

New Hampshire Hunting Report – November 21, 2022

Important Resources for Hunters

- **Hunting in New Hampshire:** www.huntnh.com/hunting
- **New Hampshire hunting licenses and permits:** www.nhfishandgame.com
- **NH Hunting and Trapping Digest:** www.huntnh.com/hunting/publications.html
- **Deer check stations:** www.huntnh.com/hunting/deer-check-stations.html

Deer Hunting

New Hampshire's deer season is in full swing, and just as muzzleloader season ended on November 8, the regular firearms season began on November 9. Read more about deer hunting in the Granite State by visiting wildlife.state.nh.us/hunting/deer.html.

According to Deer Project Leader Becky Fuda, the estimated 2022 deer harvest to date is 9,005. This total is 14% higher than last year's at the same point in the season, and is above the long-term average. Hillsborough, Grafton, and Rockingham Counties, respectively, continue to show the largest numbers of deer registrations. With the weather recently becoming more seasonable with colder temperatures and the rut in full swing, hunters should have excellent conditions over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

The **Youth Deer Hunt** weekend was October 22-23, and the unofficial reported youth harvest was 343 deer. This preliminary total is a 15% increase from the official 2021 total of 297, but this figure may change as final registration information is entered and verified.

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department urges hunters not to use natural urine-based deer lures. These products can potentially spread **chronic wasting disease (CWD)**, a neurological disorder that is always fatal to white-tailed deer and moose. Synthetic lures are preferable. Do your part and help keep our deer herd free of CWD. Learn more by visiting wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/cwd/.

It's the color of the season: all outdoor enthusiasts, hunters, and hikers should incorporate **hunter/blaze orange** into their woodland wardrobes. It's common sense in the Granite State.

Moose Hunt

New Hampshire's 2022 moose season wrapped up with hunters taking 26 moose—22 bulls and 4 cows—according to Biologist Henry Jones, the department's moose project leader. Hunters achieved a 62% success rate during the 9-day season. The average success rate over the last 5 years was 72%, with the primary difference between 2022 and previous seasons being that no moose were harvested in Wildlife Management Units (WMU) D1, D2, or F.

Around the state, moose hunters achieved a 100% success rate in the Connecticut Lakes Region, 75% in the North Region, 40% in the White Mountain Region, and 20% in the Southeast Region.

At current permit issuance levels, there are only a small number of hunters present in each region which means regional success rates are highly variable. Therefore, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department does not use hunter success rates as a measure of moose abundance.

Weather conditions were varied with a few cool mornings, particularly in the northern part of the state, which are favorable for moose hunting. Visit nhfishgame.com/2022/10/27/2022-moose-hunt-highlights/ to see the 2022 moose hunt highlights, including an inspirational account of how ethical hunters' prepare for success.

Bear Harvest

The 2022 bear season represents an increased harvest, which can be attributed to a lack of fall foods. Bear Project Leader Andrew Timmins reported that as of November 6, 1,105 bears, including 549 males and 556 females, had been harvested by hunters in New Hampshire. Bait hunters garnered 733 bears, still hunters/stalkers took 312 bears, and hound hunters registered 60 bears. This year's harvest is running 32% above 2021 (839 bears) and 26% over the latest 5-year average (874 bears). The 2022 harvest is tracking similarly to 2020, when 1,183 bears were taken. There is a chance that this year's harvest could surpass that of 2020 and represent a new state record.

Bear harvest data this fall, such as lower harvest sex ratios, method-specific harvest tallies, and regional distribution of harvest, remain consistent with management objectives. Bear harvest was highest in the White Mountains and Central Regions, two areas where bear density has exceeded goals. Bear seasons were extended in these regions to provide increased hunter opportunity. While the bear season has ended in most regions, the still hunting portion of the season remains open in the White Mountain and Central Regions through November 30. Opportunistic hunters may take a few more bears in those regions; however, an increasing percentage of bears have entered dens due to declining fall mast.

For a comparison of this year's harvest with the statewide bear harvest over the past six years, visit huntnh.com/hunting/bear-harvest.html.

Fall Turkey Season

The fall turkey season is underway and has been successful for hunters, with a total of 691 turkeys registered as of November 10. Registrations show that 231 turkeys have been harvested so far during the fall archery turkey season, and 460 were taken during the fall shotgun turkey season from October 10-16 in certain WMUs. These preliminary numbers have already surpassed last year's fall season total of 584 birds. WMU J2 is again recording the highest success rate for hunters. Unit J2 is located south of Lake Winnepesaukee and includes the towns of Sanbornton and Gilford, running south to Strafford and as far east as Milton on the Maine border. Hunters still have time to get out and harvest a turkey this fall. The archery season runs through December 8 in Wildlife Management Unit A and through December 15 in all other WMUs.

More for Hunters

Apprentice License: Don't forget the apprentice hunting license, an option for those ages 16 and older who want to try hunting, but have not yet taken the required Hunter Education course. It allows hunting under the guidance of a licensed hunter age 18 or older. Apprentice licenses are available only at Fish and Game headquarters, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH. Learn more by visiting huntnh.com/hunting/apprentice.html.

Share the Bounty: Hunters are reminded of the New Hampshire Food Bank's request for venison donations. Call (603) 669-9725 or visit www.nhfoodbank.org to find out how you can help those in need.

Report Poachers: If you are aware of poaching, call Operation Game Thief toll-free at 1-800-344-4262, or report wildlife crime online at huntnh.com/ogt.

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration: A User-Pay, User-Benefit Program

Researching and managing wildlife and teaching people to become safe, responsible hunters are activities funded by your license dollars and by the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program, which is supported by an excise tax on your purchases of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. Learn more by visiting huntnh.com/funding/wsfr.html.

