the Bureau of Forestry, P.O. Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552. Phone: 717-783-7941, visit **pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-forests** or call your nearest forestry office.

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LIMIT OF ONE ANTLERED DEER (1) PER LICENSE YEAR, AND ONE ANTLERLESS DEER (1) FOR EACH ANTLERLESS LICENSE OR PERMIT

AG TAG
Antlerless Only

STATEWIDE
Aug. 1-April 15, 2027

ARCHERY
Antlered & Antlerless

STATEWIDE
Oct. 3-Nov. 20 and Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

WMUS 2B, 5C & 5D
Sept. 19-Nov. 27 and Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

MUZZLELOADER
Antlerless Only

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-25

FLINTLOCK
Antlered & Antlerless

STATEWIDE
Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

SPECIAL FIREARMS
Antlerless Only

STATEWIDE
Oct. 22-25

Licensed seniors, Junior license holders, mentored permit holders, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind

REGULAR FIREARMS
Antlered & Antlerless

STATEWIDE
Nov. 28-Dec. 13

EXTENDED FIREARMS
Antlerless Only

DMAP
Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

WMUS 4A, 4C, 4D & 5A
Dec. 26-Jan. 18, 2027

WMUS 2B, 5C & 5D
Dec. 26-Jan. 24, 2027

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

A general hunting license is required to hunt in any season.

One antlered deer per license year can be taken with a general hunting license.

An unused, antlered deer harvest tag from a general hunting license can be used to take an antlerless deer during the after-Christmas flintlock muzzleloader season. This is the only season in which the antlered tag can be used for antlerless deer, and each participant in the flintlock season must have a muzzleloader license in addition to a general license, unless qualifying for exemptions.

A muzzleloader license also is needed to participate in the October muzzleloader season for antlerless deer, unless qualifying for exemptions.

With the lone exception of the flintlock season, each hunter must possess an antlerless deer license, DMAP permit or Ag Tag permit in order to hunt or harvest antlerless deer. One antlerless deer may be taken with each valid license or permit.

Each hunter is limited to holding a maximum of six unfilled antlerless deer licenses, except in WMUs 5C and 5D, where the limit is 15 unfilled licenses. Hunters who reach their maximum limit may apply for and obtain additional licenses as they harvest antlerless deer and report them, so long as licenses remain available. Except for the period within which Pennsylvania residents are guaranteed an antlerless license, sales of antlerless licenses end when the total number of licenses allocated for that WMU is expended.

The Special Firearms season for antlerless deer is open to licensed seniors, junior license holders, mentored permit holders, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind. Resident and nonresident hunters who hold a valid hunting license or qualify for fee exemptions, and who are 65 or will reach their 65th birthday in the year of the license application, are eligible to hunt in the season.

Participants in any archery deer season must possess an archery license in addition to a general license, unless possessing a combination license or mentored permit that includes archery privileges.

TAGGING DEER

After harvesting a deer, a hunter must detach the deer harvest tag from his or her license, fill it out using a ballpoint pen and securely attach it to the deer's ear. Be sure to use the correct tag and be careful not to attach the actual hunting license. The harvest tags have animal icons on them.

There are two holes in the center of the tag that can be punched to insert a string, twist tie or safety pin.

Deer must be tagged before the carcass is moved.

The tag must remain attached to the ear until the animal is processed for consumption or prepared for mounting. When submitting a sample for CWD testing, the completed harvest tag should remain with the head. The harvested deer carcass can still be transported for processing once the head has been submitted for testing. The bar code on the right edge of the tag should be positioned near the ear tip, unobstructed, so Game Commission personnel can scan it if the deer is documented as part of work to calculate the annual statewide deer harvest.

Hunters sometimes ask why a harvest tag must be attached to a deer's ear rather than an antler or some other part of the animal. Requiring that deer be tagged in the ear ensures that the tag stays with the head and valuable scientific information can be collected.

If tagging on the antler were allowed, harvest-tag information for bucks largely would be unavailable to Game Commission researchers, since antlers typically leave the butcher shop with the hunter.

DEER HUNTING REGULATIONS

ARMS & AMMUNITION

Archery Deer Seasons

- Long, recurve, compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds), and crossbows with broadheads of cutting-edge design. An arrow and crossbow bolt must be equipped with a broadhead.
- Magnifying scopes and red-dot sights can be used on crossbows.
- A broadhead is a fixed or mechanical tip affixed to the fore end of an arrow or bolt having sharpened cutting edges consisting of metal or naturally occurring stone. The broadhead must have an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8 of an inch, and the length may not exceed 3.25 inches.
- Persons hunting deer in the archery seasons may not possess a firearm, except those individuals who have a License to Carry Firearms, and then only those firearms authorized by the permit (most sporting arms are not authorized). Muzzleloading firearms also can be carried by bowhunters during any muzzleloading season, including muzzleloader bear season with a bear license, providing the hunter has an archery license and a muzzleloader license and meets the fluorescent orange requirements of the muzzleloader season.

Regular Firearms Deer Season

- Manually operated centerfire rifles, handguns and shotguns with all-lead bullet or ball, or a bullet designed to expand on impact.
- Semiautomatic centerfire shotguns that propel single-projectile ammunition.
- Muzzleloading long guns of any type, .44 caliber or larger, or a muzzleloading handgun .50 caliber or larger; and
- Long, recurve or compound bows and crossbows with broadheads of cutting-edge design.

See Special Regulations Areas section on Page 13 for restrictions that apply there. Ag Tag requirements appear on Page 29.

October Muzzleloader Deer Season (Antlerless)

- Any single-barrel muzzleloading long gun with flintlock, in-line or percussion ignition .44 caliber or larger, .50 caliber or larger handgun, or an encapsulated propellant charge that loads from the breech, with the bullet loaded from the muzzle. Scope sights permitted. Archery gear can be carried by muzzleloader hunters providing they have an archery license and necessary fluorescent orange.

Special & Extended Firearms Deer Seasons (Antlerless)

- Arms and ammunition permitted during the regular firearms deer season can be used in these seasons.

Flintlock Deer Season

- Flintlock ignition, single-barrel long gun, .44 caliber or larger, or .50 caliber or larger handgun, using single-projectile ammunition. It is unlawful to use telescopic sights. Peep sights are permitted.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Regular, Special & Extended Firearms Deer Seasons

- During the regular, special and extended firearms deer seasons, all participants must, at all times, wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, visible from 360 degrees (example: orange cap and coat/vest). Camouflage fluorescent orange may satisfy this regulation if the total orange content is at least 250 square inches.

Archery Deer Seasons

- Fluorescent orange is **not required** while hunting for deer during archery seasons. Orange is required, however, by hunters using archery equipment during firearms deer seasons (regular, special and extended). When orange is required, the full amount of orange is to be worn at all times. The use of fluorescent orange is highly recommended for all seasons, whether required or not.

Muzzleloader & Flintlock Deer Seasons

- Participants in the flintlock deer season are not required to wear or display fluorescent orange. However, during the October antlerless muzzleloader deer season, hunters must wear 250 square inches of fluorescent orange. See the Special Regulations Areas section for more details.

DEER & BEAR DRIVES

MAKE SAFETY A PART OF EVERY HUNT

PLAN YOUR DRIVES: Be organized. Everyone must know their role. Decide how many drivers are needed and where standers will be located.

COMMUNICATE: Stay in constant communication with other drivers so that you know the location of those around you. The use of handheld radios or cellphones is allowed for general communication, but not to alert other hunters to the presence or movement of game or wildlife.

KNOW YOUR ZONE: Be aware of your zone of fire. Identify the areas in front of you where you can safely attempt a shot, knowing that those areas are changing as you move across the landscape.

WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T SHOOT: If forced to make a split-second decision about whether it's safe to shoot, err on the side of caution and don't shoot.

CWD UPDATE

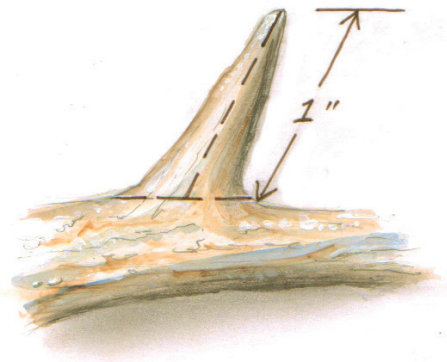
Regulations guiding the management of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) have changed and are highlighted in the **purple** section of this digest. More information on CWD can be found online by using this QR code or visiting **arcg.is/1G4TLr**. Questions also can be phoned in to the CWD hotline at 1-833-INFOCWD or emailed to **infocwd@pa.gov**.

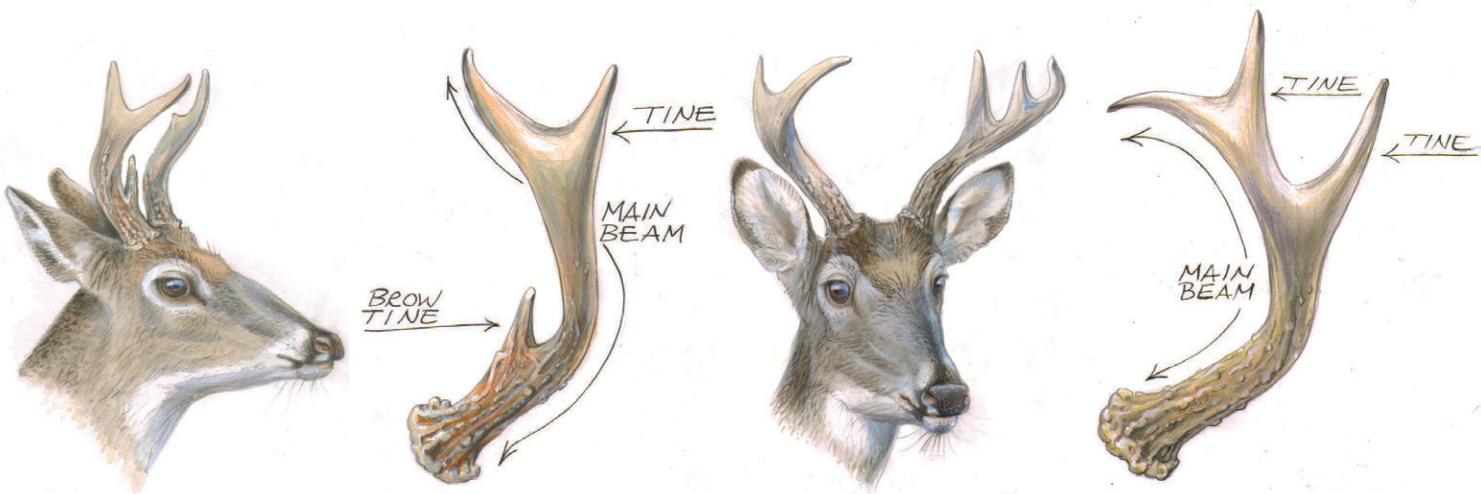
MORE ABOUT CWD

ANTLER RESTRICTIONS

STATEWIDE, junior license holders, mentored youth, disabled hunters with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind, and resident active duty U.S. Armed Services personnel, can harvest antlered deer with two or more points on one antler, or a spike three or more inches in length. **Senior license holders** must abide by antler restrictions, as well.

- A point is defined as any antler projection (including the brow tine) at least one inch in length from base to tip. The brow tine is the point immediately above the antler burr.
- The main beam tip shall be counted as a point regardless of length.
- An antlerless deer will remain defined as a deer without antlers, or a deer with antlers, both of which are less than 3 inches in length. A protected deer is one not defined as an antlered deer or an antlerless deer.



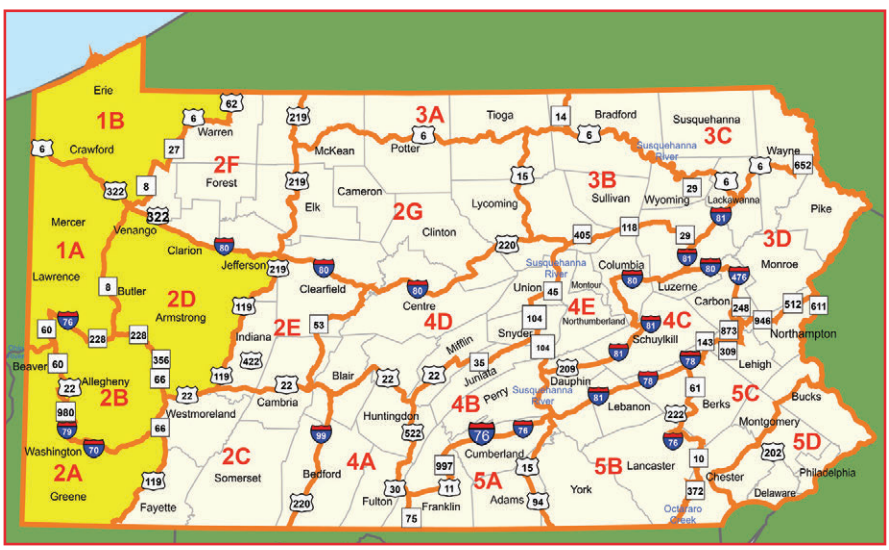


IN MOST OF THE STATE

hunters are required to abide by three points on one side.

IN WMUS 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B & 2D

hunters are required to abide by "three up"; three points, including the main beam counted as one of the points, on one side, excluding the brow tine (the point immediately above the antler burr).



THREE UP

In WMUs 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B & 2D

ANTLERLESS LICENSES

Antlerless deer licenses can be purchased anywhere licenses are sold. Antlerless licenses for all WMUs go on sale to Pennsylvania residents the first day of general hunting license sales – **Monday, June 22** at 8 a.m. One antlerless deer license in any WMU is guaranteed to resident hunters who buy at any time until Monday, July 13 at 7 a.m., at which time no remaining antlerless licenses are guaranteed. Sales to nonresidents begin at 8 a.m. July 13. Licenses will be sold first come, first serve until the license allocation for the WMU is exhausted. No hunter may purchase more than one antlerless license in the first round of sales, or exceed more than three antlerless licenses by the close of the third round. In the fourth round, hunters can buy additional licenses to reach their personal limit of six unfilled antlerless licenses, or 15 unfilled antlerless licenses in WMUs 5C and 5D. Sales of Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) permits begin in the third round of sales, on Monday, Aug. 10 at 8 a.m.

SALES SCHEDULE

Antlerless deer license sales begin at 8 a.m. in all rounds.

ROUND 1 PERSONAL LIMIT OF 1

PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENTS

MONDAY, JUNE 22 – ALL WMUs

*Resident hunters are guaranteed ONE license in any WMU; **buy at any time** between 8 a.m. June 22 and 7 a.m. July 13.*

ALL LICENSE BUYERS

MONDAY, JULY 13 – WMUs WITH LICENSES

Nonresidents may buy. No licenses are guaranteed. Beginning at 8 a.m. July 13, all remaining licenses will be sold first come, first serve until the license allocation for the WMU is exhausted.

ROUND 2 PERSONAL LIMIT OF 2

ALL LICENSE BUYERS – MONDAY, JULY 27

ROUND 3 PERSONAL LIMIT OF 3

ALL LICENSE BUYERS – MONDAY, AUG. 10

DMAP sales begin at 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 10.

ROUND 4 PERSONAL LIMIT OF 6**

ALL LICENSE BUYERS – MONDAY, AUG. 24

*** Hunters in WMUs 5C and 5D have a personal limit of up to 15 unfilled antlerless deer licenses.*

ANTLERLESS LICENSE SALES LOCATIONS

Resident and nonresident antlerless deer licenses can be purchased online at **HuntFish.PA.gov** or at any issuing agent, including county treasurer offices and Game Commission offices. **Resident Disabled Veteran** and **Resident Armed Forces Antlerless Deer Licenses** are available only at county treasurer offices and Game Commission offices. There is a validation process when purchasing online. Resident Disabled Veteran antlerless deer licenses are now available to Disabled Veterans who have a disability rating of 60-99% through Veterans Affairs. Resident and nonresident **Landowner Antlerless Deer Licenses** must be obtained at a county treasurer office. Landowners seeking such licenses should contact their local county treasurer for address information and hours of operation.

BUYING AN ANTLERLESS LICENSE

- Each antlerless license costs $6.97 for Pennsylvania residents and $26.97 for nonresidents.
- Antlerless licenses can be purchased anywhere licenses are sold, including online at **HuntFish.PA.gov**.
- Hunters must select a Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) preference in purchasing an antlerless license. An antlerless license may be used to hunt antlerless deer only within the WMU for which it's issued. General information about WMUs and specific boundary descriptions, can be found at **pa.gov/pgc**.
- A limited number of antlerless licenses is allocated in each WMU. While Pennsylvania residents are guaranteed a license until 7 a.m. on July 13, after this period, antlerless license sales for any WMU end when the allocated number of licenses sells out. In those cases, a hunter seeking a license must pick a different WMU where licenses remain available.
- If purchasing an antlerless license from an issuing agent, please review your antlerless license before leaving the location. No refunds will be issued.
- If ordering antlerless licenses online, please review your selection before checking out. Allow at least 15 business days to receive antlerless licenses through the mail. There may be additional delays during periods of high sales. If needed immediately, hunters must purchase a replacement for $6.97 over the counter at any issuing agent.

PERSONAL LICENSE LIMITS

All hunting license holders may obtain up to six antlerless deer licenses (15 in WMUs 5C and 5D) before the start of the fall deer hunting seasons. Those who hold mentored hunting permits – which are different than hunting licenses – may obtain only one antlerless deer license total in a license year. The number of antlerless deer licenses made available in each Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) is allocated by the Game Commission based on staff recommendations and scientific data on deer populations. With limited numbers available, licenses for at least some WMUs could sell out before the second or third round of sales begins. Consequently, most hunters will never reach their personal limit of unfilled antlerless deer licenses. But in WMUs where licenses remain, enabling more hunters to purchase antlerless licenses increases their opportunity and helps to achieve deer-management goals. Hunters who obtain their personal limit of antlerless deer licenses may buy additional licenses, if available, as they harvest deer and report them. Hunters who report harvests online through **HuntFish.PA.gov** or call the Customer Support line at 1-800-838-4431 instantly become eligible to purchase another license, if any are available. Those reporting by mail will not be eligible to buy another license until their report is logged.

ANTLERLESS LICENSES

ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSE REGULATIONS

- Antlerless deer licenses are WMU-specific. An antlerless deer license is valid only in the WMU for which it is issued. The use or attempted use of an antlerless license in another WMU is a violation of the law.
- All hunters must have a valid antlerless deer license or permit to harvest an antlerless deer. Exception: During the after-Christmas flintlock season, a properly licensed flintlock hunter may use his or her unused antlered tag to harvest an antlerless deer anywhere in the state. A valid WMU-specific antlerless license, DMAP permit or Ag Tag is required for each additional antlerless deer harvested.
- Archers must have a valid antlerless deer license or permit to harvest an antlerless deer. Muzzleloader hunters must have a valid antlerless deer license or permit to participate in the October muzzleloader antlerless deer season (Oct. 17-25).
- Licensed seniors, junior license holders, mentored permit holders, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind must have a valid antlerless deer license or permit to participate in the antlerless-only Special Firearms season (Oct. 22-25).
- Each antlerless deer license includes its own ear tag.

LANDOWNER ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES

Qualified resident and nonresident applicants for landowner antlerless deer licenses (see license section in the back of this digest for qualifications) must apply directly to the county treasurer of the county where the qualifying acreage is located.

These licenses are available the third week in June, a Monday if not a state-observed holiday, and should be applied for prior to the start of the regular application period, which begins the fourth Monday in June. If the qualifying acreage is located within a county with two or more WMUs, the applicant selects the desired WMU.

If the applicant or his or her agent cannot apply in person, a completed application, proper remittance ($6.97 for residents, $26.97 for nonresidents), proof of ownership and a Landowner Antlerless Deer License Application/Affidavit (available from county treasurers, Game Commission offices or **pa.gov/pgc**) should be mailed to the Treasurer in a plain envelope marked "Landowner Antlerless Application."

Applicants who apply by mail must include a self-addressed, stamped return envelope. Do not mail antlerless requests directly to the Game Commission.

Landowner antlerless deer licenses will be available for sale as long as WMU licenses remain available.

DISABLED VETERAN ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES

Qualified resident applicants who have a service-incurred 60-100% disability, or the loss of use of one or more limbs, may apply to any county treasurer or Game Commission office for the WMU in which they desire to hunt. Regardless of allocations or application deadlines, only one antlerless deer tag is guaranteed per license year.

ARMED FORCES RESIDENT ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES

Qualified residents serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, or within 60 days from honorable discharge, may apply to any county treasurer or Game Commission office for the WMU in which they desire to hunt. Regardless of allocations or application deadlines, only one antlerless deer license is guaranteed.

REPLACEMENT ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES

Applicants who lose their antlerless deer license may obtain a replacement at any license sales location. Do not mail replacement requests directly to the Game Commission.

2026-27 ALLOCATION

Antlerless deer licenses are allocated to achieve deer population objectives. An increased allocation addresses forest impacts, CWD, or stops an increasing population. Allocations may also change if harvest success changes. Shown below is the 2026-27 allocation, followed by the change in the number of available licenses compared to last year and the 2025-26 sell-out date. For more information, scan this QR code to view the 2026-27 deer population and allocation report on the Game Commission's website.

WMU 1A	52,000	(+6,000)	8/11
WMU 1B	44,000	(+/- 0)	7/28
WMU 2A	49,000	(+5,000)	8/30
WMU 2B	62,000	(+3,000)	11/8
WMU 2C	117,000	(+24,000)	10/18
WMU 2D	112,000	(+16,000)	8/29
WMU 2E	63,000	(+12,000)	9/8
WMU 2F	67,000	(+16,000)	7/31
WMU 2G	57,000	(+/- 0)	8/3
WMU 3A	21,000	(+/- 0)	7/28
WMU 3B	53,000	(+/- 0)	8/26
WMU 3C	57,000	(+/- 0)	8/28
WMU 3D	52,000	(+/- 0)	9/2
WMU 4A	64,000	(+/- 0)	N/A
WMU 4B	71,000	(+11,000)	11/8
WMU 4C	51,000	(+/- 0)	8/13
WMU 4D	120,000	(+37,000)	9/30
WMU 4E	61,000	(+/- 0)	9/6
WMU 5A	65,000	(+19,000)	11/20
WMU 5B	86,000	(+/- 0)	9/1
WMU 5C	101,000	(+3,000)	10/8
WMU 5D	44,000	(+5,000)	10/18

THE DEER MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ALLOWS HUNTERS TO ASSIST LANDOWNERS IN ACHIEVING DEER-MANAGEMENT GOALS

FOR LANDOWNERS:

Public landowners, political subdivisions, government agencies, private landowners, and any defined hunting club are eligible for the program.

A hunting club is defined as a corporation or legal cooperative that owns its enrolled acres in fee title, was established prior to January 1, 2000, and has provided its club charter and list of current members to the Game Commission.

Landowners can apply by downloading applications and instructions from **pa.gov/pgc**. Instructions for online renewal are also available.

Applications must be submitted to local Game Commission region offices and postmarked by July 1.

FOR HUNTERS:

Each DMAP permit enables a hunter to harvest an antlerless deer on the specific property for which the permit is issued.

Landowners participating in DMAP may make permits available for hunters to purchase directly through license-issuing agents and online through **HuntFish.PA.gov**, or they can choose to issue coupons to hunters that hunters then may redeem to purchase permits at any license-issuing agent or online.

For DMAP properties where landowners provide coupons to hunters, hunters can purchase up to four DMAP permits. On all other properties, the limit is two DMAP permits per hunter.

If a landowner isn't issuing coupons, hunters, before purchasing permits, might need to contact the landowner to get the DMAP unit number for the property, or for properties open to public hunting, go to **pa.gov/pgc** to find the unit number.

Sales of Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) permits will not begin until the third round of antlerless license sales, Monday, Aug. 10 at 8 a.m.

A DMAP permit costs $10.97 for a resident, and $35.97 for a nonresident.

Hunters on DMAP properties may hunt antlerless deer in any deer season that's open there using the sporting arm and/or implement allowed during that season. The hunter must be properly licensed for the season; for example, archery or muzzleloader privileges are required to take antlerless deer with DMAP permits during those seasons.

Additionally, the extended firearms season for antlerless deer (Dec. 26-Jan.24) has been approved for all DMAP properties. If an extended firearms deer season is open within a Wildlife Management Unit (WMU), a hunter may use either an antlerless license, a DMAP permit on a DMAP property or an Ag Tag. If an extended firearms deer season is not open within a WMU, hunters on DMAP properties need a valid DMAP permit (for the property they're on) to take part in an extended firearms deer season.

Mentored hunters each are **eligible to purchase** their own **DMAP permits**.

Reporting on harvest success is mandatory for all DMAP permit holders, regardless of whether a deer is taken. On a postcard, check the "no harvest" box if no game is harvested. Report online at **HuntFish.PA.gov** or report by phone at 1-800-838-4431.

FINDING LANDOWNER INFORMATION

Contact information for public lands and some private lands enrolled in DMAP will be posted online at **pa.gov/pgc**. Contact information for private landowners enrolled in DMAP is posted only with the landowner's permission. Hunters without Internet access can obtain listings of eligible DMAP properties by mailing a self-addressed, stamped envelope, along with a letter indicating their county of interest, to the Game Commission region office responsible for that particular county. For more information on the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' participation in the DMAP program, visit **pa.gov/agencies/dcnr**.

AS DEER POPULATIONS CHANGE, DEER IMPACTS ON AGRICULTURAL CROPS FLUCTUATE. AG TAG COULD PROVIDE RELIEF FOR FARMERS.

The Agricultural Deer Control Program, or Ag Tag program, isn't new.

Previously known most commonly as the **"Red Tag"** program, Ag Tag has been around for years, enlisting hunters to harvest antlerless deer on agricultural lands where they're causing damage.

That said, however, the program has undergone a host of recent changes to make it easier for farmers to enroll and more convenient for hunters to participate. The program is being promoted like never before, too, with Ag Tag season information now being provided alongside the other deer hunting seasons in this digest and elsewhere.

It's the Game Commission's hope the Ag Tag program can be more fully utilized to address what's been a growing number of agricultural deer damage complaints, while helping hunters to fill their freezers with venison.

FOR FARMERS:

By enrolling in the Agricultural Deer Control Program, farmers receive coupons they issue to hunters. Farmers can obtain one coupon for every five acres of cultivated land on enrolled properties. But farmers who request additional permits might be able to get them by submitting supporting documentation.

Any farmer or agricultural landowner wishing to participate in Ag Tag must contact the Game Commission Centralized Dispatch Center at 1-833-PGC-HUNT. Application is made through a game warden on a form provided by the Game Commission. There is no fee to enroll.

Once enrolled, Ag Tag participants need only to issue coupons to those hunters they authorize on their properties. There are no requirements to open properties to the public, and hunters report their own deer harvests, just like they do with other tags.

THE VALUE OF AG TAG OPPORTUNITY

As deer populations rise or shift from one area to another, deer impacts on agricultural crops fluctuate. Recently, there has been a noticeable increase in complaints about agricultural deer damage. But the Ag Tag program, which could provide relief for farmers, has not been widely used.

Less than 2% of the state's agricultural acreage has been enrolled in Ag Tag.

By expanding the program, making it more convenient for farmers to enroll, and creating more awareness among deer hunters that Ag Tag opportunities are available, it's the Game Commission's hope that Ag Tag can provide a solution that mutually benefits hunters and farmers while helping carry Pennsylvania's hunting tradition perpetually into the future.

FOR HUNTERS:

Ag Tag permits

A hunter must have a valid Pennsylvania hunting license or mentored permit, or otherwise qualify for license or fee exemptions, to purchase an Ag Tag permit. Mentored hunters can purchase Ag Tag permits. A hunter seeking an Ag Tag permit first must get a coupon from a landowner, then redeem the coupon at a license-issuing agent to obtain the permit, which includes an antlerless deer harvest tag.

An Ag Tag permit can be used only on the specified Ag Tag property. Each Ag Tag permit costs $1.97. There is no limit on the number of permits an individual hunter can purchase or possess, but for each Ag Tag property, there is a finite number of permits available. A list of Ag Tag properties can be obtained by visiting the Game Commission Region Office serving the county where a hunter is interested in hunting or by mailing a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the region office with your request. Region Office contact information can be found on Page 3 of this digest, or through pa.gov/pgc.

As with DMAP – the Deer Management Assistance Program – hunters who obtain Ag Tag permits must report on their success, regardless of whether they use tags to harvest deer.

Hunting with Ag Tags

Not so long ago, Ag Tag seasons only were open at times of year when other deer hunting seasons were closed.

Now, however, hunters with Ag Tags can use them to hunt and harvest antlerless deer during established deer seasons, too.

The Ag Tag season runs from **Aug. 1 to April 15** the next year.

A recent change allows Ag Tag hunters to use any sporting arm approved for the regular firearms deer season throughout the Ag Tag season. But hunters still may use their Ag Tags while participating in other deer seasons, such as the archery deer season.

A hunter participating in the archery deer season, hoping to take a buck with a bow, is not permitted to also possess a firearm for Ag Tag antlerless hunting. The rules covering the permitted dual-carry of archery gear and firearms during archery seasons are covered in the Big Game Regulations section in this digest.

Ag Tag hunters must wear, at all times, at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined, and visible from 360 degrees. The fluorescent orange requirement for Ag Tag hunters applies throughout the Ag Tag season, regardless of the sporting arm used.

In **Special Regulations Areas**, Ag Tag hunters must comply with sporting-arm and ammunition limits and other applicable regulations.

Deer harvested through Ag Tag hunting are tagged the same as with any other deer harvest, by following the instructions printed on the tag. All Ag Tag hunters are **required to submit reports on their success**, regardless of whether they use Ag Tags to harvest a deer.

Ag Tag deer harvests can be reported in a timely manner online through **HuntFish.PA.gov**, by calling 1-800-838-4431 or by mailing in one of the postage-paid report cards found in the centerfold of this digest. Those phoning in reports should have the tag they used in front of them so they can be sure they are reporting the proper tag.

Any Ag Tags not used to harvest deer **must be reported by April 30**.

CERTIFIED HUNTER PROGRAM

THE CERTIFIED HUNTER PROGRAM ALLOWS LANDOWNERS TO ENLIST HUNTERS IN ACHIEVING DEER-MANAGEMENT GOALS

HELP FOR LANDOWNERS

The Certified Hunter Program is designed to help Pennsylvania landowners who are dealing with significant wildlife-related damage to crops, forests, and vegetation caused by deer and other wildlife. This program connects landowners with certified hunters trained to manage deer populations effectively.

By removing common barriers, the program allows landowners to mitigate damage caused by wildlife in a safe and efficient manner while maintaining control over who accesses their property.

All participating hunters are thoroughly trained in ethics, safety, responsibility and hunting effectiveness.

This initiative was built with landowner feedback in order to provide them a no-cost solution to managing their deer population and promoting sustainable wildlife management on their property.

There are opportunities for both landowners and hunters to participate in the program, which launched last year in southwestern Pennsylvania and has expanded statewide after a successful pilot. The QR code provided here goes directly to the Certified Hunter Program page at **pa.gov/pgc**. Additional information about the program is available online. Questions about the program can be emailed to PGCCHP@pa.gov or phoned in to 717-787-7314.

BECOMING A CERTIFIED HUNTER

Those wishing to become certified hunters can apply online. The QR code below goes directly to the Certified Hunter Program page at **pa.gov/pgc**. Applications will be reviewed in the order they were received.

To be accepted into the program, applicants must be 18 years of age or older, need to have purchased a Pennsylvania hunting license in at least four of the last five years and pass a written exam, as well as a shooting proficiency test.

These requirements provide assurance to landowners that certified hunters are well-trained, safe and effective. Hunters, meanwhile, gain access to productive hunting grounds, receive additional tools for success such as OnX subscriptions and electronic tagging methods and benefit in other ways, too.

Applicants should be aware the Certified Hunter Program is conducted **entirely through a digital platform**. Applicants must have reliable access to a smartphone or internet-enabled device and be comfortable using it to complete all program requirements, including communication, scheduling and reporting. Individuals without this access or proficiency may find it difficult to fully participate.

More information about the Certified Hunter Program can be found online at **pa.gov/pgc**.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

PENNSYLVANIA'S MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD)

WHAT IS CWD?

- Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a fatal brain disease caused by a misfolded protein known as a prion. CWD is a threat to deer and elk in Pennsylvania, and there's no known cure.
- CWD can spread through direct animal-to-animal contact or indirectly through contaminated environments. CWD-infected animals shed prions through saliva, urine, and feces. Plants, soil, and water sources can be contaminated and remain infectious.
- CWD-infected animals may not look sick for 18-24 months after they're infected but can still spread the disease during this time.
- Although there's no evidence CWD can infect humans, it's recommended people do not consume a CWD-positive animal.

FOR HUNTERS:

In areas where CWD has been detected in Pennsylvania, hunters for more than a decade have complied with requirements intended to limit its spread in the Commonwealth.

This year, the Game Commission modified regulations for managing CWD.

It is now **unlawful statewide** to dispose of high-risk parts from deer, elk or any other cervids by placing them on the landscape at any location other than the harvest site.

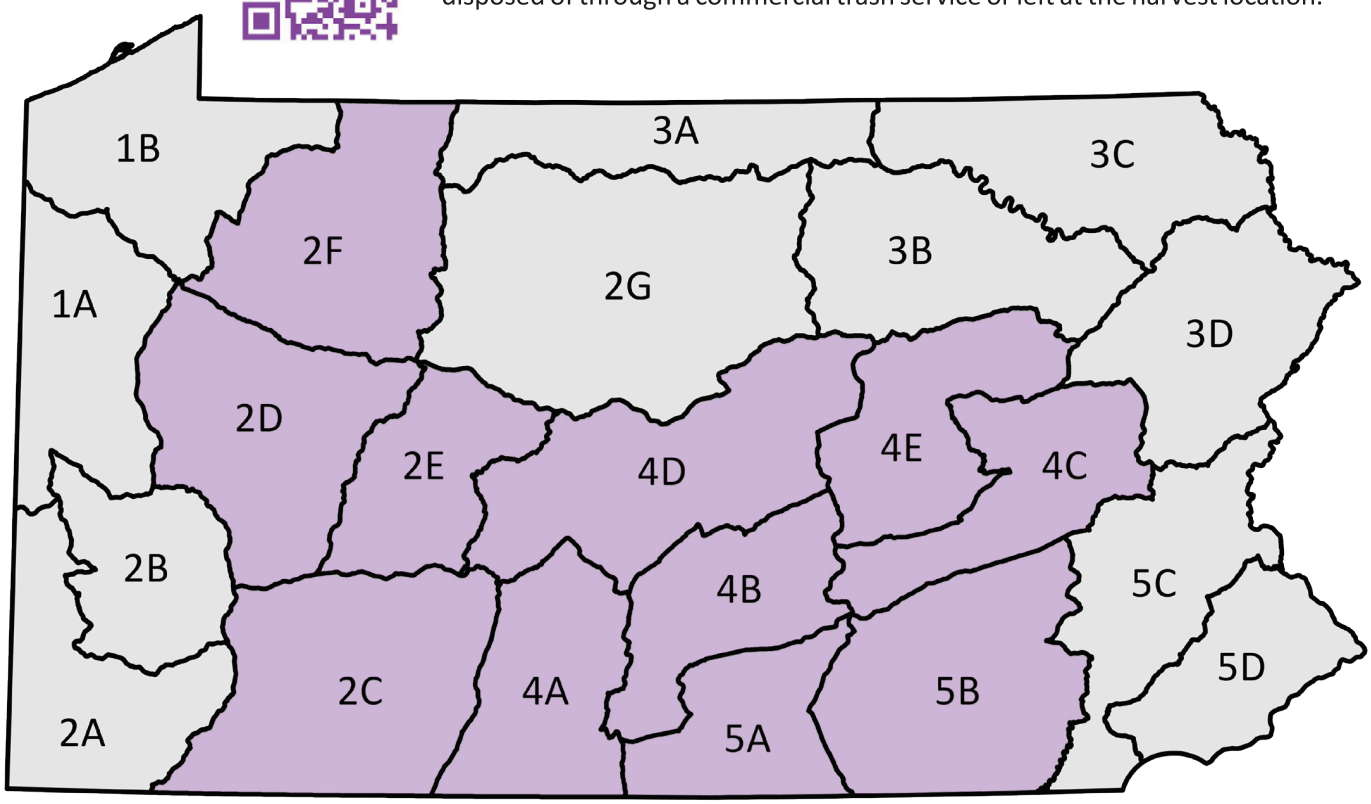
High-risk parts are outlined in the diagram on the next page and include the head and backbone. By law, high-risk cervid parts now must be disposed of through a commercial trash service or other method approved by the Game Commission.

With this requirement in place, it's **no longer prohibited** for hunters to transport deer between any two sites. Hunters can bring deer or other cervids home to butcher, from anywhere, but proper disposal of high-risk parts is required by law.

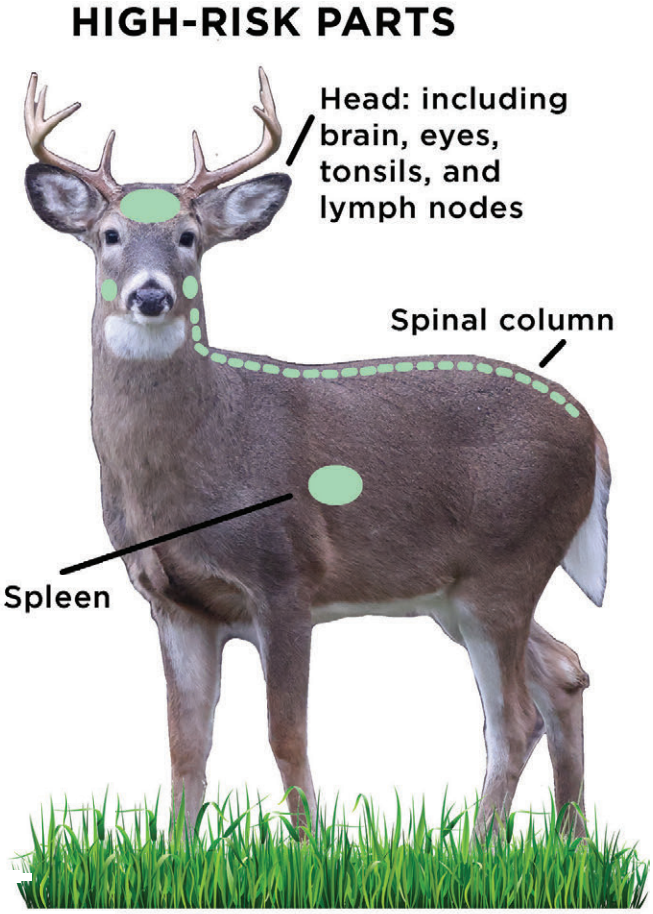
The Game Commission is now using Wildlife Management Units to manage CWD instead of unique disease management areas. Within Wildlife Management Units where CWD has been detected in free-ranging deer, shown below, head-collection bins are provided for free CWD testing.

WHERE HAS CWD BEEN DETECTED?

CWD has been detected in wild white-tailed deer within the Wildlife Management Units shown below. Statewide, high-risk cervid parts must be disposed of through a commercial trash service or left at the harvest location.



CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE



HIGH-RISK PARTS from deer and other cervid harvests must be disposed of properly. It's unlawful to place them on the landscape after an animal is moved from the harvest site. High-risk parts should be double-bagged when placed in the trash. Cooperating deer processors work with the Game Commission to ensure all high-risk parts left with them are disposed of properly. Visit **arcg.is/1G4TLr** for their locations. High-risk cervid parts include:

- The head (including brain, tonsils, eyes, and any lymph nodes);
- spinal cord/backbone; spleen;
- upper canine teeth (if root structure or other soft tissue is present);
- any object or article containing visible brain or spinal cord tissue; unfinished taxidermy mounts;
- and brain-tanned hides.

PACKING OUT DEER

While not recommended in CWD areas, it is lawful in Pennsylvania to leave high-risk parts at the harvest site. The requirement to dispose of them through a trash service begins after the animal is moved. If left at the harvest site, burying high-risk parts is recommended, as it minimizes the chance they will be encountered by other deer or spread.

HOW TO GET YOUR DEER TESTED FOR CWD

In Wildlife Management Units where CWD has been detected in the wild, the Game Commission provides headbins for free CWD testing. Hunters may submit their deer for testing by placing their deer head – double-bagged and with the completed harvest tag attached to the ear – into any Game Commission-provided head-collection bin.

Antlers will not be returned so hunters should remove the antlers and/or skull cap prior to submission. If keeping the head for mounting, call the CWD hotline, 1-833-INFOCWD, for options to get your deer tested.

For bin locations, call the hotline or go to **arcg.is/1G4TLr**.

Hunters who submit deer for testing can check their test results by calling the hotline, emailing INFOCWD@pa.gov, visiting **pgcdatacollection.pa.gov/CWDResultsLookup**, or scanning the QR code provided here. You will need to enter your hunting license CID number and date of birth.

Results take approximately two to three weeks and hunters who receive a positive test result will be notified by certified letter. Hunters also can get their deer tested through the Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System for a fee. More information is available at **padls.agriculture.pa.gov**.

The Game Commission conducts random CWD sampling at processors across the state, but using a participating processor does NOT guarantee your deer will be tested. To guarantee a deer is tested for CWD, the provided options must be followed.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS

Within WMUs where CWD has been detected in the wild, it is unlawful to rehabilitate wild cervids. Regulations enable the Game Commission to prohibit the feeding of deer in specified areas to address CWD threats. Current areas with feeding restrictions can be found at **arcg.is/1G4TLr**.

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) - BIRD FLU

Avian influenza, also known as bird flu, is a contagious virus that affects wild birds, poultry, and sometimes mammals. The virus is shed through all excretions (saliva, feces) and is highly contagious among birds. It can be spread by legal and illegal movement of infected birds, poultry products, contaminated materials, equipment and vehicles, as well as by wild bird migration. Outbreaks are suspected when a large number of sick or dead birds is encountered at the same place and time. The virus has most significantly impacted waterfowl and shorebirds, wild poultry (turkey, grouse), raptors (hawks, eagles), and other avian scavengers (crows, gulls, ravens).

Precautions for Waterfowl Hunters

Hunters should follow routine precautions when hunting and handling birds. Do not harvest or handle wild birds that appear sick or are found dead. Do not eat, drink or smoke while handling birds. Wear washable or disposable gloves while handling and cleaning birds. Wash hands, tools and work surfaces that come in contact with birds with soap and water. An alcohol-based sanitizer can be used if soap and water is not available. Tools and work surfaces can be disinfected with a 10% household bleach solution. Cook all wild bird meat to 160°F.

Backyard Bird Feeders

Avian influenza typically does not affect bird species that frequent backyard bird feeders. However, it is important to exercise good hygiene when maintaining bird feeders and baths to prevent the spread of disease. Every couple of weeks, feeders and baths should be emptied, washed with soapy water, rinsed, then disinfected with a 10% household bleach solution.

Protecting Hunting Dogs

General precautions can help reduce the risk of disease transmission to your hunting dog. Prevent your dog from consuming environmental water. Prevent your dog from contacting or consuming wildlife feces. Prevent your dog from interacting with, picking up, chewing on, or consuming wildlife found sick or dead or parts thereof (i.e., non-harvested wildlife). Keep your dog current on their vaccines and preventive medications.

Who to Call

- If you feel sick after being around wild animals, call the Pennsylvania **Department of Health** at 1-877-PA-HEALTH.
- To report domestic birds suspected to have bird flu, call the Pennsylvania **Department of Agriculture** at 1-717-772-2852, option 1.
- Dogs can carry the virus; seek veterinary care for your dog immediately if it shows signs of being ill. Call ahead to let the **veterinarian** know about possible bird flu exposure.

BE SAFE WHILE ENJOYING WILDLIFE & THE OUTDOORS

Like any animals, wildlife can carry diseases, some of which can be passed to domestic animals and humans. Following routine precautions will greatly reduce the risk of that happening. Hunters and trappers should never harvest or handle wildlife that appears sick, always practice good hygiene while handling and field-dressing wildlife, and cook wild meat to the proper temperature. Non-harvested wildlife found dead should not be handled. Whether dogs participate in hunting or just spend time outside, they should be kept current on vaccines and preventive medicines, as well as prevented from consuming environmental water, wildlife feces, or chewing on or consuming wildlife found sick or dead. While songbirds are susceptible to HPAI but not typically impacted during outbreaks, birdfeeders and baths should always be regularly emptied, cleaned, and disinfected to prevent the spread of disease.

REPORT WILDLIFE HEALTH ISSUES

The Pennsylvania Game Commission encourages the public to continue playing a critical role in wildlife health surveillance. Please call us at **1-833-PGC-WILD** (742-9453) or visit **pgcforms.pa.gov/CommentsForm** to report observations of wildlife health issues occurring within the Commonwealth. Any wild birds or mammals that appear abnormal, injured, sick, or are found dead should be reported.

ONGOING WILDLIFE HEALTH RESEARCH

The Game Commission continues to collaborate with the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine through the Wildlife Futures Program (**vet.upenn.edu/wildlife-futures**) to develop wildlife diagnostics, answer pressing wildlife health questions, and inform wildlife management strategies, while safeguarding and promoting wildlife health. In addition to collecting specimens during field investigations of wildlife mortalities, this research often needs specimens that can be collected from harvested wildlife; the current specimen request list can be found on the Wildlife Health section of the Game Commission's website using the QR code below.

SURVEILLANCE CONTINUES FOR RABBIT HEMORRHAGIC DISEASE (RHD)

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus serotype 2 (RHDV2), a virus that causes rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD), can spread rapidly and cause widespread mortality in wild and domestic rabbit and hare species. If you observe two or more wild hares or rabbits that have died from an unknown cause at the same location and time, please contact the Game Commission at **1-833-PGC-WILD**. For more information from the Game Commission and Department of Agriculture, search "rabbit hemorrhagic disease" at **PA.gov**.

LEARN MORE ABOUT WILDLIFE HEALTH & GET INVOLVED

pa.gov/agencies/pgc/wildlife/wildlife-health.html

HUNTERS SHARING THE HARVEST

PENNSYLVANIA'S STATEWIDE VENISON DONATION PROGRAM

MORE THAN 2.5 MILLION LBS DONATED SINCE 1991

1 DEER EQUALS 200 SERVINGS

SCAN TO DONATE

Every donation of $25 or more receives a **FREE "HSH SHARE FORCE" DECAL**

FIVE WAYS TO HELP HSH

1. **DONATE YOUR DEER** at no charge, thanks to our partners.
2. **GIVE A BUCK TO THE POT** with your monetary donation (scan the QR code).
3. **SPONSOR** to help offset program costs and show that your business supports HSH.
4. **VOLUNTEER AS AN AREA COORDINATOR** to help HSH expand its mission in your county.
5. **BE A PARTICIPATING PROCESSOR!** The lifeblood of HSH is its processors. More are needed statewide!

LEARN MORE AT SHAREDEER.ORG

Phone: 866-HSH-2141 (866-474-2141)
Facebook: @HuntersSharingTheHarvest
Instagram: @hunterssharingtheharvest

Randy K. Ferguson, Executive Director
218 Vernon Road Greenville, PA 16125
Email: info@sharedeer.org

Monetary donations can be mailed to Hunters Sharing the Harvest, 218 Vernon Road, Greenville, PA 16125. HSH is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and contributions are tax deductible. The official registration and financial information of HSH may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

PROUD PARTNER

FALL SEASON

1 BIRD PER SEASON (BEARDED OR UNBEARDED)

Season lengths vary by WMU.

WMUS 1A, 2G, 3A, 4A, 4B & 4D
Oct. 31-Nov. 15

WMUS 1B, 3D, 4C & 4E
Oct. 31-Nov. 8

WMUS 2A, 2F, 3B & 3C
Oct. 31-Nov. 15
& Nov. 25-27

WMUS 2B, 2C, 2D & 2E
Oct. 31-Nov. 20
& Nov. 25-27

WMUS 5A & 5B
Oct. 31-Nov. 3

WMUS 5C & 5D
Fall season is closed.

ARMS & AMMUNITION

1) Manually operated and semiautomatic shotguns limited to a three-shell capacity in the chamber and magazine combined; 2) Muzzleloading shotguns of all types and gauges; 3) Long, recurve, compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds) or crossbows with a broadhead that has a fixed or mechanical tip affixed to the fore end of an arrow or bolt having sharpened cutting edges consisting of metal or naturally occurring stone. The broadhead must have an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8 of an inch, and the length may not exceed 3.25 inches.

Fine shot no larger than No. 4 lead, No. 2 steel or No. 4 of any other U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service-approved nontoxic shot.

Centerfire and rimfire rifles, handguns, muzzleloading rifles and handguns, slug guns, and single-projectile ammunition no longer are permitted for fall turkey hunting.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Turkey hunters are not required to wear fluorescent orange material, although it is strongly recommended they do so.

MENTORED HUNTERS

Mentored hunters may participate. Harvest tags now are provided to all mentored hunters regardless of age. Mentors no longer can transfer a tag to a mentored youth.

DOGS

Dogs may be used during the fall season.

LEG-BANDED TURKEYS

The Game Commission regularly places leg bands and transmitters on a number of turkeys for research purposes. These birds are lawful to harvest and should be reported if harvested or found dead. Information should be reported by following instructions on the band.

SPRING SEASON

1 BEARDED BIRD PER SEASON

Spring turkey hunting is open statewide.

YOUTH HUNT
April 24-25, 2027
One-half hour before sunrise until noon.

STATEWIDE
May 1-31, 2027
Hunting hours vary

HUNTING HOURS

Hunting hours during the **April 24-25** youth hunt, and from **May 1 to May 15** of the statewide season begin one-half hour before sunrise and end at noon. Hunters are asked to be out of the woods by 1 p.m. during those periods. From **May 16 to May 31**, hunting hours begin one-half hour before sunrise and end one-half hour after sunset.

ARMS & AMMUNITION

1) Manually operated and semiautomatic shotguns limited to a three-shell capacity in the chamber and magazine combined; 2) Muzzleloading shotguns of all types and gauges; 3) Long, recurve, compound bows (minimum draw weight of 35 pounds) or crossbows with legal broadheads (see broadhead requirements in fall season section).

Fine shot no larger than No. 4 lead, No. 2 steel or No. 4 of any other U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service-approved nontoxic shot. Rifle/shotgun combination guns may be used if ammunition is limited to shotgun shells. Carrying or using single-projectile ammunition, rifles, handguns, muzzleloading rifles and handguns, slug guns is unlawful.

MENTORED HUNTERS

Mentored hunters may participate. Harvest tags now are provided to all mentored hunters regardless of age. Mentors no longer can transfer a tag to a mentored youth.

YOUTH HUNT

Only junior license holders and properly permitted mentored youth (16 and under) may participate. Hunters under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. An adult accompanying a mentored youth may not supervise more than three hunters total, and must carry the sporting arm at all times when a mentored hunter is moving. Each hunter may harvest only one bearded bird per season. Birds harvested must be tagged with the hunter's spring turkey harvest tag.

NO STALKING

Hunting by calling only.

BEARDED BIRDS

Only turkeys with visible beards are legal. It is suggested, though, that hunters refrain from knowingly harvesting bearded hens because they nest and raise broods.

DOGS

Dogs may not be used during the spring season.

BLINDS

The use of turkey blinds is legal under the following definition: Any artificial or manufactured turkey blind consisting of all manmade materials of sufficient density to block the detection of movement within the blind from an observer outside the blind.

Turkey blinds must be constructed of plastic, nylon, canvas, cotton cloth, plywood or other manmade materials. Blinds made by piling rocks, logs, branches, etc. are unlawful. The blind must completely enclose the hunter on all four sides and from above to block the detection of movement within the blind.

Turkey-hunting blinds that represent the fanned tails of turkeys are illegal to use in Pennsylvania because they do not hide all hunter movement from behind or within.

Portable hunting blinds left on state game lands and other Hunter Access properties under the Game Commission's management must be conspicuously marked with a durable and legible identification tag that includes the owner's first and last name and legal home address, or bears the CID number that appears on the owner's hunting license or the Sportsman's Equipment ID number found within the hunter's HuntFish.PA.gov profile.

LIVE DECOYS, DRIVES & ELECTRONIC CALLS

In both spring and fall turkey seasons, it is unlawful to possess or use live turkeys as decoys, or conduct drives for turkeys or use electronic callers or devices.

TAGGING, REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Successful turkey hunters must follow all instructions printed on tags supplied with licenses.

Separate tags are provided for fall and spring seasons. The turkey must be tagged immediately after harvest and before the carcass is moved. The tag must be securely attached to a leg until the bird is prepared for consumption or mounting. Once you have used your tag, it is unlawful to possess it in the field.

Also, please remember to discard your old hunting licenses and not carry them afield. It is unlawful to possess old licenses while hunting.

Within 10 days of harvest, turkey hunters must report harvests to the Game Commission, either by going online to **HuntFish.PA.gov**, calling toll-free, or by sending in a postage-paid report card received with this digest.

Hunters reporting their turkey harvests over the telephone call 1-800-838-4431. Hunters will need to have their license and information from the completed tag, including the tag number, beard length and spur length.

All hunters reporting harvests are asked to identify the WMU, county and township where the bird was taken as well as information regarding the breast and tail feathers of the bird.

IN PENNSYLVANIA, a device that represents a fanned turkey tail cannot be used to conceal a hunter. The unlawful use of such a device has led to a hunter being shot. Know the law and stay safe while hunting.

UNSAFE & ILLEGAL

HUNTERS ARE LIMITED TO 1 BEAR PER LICENSE YEAR. BEAR LICENSE REQUIRED.

ARCHERY

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Oct. 25

WMUS 2B, 5C & 5D
Sept. 19-Nov. 27

WMU 3C, 3D & 5B
Oct. 3-Nov. 20

SPECIAL FIREARMS

STATEWIDE
Oct. 22-25

Licensed seniors, Junior license holders, mentored permit holders ages 7 and older, qualified active-duty military personnel, and persons with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind.
Arms and ammunition permitted during the regular firearms bear season can be used.

REGULAR FIREARMS

STATEWIDE
Nov. 21-24

MUZZLELOADER

STATEWIDE
Oct. 22-25

EXTENDED FIREARMS

WMUS 2B, 5B, 5C & 5D
Nov. 28-Dec. 13

WMUS 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C, 4E & 5A
Nov. 28-Dec. 6

ARMS & AMMUNITION

1) Manually operated centerfire rifles, handguns and shotguns with all-lead bullet or ball, or a bullet designed to expand on impact (buckshot is illegal); 2) semiautomatic centerfire shotguns that propel single-projectile ammunition; 3) muzzleloading long guns of any type, .44 caliber or larger, or a muzzleloading handgun .50 caliber or larger, or an encapsulated propellant charge that loads from the breech, with the bullet loaded from the muzzle; and 4) long, recurve or compound bows (draw weights at least 35 pounds), or crossbows with weight minimum of 125 pounds. A broadhead is a fixed or mechanical tip affixed to the fore end of an arrow or bolt having sharpened cutting edges consisting of metal or naturally occurring stone. The broadhead must have an outside diameter or width of at least 7/8 of an inch, and the length may not exceed 3.25 inches.

TAGGING & REPORTING

A successful bear hunter must complete all information on the tag and attach it to the bear's ear immediately after harvest, and before the carcass is moved. In addition, within 24 hours, each hunter who harvests a bear must have it checked by the Game Commission. Bear check stations, which are listed on Page 39, are open on the first two days of the regular firearms bear season, and on select days of the extended seasons. **Hunters harvesting bears during the statewide archery, muzzleloader or special firearms bear seasons, any early season in WMUs 2B, 3C, 3D, 5B, 5C & 5D, or on any date that check stations aren't open,** should contact the Centralized Dispatch Center at 1-833-PGC-HUNT or 1-833-PGC-WILD for instructions to have their bears checked. **Bears should be field-dressed before being brought to a check station,** as Game Commission personnel do not need to examine reproductive tracts. It's also acceptable to bring only the tagged head and hide to the check station. Hunters should bring their hunting license and bear license. Once you have used your tag, it is unlawful to possess it in the field. If you purchase a bear license online, you cannot hunt for bear until the physical license, with a harvest tag, is delivered to you.

LICENSES

A general hunting license or mentored permit is required to hunt in any season. A bear license, available to hunters 7 and older, is also needed to hunt bears. A bear license allows hunters to participate in the bear archery and bear muzzleloader seasons without needing an archery or muzzleloader license for these two particular seasons. Bear licenses are available to purchase from the time general hunting licenses go on sale through the Dec. 13 close of the last extended seasons.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Bear hunters during firearms bear seasons (regular, special and extended), as well as the muzzleloader season, must wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest and back combined, visible from 360 degrees. Camouflage fluorescent orange will satisfy this regulation if the total orange content is at least 250 square inches. No fluorescent orange is required for hunting during the archery season.

RESTRICTIONS

It is unlawful to:

- Kill a bear in a den;
- Use a radio to locate a bear to which a radio transmitter has been attached;
- Hunt in areas where artificial or natural bait, hay, grain, fruit, nuts, salt, chemicals, minerals or other foods – including residue – are used, or have been used as an enticement to lure wildlife within the past 30 days;
- Use scents or lures;
- Hunt bears in a party of more than 25 persons.

BEAR FEEDING BAN

It is unlawful to "intentionally lay or place food, fruit, hay, grain, chemicals, salt or other minerals that may cause bears to congregate or habituate in an area." In addition, if nuisance bears are being attracted to an area by any other wildlife feeding, game wardens can issue written notice to temporarily halt the activity.

CHECKING BEARS

Any hunter who harvests a bear must have the bear checked by the Game Commission within 24 hours.

- **When check stations are open**, as indicated on the following page, hunters should take bears to the check station of their choice. If unable to take a bear to a check station within 24 hours, please call the Game Commission's Centralized Dispatch Center for guidance.
- **When check stations are closed**, hunters should call the Centralized Dispatch Center for instructions on having their bears checked. Check stations are open exclusively during the first two days of the regular firearms bear season, and on select days during the extended firearms bear season, which overlaps with the regular firearms deer season.

EARLY SEASONS:

If you harvest a bear during the early seasons, call the Centralized Dispatch Center for instructions.

1-833-PGC-HUNT

CENTRALIZED DISPATCH CENTER

If there is not a check station open, call for instructions to have your bear checked.

1-833-PGC-HUNT
(1-833-742-4868)

1-833-PGC-WILD
(1-833-742-9453)

PLAN AHEAD

IF YOU HARVEST A BEAR IN WARM WEATHER

- Once you tag your bear, field dress it right away to start cooling the meat down.
- Cool the carcass as quickly as possible to prevent spoilage.
- Consider removing the hide and quartering the bear to help the meat cool faster. Only the head and hide need to be presented at a check station.
- Bears are large and more difficult to move than deer. If not quartering, consider using a game cart, drag sled, or tarp to speed up transport.
- On warm days, have ice available to pack inside the carcass to aid cooling. Larger muscle groups will stay warmer longer.
- Keep the bear off the ground to aid in cooling — the ground contact can trap heat in the meat.
- If using a processor, decide ahead of time where you will take your bear and call to confirm they accept bears.

PREPARING YOUR BEAR TO BE CHECKED

At the time of a harvest, successful bear hunters should place a 3- to 4-inch stick into the bear's mouth, before rigor mortis or freezing temperatures set in, making it extremely difficult for staff members to open the mouth to remove a tooth for aging when the bear is checked.

Hunters should take their hunting license and bear license with them to the check station.

Hunters should know the date, time and approximate location of harvest.

BEAR CHECK STATIONS

REGULAR SEASON: Check stations open Saturday, Nov. 21 and Sunday, Nov. 22, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Northwest Region

Clarion County – Farmington Township Volunteer Fire Company, 6785 State Route 36, Leeper– 41.3706077 N, 79.3049949 W
Jefferson County – Friendship Hose Company #1, Interstate 80, Exit 97, Rt. 830 W (Slab Run Road/First Street), right on 1st Street in Falls Creek, then 600 feet on right–41.1458166 N, 78.7985611 W
Venango County – Northwest Region Office, 1509 Pittsburgh Road, Franklin–41.36734 N, 79.859747 W
Warren County – Tidioute Borough Fire Hall, 228 Main Street, Tidioute–41.68278 N, 79.40444 W

Southwest Region

Indiana County – Homer City Fire Department, 25 West Church Street in Homer City–40.54189 N, 79.16193 W
Somerset County – New Centerville Rural Fire Dept., on Rt. 281 in New Centerville–39.9420 N, 79.1950 W
Westmoreland County – Southwest Region Office, 4820 Rt. 711 in Bolivar–40.3140 N, 79.1480 W

Northcentral Region

Centre County – DCNR Penn Nursery, 137 Penn Nursery Road, Spring Mills–40.7778230 N, 77.6137813 W
Clearfield County – PGC Maintenance Building, 4728 Quehanna Highway, Karthaus–41.1901 N, 78.14594 W
Clinton County – Chapman Twp. Fire Hall, 4 miles south of Renovo on Rt. 120 in North Bend–41.34861 N, 77.70038 W
Lycoming County – Northcentral Region Office, 1566 S. Rt. 44 Hwy., Jersey Shore–41.1911 N, 77.2315 W
Lycoming County – Hepburn Township Fire Company, 615 PA-973, Cogan Station–41.29991 N,-77.05607 W
McKean County – PGC Maintenance Building, 1982 Lindholm Rd., Mt. Jewett – 41.755254 N, 78.571859 W
Potter County – Coudersport Fire Hall on U.S. Rt. 6, west of town–41.76788 N, 78.02842 W
Tioga County – Wellsboro Fire Company Social Building, U.S. Rt. 6 in center of town–41.7495961 N, 77.2967266 W

Southcentral Region

Fulton County – Hustontown Fire Hall, 426 N Clear Ridge Rd, Hustontown–40.052378 N, 78.024376 W
Huntingdon County – SGL 322 Building, 8877 Petersburg Pike, Petersburg, 3 miles west from Cold Spring Road in Huntingdon–40.5505 N, 78.0065 W

Northeast Region

Bradford County – Wysox Volunteer Fire Company, 111 Lake Rd., Wysox–41.77673 N, 76.40042 W
Carbon County – SGL 141 Maintenance Building, 526 Behrens Road, Jim Thorpe–40.9411 N, 75.6722 W
Lackawanna County – Fleetville Fire Company, 58 Firehouse Lane, Fleetville–41.59608 N, 75.71673 W
Luzerne County – Northeast Region Office, 3917 Memorial Highway, Dallas–41.342975 N, 75.991387 W
Monroe County – SGL 127 Building, 1305 Prospect Street, Tobyhanna–41.168317 N, 75.439614 W
Pike County – SGL 180 Shohola Building, Rt. 6 at Shohola Falls, 13 miles south of Hawley–41.3862 N, 74.9758 W

Southeast Region

Berks County – Southeast Region Office, 253 Snyder Road, 7 miles north of Reading–40.440840 N, 75.911236 W
Dauphin County – Game Commission Headquarters, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg–40.2934 N, 76.8553 W

EXTENDED SEASONS:

Northwest, Southwest and Southcentral Regions

If you harvest a bear in these regions during the extended seasons, call the Centralized Dispatch Center for instructions.

Northcentral Region

Lycoming County – Northcentral Region Office, 1566 S. Rt. 44 Hwy., Jersey Shore-41.1911 N, 77.2315 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Monday through Friday 11/30-12/4, Noon-7 p.m.
Saturday, 12/5 & Sunday 12/6, Noon-7 p.m.
Tioga County – SGL 208 Headquarters Building, 1749 Rt. 349, Gaines – 41.8007 N, 77.5721 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Saturday, 12/5 & Sunday 12/6, Noon-7 p.m.

Northeast Region

Bradford County – Wysox Volunteer Fire Company, 111 Lake Rd, Wysox–41.77673 N, 76.40042 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Saturday, 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.
Carbon County – SGL 141 Maintenance Building, 526 Behrens Road, Jim Thorpe–40.9411 N, 75.6722 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Saturday, 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.
Lackawanna County – Fleetville Fire Company, 58 Firehouse Lane, Fleetville–41.59608 N, 75.71673 W
Saturday through Saturday 11/28-12/5, Noon-7 p.m.
Luzerne County – Northeast Region Office, 3917 Memorial Highway, Dallas–41.342975 N, 75.991387 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Monday through Friday 11/30-12/4, 8 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.
Monroe County – SGL 127 Building, 1305 Prospect Street, Tobyhanna–41.168317 N, 75.439614 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Saturday, 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.
Pike County – SGL 180 Shohola Building, Rt. 6 at Shohola Falls, 13 miles south of Hawley–41.3862 N, 74.9758 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Saturday, 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.

Southeast Region

Berks County – Southeast Region Office, 253 Snyder Road, 7 miles north of Reading–40.440840 N, 75.911236 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Monday through Friday 11/30-12/4, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.
Dauphin County – Game Commission Headquarters, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg–40.2934 N, 76.8553 W
Saturday 11/28 & Sunday 11/29, Noon-7 p.m.
Monday through Friday 11/30-12/4, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday 12/5, Noon-7 p.m.

JUNIOR HUNTS

SOME HUNTERS HAVE ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE SQUIRRELS, RABBITS, PHEASANTS & MIGRATORY WATERFOWL

Eligible hunters must abide by the same bag limits and regulations as during the regular seasons.

Junior **Squirrel** Hunt: Sept. 12-27
Junior **Rabbit** Hunt: Oct. 3-18
Junior **Pheasant** Hunt: Oct. 10-18
Youth Hunts for **Migratory Birds**: Dates vary by zone. See Page 45.

JUNIOR SQUIRREL & JUNIOR RABBIT HUNTS

Junior hunters and mentored hunters under age 17 can participate in the Junior Squirrel Hunt and the Junior Rabbit Hunt. Hunters must be accompanied as required by law. A hunting license is not required to hunt squirrels or rabbits if the participant has successfully completed a Hunter-Trapper Education course.

MIGRATORY WATERFOWL YOUTH HUNTS

Licensed junior and mentored youth hunters, can hunt ducks, mergansers, brant, coots, gallinules and Canada geese during selected days. Hunters 16 or older need a federal duck stamp (E-Stamp) to participate. All eligible hunters need a Pennsylvania migratory game bird license to participate. Dates vary by Duck Zone; see Page 45 for details.

JUNIOR PHEASANT HUNT

Junior hunters and all mentored hunters can participate in the Junior Pheasant Hunt. Hunters must be accompanied as required by law. To hunt pheasants, resident and nonresident junior hunting license holders and mentored hunters need a pheasant hunting permit. Junior hunters and mentored hunters under age 17 must obtain a free pheasant hunting permit. Those 17 and older must purchase a pheasant hunting permit. These permits are available online or from any issuing agent, cost $26.97 and must be signed and carried while hunting pheasants.

Junior Pheasant Hunt stocking locations are listed online at **pa.gov/pgc**, or can be obtained by contacting the Centralized Dispatch Center. Although pheasants may be hunted statewide (except in WPRAs) during the Junior Pheasant Hunt, birds will be stocked at specific locations.

SQUIRREL
6 daily, 18 possession
Combined Species

JUNIOR HUNT
Sept. 12-27

STATEWIDE
Sept. 12-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-Feb. 28, 2027

COTTONTAIL RABBIT
4 daily, 12 possession

JUNIOR HUNT
Oct. 3-18

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-Feb. 28, 2027

PHEASANT
2 daily, 6 possession

JUNIOR HUNT
Oct. 10-18

STATEWIDE
Oct. 24-Dec. 24 & Dec. 26-Feb. 28, 2027

Pheasant permit required for most pheasant hunters. Male and female pheasants may be taken in all WMUs.

BOBWHITE QUAIL
No Limit

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-March 31, 2027

There is no open season for quail and no release of quail in the Letterkenny Army Depot Bobwhite Quail Recovery Area

WOODCHUCK
No Limit

STATEWIDE
July 1-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-June 30, 2027

CROW
No Limit

STATEWIDE
Aug. 20-March 21, 2027
Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays only

RUFFED GROUSE
2 daily, 6 possession

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Dec. 24

SNOWSHOE HARE
1 daily, 3 season limit

STATEWIDE
Dec. 26-31

ARMS & AMMUNITION
1) Manually operated and semiautomatic 10-gauge or less shotguns with a capacity of no more than 3 shells in the chamber and magazine combined; 2) Manually operated and semi-automatic rifles and manually operated handguns .22-caliber rimfire or less; 3) Air-guns for small game in calibers from .177 to .22, for woodchucks at least .22-caliber, that propel a single-projectile or bullet. BB ammunition is prohibited. 4) Muzzleloading rifles and handguns .40-caliber or less, and shotguns 10-gauge or less; and 5) Long, recurve and compound bows and arrows, and crossbows. Single-projectile ammunition, or fine shot pellets no larger than No. 4 lead, bismuth-tin, or tungsten-iron, or other approved non-toxic shot or No. 2 steel. There is no restriction on magazine capacity for semiautomatic rifles used to hunt small game.

***Note:** Rifle and handgun caliber restrictions (except air-guns) do not apply when hunting woodchucks.*

FLUORESCENT ORANGE
Small game and porcupine hunters must wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange at all times on the head, chest and back combined. Woodchuck hunters must wear a solid fluorescent orange cap on the head. Orange must be visible 360 degrees. No orange is required for crow hunters.

PHEASANT PERMIT REQUIRED
All adult hunters and some senior hunters who pursue pheasants in Pennsylvania are required to purchase a pheasant permit in addition to a general hunting license or mentored permit. Pheasant permits cost $26.97 and must be signed and carried while hunting pheasants. Senior lifetime resident hunting or senior lifetime resident combination license holders who acquired their licenses **prior to May 13, 2017** are **exempt** from needing a pheasant permit. **Junior hunters and mentored permit holders under 17** need a **FREE permit**.

PHEASANT STOCKING
It is unlawful to discharge a firearm within 150 yards of a Game Commission vehicle if its occupants are releasing pheasants.

WILD PHEASANT RECOVERY AREAS
There is no open season for the taking of pheasants in any Wild Pheasant Recovery Area (WPRA), except the executive director may authorize limited pheasant hunting opportunities. All other small game species can be hunted in WPRAs when in season. Dog training is now permitted in WPRAs. For WPRA boundaries, **visit pa.gov/pgc**.

HUNTING PARTIES
It is unlawful to hunt small game in a party of more than six persons. This does not apply to waterfowl or dove hunters when hunting from a blind or other stationary positions.

TRANSPORTING SMALL GAME
Small game may be transported untagged by the owner. Small game unaccompanied by the owner must be labeled with the name, address, CID number and signature of the owner.

NO CLOSED SEASON, NO OPEN SEASON
English sparrows and European starlings can outcompete native species (such as eastern bluebirds, chickadees, woodpeckers and American kestrels) by taking over nest sites, destroying eggs, and killing the adults. English sparrows and European starlings may be taken in unlimited numbers, but cannot be hunted during the regular firearms deer season. There is no open season for pine martens or sharp-tailed grouse.

REGULAR FIREARMS DEER SEASON
Small game hunting now is allowed during the regular firearms deer season. For the most part, small game and deer cannot be hunted simultaneously during this time due to differing sporting arm and ammunition requirements for small game and big game. Woodchucks are the only small-game species that can be hunted with centerfire rifles and ammunition that might also be lawful to use for deer. When hunting any species, hunters must, at all times, comply with the sporting arm and ammunition requirements, as well as fluorescent orange requirements, for the species they're hunting. Hunters are not to possess unapproved arms or ammunition, or fail to meet the orange requirements, for the species they're hunting.

WATERFOWL & MIGRATORY

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

A general hunting license or mentored permit is required.

To hunt waterfowl, persons 16 and older are required to have a federal duck stamp, and if the actual stamp is carried it must be signed across the face. The Electronic Duck Stamp, or E-Stamp, version of the Federal Duck Stamp has now been authorized for use through the entirety of a waterfowl hunting season, and stamps can be purchased through HuntFish.PA.gov.

In addition, all hunters must have a Pennsylvania Migratory Game Bird License to hunt ducks, geese, doves, woodcock, brant, coots, gallinules, rails and snipe. Mentored hunters can purchase migratory game bird licenses and use them to hunt any migratory game bird species authorized for mentored hunting. This license may be obtained from any license issuing agent, or through **HuntFish.PA.gov**.

If a snow goose conservation season is held, participating hunters must purchase a Snow Goose Permit and submit a mandatory report on their hunting activity and harvest. For more information, visit **pa.gov/pgc** or call 1-833-PGC-HUNT.

ARMS & AMMUNITION

- Manual and semiautomatic shotguns no larger than 10-gauge with a capacity limited to no more than three shells in the chamber and magazine combined;
- Long, recurve and compound bows and arrows; and crossbows. Only non-toxic fine shot up to and including size T (.20 inches) is lawful for waterfowl. It is unlawful to hunt waterfowl with lead shot.

HUNTING PARTIES

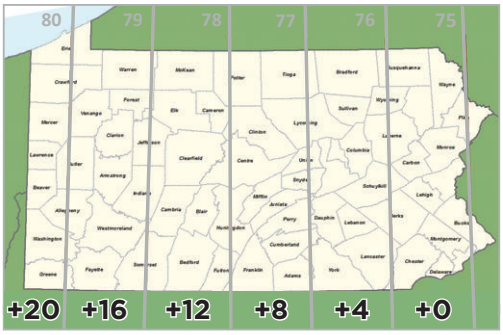
Waterfowl and dove hunters can hunt in a party of more than six persons as long as they are hunting from a blind or stationary position.

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

Hunting hours for the **entire dove season** are from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. Hunting hours during the **September Canada goose season** are from one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset. However, hunting hours for all waterfowl end at sunset on Youth Waterfowl Days. Hours for **all other migratory bird seasons** are from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset.

MERIDIAN MAP

Hunting hours begin and end 4 minutes later for each meridian west of the 75th.



SEE HUNTING HOURS PAGE FOR FULL-SIZE MAP

RESTRICTIONS

No person shall take migratory game birds:

- On Sundays;
- 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 the water);
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft;
- From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased;
- By the use or aid of live decoys. By 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 sailboat to put them in range of hunters;
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 30 days after the removal of the bait.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic decoys can be used to hunt waterfowl, doves and crows. "Ice-eaters," which disturb water to melt and prevent ice formation so waterfowl hunters can set out decoys also can be used.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Not required for waterfowl and dove hunters.

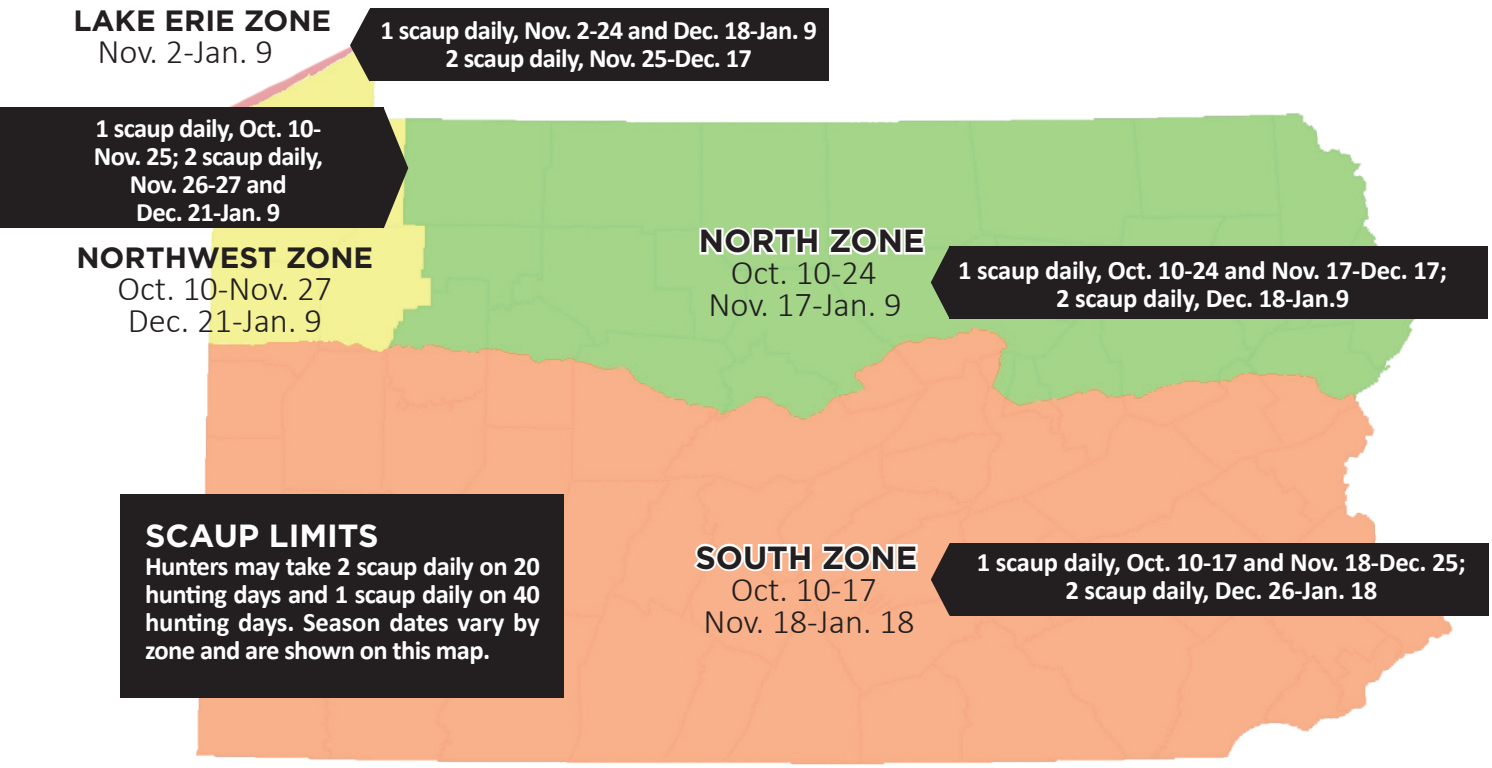
MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING HOURS TABLE

Dates	Begin A.M.	End P.M.	Dates	Begin A.M.	End P.M.
July 1 - 4	5:07	8:33	Jan. 3 - 9	6:53	4:48
July 5 - 11	5:12	8:30	Jan. 10 - 16	6:52	4:54
July 12- 18	5:17	8:26	Jan. 17 - 23	6:50	5:02
July 19 - 25	5:23	8:21	Jan. 24 - 30	6:46	5:10
July 26 - Aug. 1	5:29	8:14	Jan. 31 - Feb. 6	6:40	5:18
Aug. 2 - 8	5:36	8:06	Feb. 7 - 13	6:33	5:27
Aug. 9 - 15	5:42	7:57	Feb. 14 - 20	6:25	5:35
Aug. 16 - 22	5:49	7:47	Feb. 21 - 27	6:16	5:43
Aug. 23 - 29	5:56	7:37	Feb. 28 - Mar. 6	6:06	5:51
Aug. 30 - Sept. 5	6:02	7:26	Mar. 7 - 13	5:55	5:59
Sept. 6 - 12	6:09	7:14	**Mar. 14** - 20 *	6:44	7:06
Sept. 13 - 19	6:15	7:03	Mar. 21 - 27	6:33	7:14
Sept. 20 - 26	6:22	6:51	Mar. 28 - Apr. 3	6:21	7:21
Sept. 27 - Oct. 3	6:29	6:40	Apr. 4 - 10	6:10	7:28
Oct. 4 - 10	6:36	6:28	Apr. 11 - 17	5:59	7:35
Oct. 11 - 17	6:43	6:18	Apr. 18 - 24	5:49	7:42
Oct. 18 - 24	6:51	6:08	Apr. 25 - May 1	5:39	7:49
Oct. 25 - 31	6:59	5:59	May 2 - 8	5:30	7:56
Nov. 1 - 7 **	6:07	4:51	May 9 - 15	5:22	8:03
Nov. 8 - 14	6:15	4:45	May 16 - 22	5:15	8:10
Nov. 15 - 21	6:23	4:40	May 23 - 29	5:09	8:16
Nov. 22 - 28	6:30	4:37	May 30 - June 5	5:05	8:22
Nov. 29 - Dec. 5	6:37	4:35	June 6 - 12	5:02	8:27
Dec. 6 - 12	6:43	4:35	June 13 - 19	5:02	8:30
Dec. 13 - 19	6:48	4:36	June 20 - 26	5:03	8:33
Dec. 20 - 26	6:51	4:38	June 27 - 30	5:05	8:33
Dec. 27 - Jan. 2	6:53	4:42	**Daylight Saving Time Begins***		**Ends****

Add the minutes from the Meridian Map to the begin/end times on this table.

DUCKS, MERGANSERS & COOTS

Seasons for **Ducks, Sea Ducks, Coots and Mergansers** run concurrently, but each of the state's four zones has its own **opening and closing dates**. Waterfowl hunting is closed on Sundays.



The daily bag limit of six ducks or sea ducks is combined for any species with an open season, except for the following restrictions. Only 4 sea ducks may be taken daily. Daily limit may not include more than:

DUCKS

6 daily, 18 in possession

- 4 mallards
  **No more than 2 hens*
- 1 scaup (2 scaup at times)
- 2 black ducks
- 3 wood ducks
- 2 redheads
- 2 canvasbacks
- 3 pintail

SEA DUCKS

4 daily, 12 in possession

- 3 eiders
  **No more than 1 hen*
- 3 long-tailed ducks scoters
- 3 scoters

Possession limits are triple the daily limits.
There is no open season for Harlequin Ducks

MERGANSERS

5 daily, 15 in possession

Hooded mergansers are now part of the overall merganser limit.

COOTS

15 daily, 45 in possession

DUCK ZONE BOUNDARIES

Lake Erie Zone

Lake Erie, Presque Isle and the area within 150 yards of the Lake Erie shoreline.

Northwest Zone

The area bounded on the north by the Lake Erie Zone and including all of Erie and Crawford counties and all of Mercer and Venango counties north of I-80.

North Zone

The area east of the Northwest Zone and north of I-80 to Route 220, north from I-80 to I-180, north and east of I-180 from Route 220 to I-80, north of I-80 from I-180 to the Delaware River.

South Zone

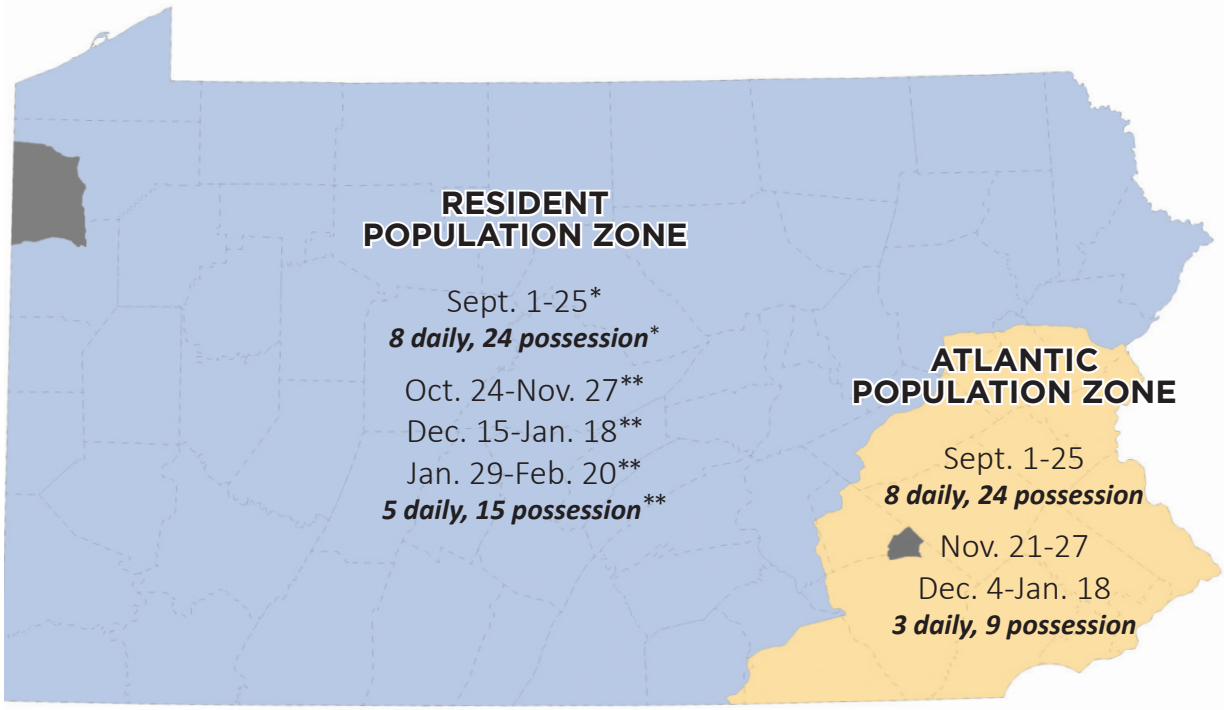
All of state not in the Lake Erie, Northwest and North Zones.

CANADA GEESE

Canada Goose hunting is open statewide, but season lengths and bag limits vary by zone.
Seasons for Canada geese include white-fronted geese.
Waterfowl hunting is closed on Sundays.

** In western Crawford County & northwestern Mercer County, the season runs from Sept. 1-12 with a daily limit of 1 and possession limit of 3.*

*** In western Crawford County & northwestern Mercer County, the daily limit is 3 and possession limit is 9.*



EXCEPTIONS

*Detailed maps of described areas available at **pa.gov/pgc***

September Season

1) In the area south of SR 198 from the Ohio state line to intersection of I-79, west of I-79 to SR 358, north of SR 358 to the Ohio state line: the season dates are Sept. 1 – Sept. 12. The daily bag limit is 1 Canada goose, possession limit 3: except on State Game Lands 214 where the season is closed to September goose hunting.

2) In the area of Lancaster and Lebanon counties north of the Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, east of SR 501 to SR 419, south of SR 419 to Lebanon-Berks county line, west of Lebanon-Berks county line and the Lancaster-Berks county line to SR 1053 (also known as Peartown Road and Greenville Road), west of SR 1053 to Pennsylvania Turnpike I-76, the daily bag limit is 1, possession limit 3; except on State Game Lands 46 (Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area) where the season is closed.

Note: The above exception area restrictions do not apply to youth participation on the September youth waterfowl day in the public hunting areas of SGL 214 and SGL 46. The Controlled Hunting Areas within the Wildlife Management Areas of SGL 214 and SGL 46 remain closed to September goose hunting. Hunting hours for all migratory birds, including Canada geese, close at sunset on youth waterfowl days.

Regular Season

Areas in the public hunting sections of SGL 46 (Middle Creek WMA) in Lebanon and Lancaster counties that are outside of the controlled goose hunting areas have a daily limit of 1, and a possession limit of 3 during the regular Canada goose season. Areas inside of the controlled goose hunting areas of SGL 46 (Middle Creek WMA) have a season limit of one.

GOOSE ZONE BOUNDARIES

Atlantic Population Zone

The area east of SR 97 from Maryland State Line to the intersection of SR 194, east of SR 194 to intersection of US Route 30, south of US Route 30 to SR 441, east of SR 441 to SR 743, east of SR 743 to intersection of I-81, east of I-81 to intersection of I-80, south of I-80 to New Jersey state line.

Resident Population Zone

All of Pennsylvania except for the Atlantic Population Zone.

Southern James Bay Population Zone

This zone has been dissolved and its area incorporated into the resident population zone due to a shift in migration patterns. However, different bag limits, and in some cases different seasons, continue to apply in parts of Crawford and Mercer counties.

LIGHT GEESE, BRANT & WEBLESS

LIGHT GEESE (Snow Geese & Ross' Geese) Closed on Sundays

25 daily, no possession limit

RESIDENT POPULATION ZONE

REGULAR SEASON
Nov. 6-March 10

CONSERVATION SEASON
To be determined following spring population surveys.

ATLANTIC POPULATION ZONE

REGULAR SEASON
Nov. 6-March 10

CONSERVATION SEASON
To be determined following spring population surveys.

CONSERVATION SEASON

During a conservation season, recorded or amplified calls or sounds are permitted. Hunters need a Snow Goose Permit, ($1.97 transaction fee), a federal duck stamp (E-Stamp), and a Pennsylvania Migratory Game Bird License.

WEBLESS BIRDS & BRANT Closed on Sundays

BRANT
1 daily, 3 possession
Federal duck stamp needed

BOTH GOOSE ZONES
Oct. 10-Nov. 13

WOODCOCK
3 daily, 9 possession

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Dec. 8

GALLINULES
3 daily, 9 possession

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Nov. 20

VIRGINIA & SORA RAILS
3 daily, 9 possession
Bag limit singly or combined

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Nov. 20
Clapper and King Rail hunting is closed statewide.

Except for crows, migratory bird hunting is closed on Sundays.

WILSON'S SNIPE
8 daily, 24 possession

STATEWIDE
Oct. 17-Dec. 8

DOVES
15 daily, 45 possession

STATEWIDE
Sept. 1-Nov. 27
Dec. 18-Jan. 2

LIFE JACKETS REQUIRED BY LAW
NOV. 1 TO APRIL 30

All boaters, including waterfowl hunters, must wear life jackets on boats less than 16 feet in length, or on any canoe or kayak during the cold-weather period from Nov. 1 through April 30.

Recreational boating fatalities that occur in Pennsylvania from November through April are primarily caused by the effects of cold-water immersion.

When water temperatures are less than 70 degrees Fahrenheit, cold-water shock is a major factor in boating fatalities.

Victims who wear a life jacket when exposed to cold water have potentially life-saving advantages, such as insulation from the cold, buoyancy for victims who are unable to tread water and reduced risk of aspiration of water.

In an effort to reduce the number of fatalities related to cold-water immersion, the Fish & Boat Commission has amended regulations to require life jackets to be worn on small and unstable boats during the period most noted for cold-water temperatures.

For other times of the year and on other types and sizes of boats, all boaters are required to have properly fitted personal flotation devices readily accessible. For more information on boating laws and safety, visit **fishandboat.com**.

YOUTH, VETERANS & MILITARY DAYS

Licensed junior and mentored youth hunters, military veterans and active military personnel can hunt ducks, mergansers, coots, gallinules, Canada geese and brant during selected days. Hunters 16 or older need a federal duck stamp (E-Stamp) to participate. All hunters need a Pennsylvania migratory game bird license. Regular season bag limits and other restrictions apply. Check **pa.gov/pgc** for more details.

Statewide
Youth only – Sept. 19

North Zone
Youth, veterans and active military – Oct. 31
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 16

Northwest Zone
Youth, veterans and active military – Sept. 26
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 16

Lake Erie Zone
Youth, veterans and active military – Oct. 24
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 16

South Zone
Youth, veterans and active military – Nov. 7
Veterans and active military only – Jan. 23

SPECIAL HUNTS

DRAWING FOR SPECIAL HUNTS

The Game Commission conducts several special hunts at the **Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area** in Crawford County and the **Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area** in Lebanon and Lancaster counties.

These consist of waterfowl, deer, and adult mentored hunts at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, and goose, youth waterfowl, youth turkey, and deer hunts at Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area. Permittees to hunt these areas are selected only by drawings held prior to the hunting season. Individuals can apply for a hunt at no cost but must hold an active license or permit, or have one in their "cart" at the time of application. Applications may be submitted online at HuntFish.PA.gov or at any Game Commission region office or the agency's Harrisburg headquarters.

For more information on these hunts and how to apply, use the QR code to the right or visit the Game Commission's website, **pa.gov/pgc**.

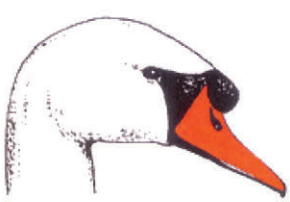
Hunters are encouraged to frequently check the website for the most up-to-date information regarding the special hunt programs.

REPORT BANDED BIRDS

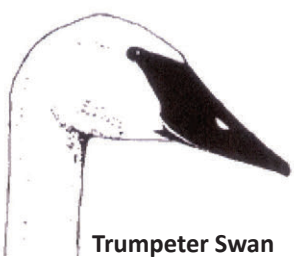
Hunters can report bird bands online at **reportband.gov**. In addition to band numbers, information requested includes when, where and what species of waterfowl were killed. The age and sex of the bird and where it was banded will be provided to the hunter by email. Online reporting provides better data quality and lowers costs.

SWANS

Mute swans are non-native and not protected under state or federal law. Hunters may harvest mute swans and they do not count as part of the daily bag. Taking mute swans on private property requires landowner permission. Mute swans have an orange bill with a black fleshy knob on top at the feather line. Mute swans do not feed in fields and are encountered only in wetlands. **Native tundra and trumpeter swans are protected.** They have a black bill and commonly are found in fields and wetlands. Sandhill cranes are likely to be present in certain areas and are protected.



Mute Swan



Trumpeter Swan

Tundra Swan

WHY HUNTING DOGS SHOULD BE LICENSED

A hunting dog is a partner in the field and a valuable investment. In Pennsylvania, licensing your dog is required and essential.

IT'S THE LAW: All dogs must be licensed when you buy or adopt them (earliest is 8 weeks old) or 3 months of age, whichever comes first, to avoid fines.

GET YOUR DOG BACK FAST: Hunting dogs can roam far. A license tag helps return them quickly.

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT: A small cost gives your dog clear identification.

BUILD TRUST: Licensed dogs show responsibility and help maintain landowner access.

AVOID CONFUSION: A tag shows your dog is owned, not a stray.

SIMPLE AND AFFORDABLE: For $10.80 annually, you protect your dog and dogs across Pennsylvania every day. A Lifetime license costs $52.80 (dog must be either chipped or tattooed for eligibility). Discounts available for seniors or individuals with disabilities.

SUPPORT COMMUNITIES: License fees help wardens stop puppy mills, inspect kennels, monitor dangerous dogs, prevent the spread of infectious and contagious diseases, and support shelters and agriculture.

PA.GOV/DOGLICENSE

LICENSE YOUR DOG.

HUNTING

COYOTE
No Limit
No closed season, with certain exceptions during big-game seasons

RACCOON
No Limit
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027
May only be hunted from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise Nov. 28-Dec. 13

FOX
No Limit
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027
May only be hunted from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise Nov. 28-Dec. 13

OPOSSUM, STRIPED SKUNK & WEASEL
No Limit
July 1-June 30, 2027
May only be hunted from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise Nov. 28-Dec. 13

BOBCAT
1 per license year with permit
Jan. 9-Feb. 3, 2027

WMUS 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E & 5A

PORCUPINE
3 daily, 10 per season
Oct. 10-Nov. 27
Dec. 14-Dec. 24
Dec. 26-Jan. 31, 2027
Porcupines may not be hunted at night.

TRAPPING
A furtaker license is needed to trap all furbearers, including coyotes.

FOX & COYOTE
No Limit

GENERAL
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027

CABLE RESTRAINTS
Dec. 26-Feb. 21, 2027

BOBCAT
1 per license year with permit
Dec. 19-Jan. 10, 2027

WMUS 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E & 5A

RACCOON, OPOSSUM STRIPED SKUNK & WEASEL
No Limit
Oct. 24-Feb. 21, 2027

MINK & MUSKRAT
No Limit
Nov. 21-Jan. 10, 2027

FISHER
1 per license year with permit
Dec. 19-Jan. 10, 2027

WMUS 1B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D & 4E

BEAVER
Dec. 19-March 31, 2027

WMUS 1A & 1B
(Combined) 20 daily, 60 per season

WMUS 2A, 2B & 3C
(Combined) 20 daily, 40 per season

WMUS 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 3A, 3B, 3D, 5C & 5D
(Combined) 20 daily, 20 per season

WMUS 2G, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E, 5A & 5B
(Combined), 5 daily, 5 per season

RIVER OTTER
1 per license year with permit
Feb. 13-21, 2027

WMUS 1A, 1B, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C & 4E

LICENSES AND PERMITS
A furtaker license is required to trap furbearers, and is required to hunt most of them. Coyotes can be hunted with a hunting license, but within a big-game season, a hunter must have valid harvest tags for big game that's in season. If you're out of big-game tags, you'll need a furtaker license to hunt coyotes. Porcupines may be hunted with a hunting or furtaker license. In addition to a furtaker license, permits are required for bobcat, fisher and otter.

FIREARMS WHILE TRAPPING
To dispatch trapped animals during deer season, trappers are limited to semiautomatic or manually operated .22 caliber rimfire or smaller rifles, manually operated .22 caliber or smaller rimfire handguns, or manually operated or semiautomatic air- or gas-operated rifles, manually operated handguns, that are .177 to .22 caliber. Persons under 12 may use a .22 caliber or smaller rimfire rifle, but only when accompanied by an adult.

FIREARMS FOR HUNTING FURBEARERS
It is unlawful to take furbearers, including bobcats, with shotguns using shot larger than size No. 4 buckshot, or implements that are not lawful firearms, bows or crossbows. Semiautomatic and manually operated rifles, manually operated handguns of any caliber, manual or semiautomatic shotguns, and bows and crossbows can be used. Muzzleloading rifles or handguns that propel single-projectile ammunition can be used. Air- or gas-operated firearms that are at least .22 caliber and propel a single-projectile pellet or bullet can be used. Persons hunting coyotes, foxes, bobcats, raccoons, striped skunks, opossums and weasels may use gun-mounted lights that do not project a laser-light beam, as well as handheld and sporting-arm mounted night-vision and infrared (thermal) optics.

See Special Regulations Areas section on Page 13 for restrictions that apply there.

COYOTES
There is no closed season for the hunting of coyotes. Coyotes may be hunted on Sundays throughout the year. There are additional requirements for hunting coyotes during big-game seasons.

Outside of Any Big Game Season
- Coyotes may be taken with a hunting license or a furtaker license and without wearing orange.

During Any Big Game Season
- Coyotes may be taken while lawfully hunting big game (big-game orange requirements must be followed) or with a furtaker license.

Bait and Devices
- Natural or manmade nonliving bait and any electronic or mechanical device may be used to attract coyotes for hunting or trapping.

Bait Visible From the Air
- It is unlawful to bait a trap with meat, animal products or their facsimiles if the bait is visible from the air. Those **hunting coyotes**, however, may hunt over bait visible from the air.

BIG GAME SEASONS

Foxes, raccoons, opossums, striped skunks and weasels may be hunted any hour, day or night, except during the overlap with regular firearms deer season, when hunting only may occur after legal hours for deer have closed. Furbearers may be hunted on Sundays throughout their open seasons. During the overlap with any big-game season, coyotes may be hunted while lawfully hunting big game (big-game orange requirements must be followed) or with a furtaker license.

SETTING TRAPS

It is unlawful to 1) stake or set traps prior to 7 a.m. on the first day of a season; 2) set traps within 5 feet of a hole or den, except for underwater sets; 3) use pole traps, jaw-toothed traps, deadfalls, poison, explosives, chemicals, or traps with a jaw-spread exceeding 6½ inches as measured to the outside of the jaw; 4) set body-gripping traps outside a watercourse, waterway, marsh, pond or dam; 5) set a trap not marked with one durable identification tag attached to either the trap or chain showing the first and last name and address of the trapper, or a number issued by the Game Commission; 6) set a trap with bait visible from the air; 7) smoke or dig out a den or house or cut den trees; 8) disturb traps or remove any wildlife from the traps of another without specific permission; and 9) on the closing day, fail to remove traps by sunset. *Note: Beaver and otter regulations differ; see Page 51, where you will also find information on handling and avoiding incidental otter captures.*

TENDING TRAPS

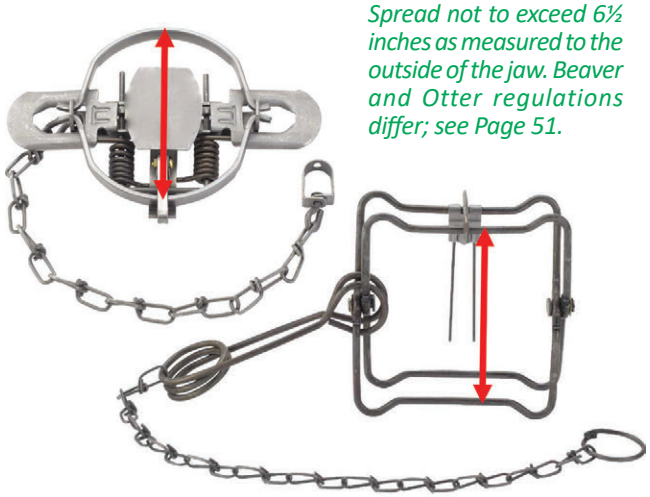
Traps must be visited by the owner once every 36 hours, and each animal removed or released.

UNLAWFUL DEVICES

It is unlawful to take furbearers through the use of fish hooks, snagging hooks or any other hooks of similar design, or implements that are not lawful traps.

MEASURING JAW SPREAD

When measuring the jaw spread of a foot-hold or body-gripping trap, the term "jaw-spread" is the width or the distance between the striking bars of the trap when it is set. This measurement includes the outside measurement of the jaw striking bar.



Spread not to exceed 6½ inches as measured to the outside of the jaw. Beaver and Otter regulations differ; see Page 51.

DOGS

Dogs are permitted to hunt furbearers. Hunting furbearers with dogs during regular firearms deer and bear seasons is prohibited. The change does not impact the lawful nighttime hunting of furbearers during open seasons.

POSSESSION

It is unlawful to 1) possess green pelts (not dried, cured or tanned), except during open season and for 10 days thereafter; 2) possess live, wild furbearers, except foxes, for which a permit must be issued by the Game Commission; and 3) buy, sell or possess furbearers or parts unlawfully taken, transported, imported, exported or improperly tagged.

EXPORTING/IMPORTING FURS

It is unlawful to ship furs or harvested furbearers outside the state unless an official "Shipping Tag" is properly attached. Tags are available from Game Commission offices and licensed fur dealers. Furs and furbearers taken outside of Pennsylvania must be tagged according to laws of the state or country where harvested.

FOOT-ENCAPSULATING TRAP

A device that has all triggering and restraining mechanisms enclosed by a housing that, once set, allows access to the triggering and restraining mechanisms through a single opening not to exceed 2 inches in diameter or diagonally and is anchored by a swivel-mounted anchoring mechanism. Encapsulating traps may be used to harvest furbearers during legal seasons.

CAGE AND BOX TRAPS

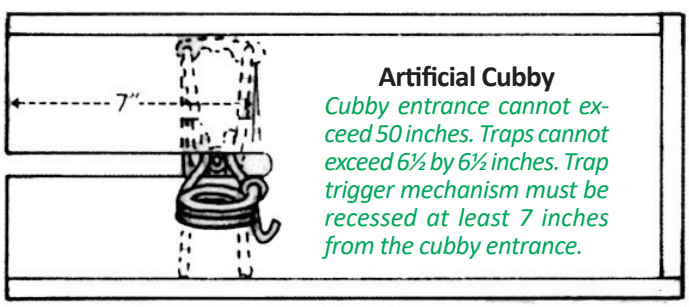
Cage and box traps can be used to take furbearers, however it is unlawful to 1) use a cage or box trap in water; and 2) use a cage or box trap capable of capturing more than one animal at a time.

ARTIFICIAL CUBBY

An artificial cubby is a baited enclosure constructed of natural or artificial material that is designed to house and corral a furbearer into a body-gripping trap. Furtakers are permitted to trap furbearers using body-gripping traps set in artificial cubbies when all of the following conditions are met: 1) The artificial cubby is placed within an established watercourse, waterway, marsh, pond or dam. 2) The entrance to the artificial cubby does not exceed 50 square inches. 3) Traps are no larger than 6½ x 6½ inches. 4) The triggering mechanism of the trap is recessed within the artificial cubby at least 7 inches from the entrance. 5) The artificial cubby is anchored in a manner that it cannot be moved or rolled.

NOTES:

- *These requirements do not apply to snap traps that are set in artificial cubbies to target **weasel**.*
- *Requirements 2 through 5 shall not apply to body-gripping traps that are 5½ inches or less and set in artificial cubbies to target **mink or muskrat**.*

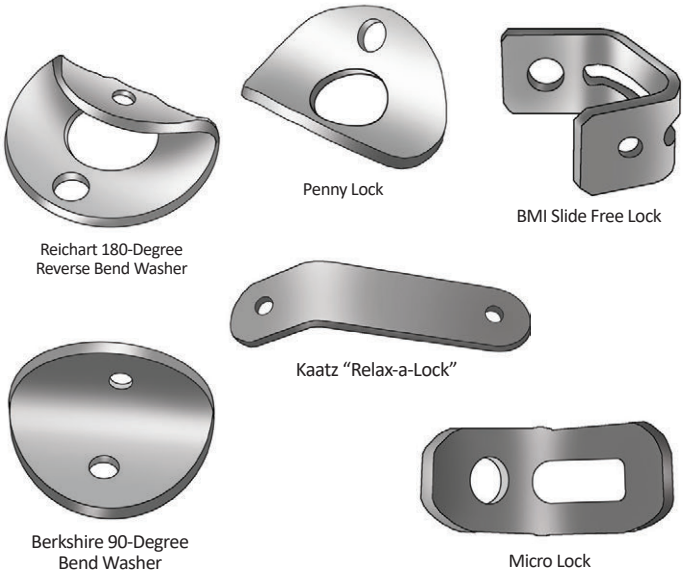


Artificial Cubby

Cubby entrance cannot exceed 50 inches. Traps cannot exceed 6½ by 6½ inches. Trap trigger mechanism must be recessed at least 7 inches from the cubby entrance.

CABLE RESTRAINTS

APPROVED CABLE RESTRAINT & SNARE LOCKS:



Reichart 180-Degree Reverse Bend Washer

Penny Lock

BMI Slide Free Lock

Kaatz "Relax-a-Lock"

Berkshire 90-Degree Bend Washer

Micro Lock

CERTIFICATION NEEDED

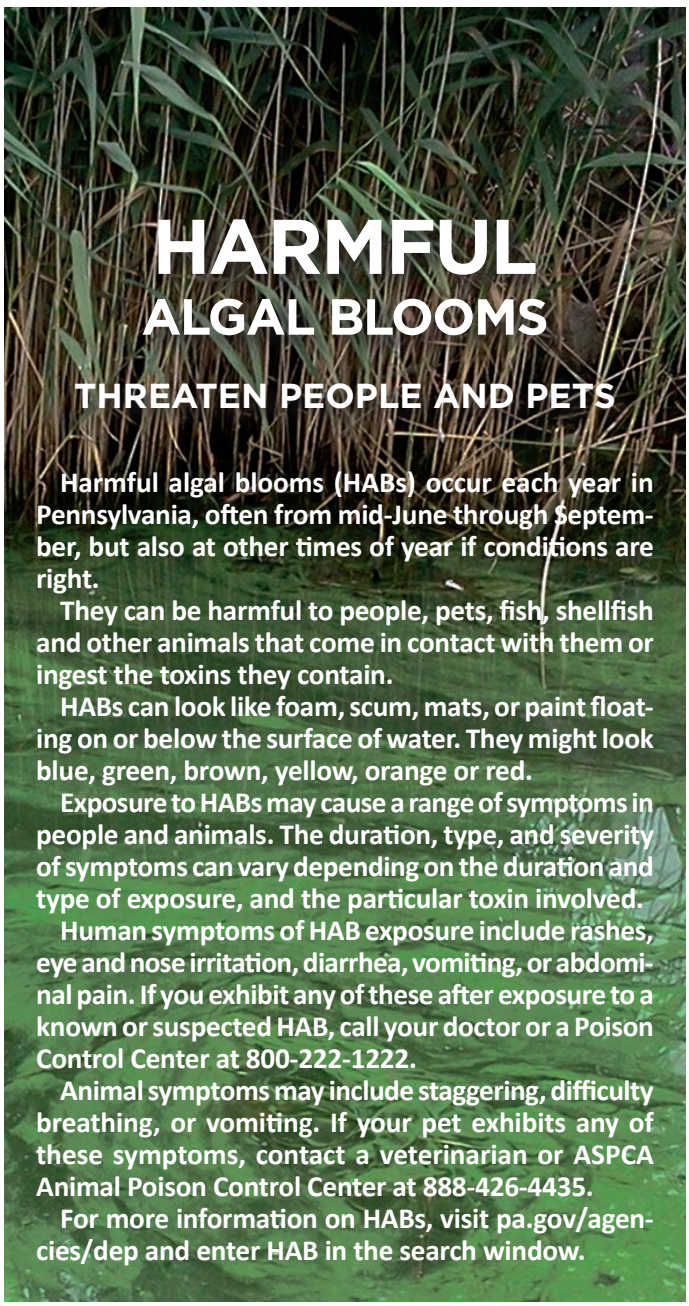
To view cable restraint training course schedules, visit **pa.gov/pgc**, or contact the Game Commission's Hunter-Trapper Education Division at 717-787-7015.

Trappers shall keep the certificate from the training course in possession while setting or checking sets using cable restraints, and present the certificate upon the request of a game warden.

In addition to the certificate, those using cable restraints must possess a valid furtaker license, or qualify for license and fee exemptions under Section 2706 of the act relating to resident license and fee exemptions, or qualify for trapping exceptions under Section 2363 of the act relating to trapping exceptions for certain persons.

CABLE RESTRAINT REGULATIONS

- Cable restraints are permitted only for foxes and coyotes during late winter periods (Dec. 26-Feb. 21, 2027), when freezing conditions render traditional methods ineffective.
- Cable restraints must be made of a galvanized stranded steel cable with a diameter of not less than 3/32 of an inch. The cable must be constructed of 7 bundles of 7 wires per bundle (7x7), 7 bundles of 19 wires per bundle (7x19), or 1 bundle comprised of 19 wires (1X19). The cable may not exceed 7 feet in length from the anchor point to the lock contacting the fully closed loop stop, must be equipped with at least one swivel device (which allows for 360-degree rotation) between the loop and the anchor, and must have stops affixed to the cable to ensure that the circumference of the cable that makes up the loop may not be greater than 38 inches when fully open, or less than 8 inches when fully closed. Cable restraint loops must be set so that the bottom of the loop is no less than 6 and no greater than 12 inches above the first surface beneath the cable restraint. Cable restraints must be equipped with an approved lock, and the lock may not be constructed with moving parts.
- A cable restraint must include a breakaway device affixed between the lock and cable or at the end of the cable that is rated at 375 pounds or less.
- A cable must be maintained so that all components operate properly.
- Cable restraints must be anchored to prevent the animal from moving the restraint from place of capture.
- Cable restraints may not be set where entanglement may occur or where the animal may become suspended.
- Trappers eligible to use cable restraints for foxes and coyotes can keep non-target furbearers that are incidentally captured in a cable restraint if there is an open trapping season in which those furbearers are legal for harvest, and the trapper has a license or permit for that furbearer.
- Bobcats may not be taken in cable restraints during the bobcat hunting season. Other wildlife mistakenly killed with cable restraints must be reported to the Centralized Dispatch Center to have a game warden respond, 1-833-PGC-HUNT.



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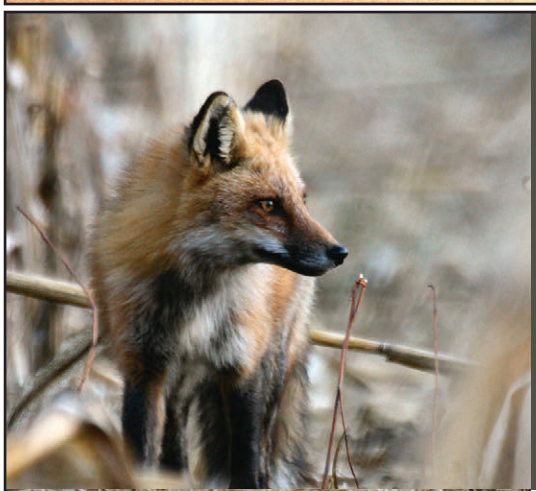


BECOME A FURBEARER COOPERATOR TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CONSERVATION!

Pennsylvania furbearer cooperators help shape the future of wildlife management by providing carcasses, participating in surveys, and sharing trail camera photos.

Cooperators will receive annual newsletters and updates on furbearer research in Pennsylvania.

TO LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED, EMAIL FURBEARERS@PA.GOV.

BOBCAT, FISHER AND OTTER PERMITS

Bobcats, fishers and river otters can be taken only by furtakers holding valid species-specific permits. All furtakers may purchase one permit for each species during the 2026-27 season. Furtakers may take no more than one animal with each permit. Each permit costs $6.97. Harvests must be reported.

PERMIT PURCHASES

Bobcat permits, fisher permits and otter permits are available through any license issuing agent and through **HuntFish.PA.gov**. Permits must be purchased before the start of each respective season. **Bobcat and fisher permits must be purchased before Dec. 19. Otter permits must be purchased before Feb. 13.**

If You Harvest a Bobcat or Fisher

A permitted person taking a bobcat or fisher shall, immediately before removing the animal from the harvest site, fully complete and attach to the animal the harvest tag furnished with the permit. The tag shall remain attached to the animal until it is mounted, tanned, made into a commercial fur or prepared for consumption. A CITES tag automatically will be issued for bobcats that may be exported or sold. A CITES tag is not required for a fisher pelt. Within 48 hours of harvesting a bobcat, fisher, or otter, a permit holder must report the harvest to the Game Commission through **HuntFish.PA.gov**, or by calling 1-800-838-4431.

If You Harvest an Otter

Before removing an otter from the location where it was caught, successful permit holders must immediately complete and attach to the otter the carcass tag furnished with the permit, and report their harvest within 48 hours through **HuntFish.PA.gov**, or by calling 1-800-838-4431. The harvest tag must remain attached to the otter until a plastic CITES tag is attached, if applicable, or the animal is mounted, tanned, made into a commercial fur or prepared for consumption.

Beaver and Otter Regulations

In addition to general trapping regulations, it is unlawful to: 1) destroy, disturb or interfere with a beaver dam or house; 2) use other than raw, native wood and stone materials to direct the travel of beavers or otters (manmade materials may be used only to support traps or snares); 3) place, check, reset or tend a trap or snare on an established beaver dam or beaver house, or within 15 feet of either a dam or a house. Measurement shall be from directly above the trap or snare, across the water, ice or land to the nearest point of the structure; 4) check or maintain a beaver or otter trap, or remove a beaver or otter unless the person who owns the trap is present; 5) set body-gripping traps larger than 14 inches in width or height.

ACCIDENTAL OTTER CAPTURES

REPORTING

Incidental capture reporting is critical in both **tracking populations** throughout the state and making decisions about **harvest opportunities** within Wildlife Management Units. If an otter is captured accidentally, report it to the local game warden through the Centralized Dispatch Center at 1-833-PGC-HUNT.

AVOIDING

To avoid the **accidental capture of otters while trapping beavers**, trappers are urged to learn to identify otter sign and, where otters exist, to adopt the following recommendations:

- When using snares, set snare loops at 10 to 12 inches in diameter.
- Use baited sets for beavers where feasible.
- Avoid main channels in ponds and primary crossings where otter sign is present.

TRAPPING DEVICE LIMITATIONS

Snares

A legal snare for beaver and otter trapping must be looped galvanized stranded steel cable 3/32 inches in diameter, equipped with the approved locks required for cable restraints. A metal ferrule shall be crimped on the cable to prevent the snare loop from closing to a circumference less than 7 inches. It is unlawful to equip snares with a spring-activating mechanism or any device designed to aid in closing the snare loop. Snares used for taking beavers must be set completely or partially submerged in water within a waterway, watercourse, marsh, pond or dam.

Trap Tagging Requirements for Beaver and Otter

There must be one durable identification tag attached to each trap or snare by means of an extension wire of sufficient length so that the name tag or a number issued by the Game Commission is completely above the water or ice level and totally visible. The tag must list the owner's first and last name and legal home address, or a number issued by the Game Commission.

Number of Devices

The number of trapping devices allowed for beaver and otter trapping differs depending on furbearer species, WMU trapped, and beaver/otter season overlap.

Otter Trapping

It is unlawful for otter trappers to set, tend or operate more than a combined total of five traps or snares, no more than two of which may be body-gripping traps.

Beaver Trapping During Otter Season

Where beaver season overlaps with otter season by calendar date within WMUs 1A, 1B, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C & 4E, it is unlawful for beaver trappers to set, tend or operate more than a combined total of five traps or snares, no more than two of which may be body-gripping traps.

Beaver Trapping

Where no overlap of otter and beaver seasons occurs by both calendar date and WMU, it is unlawful for beaver trappers to set, tend or operate more than a combined statewide total of 20 traps or snares, no more than 10 of which may be traps. No more than two of the traps may be body-gripping traps, except in WMUs where beaver bag limits are 40 per season all 10 traps may be body-gripping traps. In WMUs where beaver bag limits are 60 per season, all 20 traps or snares may be body-gripping traps. *Please review the Accidental Otter Capture information to the left.*

BEAVER SEASON LIMIT

Trappers may legally take up to 125 beavers with the combined harvest in multiple Wildlife Management Units in a season. When trapping in multiple WMUs, a trapper may set or tend up to 10 traps, up to 20 snares, and not more than a total of 20 devices statewide. Beavers or pelts do not need to be tagged.

POACHERS ARE THIEVES

HELP US CATCH THEM!

REPORTING A VIOLATION

Have you witnessed a wildlife crime involving deer, turkey, bear, or elk or a species that is protected, endangered, or threatened?

CALL OPERATION GAME THIEF'S TOLL-FREE HOTLINE

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year – to report wildlife violations or fill out an online form. Calls are answered by a secure recording device, and callers may remain confidential. However, those who wish to claim any monetary reward must provide contact information.

TIPS FOR REPORTING WILDLIFE CRIMES:

- Gather as much information as possible.
- Get an accurate physical description and any other pertinent information.
- Share when and what type of violation occurred.
- Report the number and species of wildlife involved.
- Describe the suspect's vehicle and any distinguishing features.
- Note other physical evidence, such as hides, entrails, firearms, and cartridge casings.

REPORT WILDLIFE VIOLATIONS

Report online by following the QR code ***OR*** calling **1-888-PGC-8001**

RMEF AUCTION & KECA RAFFLE TAGS	ARCHERY SEASON	FIRST REGULAR SEASON	SECOND REGULAR SEASON	THIRD REGULAR SEASON
July 1-Nov. 8	Sept. 12-27	Oct. 3-11	Oct. 31-Nov. 8	Jan. 9-17, 2027

Elk licenses are awarded by lottery. The number of licenses available in each Elk Hunt Zone, and the elk seasons for which licenses are available, are allocated annually by the Game Commission. Licensed elk hunters are limited to harvesting one antlered or one antlerless elk, depending on the license they obtain.

HOW TO APPLY: (DEADLINE: 11:59 P.M. JULY 12)

A valid Pennsylvania hunting license is now required to apply for an elk license, though a hunting license and elk license application may be purchased in the same transaction.

The elk license application process also has changed.

Each applicant now submits a single application, which costs $11.97. Applicants then select up to five options covering the **elk season** and **Elk Hunt Zone** for which they're applying, and whether they want to hunt **antlered or antlerless** elk. Each applicant must select at least one option, but each option represents a chance to draw a license, so selecting more options puts you in the running for more opportunities.

Hunters should note the Elk Hunt Zones have been reconfigured and renamed. A map and descriptions of the **new Elk Hunt Zones** are provided in this digest, as is a map of the previous Elk Hunt Zones so hunters can compare the two and locate the areas where they want to apply. Detailed maps of the new Elk Hunt Zones are available at pa.gov/pgc.

There now are 11 established Elk Hunt Zones, numbered 300 through 310, with 2026-27 elk licenses allocated for nine zones.

There is also a **new elk season** this year – the First Regular Season (Oct. 3-11), in which hunters may use centerfire rifles and other sporting arms authorized for regular elk seasons.

Apply online by logging into your HuntFish.PA.gov account, or **apply in person** at any hunting license agent location.

A hunter drawn for an elk license must obtain an elk license to hunt elk, and may hunt in the season and Elk Hunt Zone for which the license is valid. Only one antlered or one antlerless elk may be taken with a license, depending on the tag issued.

By regulation, no more than 10% of available elk licenses can be awarded to nonresidents.

BONUS POINTS: A bonus point is awarded each time a hunter applies for an elk license and isn't drawn. Then, when the hunter applies again, each bonus point accumulated will serve as an additional application.

Hunters retain all bonus points they accumulate until drawing an elk license. With the change to a single elk license application, instead of separate applications for different elk seasons, any bonus points a hunter accumulated through previous applications have been pooled. For the 2026-27 seasons, a hunter can have a maximum of 37 bonus points.

Hunters can review their bonus points, as well as check on the status of an elk application, at **HuntFish.PA.gov**.

ELK LICENSE DRAWINGS are scheduled to occur on July 25, 2026 at the Elk Country Visitor Center near Winslow Hill in Benezette Township. If drawn, a Pennsylvania resident may purchase an elk license for $25; nonresidents for $250.

Once drawn for an antlerless elk license, a hunter's bonus points reset to zero, but the hunter is free to apply again in coming years. Once drawn for an antlered elk license, a hunter is ineligible to apply for an antlered elk license again.

ARMS & AMMUNITION

Manually operated centerfire rifles and handguns at least .26 caliber that propel single-projectile ammunition 120 grains or larger. Manually operated or semiautomatic centerfire shotguns at least 12-gauge firing a single projectile. Muzzleloading firearms at least .50 caliber propelling a single projectile weighing at least 210 grains. A bow with a minimum draw weight of 45 pounds. Any arrow, or crossbow bolt, with a broadhead that has a fixed or mechanical tip having sharpened cutting edges consisting of metal or naturally occurring stone. The broadhead must have an outside diameter or width of at least 1 inch, and the length may not exceed 3.25 inches. Crossbows must have a minimum peak draw weight of 125 pounds.

FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Except during the archery season, elk hunters and those accompanying them must wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange, visible 360 degrees, on the head, chest and back combined. Camouflage-fluorescent orange may satisfy this regulation if the total orange content is at least 250 square inches.

TAGGING, REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A successful hunter must attach the tag to the ear of an elk immediately after harvest and before the carcass is moved. In addition, within 24 hours, each hunter who harvests an elk must take it, along with his or her hunting license and elk license, to a Game Commission check station. Hunters will receive instructions for the location and hours of the elk check station in the mail prior to the season.

ELK GUIDES

Elk guides are an optional service available to licensed elk hunters. Elk guides are regulated by the Game Commission and the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and offer various services to the hunter.

DRIVING & FEEDING ELK

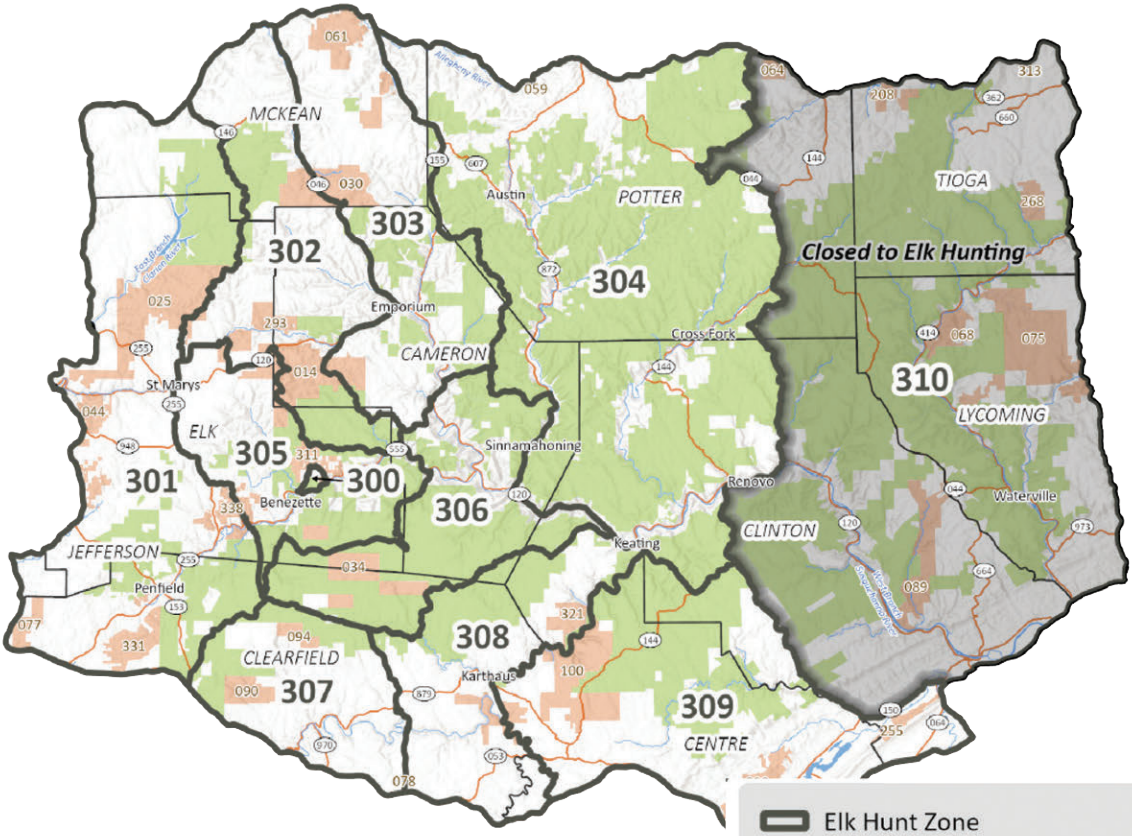
It is unlawful to drive or herd elk. It is unlawful to feed elk at any time of year.

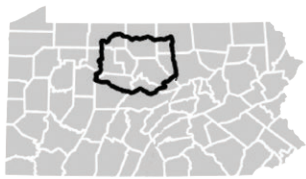
CHANGES FOR THE 2026-27 SEASONS

- A Pennsylvania general hunting license is needed to apply for an elk license.
- No more than 10% of available elk licenses will be awarded to nonresidents.
- Antlered elk licenses are once in a lifetime. Those drawn for antlered elk licenses will be ineligible to apply to hunt bulls again, but still may apply for antlerless elk licenses.
- A new early October firearms elk season will create additional opportunity and limit crowding across Elk Hunt Zones.
- There's a new application process and revised Elk Hunt Zones. Hunters retain all their bonus points and submit one elk license application instead of separate applications for different seasons.

ELK

Pennsylvania's Elk Hunt Zones have been adjusted this year, with the new zones numbered 300 to 310, as shown on the map below. Elk Hunt Zone boundaries are described on the next page. Hunters applying for elk licenses should familiarize themselves with the new zones. Applicants select up to five options covering the season, Elk Hunt Zone and choice to hunt antlered or antlerless elk.

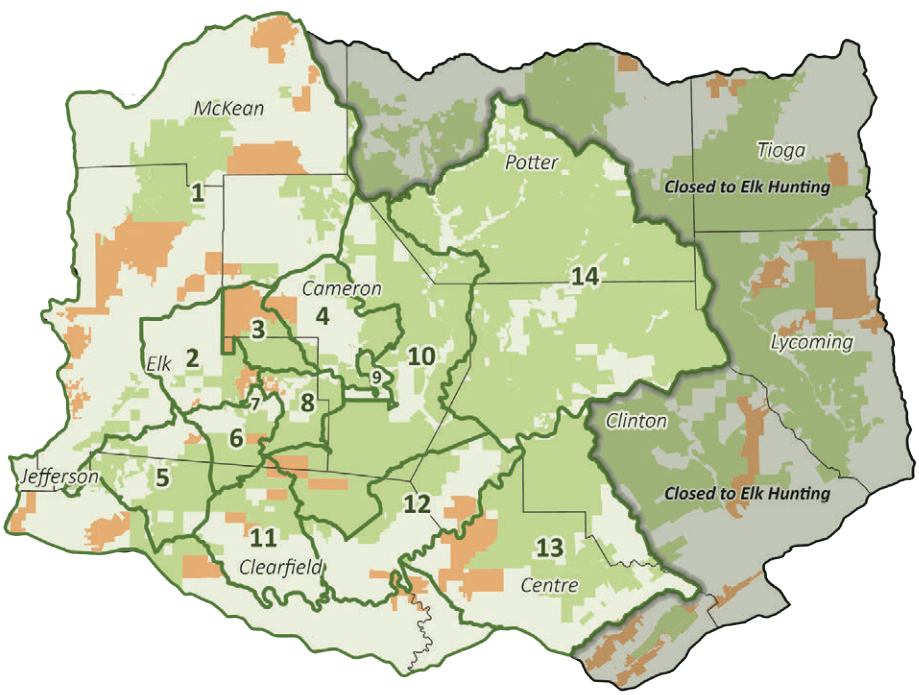




The Elk Management Area is in northcentral Pennsylvania, outlined in black on the map above, and shown in greater detail at left

SELECTING YOUR SPOTS

For comparison, a map showing the previous Elk Hunt Zones is provided at right. Hunters can use this map to see how the new and old zones overlap, and narrow down which of the new zones they'd like to select as preferences when applying for an elk license. Use this map for comparison only. The new Elk Hunt Zones, which are shown above, are numbered 300 to 310.



All Elk Hunt Zones have been adjusted for the 2026-27 elk hunting seasons. The new zones have more-readily identifiable boundaries, better encapsulate subpopulations of elk and, on average, have an increased proportion of public land. Descriptions of the new Elk Hunt Zones appear below. Detailed maps of the zones are available at pa.gov/pgc.

ELK HUNT ZONE 300 *(Closed to elk hunting)*: This is the area immediately surrounding the Elk Country Visitor Center and the town of Benezette.

ELK HUNT ZONE 301 *(448 square miles, 38% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, the elk population in this zone is relatively low and there are high human/elk conflicts, especially in and around Weedville. The elk tend to be nomadic in this area and most of the successful hunters have harvested elk on private land. A great deal of preseason scouting, local knowledge, and/or the use of an outfitter is advised for this zone.

ELK HUNT ZONE 302 *(231 square miles, 38% public land)*: Encompassing a large portion of SGL 14 and the Elk State Forest, this zone has a healthy population of elk. Extensive habitat work was recently completed on SGL 14 and the Elk State Forest contains managed openings, too. Some of the better areas may require walking a few miles, including several hundred feet of elevation gain, so it helps to be in good physical shape to hunt this area. Due to the extensive amount of public land, this is a good area for all hunters.

ELK HUNT ZONE 303 *(251 square miles, 40% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, with one large private land holding open to public hunting (Lyme Conservation Easement), this zone contains good access throughout the area and holds a good population of elk. Access to some private farms may increase hunter success, but huntable populations of elk can be found on accessible public and private land.

ELK HUNT ZONE 304 *(724 square miles, 76% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, the elk population is growing and the elk mostly occur along the First Fork and the Main Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek and in the Kettle Creek Valley. Due to the high elk population and good access to public land, this zone is a good choice for any hunter.

ELK HUNT ZONE 305 *(152 square miles, 50% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, this zone has a good population of elk that mostly reside on SGL 311, the Elk State Forest and along the Bennett Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek. Some of the private property in this zone is open to hunting, and there are enough elk on public land that a self-guided hunter could be successful, but a great deal of preseason scouting, local knowledge, and/or the use of an outfitter should be considered. This zone surrounds the town of Benezette and the Elk Country Visitor Center with the majority of the elk viewing opportunities, hunters should be cognizant of this and avoid hunting in highly visible areas.

ELK HUNT ZONE 306 *(193 square miles, 91% public land)*: Located on a great deal of public land, this zone contains a good population of elk. Elk can be found across the Quehanna Plateau and there is plenty of public land that holds elk. Some of the better areas require a few miles of walking, so it helps to be in good physical shape to hunt this zone. Due to the extensive amount of public land, this is a good area for all hunters.

ELK HUNT ZONE 307 *(143 square miles, 29% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, the elk population in this zone is relatively low. The elk tend to be nomadic in this area and most of the successful hunters harvested them on private land. Because of this, a great deal of preseason scouting, local knowledge, and/or the use of an outfitter is advised for this zone.

ELK HUNT ZONE 308 *(197 square miles, 35% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, including areas of SGL 321, SGL 100 and the Moshannon State Forest, there is a high population of elk in this zone with good hunting opportunities. There are also elk on private lands, so a great deal of preseason scouting, local knowledge, and/or the use of an outfitter is advised for this zone. This is a good area for all hunters.

ELK HUNT ZONE 309 *(367 square miles, 46% public land)*: Located on a mix of public and private land, the elk population is growing and they can be found on SGL 100 and the Sproul State Forest. Extensive habitat work was recently completed on SGL 100. Some of the better areas require a few miles of walking, so it helps to be in good physical shape to hunt this zone. Due to the extensive amount of public land, this is a good area for all hunters.

ELK HUNT ZONE 310 *(Closed to elk hunting)*: This area does not support enough elk to allow hunting. The main focus of this area is to improve habitat and increase the elk population to a level where a future hunt may be possible.

2026-27 ELK TAG ALLOCATIONS

	ARCHERY Sept. 12-27		1ST REGULAR Oct. 3-11		2ND REGULAR Oct. 31-Nov. 8		3RD REGULAR Jan. 9-17		BULL TOTALS	COW TOTALS
ZONE	BULL	COW	BULL	COW	BULL	COW	BULL	COW		
300	NO LICENSES AVAILABLE								-	-
301	1	1	2	1	3	2	3	2	9	6
302	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	3	9	8
303	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	3	9	8
304	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	9	9
305	1	0	1	0	3	2	3	2	8	4
306	2	1	2	2	3	4	2	4	9	11
307	1	0	2	1	2	1	2	1	7	3
308	2	1	2	3	3	5	3	5	10	14
309	2	1	2	2	3	4	3	5	10	12
310	NO LICENSES AVAILABLE								-	-
TOTALS	**15**	**7**	**15**	**15**	**26**	**25**	**24**	**28**	**80**	**75**

LICENSE INFORMATION

LICENSE REQUIRED
A current hunting license is required and must be in possession to hunt, take or kill any wildlife in Pennsylvania not classified as a furbearer. A current furtaker license is required to hunt, trap, take or kill any furbearer (coyotes and porcupines are the exceptions). A license is valid July 1 to the following June 30. For waterfowl license requirements refer to migratory bird section in this digest.

IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED WHEN HUNTING OR TRAPPING
While afield, hunters and trappers are required to carry their appropriate licenses as well as cards or papers, which must be shown to a game warden or landowner upon request, to confirm identification and residency.

VALIDITY OF LICENSES
Only one hunting or furtaker license shall be valid during any license year. Any replacement license, or purchase of a second or subsequent license shall immediately invalidate any license of the same kind that had been previously issued.

LICENSE TRANSFERS
Hunting and furtaker licenses are nontransferable and nonrefundable. It is unlawful to possess another's hunting license or big-game tags.

PROOF OF RESIDENCY
Proof of Pennsylvania residency must be shown to obtain a resident hunting or furtaker license. Persons must be domiciled in Pennsylvania at least 30 consecutive days prior to application. A valid Pennsylvania driver's license, certain Pennsylvania and local tax receipts, and other positive means indicating residency may be used. A change in residency status from resident to nonresident or from nonresident to resident automatically invalidates a person's hunting or furtaking license 30 days after the change in status, unless the licensee completes and submits a change-in-residency form.

PURCHASING LICENSES ONLINE
Individuals may purchase most licenses and permits online at HuntFish.PA.gov, except for disabled veteran lifetime and landowner antlerless licenses. All harvest tag panels are mailed to those who purchase their licenses online, and these must be possessed afield when hunting in a season where tagging game is required. Buyers will have licenses with harvest tags mailed to them with the ability to print a digital copy, without big-game harvest tags. To receive a Hunting & Trapping Digest with your online order, it must be added to the shopping cart (additional shipping will apply). Free digests are available at issuing agent locations. Licenses are typically received within 7-15 business days, additional delays may occur during periods of high sales. Please contact the License Division directly at 717-787-2084 if you have not received your license within 14 business days.

DIGITAL LICENSE
HuntFish.PA.gov provides the option for hunters and trappers to carry afield electronic versions of licenses they buy, as an alternative to carrying certain paper licenses. Harvest tags continue to be issued in physical form on green or white durable stock, and harvest tags need to be carried afield when hunting in big-game seasons or trapping in seasons where harvest tags are used. Hunters and trappers buying licenses online will continue to be mailed all durable-stock license panels, including harvest tags, and will also be given access to eLicenses. Those buying licenses from an issuing agent will be issued harvest tags at the time of purchase and will have the opportunity to receive digital licenses without tags if an email address is on profile. No signature is required on digital licenses. The license buyer attests to a statement, which serves in place of a signature.

BEAR LICENSES
Hunters 7 and older may purchase this license online or over the counter at any issuing agent from the start of license sales in June through the end of bear season.

MIGRATORY GAME BIRD LICENSES
All persons are required to have a Migratory Game Bird License to hunt waterfowl (including within the conservation season) and other migratory birds including doves, woodcock, brant, coots, gallinules, rails and snipe. Unless issued as a digital license, the license must be signed in ink and carried by the hunter.

FEDERAL DUCK STAMP
In addition to Migratory Game Bird License, waterfowl hunters 16 or older need a federal duck stamp, and if the actual stamp is carried, it must be signed across the face. The electronic duck stamp, or E-Stamp, version of the federal duck stamp has now been authorized for use through the entirety of a waterfowl hunting season. Stamps can be purchased online at HuntFish.PA.gov or over the counter at any issuing agent. Physical stamps will be mailed in March.

ELK LICENSE APPLICATION
Hunters may apply to enter a drawing for an elk license either online or at an issuing agent. Refer to the "Elk Section" in this digest for detailed information.

JUNIOR LICENSES AND HUNTERS
Persons under 17 years of age must have their parent or legal guardian's approval to purchase a general hunting, combination or furtaker license. Junior hunters who wish to hunt in the archery and/or muzzleloader seasons, must purchase a combination license. These add-on licenses may not be added to a general junior hunting license. Eleven-year-olds who have successfully completed a required Hunter-Trapper Education course may apply for a Junior License if they will be 12 years old by June 30 of the license year. They may not lawfully hunt with the license prior to their 12th birthday. Persons 12 and 13 must be accompanied by an adult member of the family (at least 18), or by an adult serving in place of a parent. Persons 14 and 15 must be accompanied by any adult 18 or older. Sixteen-year-olds may hunt alone. Persons who turn 17 after purchasing a junior license can still hunt that year with the Junior License. It is unlawful while accompanying junior hunters under 16 to be out of sight of or unable to physically or verbally control the junior hunter or fail to comply with the fluorescent orange requirements. Verbal instructions given through the use of an electronic or other sound amplification device does not meet this requirement.

SENIOR LIFETIME LICENSE HOLDERS
Lifetime licenses must be renewed each year. If you have not yet purchased or renewed your Senior Lifetime License through HuntFish.PA.gov, you will need to provide your SSN when creating an account. This is a one-time requirement and your SSN will not be needed again. All Senior Lifetime and Senior Lifetime Combination License holders who purchased prior to May 13, 2017 are exempt from the Pheasant Permit. "Pheasant Eligible" will be located on the bottom panel of the license if a hunter does

not have to purchase a pheasant permit. You will need to provide proof of residency when renewing your license, usually through a valid Pennsylvania driver's license.

REPLACEMENT LICENSES

If a hunting or furtaker license has been lost or destroyed, a replacement license may be purchased for $6.97, per privilege, over the counter at any issuing agent or online at pa.gov/pgc by clicking on "Buy a License." Most lost or destroyed antlerless licenses can be replaced at any issuing agent location. Resident Disabled Veteran Antlerless and Resident Armed Forces Antlerless licenses can only be replaced at county treasurers and Game Commission offices.

UNLICENSED PERSONS

An unlicensed person may accompany a properly licensed hunter or trapper provided that the unlicensed person acts as only an observer and does not, in any manner, participate in hunting or trapping. Any unlicensed person accompanying a licensed hunter must wear the required amount of fluorescent orange. A person who has never held a hunting license in Pennsylvania or any other state must remain in sight of and close to the hunter, who must be at least 18 years of age. An unlicensed person may not possess a firearm, bow, or other hunting device. An unlicensed person who accompanies any hunting party shall be counted as a member of the hunting party for maximum allowed members. The ratio of licensed hunters to non-licensed persons must not exceed 1:1.

RESIDENT LANDOWNER HUNTING LICENSE

An eligible landowner who owns 80 or more contiguous acres open to public hunting in a Cooperative Hunter Access Program, or a designated immediate family member living in the same household, is entitled to a Landowner Hunting License. Applicants must have their PGC Cooperative Hunter Access Program agreement number when applying.

LANDOWNER ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSE

An eligible landowner who owns 50 or more contiguous acres within a county is entitled to one antlerless deer license for the WMU where the land is located at the prescribed fee ($6.97 for residents, $26.97 for nonresidents). If the qualifying acreage is located within a county with two or more WMUs, the applicant selects the WMU he or she desires. A landowner must keep his or her property open to public hunting and trapping year-round to qualify. The Landowner Antlerless Deer License Application/Affidavit is available from county treasurers, PGC offices, and online. Applicants must apply directly to the county treasurer of the county where the acreage is located. Landowners may apply for these licenses a week prior to licenses going on sale and licenses can be purchased through the end of deer season, so long as the WMU has not sold out of licenses.

REQUIRED ARMED SERVICES PERSONNEL DOCUMENTATION

Residents applying for any of the Armed Services licenses must provide official documentation, from the branch in which they serve, to prove eligibility in the form of orders, leave documents, military ID, and in the case of POWs, a DD214. All of these licenses, except for the POWs (county treasurers and PGC offices sell POWs), are available from any issuing agent or online. If the applicant cannot apply in person, he or she may submit to the Game Commission office or county treasurer a written request, including full name, legal address, telephone number, date of birth, height, eye color and documentation verifying Pennsylvania residency and military orders and, for the POW license, a copy of DD214 stating Prisoner of War status. Applicant must include a self-addressed, stamped, return envelope with the request. Online applications will include questions to self-validate.

RESIDENT MILITARY PERSONNEL LICENSE

To qualify for a general hunting license for $2.97, applicants must meet all of the following requirements: 1) be a resident of Pennsylvania; 2) be on active and full-time duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, including the U.S. Coast Guard; 3) be currently assigned to a facility outside Pennsylvania; and 4) be on temporary leave in Pennsylvania.

RESIDENT NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVES LICENSE

Reduced fee $2.97 general hunting licenses are available to residents serving in the Pennsylvania National Guard and the Reserves who, within the previous 24 months, were deployed overseas for a period of 60 consecutive days or more, or were released early from such service because of an injury or disease incurred in the line of duty. Only one reduced-fee license may be issued for each qualifying deployment.

RESIDENT PRISONERS OF WAR

Reduced fee $2.97 general hunting licenses also are available to residents who are former Prisoners of War, certified to have been imprisoned by enemy forces while in the service of the U.S. Armed Forces.

DISABLED WAR VETERANS

People in all three classifications of resident disabled veterans must provide documentation from the Veterans Administration specifying percentage of disability and confirming disability is service-related or is a loss of use of one or more limbs to acquire these licenses. All resident disabled veteran licensees with 100% permanent disability can apply for free Lifetime Hunting and Lifetime Furtaker licenses at county treasurer locations only. Free hunting and furtaker licenses are available for Resident Disabled Veterans with 100% service-incurred disability (not lifetime). Resident Disabled Veterans with 60-99% service-incurred disability rating license can receive a license for $2.97. These license types can be purchased at county treasurer locations, Game Commission offices and online at HuntFish.PA.gov. Applicants must provide documentation from the Veterans Administration. If you have questions, call the License Division at 717-787-2084.

UNCOLLECTIBLE CHECKS

If a check issued in payment of any fee or fine is returned uncollectible, the person who makes, issues or presents it will be charged a $25 fee, in addition to any costs of prosecution or penalties assessed. Any license, permit or privilege granted by an uncollectible check shall be invalid until all applicable fees are paid.

TRAINING CERTIFICATE – HUNTING

Persons who have not held a hunting license issued in Pennsylvania or another state or nation, or do not possess a training certificate, are required to attain certification in an accredited hunter-trapper education program before hunting or applying for a hunting license. These provisions do not apply to a person presenting 1) evidence of service in the U.S. Armed Forces, including the Coast Guard and discharge or separation under honorable conditions within six months of application, or 2) evidence that the person is currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

LICENSE INFORMATION

TRAINING CERTIFICATE – TRAPPING

Persons applying for a furtaker license must present to the issuing agent one of the following: 1) evidence that the applicant has held a trapping or furtaker license issued in Pennsylvania or another state or nation; 2) a certificate of training; 3) an affidavit that the applicant completed a voluntary trapping course sanctioned by the Game Commission, or 4) the applicant has previously hunted or trapped furbearers within the last five years. These provisions do not apply to persons under 12 who trap furbearers under direct supervision of a licensed adult furtaker at least 18 years old. Trappers must be certified to use Cable Restraints.

REPLACEMENT HUNTER EDUCATION TRAINING CERTIFICATE

Information about obtaining a replacement Hunter Education Training Certificate, can be found online at **pa.gov/pgc** or ilostmycard.com.

HUNTER-TRAPPER EDUCATION

Select from in-person or online course options
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LICENSE AVAILABILITY

THE FOLLOWING LICENSES, PERMITS AND SPECIAL-DRAW APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE FROM ALL ISSUING AGENTS INCLUDING COUNTY TREASURERS, GAME COMMISSION OFFICES AND ONLINE.

LICENSES

Resident Mentored Youth (Ages under 12) $2.97
Resident Mentored Youth (Ages 12 through 16) $6.97
Resident Mentored Adult (17 and older) $20.97
Resident Junior Hunting (Ages 12 through 16) $6.97
Resident Junior Furtaker (Ages 12 through 16) $6.97
Resident Junior Combination (Ages 12 through 16) $9.97
Resident Landowner Hunting (Ages 12 & older) $4.97
Resident Adult Hunting (Ages 17 and older) $20.97
Resident Adult Furtaker (Ages 17 and older) $20.97
Resident Senior Hunting (Ages 65 & older) $13.97
Resident Senior Lifetime Hunting (Ages 65 & older) $51.97
(Must be renewed each license year at no additional cost)
Resident Senior Lifetime Combo (Ages 65 & older) $101.97
Resident Senior Lifetime Combo Upgrade $51.97
(See Lifetime Combination)
Resident Senior Furtaker (Ages 65 & older) $13.97
Resident Senior Lifetime Furtaker (Age 65 & older) $51.97
(Must be renewed each license year at no additional cost)
Resident Military Personnel, National Guard,
Reserves and POW Hunting Licenses $2.97
Resident Hunting Heritage License (Active HTE instructors) . $2.97
Nonresident Mentored Youth (Ages under 12) $2.97
Nonresident Mentored Youth (Ages 12 through 16) $41.97
Nonresident Mentored Adult (17 and older) $101.97
Nonresident Adult Hunting (Ages 17 & older) $101.97
Nonresident Junior Hunting (Ages 12 through 16) $41.97
Nonresident Junior Combination (Ages 12 through 16) $51.97
Nonresident Adult Furtaker (Ages 17 & older) $81.97
Nonresident Junior Furtaker (Ages 12 through 16) $41.97
Nonresident 7-Day Small Game ** $31.97

ADD-ON LICENSES, STAMPS & PERMITS

Resident Archery *** $16.97
Nonresident Archery *** $26.97
Resident Muzzleloader *** $11.97
Nonresident Muzzleloader *** $21.97
Resident Migratory Game Bird License $3.97
Federal Duck Stamp (E-Stamp) $30.97
Nonresident Migratory Game Bird License $6.97
Resident Bear License (Ages 7 and older) $16.97
Nonresident Bear License (Ages 7 and older) $36.97
Resident Antlerless Deer License $6.97
Resident DMAP Harvest Permits *(Sales begin Aug. 10)* $10.97
Nonresident Antlerless License $26.97
Nonresident DMAP Harvest Permits *(Sales begin Aug. 10)* $35.97
Agriculture Deer Permit (Coupon required) $1.97
Elk License Drawings (See elk section in this Digest) $11.97
Bobcat Permit (See bobcat section in this Digest) $6.97
Fisher Permit (See fisher section in this Digest) $6.97
River Otter Permit (See otter section in this Digest) $6.97
Adult Pheasant Permit $26.97
Junior Pheasant Permit . . . . . FREE
Shooting Range Permit (See PGC website for more info) $31.97
Snow Goose Permit (if season is held) $1.97

SOLD ONLY BY COUNTY TREASURERS

Resident Landowner Antlerless Deer $6.97
Nonresident Landowner Antlerless Deer $26.97
Resident Disabled Veteran Lifetime
Hunting License (if qualified) . . . . . FREE
Resident Disabled Veteran Lifetime
Furtaker License (if qualified) . . . . . FREE

SOLD BY COUNTY TREASURERS, GAME COMMISSION OFFICES AND ONLINE

Resident Disabled Veteran Antlerless License $6.97
Resident Armed Forces Antlerless License $6.97
Resident Reduced Disabled Veteran
Hunting License $2.97
Resident Reduced Disabled Veteran
Furtaker License $2.97
Resident Disabled Veteran
Annual Hunting License * . . . . . FREE
Resident Disabled Veteran
Annual Furtaker License * . . . . . FREE
* Must be renewed annually

Resident Disabled Veteran Lifetime hunting and furtaker licenses can be renewed at any issuing agent, or online.

All combination licenses include hunting, furtaker, archery and muzzleloader privileges. (Bear hunting privileges, antlerless deer license, migratory game bird license and federal duck stamp not included.)

Senior resident hunting and furtaker (annual and lifetime, including combination) licenses are available to those who will be 65 years old by June 30 of the current license year.

** Nonresidents of Pennsylvania who are 12 years of age and older may purchase a consecutive 7-Day Small Game license, which includes waterfowl and pheasants, but is not valid for coyotes or big game, including turkey. All junior, adult and senior hunters need to hold a Pheasant Hunting Permit to hunt pheasants. To hunt waterfowl, applicants 16 years of age and older need a federal duck stamp and applicants 12 and older need a Migratory Game Bird License.

*** Muzzleloader firearms, bows and arrows, and crossbows may be used during regular, special and extended firearms deer seasons without purchasing muzzleloader or archery licenses.

Firearms Regulations for Non-Immigrant Aliens

Since the events of Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has enacted new permit requirements for bringing firearms and ammunition across the U.S. border. Any resident of another country who intends to import a firearm and ammunition into the U.S. for the purpose of hunting or recreational target shooting should contact the ATF's Firearms and Explosives Imports Branch. Provide yourself ample time for the processing of the import permit application. It could take six weeks or more to receive the required permit. The ATF can be contacted at 304-616-4550. Visit the ATF website at **atf.gov**. An application for the Permit for Importation of Firearms can be found at ATF F6 NIA (5330.3D).

FOLLOW THE LAW

VIOLATING THE GAME & WILDLIFE CODE CAN RESULT IN SERIOUS PENALTIES, INCLUDING THE LOSS OF HUNTING PRIVILEGES.

A person charged with violating the Game and Wildlife Code will have the charges adjudicated before a Magisterial District Judge or Court of Common Pleas having jurisdiction. In addition to imposing fines, the court may also order the revocation of hunting and furtaking privileges. Absent a court order, the Game Commission may suspend the hunting and furtaking privileges of persons convicted of violating the Game and Wildlife Code. While revocation can be assessed for any violation, it's generally reserved for significant violations that affect the safety of people or property, or impact the valuable resources of the commonwealth.

Act 54 of 2010 significantly increased fines and revocation periods for serious violations. The following is a list of the most common revocations, but revocation may be applied to other violations, too.

REVOCATION PERIOD REQUIRED BY LAW:

- Failure to respond to a citation – Indefinite revocation or until adjudicated
- Failure to pay a fine in full within 180 days after adjudication – Indefinite or until paid, unless enrolled in a payment plan established by court and current with payments
- Hunting or trapping under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance – 1 year
- Refusal to submit to a chemical or blood test – 1 year or second/subsequent refusal – 3 years
- Shooting at another person resulting in no injury or minor injury – 2 years; causing serious injury – 5 to 10 years; killing another person – 15 years
- Failure to render assistance or fleeing after shooting (nonfatal incident) – 10 years; failure to render assistance or fleeing after shooting (fatal incident) – 15 years/Second offense – additional 10 years
- Trespass on private property while hunting, second or subsequent offense – 5 years

REVOCATION PERIODS FOR OTHER GAME & WILDLIFE CODE VIOLATIONS:

- Assaulting an officer – 3 years
- Resisting or interfering with an officer; failure to stop on signal by an officer; turning off lights to avoid arrest or detection – 2 years
- Buying or selling wildlife or edible parts contrary to law – Threatened or endangered species – 7 years first offense; big game – up to 5 years first offense; other wildlife – 3 years first offense
- Take, injure, kill, possess or transport big game during closed season or beyond daily or season bag limits – up to 5 years first offense
- Hunting or furtaking while on revocation – 5 years
- Killing or attempting to kill game through the use of bait as an enticement – bear or elk – 3 years; all other game – 2 years
- Unlawfully taken big game (in season) – Bear or elk – 3 years; deer or turkey – 1 year
- Disturbing traps of another; trapping/furtaking during closed season; multiple violations in 2-year period; killing protected wildlife; hunting small game in a closed season; taking over the daily bag limit of small game or migratory birds – 1 year

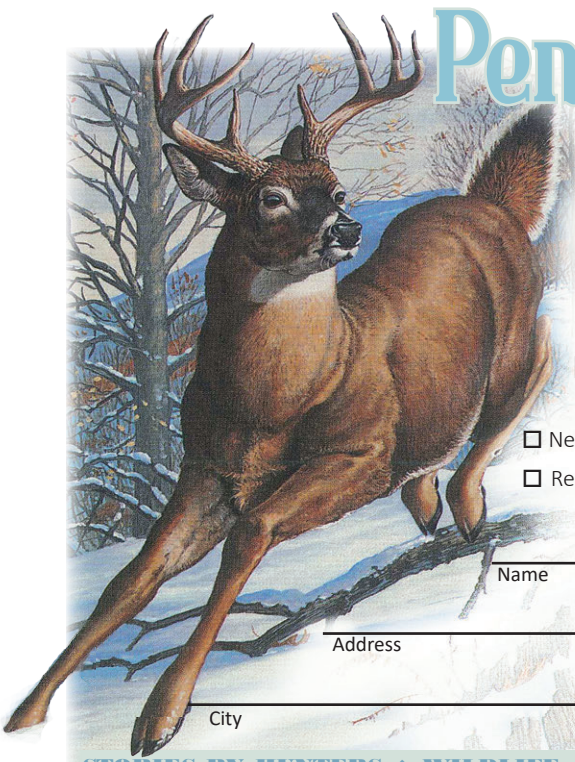
INTERSTATE WILDLIFE VIOLATOR COMPACT

Pennsylvania is the 36th state to join the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (IWVC). All persons convicted of a violation in Pennsylvania that results in the suspension of their hunting and furtaking privileges will receive in addition to the Pennsylvania revocation notice, an additional notification if the terms of the suspension will be shared with other states cooperating in the IWVC.

Persons having a license suspension in Pennsylvania, which is subject to the provisions of the IWVC, and who plan to hunt or trap in another state, must contact that state to determine their eligibility to purchase a license.

The IWVC also establishes a process whereby wildlife law violations by a nonresident from a member state are handled as if the person were a resident, meaning they can be issued a citation rather than being arrested, booked, and bonded. This process is a convenience for hunters and trappers of member states and increases efficiency of wildlife officers by allowing more time for enforcement duties rather than violator processing procedures.

For more information on the Interstate Wildlife Compact, visit the Game Commission website at **pa.gov/pgc**.



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HUNTING & TRAPPING DIGEST

This digest is not the Game & Wildlife Code or its attendant regulations and should not be considered final on legal interpretation.

The digest simply is a summary of the more important and frequently misunderstood hunting and trapping regulations.

Review the digest carefully. If there is anything you do not understand, contact your nearest Game Commission office.

Hunting and trapping are privileges in Pennsylvania. Remember, a license does not entitle you to trespass on private lands. Hunters and furtakers may be prosecuted for trespassing, whether or not a property is posted against hunting or trapping.

Always ask permission to hunt or trap, and make sure you are a welcomed guest of the landowner.

A private landowner who permits hunting or trapping does not extend assurance that the premises are safe and does not assume responsibility or incur liability for injury.

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