Licenses, Permits & Stamps

LICENSE INFORMATION

Regulations in red are new this year.

DEER PERMITS ARE VALID for the 2018–2019 hunting season. New Jersey sporting licenses are valid for the calendar year and expire on Dec. 31. Beaver and river otter trapping permits are valid for the 2018–19 trapping season. For permit and license fees, see page 1.

Licenses
The electronic license system will create a customer profile identified by an assigned lifetime Conservation Identification Number (CID#) for all first-time purchasers of any hunting, trapping or fishing license or permit. This unique number appears on every license, permit and stamp issued by New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. Your customer profile and CID# can be established on the license website (www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com) from your home computer or with valid identification at a license agent (see list, page 22), or by calling (888) 773-8450. A customer profile and CID# can be established on the license website (www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com) for the weapon type being used.

All hunters and trappers must openly display their license in the middle of the back on their outer clothing and must show their license to any law enforcement officer or any person requesting to see it. Farmers hunting their own land must also display any deer season permit.

Licenses, permits and stamps may be purchased using Fish and Wildlife’s Internet sales site (www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com), via your smartphone or other mobile device, from approved license agents listed on page 22, or by calling (888) 773-8450. A license or permit cannot be self-printed. Permits with a designated zone or hunting season must be purchased at a license agent. See also Non-resident and Resident Licenses, page 10.

Do NOT heat laminate the durable license or permit. High temperature will destroy these waterproof, heat-sensitive documents.

Apprentice License
An Apprentice License allows a new hunter (or new to hunting with a particular sporting arm) to participate in the sport but does not require completion of a hunter education course. However, an apprentice MUST hunt under the direct supervision and guidance of a hunting mentor, hunting together as a unit in the same location. Mentors must be 21 years of age or older and must possess a valid NJ Hunting License for the weapon type being used.

Both residents and non-residents are eligible. Individuals are limited to two apprentice licenses per weapon type per lifetime. The Apprentice License cannot be used as proof of the hunter education requirement for purchasing a regular license. Due to N.J. Firearm ID Card regulations, Firearm Apprentice Licenses are limited to individuals 18 years of age and older. An archery Apprentice License holder must be 14 years of age or older.

There are no free youth apprentice licenses. Apprentice license holders are NOT eligible for a Bear Permit, Rifle Permit or Muzzleloader Deer Permit and may not hunt with any type of rifle. An air gun is not considered a rifle. See Firearms and Missiles beginning on page 26. For additional information, see the Apprentice License QR code and web-link on page 6. Apprentice hunters must ALWAYS hunt under the direct supervision of a licensed hunter and cannot hunt at night nor hunt for coyote, fox or black bear. Apprentice hunters must adhere to hunting laws, (continued on page 10)
Free hunting and fishing licenses, stamps and permits are available for resident disabled veterans.

For the purposes of this program, legislation defines disabled veterans as “…any resident of New Jersey who has been honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service from any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States and who has been declared by the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, or its successor, to have a service-connected disability of any degree…”

New applicant disabled veterans may obtain their hunting and fishing licenses and stamps by FIRST CALLING before going to one of the following Fish and Wildlife field offices to ensure that staff will be available to assist you:

- Southern Region Office, Sicklerville, Camden Co., (856) 629-0090.

Call before going to one of these offices to ensure that staff will be available to assist you.

Applications for disabled veteran certification and your first disabled veteran license may be made via the mail by sending the application and all required documentation to:

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Attn: Disabled Veteran Licensing
MC 501-03, PO Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

All licenses, stamps and permits for which the veteran is eligible will be free of charge. Disabled Vet status does not give preferential treatment in any lottery. For questions call (609) 292-2965.

Disabled Veteran Applicants:
1. Documentation of current benefits for a service-connected disability and proof of honorable discharge (such as a copy of your DD-214, VA card or monthly check stub) must be presented to obtain a free disabled veteran license.
2. Applicant must provide a hunter education (archery, shotgun or rifle) course certificate applicable to the license for which he or she is applying or a previously issued resident archery or firearm license or Rifle Permit. Resident licenses from other states issued to hunters prior to establishing residency in New Jersey will be accepted if the license indicates the sporting arm for which it was valid. Non-resident licenses from other states are not acceptable.
3. To obtain the free disabled veteran deer/turkey permits one must first have a free disabled veteran hunting license.
Licenses, Permits & Stamps

**LICENSE INFORMATION**

Regulations in red are new this year.

(continued from page 8)

regulations and must purchase all hunting permits, stamps or the HIP certification, as required.

Apprentice licenses are available only at web-based license agents. Call the license agent in advance to confirm that they are web-based.

On page 16, see Welcome Apprentice Hunters! for a summary of participation in our first year of offering an Apprentice Hunting License.

**Child Support Certifications**
The “Child Support Program Improvement Act” requires Fish and Wildlife to collect and maintain Social Security numbers and a child support obligation certification from license applicants and to make the collection of this information part of the license application. To comply, Fish and Wildlife, working with the Division of Law in the Office of the Attorney General, created the Supplemental License Application available on the Fish and Wildlife website at NJFishandWildlife.com/child_support_info.htm or at license agents.

The online child support application allows an individual to be certified from the privacy of their home. Once completed—either over the Internet or at a license agent—the certification remains valid for the calendar year in which the certification was completed.

**Farmer License Exemption**
A farmer and members of the immediate family (see definition under Farmer Regulations, page 30) who also reside on the farm may hunt, trap and fish on the farm without being licensed or possessing a valid Rifle Permit. For details, see Farmer Hunting and Permit Information, page 30.

All farmers must have a Conservation Identification number (CID#). Register online now for a free CID# at www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com. No purchase is required.

**Hunter and Trapper Education Requirements**
New Jersey requires that everyone, age 10 and above, applying to hunt with a firearm or bow must show a previous resident license of the appropriate type from this or any state, or a course completion card from the appropriate hunter education course. Anyone, age 12 and above, applying to trap furbearing animals must show a previous resident trapping license from this or any state, or a trapper education course completion card. See also Youth Licenses, this page.

The New Jersey Hunter Education Program is offered as a home study, video-based course. Students may obtain course materials at most license agents and Fish and Wildlife field offices or download from our website. After completing an extensive homework assignment, the student will choose from a list of testing facilities and dates to complete their hunter education course. For more Hunter Education Program details, including course material availability, facility locations, dates and course registration, go to Fish and Wildlife’s website at NJFishandWildlife.com/hunted.htm or call (877) 2-HUNT-NJ or (877) 248-6865.

Trapper education courses are offered four times throughout the state in the months of September and October. To enroll in a trapper education course, go to the Fish and Wildlife website or call (877) 2-HUNT-NJ to register.

**Lost Licenses**
A license, permit or stamp can be replaced at any license agent, at Fish and Wildlife’s Internet license sales site, www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com, via your mobile device or by calling (888) 773-8450. Licenses and permits which contain the Harvest Report can be duplicated at license agents or on the Internet sales site only twice. All subsequent duplicates of these license and permit types must be handled in person at Fish and Wildlife regional offices or the Pequest Natural Resource Education Center. The Trenton office is not open to the public for license and permit sales. A $2 fee is charged for each duplicate license/permit.

**New Jersey National Guard Licenses**
Only New Jersey National Guard personnel in good standing are entitled to free sporting licenses, permits and stamps. These privileges are not available using Fish and Wildlife’s website. However, the NJ Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs can issue fishing licenses through their DMAVA website at www.nj.gov/military/iasd/fishing.html. For all other free sporting licenses, call (609) 580-6866, e-mail or write to: MSG (Ret.) Robert Greco, NJ DMAVA, 101 Eggert Crossing Rd., Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.

**Non-resident Licenses**
Non-residents must show either a resident license from their state or proof of successfully completing an appropriate hunter education course in order to obtain a license to hunt or trap in New Jersey. (See License Information and Fees, page 1 for license types and also Youth Licenses, Resident and Non-resident, this page.) Non-immigrant aliens who temporarily import firearms to the United States must first obtain an application for the permit from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF). For importation of firearms, use form ATF Form 5300.3A. The approval may take up to 12 weeks. Contact ATF’s New Jersey field office at (609) 989-2142 or download forms from their website at www.atf.gov/firearms/forms.

Non-resident hunters: For more information on non-resident hunting, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/nonrsnt.htm.

**Military Licenses, Active Duty**
Any person on active duty in the armed services, regardless of their current residency, may buy a New Jersey resident hunting license. Present a previous resident license (from this or any other state) of the appropriate type or show proof to the license agent of successful completion of the appropriate hunter education course along with proof of your current active duty status in the armed services.

One-day License
A one-day license may be issued for hunting on a licensed commercial shooting preserve. This license may be obtained at the shooting preserve and is valid only on the day issued for the species covered by the preserve’s license. Hunter education requirement still applies.

**Resident Licenses**
A resident license may be purchased if one currently resides in—and has resided in—the state for at least six months immediately prior to application.

**Revocation of Licenses**
Anyone convicted of a second fish and game violation within a period of five years will have their New Jersey hunting and fishing privileges revoked for two years. Certain violations carry greater periods of revocation, ranging from three years to lifetime revocation. Two convictions of any wildlife management area regulation will result in a five-year revocation of all hunting privileges. Two convictions of the following will result in lifetime revocation: safety zone violation, causing damage to real or personal property and negligent use of a firearm or bow. Fish and Wildlife may revoke any permit or other authorization issued for violation or due cause. See also page 15 for New Jersey’s participation in the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact.

**Youth Licenses, Resident and Non-Resident**
A Youth Firearm or Youth Bow and Arrow License is valid from 10 years of age (or the time of issuance) until Dec. 31 of the year when the youth turns 16. Note that properly licensed youth hunters age 10–13 may hunt only when under the direct supervision of a properly licensed adult hunter age 21 or older. See also Youth Hunting, page 28. Youth licenses are available free to youths who have completed the hunter (ages 10–15) or trapper (ages 12–15) education course; see this page for course information. See also Take a Kid Hunting pages 24–25.
36th Annual Ocean County Decoy & Gunning Show
September 29 & 30, 2018

TIME: SAT: 7AM – 5PM
SUN: 7AM – 4PM

WHERE: TUCKERTON, NJ

ADMISSION: FREE   Rain or Shine!

WHERE: TUCKERTON, NJ

VISIT BOTH TUCKERTON LOCATIONS:
Tip Seaman County Park,
Lakeside Drive & Route 9
Tuckerton Seaport, Route 9

FEATURING
New & Antique Decoys
Hunting & Fishing Gear
Collectables • Duck Boats
Hunting Guide Services
Demonstrations
Music & Food

SPONSORED BY:
Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Ocean County Department of Parks & Recreation
In cooperation with the Tuckerton Seaport & New Jersey Waterfowlers Assn
For more information, contest rules or past winners please visit
www.OceanCountyParks.org or call Wells Mills County Park: 609-971-3085

Bird of the Year: Redhead

Contest rules are on our website!

Dock Dogs at the Tuckerton Seaport

CONTESTS
Decoy Carving • Decorative Carving • Boat Building
Model Boats • Archery • Dock Dogs • Hunting Retriever
Art & Photo • Youth Contests Skeetshoot from a Sneakbox
Duck & Goose Calling • Including the NJ State Duck Calling Championship with a $500 1st Place Prize!

Permits for Hunters and Trappers
Lottery Permit Application Process
Specific permit information for hunting wild turkey, beaver or otter is now located with the regulations for each species. For permit and license fees, see page 1.
A lottery is conducted to allocate spring turkey, beaver and otter hunting or trapping permits. There is no lottery for fall turkey permits. To receive certain permits you must first apply for the lottery. The application period is listed below with each permit type. Apply at license agents or via the Internet. Be sure to have your Conservation ID number (CID#) on hand. A non-refundable $2 application fee is charged for each lottery application.

Hunters or trappers will have three choices in each lottery. If you will accept a permit only for one particular zone (and/or period), complete only a first choice selection. There is no obligation to select a second or third choice; these are optional. When an applicant’s first choice cannot be filled, the computer will check for the second choice listed. If this selection is also sold out, the computer will check for the third choice. Each lottery is completely random and awards only ONE permit — not three. Your chance of winning a permit in the lottery depends on the number of applicants and the number of permits allocated (permit quota.)

Changing Your Lottery Application
Regardless of where or how you applied for a lottery, applicants may review their information at any time from any computer, smartphone or tablet with Internet access. All hunters should check their application status and can edit the application if a correction is necessary. With your CID# and DOB, visit www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com to access your profile and follow the prompts. Applications may be edited only during the actual application period. Once the application period is closed, it is impossible to change your application. License agents and Fish and Wildlife offices DO NOT have the ability to change your application once submitted. Only you can make changes, so take care during the application process then go back into your profile to verify that the information is correct.

Application Status Check
Hunters and trappers may check their application status at any time from a computer, smartphone or tablet. Go to the licensing website (www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com) to access your profile using your CID# and DOB, then follow the prompts. The license system indicates if the lottery has been run and if you won a permit. When the system shows “pending,” the lottery has not been completed. During the application period the system displays your application as “pending.”

IMPORTANT: Hunters who are awarded two permits in the lottery must claim (purchase) both at the same time. Hunters may not claim only one awarded permit.

Application via the Internet— Before You Start
• Know your Conservation ID number (CID#) or Social Security Number and date of birth (DOB).
• Know your desired permit zone and, if applicable, time period or season. Note: After a period of inactivity, the Internet transaction

11
will time out, requiring you to start over from the
beginning.
• Have your payment ready. Internet transactions
may be paid either by electronic check (e-check)
or major credit card. For e-check transactions,
your bank routing number and your check
book ready before you begin.
• During every transaction, there are several oppor-
tunities to review your information for accuracy. A
complete review at each step will allow you to make
corrections, if necessary. Once a purchase trans-
action is complete there will be NO refunds or
exchanges. Permit applicants will have the oppor-
tunity to edit their application at any time during
the permit application period; see Changing Your
Lottery Application, page 1. Applicants are responsible
to take application carefully. When the process is
complete, print the confirmation page or note the
transaction number for your records.

Application at License Agent
Locations—Know Before You Go
• Know your Conservation ID number (CID#) or
Social Security Number and date of birth (DOB.)
• Know your desired permit zone and, if applicable
time period or season. The store proprietor or clerk
does not know the zone/area of your hunting/trapping property. Be sure to review the
map and zone descriptions at home before you
arrive at the license agent. Not sure of your area?
Use a county map, then follow the zone or area
description shown either on Fish and Wildlife’s
website, NJFishandWildlife.com/alhrs.htm, in
this hunting Digest or in the turkey permit supple-
ment to drive around the zone boundary.
• To speed your transaction, write down your infor-
mation (CID#, DOB, lottery type, first, second
and third choices) and hand it to the license agent.
• NOTE for applying at license agents: Agents
using a VeriFone machine (a special keypad)
can print a transaction receipt, but might do so
only at your request. Therefore, you should ask for
a receipt of the transaction. This receipt will list
your choices and the transaction number. Agents
using Web-based (computer) systems may or may
not be able to print a receipt. ASK FIRST! When
an agent cannot print a receipt, it’s important
to have the clerk orally verify your application
choices and to provide your transaction number.
Keep this transaction number; it can be helpful
should a problem occur with your application.
• Each agent decides what types of payment to
accept. Learn this in advance, then have the cor-
rect payment ready when you arrive.

Notification of Lottery Results
(Do you win a permit?)
Once the lottery is complete, applicants will be
notified of their results. When applying at a license
agent, applicants may or may not be asked to choose
a notification mode. Some license issuing machines
must use the default method of mailing a postcard
notification. Those who select email notification are
reminded to set your junk/spam folder to accept
this notification. IMPORTANT: the notification
may fail to arrive due to email account provider
issues (email filters, data storage capacity) or post-
card delivery delays.

Permit Claim Deadline!
The applicant is responsible to know
the lottery results’ notification date and permit claim period deadline. If
you did not receive your permit award
notification, you can check the permit award status in your customer profile.
You MUST claim your permit BEFORE the
claim period has ended! (See Application
Status Check in the box on page 11.)

Claim Your Permit!
Successful lottery applicants have only a
short window in which to claim the awarded
permits. Pay close attention to the claim
period dates listed! Unclaimed permits will
be redistributed and become available for
over-the-counter sales. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Lottery permit winners may claim their permit(s)
at any license agent or via the Internet. See the cor-
responding lottery permit claims listed in this
Digest for beaver/otter and spring turkey permits.
At the time of application, the hunter paid only
the non-refundable $2 application fee; the actual
permit fee must still be paid. Bring your CID# to
the license agent to claim your Fish and Wildlife-
awarded lottery permit. Internet-claimed permits are
subject to an additional convenience fee and will
arrive via mail in 7–10 business days.

Purchasing Non-lottery and
Unclaimed Lottery Permits
Leftover (unclaimed) lottery permits and non-
lottery permits are available at license agents and
online. Internet permit purchases CANNOT be
printed at home. Plan ahead, as it may take 7–10
business days for your permit(s) to arrive. During
every transaction there are several opportunities
to review your information for accuracy. A com-
plete review at each step will allow you to make
corrections, if necessary. Note: Once a purchase
transaction is complete there will be NO refunds or
exchanges. When purchasing permits at a license
agent, speed your transaction by presenting to the
agent a written note with your CID# and DOB,
plus the season and zone of your permit choices.

Deer Hunting Permits
Permits are required to hunt during the Permit
Bow, Permit Muzzleloader and Permit Shotgun
deer seasons. There is no lottery for deer permits.
See Special Areas, page 44, for specific deer per-
mit requirements on those properties.

Permits may be purchased either at a license agent
or at Fish and Wildlife’s Internet license sales site
www.NJWildlifeLicense.com. For details, see Deer
Season Permits, page 18. See page 1 for fees.

Farmer Permits
See Farmer Hunting and Permit Information, page 30.

Falconry Permits
Hunting with raptors (birds of prey) is allowed only
with both a falconry permit and a hunting license.
For hunting regulations see Falconry, page 26.

Rifle Permits
All persons in possession of a rifle (modern or
muzzleloading rifle including a smoothbore muz-
zleloader firing a single projectile) while hunting
or trapping must have a valid Rifle Permit. See the
specific regulations for each game or fur-bearing ani-
mal for the specific rifles allowed. A Rifle Permit
is not required for hunting with an air gun. Initial
Rifle Permit applicants must be at least 10 years
old and have successfully completed a rifle Hunter
Education Course. New hunters taking the Firearms
Hunter Education courses will also be certified
for rifle hunting. See page 1 for Rifle Permit fees.
• Rifle Permits may be purchased at license agents
or at Fish and Wildlife’s Internet license sales site.
Rifle Permits are valid for all ages of permit holders.
• Rifle Permits are valid from July 1–June 30.

Permits for Hunters with
Disabling Conditions
A permit to use alternative methods/equipment
for taking game during the prescribed seasons for
certain physically challenged persons may be
issued. The application period is Jan. 1 to Aug. 31
of each year.

Permits to Shoot from a Standing Vehicle
A permit to hunt or shoot from a standing vehicle
that is parked off the road may be issued to licensed
hunters who:
1. have a permanent or irreversible physical dis-
ability that limits their ambulatory ability,
2. suffer from cardiovascular disease and are clas-
sified as Class 3 or 4 heart patients according
to American Heart Association standards, or
3. suffer from chronic lung disease. This permit
will be issued if the need is certified by a licensed
physician or chiropractor.

Individuals hunting with a permit to hunt or shoot
from a motor vehicle must mark the vehicle from
which they are hunting either with handicapped
license plates issued by the Motor Vehicle Com-
mission or by displaying a sign provided by Fish
and Wildlife in the rear window of this vehicle.
For more information on these permits, call
(609) 292-1473 or write: NJ Division of Fish and
Wildlife, Handicapped Permits, MC501-03, P.O.
Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420 or downloaded
directly from our website: NJFishandWildlife.com/
disinfo.htm.

(continued on page 14)
FULL RANGE OF ARCHERY SERVICES
from target to bow hunting. From beginner to expert, our professional staff are always there for setup advice and instruction. Our pro shop services include bow setup, paper and dynamic tuning on our 20 yard indoor range, custom string construction, using only the best materials available, custom fletching and refletching, compound and crossbow troubleshooting. Our goal is to make you the most confident archer possible.

Set up and Tuning Always Included Free With New Bow Purchase!

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CMOGuns.com
Licenses, Permits & Stamps

(continued from page 12)

Permits, Other

Captive Wildlife Permits
The possession, ownership and release of wildlife is strictly regulated and allowed only for limited purposes. Information and permit applications may be obtained online or by calling:
- Nongame and exotics permits at (908) 735-5450, NJFishandWildlife.com/exotic_apps.htm;
- Game birds and mammals: (609) 984-0530, NJFishandWildlife.com/captpermits.htm.

Deer Road-kill Permits
Deer accidentally killed by motor vehicles may be possessed only for private consumption by obtaining a free permit from the local police department or from a Fish and Wildlife regional law enforcement office. The permit authorizes only possession of the meat for consumption and is valid only for 90 days. The possession of all other parts such as antlers, under terms of this permit, are expressly prohibited. Wrapped venison packages must be labeled with the permit number.

Tracking Dog Permits, Certification
Fish and Wildlife may issue permits to dog handlers who possess a certified tracking dog for the search and recovery of deer lost by a hunter during any deer hunting season prescribed by the Game Code. Minimum certification: UBT-1 from United Blood Trackers, Inc., or the equivalent from another recognized tracking dog organization. A photo of each certified dog must accompany the application. Each handler must possess a valid New Jersey hunting license for the current year.

Stamps

Stamps (such as federal migratory bird stamps) are not transferable to another person and are not valid unless signed across the face in ink. Stamps need not be affixed to the license. State waterfowl “stamps” and Pheasant and Quail stamps now print either directly on your hunting license or as a separate stub, replacing the former paper stamp for these privileges. Waterfowl stamps may be purchased ONLY for a specific individual; hunters can no longer purchase multiple stamps on behalf of a fellow hunter.

Pheasant and Quail Stamp
Anyone aged 16 and over (except 16 year olds whose youth license remains valid through the end of the year in which they turn 16 and which includes a free youth pheasant and quail stamp) hunting or possessing pheasant (or quail only on Greenwood Forest or Peaslee WMAs) on the following designated wildlife management areas must have in possession a current Pheasant and Quail Stamp:
- Assunpink, Berkshire Valley, Black River, Clinton, Colliers Mills, Dix, Flatbrook, Glassboro, Greenwood Forest, Howardsville, Heislerville, Mad Horse, Manahawkin, Manasquan River, Medford, Millville (Bevan), Nantuuent, Peaslee, Pequest, Port Republic, Rockport, Stafford Forge, Tuckahoe (MacNamara), Walpack, Whittingham and Winslow. The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is also a designated pheasant and quail stamp area. Pheasant and quail stamps are valid for the calendar year, January–December. Quail may be hunted or possessed ONLY on Peaslee or Greenwood WMAs.

New Jersey Waterfowl Stamp
Anyone 16 or older who hunts waterfowl must possess a New Jersey Waterfowl Stamp (now printed directly on your license at the time of purchase) in addition to the Federal Migratory Bird Stamp. Both stamps are valid for the fiscal year, July 1–June 30. A Harvest Information Program (HIP) certification is also required. For HIP details, see Migratory Bird Regulations, page 65.
WORRY FREE PROTECTION FROM TICKS

STEP 1: PERMETHRIN TREATMENT

• For use on clothing and gear (fishing vests, mosquito nets, waders, tents, packs, camp chairs, hammocks, and more).
• Repels and kills ticks, mosquitoes, and 55 other insects on contact.
• Odorless and effective through 6 washings or 6 weeks of outdoor exposure.
• Effective against ticks which may carry Lyme Disease, Powassan Virus, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and Tick Borne Encephalitis.

STEP 2: PICARIDIN REPELLENT

• Longest lasting topical repellent for mosquitoes and ticks.
• Gear safe and great for the entire family.
• More effective on flies than DEET.
• Available in sprays, lotions, and continuous sprays, bulk sizes, and single use packets.

Visit www.sawyer.com for more info
Welcome Apprentice Hunters!

By Andrew Burnett, Principal Wildlife Biologist and Ryan Risher, Wildlife Biologist

In 2017, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife established an Apprentice Hunting License for archery and firearm hunters with minimum ages of 14 years and 18 years, respectively. Completion of a Hunter Education course is not required. However, apprentice hunters are required to hunt under the direct supervision of a similarly licensed hunting mentor at least 21 years of age.

Apprentice hunters, according to survey respondents, took to the field mostly to hunt deer, but also to pursue turkey, waterfowl and small game. Apprentice hunters’ primary motivation to try hunting was to spend time with family and friends; equally motivating was the opportunity to obtain wild meat. (Are you a locavore? See page 78.) Nearly all participants expressed satisfaction and a positive hunting experience while hunting in New Jersey with their mentor.

Both resident and non-residents may purchase an Apprentice License. (See Apprentice License, page 8.) In our introductory year, a total of 592 Apprentice licenses (227 archery and 311 firearm) were sold to 538 hunters. Apprentice hunters were, on average, 34 years old, ranging from 14–88 years old in 2017.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife is excited that over half of the apprentice hunter respondents indicated success harvesting game under the supervision of their mentor! Despite much public misconception that most hunters are trophy hunters, approximately 75 percent indicated hunting for a trophy was the least important reason that they wanted to try hunting.

I knew, in getting my Apprentice License, that I was about to take part in something I’d likely remember for a lifetime, especially because it was my first time hunting alongside my dad. My appreciation for the outdoors seems more real now than ever. — Jess Kreppel

There were 120 female and 418 male Apprentice license holders last year. The percentage of female hunters in the apprentice category (22 percent) is greater than the hunter population at large (4 percent) in 2017.

While the majority of Apprentice License holders (185 or 90 percent) were New Jersey Residents, 53 non-resident apprentice hunters came from Pennsylvania (19), New York (17), Texas (3), Connecticut, Delaware and Vermont (two each), Alaska, District of Columbia, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina and Virginia (one each.)

In 2017, 67 established hunters tried a new type of sporting arm as an apprentice hunter: 48 firearm license holders acquired an Apprentice Archery License; 19 archery license holders acquired an Apprentice Firearm License.

This fall, (and next spring—gobble, gobble!) hunters are encouraged to introduce someone new to hunting through this hands-on opportunity—a co-worker, a family member, a friend or a significant other. Three-quarters of survey respondents felt strongly that the apprentice license provided them with a worthwhile introduction to hunting: 83 percent felt they could hunt independently in the future.

Share your love of the outdoors and appreciation for wildlife with someone yet to have the experience. Equally important, foster respect for the game animals pursued, model good hunter ethics—and have fun doing it!

Lastly, we encourage apprentice hunters to complete a Hunter Education course to become an annual hunter. By purchasing a hunting license, you make a valuable contribution towards wildlife management and the protection of public natural resources. Visit https://www.nj.wildlifelicense.com/ALS/course/course_report.php for the fall Hunter Education course schedule.

For questions about the apprentice hunting license as a mentor or an apprentice, contact Ryan Risher at Ryan.Risher@dep.nj.gov or call (609) 629-1014.

Mentor hunters:
Convey your knowledge, transfer your skills, lend your gear, share your access and make memories afield with friends and family.
The target shooting and hunting community prides itself on being safe and responsible with firearms in all situations—from using them outdoors to storing them safely at home. Sometimes, however, unusual conditions such as extremely dry environments require an extra level of awareness and safety on the part of shooters.

Wildfires have many possible causes. The National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearms and ammunition industry, reminds all shooters that during dry and hot weather conditions their use of certain ammunition and targets could accidentally ignite a wildfire. NSSF reminds all target shooters and hunters, as well as other outdoor enthusiasts, to consider the potential consequences of their activities in fire-prone environments.

- Make it a point to know the regulations and rules related to shooting in areas experiencing dry and hot conditions, whether on public or private land or at shooting ranges. Many national forests, for example, do not allow recreational shooting when fire restrictions are in effect.
- Consider the type of ammunition and targets you are using. Minimize the risk of fires by not using steel-jacketed ammunition, ammunition with steel-core components, tracer rounds or exploding targets in fire-prone areas.
- Remember that equipment, such as cars and ATVs, can have extremely hot exhaust systems that could ignite dry vegetation, so park only in designated areas.
- Extinguish and dispose of smoking materials safely.
- Follow guidelines to extinguish campfires.
- Warn others of potential dangers and behaviors for starting wildfires.
- Report any wildfire you see to authorities.
- Spread this message to other target shooters, hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.

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