

WEST VIRGINIA

# Big Game

## BULLETIN 2015



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# **BLACK BEAR**

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## **Season Results and Highlights**

West Virginia hunters harvested a record 3,201 black bears during the combined 2015 archery and firearms seasons (Tables 1,2 and 3). The kill has topped 2,000 in each of the past 6 years. The harvest of 2015 was 24% higher than the 2014 harvest of 2,581 bears and is 17% higher than the previous record of 2,735 set in 2012 (Figure 1, Table 4). West Virginia hunters have harvested 40,250 bears since 1979 (Table 2). Thirty-nine percent (15,601) of those bears have been harvested since 2010.

The 2015 Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook documented mast production for all species combined that was above the long-term average. However, oak mast production statewide decreased 50% from 2014. Historically, scarce oak mast has led to an increased archery harvest and a decreased December firearms harvest, and that scenario held true in 2015. However, the archery harvest increased 92% over 2014 (a new record) and the December firearms harvest only decreased 18%.

Hunters took 1,091 bears during the first segment of the 2015 archery season (September 26 – November 21). The top five counties were Nicholas (85), Fayette (81), Wyoming (75), Randolph (72) and Webster (64)(Tables 1 and 2). In all bear seasons combined, hunters using vertical bows killed 712 bears and hunters using crossbows killed 430 bears.

Hunters harvested 2,110 (1,266M: 844F) bears during the 2015 combined firearms seasons (Table 4). This is a 6% increase over the 1,988 bruins killed in 2014 (Table 4). Hunters took 726 bears in September and October, 497 during the concurrent buck/bear season and 887 during the traditional December season (Table 1). The top five counties were Randolph (195), Nicholas (181), Pocahontas (173), Greenbrier (172) and Pendleton (165).

## **Non-hunting Mortalities**

One-hundred fifty-four bears were killed on highways, died as a result of illegal or marauder activities, or succumbed from other non-hunting causes (electrocution, accidental poisoning, etc.) (Tables 4 and 5). This is down 9% from the 170 non-hunting mortalities recorded in 2014 (Table 4). There were 60 deaths from vehicles in 2015

compared to 78 in 2014. The number of illegal deaths was up from 2 to 3 from 2014 to 2015, respectively. Miscellaneous deaths increased from 7 in 2014 to 8 in 2015. Bears killed for nuisance or damage activity (marauders), remained at 83 in 2015. The combined seasonal and non-seasonal deaths (3,355) is the highest ever recorded in West Virginia (Table 4).

## **Damage Payments and Nuisance Complaints**

All hunters who pursue bears are required to buy bear damage stamps (Class DS). Funds derived from stamp sales are deposited in a special bear damage account to reimburse property owners for real and personal property damage caused by bears.

The number of bear damage claims was down 8% from 163 in 2014 to 150 in 2015 (Table 6). Total payments of \$154,981 were 6% higher than the \$146,471 paid out in 2014. Claims were reported in 37 counties in 2015 and 33 counties in 2014. There were 38 claims for bees (compared to 44 in 2014) totaling \$23,277, 14 for livestock at \$7,024 (22 in 2014), 40 for corn at \$93,164 (47 in 2014), and 58 (63 in 2014) miscellaneous claims at \$31,515.

Greenbrier County had the greatest dollar amount in compensations at \$46,693 followed by Pendleton (\$21,839), Preston (\$18,134), Pocahontas (\$13,155) and Boone (\$9,443). Greenbrier County had the highest number of claims (28) followed by Pocahontas (12), Pendleton (11), Hardy (8) and Fayette and Preston (7).

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR) employees received 721 nuisance bear calls in 2015 compared to 956 in 2014. The 5 counties with the most complaints were Fayette (88), Greenbrier (85), Raleigh (83), Kanawha (54) and Nicholas (39).

## **Tooth Collections**

Age data from the 2014 tooth samples have been received and hunters will be notified of their bear's age. Hunters submitted 526 useable teeth (correct tooth, identification matched check tags, etc.) for age consideration. There were no cubs, 39% (205) were yearlings, 24% (126) were 2-year olds, 12% (64) were 3-year olds, and the remaining 25% (131) were 4-years old or older. Biologists use age data from hunter-harvested bear teeth to calculate population estimates and mortality rates for black bears in West Virginia. The 526 useable teeth submitted in 2014 represent only 20% of the total black bear harvest and the lowest percentage collected in modern times. Low numbers of bear teeth submitted by hunters for age analysis lead to reduced precision in estimation of vital rates that are critical for managing and

monitoring West Virginia's black bear population. In 2014, the West Virginia Bearhunters Association and the West Virginia Bowhunters Association pledged their support of mandatory bear tooth submission. In 2015, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources asked sportsmen on the Questionnaire at the Hunting and Fishing Regulations meetings if they would support mandatory tooth submission from all bears harvested in West Virginia. Seventy-three percent of individuals and 75% of clubs supported mandatory bear tooth submission. The regulation requiring hunters to submit a first premolar tooth from each harvested bear in West Virginia was submitted as a Legislative Rule in the 2016 Legislative Session. If approved, hunters who harvest a bear will be required to submit a first premolar tooth to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources for aging beginning in 2016.

## **Reproductive Tract Collections**

Wildlife managers and biologists have been collecting female reproductive tracts to estimate litter size around the state for many years. The data gathered from reproductive tracts (cubs/female) mirrors data collected from visiting the dens of radio-tagged females. The information collected from examining female reproductive tracts can be obtained at far less cost than maintaining a large sample of radio-tagged females.

Managers collected only 8 reproductive tracts that supplied useful information in 2014. Reproductive tract data lags one year behind because researchers are waiting on age data. Information from reproductive tracts obtained in 2014 cannot be fully analyzed until ages are determined. Two yearling tracts were examined and showed no evidence of breeding in 2014. Four 2-year olds showed evidence of breeding in 2014 and averaged 2 corpora lutea per female. These bears would have given birth at age 3 to their first litter. One sow over the age of 3 showed evidence of breeding and averaged 3 corpora lutea. One female over the age of 3 showed evidence of giving birth in 2014 and had 3 placental scars.

The number of reproductive tracts submitted each year by hunters has declined in much the same way as the number of teeth. In an effort to gather a larger sample of reproductive tracts, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources will work to offer an incentive to hunters who submit reproductive tracts in 2016. Details and instructions will be available in the near future.

## **Black Bear Research**

Reproductive tracts and tooth collections from harvested bears provide the most cost-effective way to monitor the black bear population and are being used to help make decisions about changes in hunting regulations. Therefore, radio collars have only been left on a small number of females in the northern and southern part of the state (5 in

2015). In 2015, managers handled 2 sows with yearlings and tagged 2 of 2 yearlings in one litter and none in the other. Managers visited 2 sows with neonate cubs ( $\bar{x} = 3$ ).

Monitoring the status of West Virginia's black bear population has always been a top priority for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. Trends in bear population size are more realistic to obtain than absolute population numbers. In recent years, managers have shifted gears from growing the bear population to stabilizing population growth or reducing bear numbers in some management units. Accurate trend data is essential to making sound decisions on bear hunting seasons and bag limits.

The implementation of mandatory bear tooth submission will add confidence to estimates of population size and survival estimates. In addition, mandatory tooth submission will allow managers to explore other methods of population estimation to support estimates obtained from ages alone.

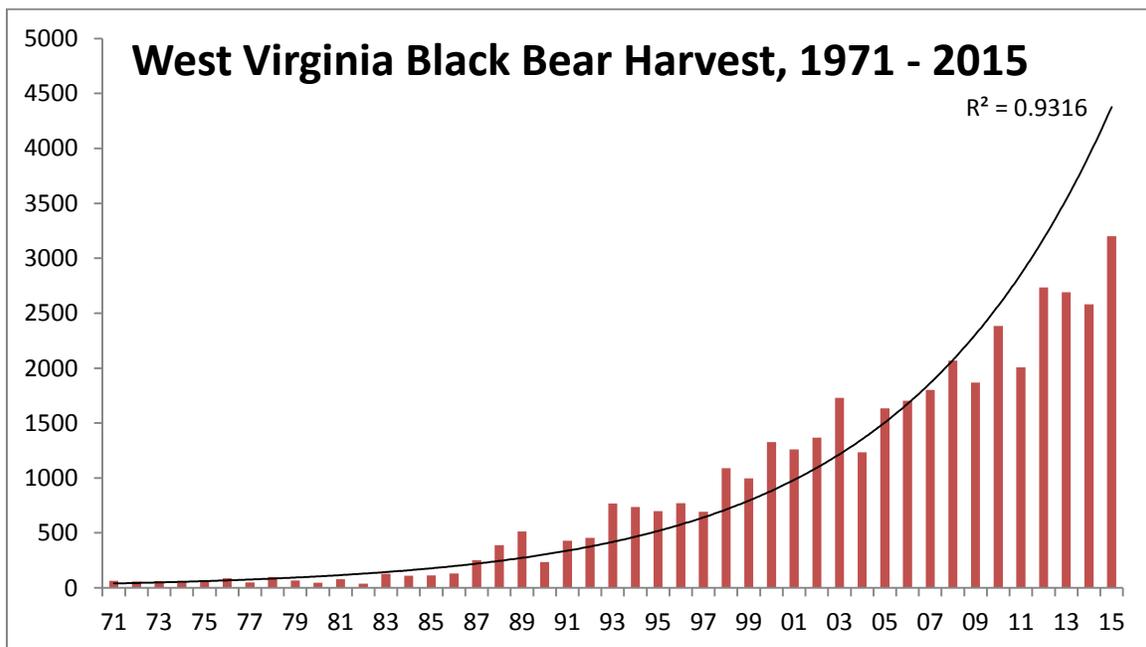


Figure 1. West Virginia black bear harvest, 1971-2015.

Table 1. West Virginia black bear harvest by season and county, 2015.

County	SEASON				TOTAL
	Bow	Sept./Oct.	Buck Gun	December	
Barbour	29	8	22	7	66
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	6	0	0	1	7
Marion	4	0	0	0	4
Marshall	0	0	0	0	0
Monongalia	7	0	3	0	10
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Preston	60	23	36	36	155
Taylor	7	0	2	1	10
Tucker	21	27	10	58	116
Wetzel	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>370</b>
Berkeley	3	0	4	0	7
Grant	15	15	7	36	73
Hampshire	19	0	34	6	59
Hardy	28	40	15	31	114
Jefferson	3	0	0	0	3
Mineral	9	0	0	8	17
Morgan	6	0	5	1	12
Pendleton	25	44	19	102	190
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>475</b>
Braxton	26	5	9	8	48
Clay	23	17	6	13	59
Lewis	11	0	9	1	21
Nicholas	85	53	68	60	266
Pocahontas	18	47	21	105	191
Randolph	72	68	12	115	267
Upshur	17	10	3	8	38
Webster	64	53	26	79	222
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>1,112</b>
Fayette	81	23	41	17	162
Greenbrier	37	51	23	98	209
McDowell	50	45	0	14	109
Mercer	29	0	3	2	34
Monroe	22	29	16	22	89
Raleigh	50	27	31	16	124
Summers	8	0	6	0	14
Wyoming	75	29	0	4	108
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>849</b>
Boone	49	33	33	15	130
Cabell	1	0	0	0	1
Kanawha	32	28	31	11	102
Lincoln	7	0	0	0	7
Logan	39	39	0	6	84
Mason	0	0	0	0	0
Mingo	25	12	0	2	39
Putnam	1	0	0	0	1
Wayne	5	0	0	0	5
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>369</b>
Calhoun	3	0	2	0	5
Doddridge	2	0	0	0	2
Gilmer	8	0	0	3	11
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasants	1	0	0	0	1
Ritchie	1	0	0	0	1
Roane	0	0	0	1	1
Tyler	1	0	0	0	1
Wirt	4	0	0	0	4
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>3,201</b>

Bow\* refers to bears killed with a bow or crossbow from September 26, 2015 - November 21, 2015.

All other bow and crossbow bear kills have been separated based on the dates in which they were killed.

Table 2. Sex ratios of West Virginia black bears for September or November gun season, bow season, and December gun season, 1964-2015.

Year	Bow or gun season September/October		Bow season and/or Early Nov. gun season		Late Nov. or December gun season		Annual Kill		Total*
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<b>1964-1978</b>	0	0							
<b>15-Yr Total</b>	0	0	318	345	178	71	496	416	912
<b>Sex Ratios</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>	
1979	0	0	0	0	50	18	50	18	68
1980	0	0	2	2	34	9	36	11	47
1981	0	0	3	2	59	16	62	18	80
1982	0	0	11	5	16	4	27	9	36
1983	0	0	11	6	78	34	89	40	129
1984	0	0	8	8	51	43	59	51	110
1985	0	0	14	7	68	24	82	31	113
1986	0	0	31	14	61	26	92	40	132
1987	0	0	40	14	146	51	186	65	251
1988	0	0	21	16	198	165	219	181	400
1989	0	0	81	96	198	135	279	231	510
1990	0	0	41	20	114	60	155	80	235
1991	0	0	72	57	186	111	258	168	426
1992	0	0	112	89	169	85	281	174	455
1993	0	0	141	96	340	190	481	286	767
1994	0	0	111	73	290	258	401	331	732
1995	0	0	152	75	310	153	462	228	690
1996	0	0	114	101	355	198	469	299	768
1997	0	0	225	198	178	85	403	283	686
1998	0	0	167	97	481	337	648	434	1,082
1999	0	0	256	168	369	201	625	369	994
2000	0	0	196	102	655	364	851	466	1,317
2001	0	0	302	165	482	301	784	466	1,250
2002	0	0	540	321	327	169	867	490	1,357
2003	0	0	605	422	450	222	1,055	644	1,699
2004	0	0	319	219	479	218	798	437	1,235
2005	0	0	432	285	616	301	1,048	586	1,634
2006	0	0	399	266	727	312	1,126	578	1,704
2007	0	0	521	328	637	318	1,158	646	1,804
2008	348	322	283	177	597	343	1,228	842	2,070
2009	118	79	575	417	464	215	1,157	711	1,868
2010	215	248	314	146	932	530	1,461	924	2,385
2011	332	306	356	254	483	276	1,171	836	2,007
2012	380	310	462	261	844	478	1,686	1,049	2,735
2013	375	309	523	330	743	412	1,641	1,051	2,692
2014	265	240	402	165	1008	501	1,675	906	2,581
2015	423	303	685	406	843	541	1,951	1,250	3,201
<b>37-Year Total</b>	<b>2,456</b>	<b>2,117</b>	<b>8,527</b>	<b>5,408</b>	<b>14,038</b>	<b>7,704</b>	<b>25,021</b>	<b>15,229</b>	<b>40,250</b>
<b>Average Sex Ratio:</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>	
<b>2015 Sex Ratios</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>39%</b>	

\*Represents bears of known sex and not the total harvest in each year.

Table 3. West Virginia black bear harvest by county, 2011-2015.

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Barbour	31	43	46	43	66
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	0	3	4	2	7
Marion	4	1	2	0	4
Marshall	1	0	0	0	0
Monongalia	4	8	11	7	10
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Preston	129	132	131	119	155
Taylor	4	7	4	6	10
Tucker	90	94	108	106	116
Wetzel	3	1	1	2	2
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>370</b>
Berkeley	2	3	2	5	7
Grant	89	116	95	119	73
Hampshire	19	72	35	42	59
Hardy	123	146	123	169	114
Jefferson	1	12	3	2	3
Mineral	18	14	22	14	17
Morgan	7	18	11	12	12
Pendleton	146	197	221	205	190
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>475</b>
Braxton	26	42	48	40	48
Clay	28	47	37	34	59
Lewis	5	13	7	11	21
Nicholas	120	149	146	164	266
Pocahontas	127	187	140	199	191
Randolph	218	240	297	219	267
Upshur	8	22	18	34	38
Webster	151	223	178	218	222
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>919</b>	<b>1,112</b>
Fayette	98	192	138	111	162
Greenbrier	172	183	180	199	209
McDowell	46	67	69	49	109
Mercer	17	15	32	13	34
Monroe	21	34	63	55	89
Raleigh	71	71	103	63	124
Summers	13	13	18	15	14
Wyoming	49	52	99	34	108
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>849</b>
Boone	55	117	116	100	130
Cabell	1	0	0	0	1
Kanawha	73	122	79	103	102
Lincoln	0	2	3	1	7
Logan	23	51	63	34	84
Mason	0	0	0	0	0
Mingo	2	11	32	12	39
Putnam	0	0	0	0	1
Wayne	0	2	1	1	5
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>369</b>
Calhoun	4	2	2	8	5
Doddridge	1	0	0	0	2
Gilmer	3	3	0	2	11
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasants	0	0	0	1	1
Ritchie	2	4	3	2	1
Roane	2	4	1	1	1
Tyler	0	0	0	0	1
Wirt	0	0	0	5	4
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>State Total*</b>	<b>2,007</b>	<b>2,735</b>	<b>2,692</b>	<b>2,581</b>	<b>3,201</b>

\*totals change as late tags are added to the database.

Table 4. Number of black bears killed each year in West Virginia and cause of death.

Year	Hunting Season		Illegal Kill	Road Kill		Marauders	Others	Total
	Bow	Gun		Kill	Kill			
<b>70's Subtotal</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>70's Average Annual Bag: Bow 2; Gun 65</b>					
<b>80's Subtotal</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>80's Average Annual Bag: Bow 26; Gun 154</b>					
1990	61	174	14	23	13	10	295	
1991	131	297	18	21	13	2	482	
1992	201	254	17	48	18	8	546	
1993	239	529	24	40	4	6	842	
1994	185	550	10	31	5	5	786	
1995	227	470	14	37	6	8	762	
1996	214	558	6	23	15	7	823	
1997	420	272	13	58	30	10	803	
1998	265	825	12	30	8	6	1,146	
1999	420	577	9	24	8	15	1,053	
<b>90's Subtotal</b>	<b>2,363</b>	<b>4,506</b>	<b>90's Average Annual Bag: Bow 236; Gun 450</b>					
2000	305	1,023	6	16	8	4	1,362	
2001	475	785	18	43	22	1	1,344	
2002	726	670	14	82	28	10	1,530	
2003	774	958	17	87	61	7	1,904	
2004	374	861	7	55	22	11	1,330	
2005	585	1,076	15	62	18	10	1,766	
2006	516	1,188	8	61	36	10	1,819	
2007	728	1,076	4	62	155	7	2,032	
2008	460	1,610	3	38	34	6	2,151	
2009	992	876	11	70	184	9	2,142	
<b>00's Subtotal</b>	<b>5,935</b>	<b>10,123</b>	<b>00's Average Annual Bag: Bow 600; Gun 1,002.</b>					
2010	460	1,925	6	66	35	5	2,497	
2011	610	1,397	8	107	85	6	2,213	
2012	723	2,012	5	72	104	2	2,918	
2013	853	1,839	4	65	94	12	2,867	
2014	593	1,988	2	81	86	7	2,757	
2015	1,091	2,110	3	60	83	8	3,355	
<b>10's Subtotal</b>	<b>4,330</b>	<b>11,271</b>	<b>10's Average Annual Bag: Bow 722; Gun 1,879</b>					

\*November Gun Seasons held in 1989, and 2002 - 2015 in certain counties.

\*\*September Season held in 2008-2015 in certain counties.

\*\*\*Check tags without season (<0.05%) marked were assumed gun kills for this table.

\*\*\*\*Bow kill for 2015 indicates bears killed between September 26 - November 21, 2015, not all bears killed with a bow or crossbow.

Table 5. West Virginia 2015 nonseasonal black bear mortalities by county and type.

County	Roadkills	Illegal	Marauders	Misc.	Total
Barbour	2	0	0	0	2
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	1	0	0	0	1
Marion	0	0	1	0	1
Marshall	0	0	0	0	0
Monongalia	1	0	2	0	3
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Preston	1	0	0	0	1
Taylor	0	0	0	0	0
Tucker	0	0	1	0	1
Wetzel	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
Berkeley	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	0	0	0	0	0
Hampshire	0	1	3	0	4
Hardy	2	0	3	0	5
Jefferson	0	0	0	0	0
Mineral	0	0	0	1	1
Morgan	0	0	0	0	0
Pendleton	2	0	3	1	6
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>
Braxton	7	1	1	2	11
Clay	3	0	1	0	4
Lewis	4	0	1	0	5
Nicholas	16	0	9	1	26
Pocahontas	0	0	10	0	10
Randolph	0	0	0	0	0
Upshur	1	0	0	0	1
Webster	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>57</b>
Fayette	2	0	3	0	5
Greenbrier	2	0	29	1	32
McDowell	0	0	6	0	6
Mercer	2	0	0	0	2
Monroe	0	0	0	0	0
Raleigh	3	0	5	0	8
Summers	0	0	0	0	0
Wyoming	1	0	1	0	2
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55</b>
Boone	0	0	1	0	1
Cabell	0	0	0	0	0
Kanawha	6	0	1	2	9
Lincoln	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	0	0	2	0	2
Mason	1	0	0	0	1
Mingo	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Dist. V Subtotal</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	0
Doddridge	0	0	0	0	0
Gilmer	1	0	0	0	1
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	0
Ritchie	1	0	0	0	1
Roane	1	0	0	0	1
Tyler	0	0	0	0	0
Wirt	0	0	0	0	0
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>154</b>

Table 6. Black bear damage claims paid and payments by county 2011-2015.

County	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Claims	Payments								
Barbour	1	\$609	0	\$0	1	\$208	1	\$399	2	\$1,396
Berkeley	0	\$0	0	\$0	3	\$899	0	\$0	0	\$0
Boone	3	\$2,835	2	\$587	0	\$0	6	\$2,770	3	\$9,443
Braxton	4	\$4,664	1	\$383	9	\$3,332	4	\$750	1	\$263
Brooke	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Cabell	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$411
Calhoun	1	\$55	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$364
Clay	1	\$43	1	\$225	1	\$149	8	\$1,954	2	\$291
Doddridge	1	\$350	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$141	0	\$0
Fayette	1	\$3,600	4	\$1,672	8	\$5,352	10	\$6,695	7	\$4,008
Gilmer	0	\$0	1	\$1,040	2	\$185	1	\$398	1	\$100
Grant	6	\$14,983	5	\$9,064	5	\$7,425	2	\$5,578	4	\$4,817
Greenbrier	19	\$51,660	24	\$63,572	33	\$46,475	23	\$24,999	28	\$46,693
Hampshire	13	\$11,619	15	\$8,993	11	\$5,791	3	\$328	5	\$2,927
Hancock	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Hardy	13	\$50,839	13	\$28,052	15	\$40,965	8	\$14,839	8	\$3,382
Harrison	1	\$228	0	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$1,570	1	\$150
Jackson	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$1,817	0	\$0	0	\$0
Jefferson	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$144
Kanawha	0	\$0	2	\$199	2	\$820	1	\$299	1	\$138
Lewis	0	\$0	3	\$888	1	\$669	1	\$541	3	\$1,733
Lincoln	0	\$0	1	\$328	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Logan	3	\$2,167	8	\$3,256	6	\$1,868	5	\$1,793	2	\$293
Marion	0	\$0	1	\$834	2	\$952	4	\$1,360	4	\$1,823
Marshall	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$578
Mason	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
McDowell	3	\$1,031	1	\$2	0	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$212
Mercer	2	\$530	2	\$580	6	\$5,679	2	\$633	6	\$3,575
Mineral	11	\$12,341	8	\$4,107	1	\$863	3	\$1,200	1	\$80
Mingo	0	\$0	1	\$313	3	\$824	0	\$0	5	\$4,900
Monongalia	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$54	2	\$7,999	1	\$606
Monroe	1	\$232	3	\$10,753	11	\$26,745	1	\$5,765	0	\$0
Morgan	3	\$1,088	1	\$1,150	2	\$610	5	\$5,523	1	\$674
Nicholas	12	\$7,080	15	\$5,039	9	\$7,206	5	\$1,107	5	\$3,608
Ohio	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Pendleton	25	\$29,434	17	\$32,054	14	\$9,910	13	\$14,000	11	\$21,839
Pleasants	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Pocahontas	18	\$29,782	22	\$22,211	8	\$9,190	11	\$9,818	12	\$13,155
Preston	26	\$74,074	11	\$33,158	12	\$39,988	10	\$23,758	7	\$18,134
Putnam	1	\$1,193	1	\$1,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Raleigh	5	\$1,558	6	\$1,447	4	\$1,093	7	\$2,726	3	\$557
Randolph	19	\$7,773	9	\$1,651	8	\$2,581	13	\$3,123	3	\$363
Ritchie	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$350	0	\$0	0	\$0
Roane	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$2,403	2	\$854	0	\$0
Summers	2	\$1,396	2	\$742	2	\$813	3	\$2,557	1	\$173
Taylor	1	\$70	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Tucker	8	\$25,319	12	\$28,290	9	\$17,672	2	\$1,874	2	\$5,288
Tyler	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Upshur	6	\$1,299	0	\$0	1	\$75	1	\$227	4	\$1,099
Wayne	1	\$484	1	\$299	1	\$451	0	\$0	0	\$0
Webster	8	\$2,096	9	\$7,471	4	\$1,659	0	\$0	1	\$250
Wetzel	7	\$3,100	5	\$4,154	3	\$2,244	0	\$0	3	\$960
Wirt	1	\$1,041	0	\$0	1	\$919	2	\$775	0	\$0
Wood	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Wyoming	2	\$434	3	\$815	4	\$1,517	1	\$118	5	\$554
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>\$345,007</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>\$274,329</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>\$249,753</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>\$146,471</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>\$154,981</b>

# **WILD TURKEY**

**By  
Keith D. Krantz**

## **Spring Harvest**

Spring gobbler season began in 1966 on our wildlife management areas and went statewide in 1968. In those first 49 years, hunters were required to affix a paper field tag to their bird and take it to a physical check station for registration purposes. Beginning with the 2015 spring gobbler season hunters still had to field tag their animal but could check their harvested bird in via the telephone (1-844-wvcheck), internet (wvhunt.com) or at one of the 170+ hunting/fishing license agents around the state. The 2015 harvest recorded electronically was remarkably similar to the 2014 paper check tag system. Spring Gobbler hunters electronically checked in 9,037 gobblers this year (Table 1), which was slightly lower than the number checked last year. Because we do not know if the check-in rate changed significantly between paper and electronic systems, drawing annual comparisons may be problematic. Of the six administrative Districts in the state, District I recorded the most birds checked with 1,837, followed by District IV (1,728), District VI (1,678), District V (1,510), District III (1,399) and lastly District II (885). While District I had the highest harvest, District IV had four counties in the top 10, more than any other District. Within Districts, Preston County in District I led the state with 333 gobblers checked. Mason County hunters followed with 314 birds checked; rounding out the top 5 were Jackson (264), Wyoming (257) and Wood County (248). Rounding out the top 10 counties were Harrison (247), Greenbrier (242), Fayette (239) and Upshur and Summers tied at 231.

Timing of the Spring Gobbler season harvest returned to a more normal pattern in 2015. If you recall, the 2014 season saw the bulk of the harvest occur the second week of the season with 30% occurring in the last two weeks (Table 2). In 2015, 58% of the harvest occurred in week one and 17% occurred the last two weeks which was very similar to past trends. The Youth Season accounted for 4% of the spring gobbler harvest which was twice as much as 2014.

## Fall Harvest

A total of 33 counties were open to wild turkey hunting in 2015, 1- less than 2014 and included:

- Fourteen (14) traditional fall hunting counties open to a four-week split season (October 10 - October 17 and October 26 - November 14, 2015).
- Six (6) counties open to a two-week split season (October 10 - October 17 and October 26 - 31, 2015).
- Thirteen (13) counties open to a one-week season (October 10 - October 17, 2014).

Fall turkey hunters electronically checked in a total of 1,140 birds this year (Table 3). District III continued to lead the state in total harvest with 371 turkeys registered. District 4 was second (209) followed closely by District II (199), District I (187), District VI (109) and lastly District V (62). District V harvest is directly linked to the number of counties open for hunting, last year only Mason County was open, whereas in 2015 both Mason and Putnam were open for a 1-week season.

The top fall harvest counties were: Randolph (114), Greenbrier (81), Preston (71), Nicholas (32) and Pocahontas (62) in the top five, followed by Monroe (61), Upshur (59), Webster (48), Wood (47) and Mason (43) rounding out the top 10. Preston county hunters have a two-week season whereas the others in the top five had four-week seasons. The 14 "Traditional" fall hunting counties accounted for 56% of the total fall harvest which was very similar to previous years. This similarity is encouraging as the rate at which hunters check their game is unknown between the old and new systems. Fall turkey harvests are driven by a number of factors including hunter interest and participation, recruitment, and hard mast conditions. Harvest is relatively low in many of our non-traditional counties because those hunters may be more focused on bow hunting for deer.

Opening day hunters checked in 14% of the total fall turkey harvest in 2015 (Table 4). Similar to the spring gobbler hunting season, 58% of the total fall harvest occurs the first week. Given that the 14, 4-week Traditional Fall counties account for 58% of the total statewide harvest, the bulk of the successful hunting is over with after the first week. The first week after the split, which is recorded as the second week of the season accounted for 17% of the harvest, 75% of the season total occurs during the first half of the season. The remaining 25% of the total fall season harvest occurred during the peak of the white-tailed deer rut. With the new electronic check system, we will be able to discern how much of these percentages were due to archery and cross bow hunters.

A total of 10,177 turkeys were taken in the combined seasons making this a very average year (Table 5). Spring gobbler season will open a full week earlier in 2016 which should make the distribution and magnitude of harvest interesting to compare.

## **Surveys**

### **Spring Gobbler Survey**

The Wildlife Resources Section and the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation conduct an annual survey of spring gobbler hunters. The survey is done entirely by volunteer sportsmen that donate their time and effort to gather information to help the DNR manage wild turkeys. Typically, the West Virginia Chapter sends survey forms to its members and the Wildlife Resources Section compiles the data from these and other participants. A survey report is written and provided free to cooperators. Due to staffing changes, the results of this survey were not available at the time of printing.

Hunters desiring a copy of the annual survey report need to participate in the survey. Spring gobbler hunters wanting to help are encouraged to contact Tammie Thompson, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241, phone 304-637-0245. Those wishing to participate will be sent necessary forms and a questionnaire prior to the spring hunting season. The survey is simple to conduct and a hunter does not have to harvest a gobbler to provide useful data. Most of the information collected deals with what hunters hear, see, or has an opinion on.

### **Brood Survey**

Past studies have shown that the quantity of gobblers born two years prior to a spring turkey season is a pretty good forecaster of that spring's gobbler harvest. In the near term, the number of turkey broods observed helps inform the fall hunter outlook. A fairly productive turkey brood observation season was had in the Southern Region, exceeding the 5-year average by 14%. The Southern Region recorded 111 broods, an amount not seen since 2008 when Western Region observers recorded 118. Declines in brood reporting were seen in the other 3 Regions, ranging from 6% below the 5-year average for the Western Region to 44% below the average for the Mountains. Comparing observation trends to 2014 reveals only the Mountains Region being in the red, all the other Regions saw increases which was encouraging. Overall, turkey brood observations were up 22% over last year.

If survey observations were representative, it was predicted that fall turkey hunters in Mason, Putnam, Nicholas, Summers, Monroe and Wyoming counties should run into more turkeys and have their harvests increase this year than they have in quite a while. This prediction only failed in Summers and Wyoming counties who exhibited

declines in harvest. Two years from now (2017), spring gobbler hunters in this Region should also expect an improved harvest. Conversely, fall turkey hunters in the Mountains will have an even more difficult time finding birds this year and in a few years will have an even harder time running in to a spring gobbler. The remainder of the state which falls into the Eastern Panhandle and Western Regions should see similar to improved numbers of birds this fall contrasted against 2014 and a similar to slightly fewer birds in the spring of 2017.

## **Mast Survey**

Seventy-eight active duty personnel and retirees from the Wildlife and Law Enforcement Sections of the Division of Natural Resources and the Division of Forestry devoted their time to perform mast surveys this year. This, our longest running survey since 1970 had 218 locations covering all regions of West Virginia and were surveyed in 2015. Mast from 18 tree and shrub species important to wildlife were monitored again this year

Compared to the 2014 survey, the mast index for all species combined was up slightly. Last year beech, hickory and walnut were scarce while oaks were abundant. This year, indices for oaks were down and indices for beech, walnut and hickories were up. Indices for all oak species decreased over 50 percent indicating a substantial decrease in oak production. Scarlet oak decreased 76 percent compared to 2014. White, chestnut, black, red and scarlet oaks should be scarce across the landscape. Statewide, beech did great with a 234% increase compared to the poor crop in 2014. Walnut and hickory followed a similar trend as beech, with increased production of nuts. Walnut and hickory increased 38 and 119 percent, respectively.

For soft mast, apple was clearly abundant across the state and was 38 above the index for 2014. Hawthorn, crabapple and grape were noticeably higher with percent increases of 50, 24, 34, respectively above 2014 values. Sassafras increased 16 percent. Dogwood and black cherry were the only soft mast that decreased from 2014.

When comparing all species, the 2015 index was 1% above last year and slightly over the long-term trend. Hickory, cherry and oaks were below the average with all oaks down 50%. In 2014, the lack of beech, hickory and walnut was offset by oak mast. Hickory was extremely good statewide in 2015 with an index of 73. All hard mast species were down 8% but right at their long-term average.

Table 1. West Virginia spring wild turkey harvest, 2011-2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Brooke	160	182	162	178	127
Hancock	93	74	104	84	67
Harrison	107	92	110	110	89
Harrison	242	282	355	264	247
Marion	135	163	218	149	170
Marshall	253	224	300	220	174
Monongalia	218	221	262	174	199
Ohio	92	87	131	91	109
Preston	325	330	403	344	333
Taylor	76	93	103	87	72
Tucker	56	62	57	88	82
Wetzel	125	210	256	203	168
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>1,882</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>2,461</b>	<b>1,992</b>	<b>1,837</b>
Berkeley	86	88	98	112	124
Grant	102	114	129	129	131
Hampshire	119	120	124	138	156
Hardy	123	101	129	135	116
Jefferson	42	43	60	57	82
Mineral	78	86	87	96	118
Morgan	70	56	54	62	64
Pendleton	100	95	117	95	94
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>885</b>
Braxton	172	119	238	175	194
Clay	85	77	147	68	83
Lewis	201	181	221	180	194
Nicholas	166	161	221	164	213
Pocahontas	108	124	160	130	145
Randolph	142	94	217	186	225
Upshur	213	199	262	229	231
Webster	99	94	118	113	114
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>1,049</b>	<b>1,584</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>1,399</b>
Fayette	234	176	287	244	239
Greenbrier	253	235	299	245	242
McDowell	228	154	308	215	218
Mercer	186	146	177	170	161
Monroe	158	162	206	212	181
Raleigh	215	185	277	214	231
Summers	210	176	258	209	199
Wyoming	242	132	291	255	257
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>1,726</b>	<b>1,366</b>	<b>2,103</b>	<b>1,764</b>	<b>1,728</b>
Boone	185	144	230	159	138
Cabell	134	129	138	80	110
Kanawha	311	214	332	231	227
Lincoln	188	157	213	178	169
Logan	169	133	246	181	172
Mason	445	343	370	293	314
Mingo	138	92	141	93	91
Putnam	236	196	225	150	181
Wayne	182	92	144	103	108
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>1,988</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>2,039</b>	<b>1,468</b>	<b>1,510</b>
Calhoun	96	138	179	135	128
Doddridge	121	111	138	126	118
Gilmer	137	132	191	147	124
Jackson	290	244	326	293	264
Pleasants	68	81	83	73	71
Ritchie	212	233	326	245	218
Roane	195	193	236	232	210
Tyler	135	133	211	136	144
Wirt	157	164	193	177	153
Wood	277	236	294	271	248
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>1,688</b>	<b>1,665</b>	<b>2,177</b>	<b>1,835</b>	<b>1,678</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>9,190</b>	<b>8,303</b>	<b>11,162</b>	<b>9,128</b>	<b>9,037</b>

Table 2. Spring wild turkey harvest in West Virginia by week of season, 2014-2015

Week of Season	2014		2015	
	N	%	N	%
Youth	195	0.0214	385	0.0426
Week 1	978	0.1071	5,259	0.5819
Week 2	5,148	0.5640	1,864	0.2063
Week 3	1,815	0.1988	890	0.0985
Week 4	951	0.1042	639	0.0707
Unknown	41	0.0045	0	0.0000
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,128</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9,037</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3. West Virginia fall wild turkey harvest, 2011-2015.

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Barbour	C	30	C	18	C
Brooke	6	7	9	2	6
Hancock	8	11	8	5	8
Harrison	20	26	20	20	28
Marion	C	15	4	6	19
Marshall	11	28	10	22	9
Monongalia	13	18	24	15	25
Ohio	12	12	9	3	6
Preston	76	63	77	53	71
Taylor	C	11	8	5	2
Tucker	17	25	14	25	13
Wetzel	C	14	2	18	C
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>187</b>
Berkeley	35	18	36	19	30
Grant	31	31	41	17	38
Hampshire	22	22	41	15	35
Hardy	27	30	34	18	31
Jefferson	C	C	C	C	C
Mineral	32	22	28	16	25
Morgan	18	5	14	15	15
Pendleton	38	46	26	31	25
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>199</b>
Braxton	C	C	C	C	C
Clay	C	C	C	C	C
Lewis	22	C	8	C	25
Nicholas	61	98	39	88	63
Pocahontas	68	79	57	54	62
Randolph	142	77	59	83	114
Upshur	42	43	28	C	59
Webster	44	58	35	50	48
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>371</b>
Fayette	C	C	C	C	C
Greenbrier	90	138	64	81	81
McDowell	C	C	33	C	C
Mercer	52	C	C	2	C
Monroe	63	89	71	52	61
Raleigh	C	C	C	C	C
Summers	31	73	42	41	26
Wyoming	C	C	37	35	41
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>209</b>
Boone	C	C	C	C	C
Cabell	5	12	4	C	C
Kanawha	C	C	C	C	C
Lincoln	C	C	14	C	C
Logan	C	C	17	C	C
Mason	57	41	26	33	43
Mingo	C	C	C	C	C
Putnam	21	21	2	C	19
Wayne	C	C	C	C	C
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>62</b>
Calhoun	C	14	8	C	C
Doddridge	C	C	C	C	C
Gilmer	C	C	6	C	C
Jackson	33	39	18	37	24
Pleasants	2	5	4	3	6
Ritchie	C	C	2	12	C
Roane	C	C	C	C	C
Tyler	9	6	1	8	15
Wirt	34	23	19	23	17
Wood	43	44	20	31	47
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>1,019</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>1,140</b>

Table 4. Fall wild turkey harvest in West Virginia by week of season, 2014-2015.

<b>Week of Season</b>	<b>2014</b>		<b>2015</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Opening Day	133	0.1391	162	0.1421
Week 1	443	0.4634	509	0.4439
Week 2	131	0.1370	198	0.1737
Week 3	89	0.0931	102	0.0895
Week 4	96	0.1004	163	0.1404
Unknown	64	0.0669	6	0.0009
<b>Total</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5. Total spring and fall wild turkey harvest, West Virginia, 1966-2015.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1966	12	1,334	1,346	49
1967	42	989	1,031	50
1968	134	1,697	1,831	48
1969	243	3,430	3,673	38
1970	370	3,020	3,390	41
1971	421	2,374	2,795	45
1972	589	2,353	2,942	44
1973	554	3,038	3,592	39
1974	596	2,158	2,754	46
1975	585	2,827	3,412	40
1976	721	1,860	2,581	47
1977	719	2,998	3,717	37
1978	566	2,803	3,369	42
1979	873	2,421	3,294	43
1980	1,459	3,696	5,155	34
1981	1,970	3,135	5,105	35
1982	2,458	5,684	8,142	30
1983	2,627	2,224	4,851	36
1984	3,387	2,414	5,801	33
1985	4,215	2,343	6,558	32
1986	4,774	3,130	7,904	31
1987	5,665	4,114	9,779	26
1988	6,526	2,939	9,465	28
1989	7,245	2,204	9,449	29
1990	9,152	3,504	12,656	15
1991	10,097	3,690	13,787	13
1992	11,299	3,518	14,817	8
1993	13,428	3,536	16,964	6
1994	15,501	3,351	18,852	4
1995	16,770	3,211	19,981	2
1996	16,618	2,870	19,488	3
1997	14,021	3,385	17,406	5
1998	12,467	1,678	14,145	11
1999	11,241	2,901	14,142	12
2000	12,794	1,541	14,335	10
2001	17,875	3,505	21,380	1
2002	13,385	2,808	16,193	7
2003	12,535	1,841	14,376	9
2004	10,573	1,357	11,930	18
2005	10,957	1,130	12,087	17
2006	11,735	1,186	12,921	14
2007	9,965	1,511	11,476	19
2008	9,929	1,206	11,135	21
2009	9,787	1,208	10,995	22
2010	10,209	1,126	11,335	20
2011	9,190	1,186	10,376	23
2012	8,303	1,272	9,575	27
2013	11,162	1,019	12,181	16
2014	9,128	956	10,084	25
2015	9,037	1,140	10,177	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>353,909</b>	<b>120,821</b>	<b>474,730</b>	

# **WILD BOAR**

**By**  
**Travis G. Bowman**

Hunters killed 99 boars during the 2015 season. West Virginia hasn't seen a harvest this high since 1997 when 141 boars were taken. This year in the Southern Coal Fields acorns were very sparse, but hickory and beech hit fairly well. With poor mast conditions boars traveled to find food and then concentrated around those locations. This factor, along with the good reproduction from last year, contributed to the high success hunters had in the fall.

Firearms hunters took 31 boars (17 in Logan County and 14 in Boone County) and archers killed 68 (37 in Logan County, 31 in Boone County). Raleigh and Wyoming County had no reported kills.

Boars were introduced in 1971 to supplement big game populations and did well enough to accommodate a hunting season in 1979. Harvests have ranged from 3 that year to 158 in 1995. The decline in the population since the late 1990's led to the removal of the December season in 2003. The single October firearms season is designed to reduce the harvest and to allow boars to move into unoccupied habitats. Traditionally, hunters have been less successful during October when weather conditions are warm and dry, and leaf fall makes boar sign more difficult to find.

Biologists do not believe that hunting contributed to the population decline. Hunting seasons have been short and hunter participation was restricted by permits. The main reason for fewer animals in Boone, Logan, Raleigh, and Wyoming counties is loss of habitat resulting in poor reproduction and survival. Impacts from mining and logging operations continue to decrease the mature oak-hickory forest favored by the boar.

Boar harvest took a big jump in 2015, but next year's harvest will likely be back to the harvest seen in 2013 and 2014. Harvest is expected to change from year to year due to changing weather patterns and mast conditions. Wildlife personnel will continue to monitor the wild boar population in the southern 4 counties and will make management recommendations accordingly.

Table 1. Wild boar harvest in West Virginia, 1979-2015

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Kill</b>
1979	3
1980	10
1981	33
1982	72
1983	54
1984	81
1985	58
1986	35
1987	74
1988	34
1989	116
1990	86
1991	59
1992	130
1993	82
1994	86
1995	158
1996	139
1997	141
1998	58
1999	96
2000	46
2001	43
2002	38
2003	5
2004	7
2005	12
2006	14
2007	22
2008	14
2009	35
2010	16
2011	37
2012	62
2013	49
2014	51
2015	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,155</b>

Table 2. Wild Boar harvest in West Virginia by weapon, 2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>Crossbow</b>	<b>Archery</b>	<b>Gun</b>	<b>Total</b>
Boone	7	24	14	45
Logan	8	30	16	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>99</b>

# WHITE-TAILED DEER

By  
JAMES M. CRUM

## Deer Season 2015

The following Tables 1 through 6 contain the 2015 white-tailed deer hunter harvest information for each of West Virginia's 55 counties. In 2015, deer hunters harvested a total of 138,493 deer in the combined deer seasons. This is a 32% increase from the 2014 harvest of 104,707 and 10% more than the previous five-year harvest average of 126,067. The combined deer season harvest for 2015 is the 21st largest total deer harvest on record for West Virginia. The 2015 total deer harvest represents one deer killed for every 106 acres of deer habitat in the state (Table 6), and a 46% harvest decrease from the record harvest of 255,356 deer in 2002. From 1945 through 2015, a total of 6,134,525 deer have been recorded as harvested in West Virginia (Fig.1). Fifty six percent (3,409,101) of the total recorded deer harvest of the past 70 years has occurred in the last 20 years.

### WV DEER HARVEST 1945-2015

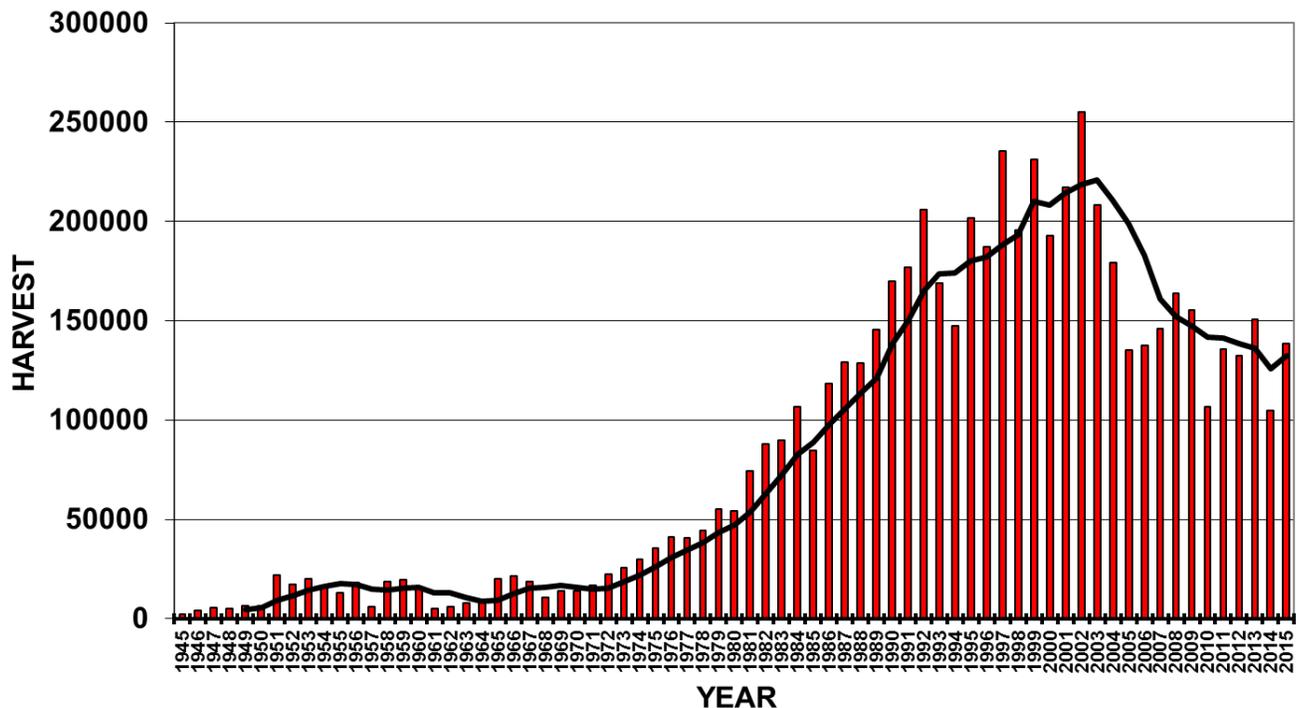


Figure 1. White-tailed deer harvest in West Virginia from 1945-2015.

In 2015, the traditional bucks-only firearm season harvest of antlered bucks was 60,814, an increase of 62% from the 2014 harvest (Table 1). This is 20% more than the five-year average bucks-only firearm season harvest of 50,795 and ranks 24<sup>th</sup> among all past years.

The 2015 antlerless deer harvest taken with a firearm increased by 1% from that of 2014 but was 62% less than the record harvest of 104,199 recorded in 2002. A total of 39,852 antlerless deer (Table 3) were taken with a firearm during the antlerless deer season and the Youth, Class Q/QQ and Senior Lifetime Class XS deer season. This year marked the fourth year for a three-day October firearm antlerless deer season and a reduction of the traditional December antlerless season from six to three days that was moved to follow muzzleloader season in mid-December (December 17-19). The antlerless deer maximum season bag limit was decreased from 4 to 3 in 2012 and continued to remain at 3 for 2015. In comparison to 2014, the antlerless bag limit in 2015 was not increased in any county. A portion of one county (Nicholas) that was closed in 2014 was opened to limited permits in 2015. However, the bag limit for antlerless deer in 9 counties and portions of two counties was decreased from 3 to 1 and the season was closed in two counties and portions of three counties from that of 2014. The firearm antlerless deer season was open in 2015 for 21 days on private land in 47 counties or portions thereof. In 8 counties and portions of seven more, the season was closed. Of the counties open for antlerless deer hunting to resident and nonresident hunters, 24 counties and portions of three counties had a bag limit of three antlerless deer, and 16 more counties and portions of four counties had a bag limit of one antlerless deer. Four counties and portions of three counties in 2015 were limited to resident and nonresident hunters who had to apply for limited permits. The antlerless season was closed on a large portion of National Forest land. Unlike 2014, all Monongahela National Forest land in Pendleton, Pocahontas, Randolph, and Tucker counties was closed to firearm antlerless hunting. Qualifying youth, Class Q/QQ (physically challenged) and Senior Lifetime Class XS license holders had an additional three-day antlerless-only season on private and public land in counties having a firearms deer hunting season. The 2015 special split deer season for youth, Class Q/QQ and Senior Lifetime Class XS hunters was the eighth year for the season to be open on private land in all 51 counties open to a deer firearms season, the fourth year that all public lands in the 51 counties were open and also the fourth year that Senior Lifetime Class XS license holders could participate. The 2015 antlerless season harvest was 23<sup>rd</sup> highest on record and 8% less than the five-year average antlerless harvest of 43,188.

The 2015 deer archery (bow/crossbow) season opened September 26, 2015, one day earlier than the 2014 season and two weeks earlier than any season prior to 2011. In the 2015 archery season, a harvest of 32,540 was recorded which includes 12,064 deer harvested during the archery season with a crossbow. Deer reported as harvested with a crossbow represented 39% of the total archery season harvest and ranged from 11% to 55% of archery harvest of antlered deer by county. This year's

archery harvest was an increase of 46% from the 2014 archery season, 5<sup>th</sup> highest on record and 28% above the five-year average of 25,481 (Table 2).

The 2015 muzzleloader season harvest was 5,178, a decrease of 6.5% from 2014. This is 21.6% below the five-year average harvest of 6,603, and the 29<sup>th</sup> out of 33 years the muzzleloader season has existed in West Virginia (Table 4). Major changes to the muzzleloader season that occurred in 2012 remained in place for 2015. In 2012 the early 6-day special antlerless muzzleloader deer season in September was dropped and the traditional mid-December portion of the season was moved to early December opening the Monday following the close of buck firearm season.

In 2015, hunting on Sunday was permissible in West Virginia for the 15<sup>th</sup> year since 1956. In 2001, all counties were open to hunting on Sunday. In 2002, a total of 20 counties were open to hunting on Sunday. From 2003 through 2013, there were 14 counties open to hunting on Sunday. In 2014 19 counties and in 2015 20 counties were open to hunting on Sunday. These 20 counties had 11 additional days available for deer hunting in 2015 deer seasons. All eleven days were open for bow and crossbow hunters who recorded taking 1,454 deer on Sundays, or 5% of the total 2015 archery (bow/crossbow) harvest. One Sunday was open for firearms deer hunting (the Sunday after Thanksgiving November 29<sup>th</sup>), and 399 deer were recorded as harvested.

In the 2015 deer season, 51 counties were open to the two-week bucks-only season. The desired buck harvest per square mile was exceeded by more than one buck per square mile in 13 counties open to firearms deer hunting representing 4,283.62 square miles or 18.6% of deer habitat in West Virginia. There were no counties, with a buck harvest one buck per square mile lower than the desired harvest. For the remaining 38 counties, the buck harvest was within one buck per square mile of the desired harvest for the county. In contrast to 2014, no counties exceeded the desired buck harvest per square mile by at least one buck per square mile and 17 counties were lower than the desired harvest while 34 counties were within one buck per square mile of the desired buck harvest.

The harvest of antlerless deer is the key to healthier, heavier, and more productive deer herds. This is because there are natural limits to the number of deer the land can support. When these natural limits are exceeded, deer body weights, reproductive rates, antler development, and herd health declines, including an increased likelihood that deer will die over winter. If deer exceed natural limits long enough, habitat quality is reduced which produces a long-term reduction in the natural limit of deer the land can support. To avoid these problems a minimum of 70 females for every 100 bucks is generally required just to stabilize a deer herd. If a decrease in the herd is warranted, the percentage of females needs to be above 40%. Figure 2 depicts the total deer harvest in West Virginia from 1993 through 2015 by the sex composition of the harvest for each year in relation to the percentage of female deer

harvested. This figure appears to reflect the stabilizing effect the 40% female harvest has on the number of deer harvested. The 2015 deer harvest records indicate the percentage of female deer in the harvest was 37% down from the 45% recorded in 2014 which is expected to increase the statewide deer herd. However, the percentage of female deer in the harvest of individual counties in 2015 varied from 13% to 42% which reflects antlerless deer season frameworks design for individual counties to grow, reduce, or stabilize the deer population on a county basis.

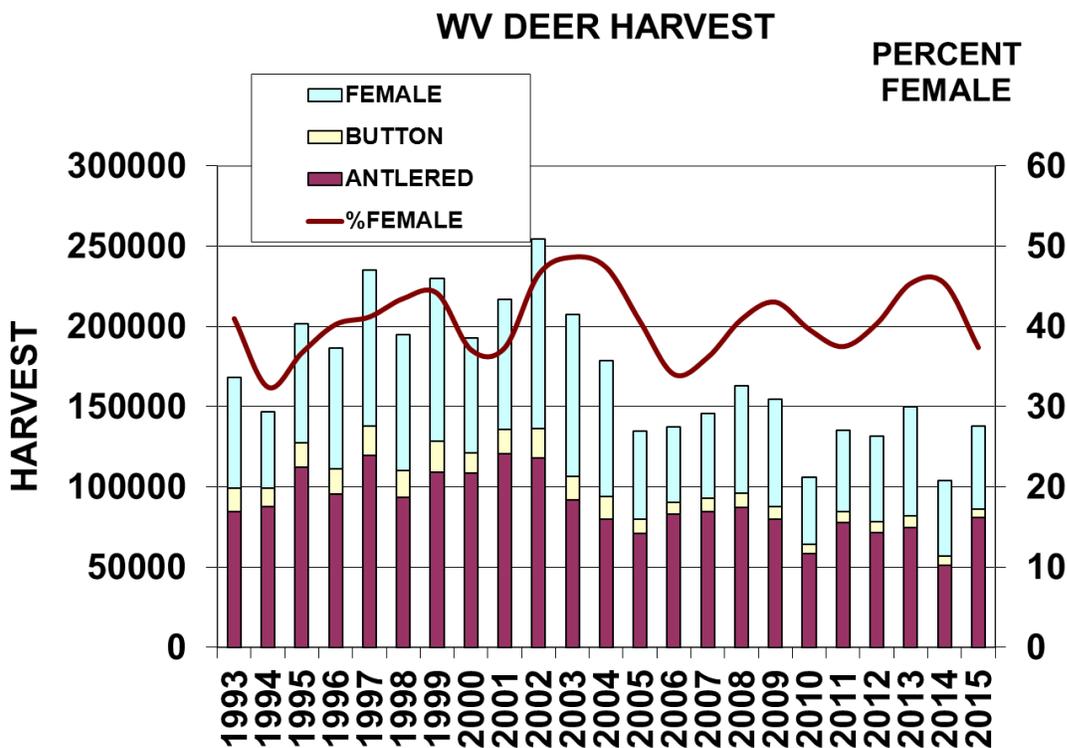


Figure 2. Deer harvested by sex in West Virginia from 1993-2015.

Over the last 10 years the yearly average number of reported antlered bucks harvested during all deer seasons is 3.3 antlered bucks per square mile of deer habitat in West Virginia or one buck per 206 acres. Hunters and landowners must continually assess their expectations of the proper number of deer sightings versus the visible impacts deer have on vegetation, and manage the state's deer herd by participating and encouraging antlerless deer harvest where needed to benefit not only the deer herd, but all wildlife dependent on our state's woodland habitat and conversely reduce antlerless deer harvest to stabilize or increase deer populations.

## Special Deer Management Areas

Hunters took 1,093 deer in the special urban deer season in 2015 which are included in tables 2, 5 and 6 as part of the archery (bow/crossbow) season harvest. This special archery deer hunting season is available to incorporated cities and homeowner associations, which may open three weeks prior to the opening of statewide deer archery season and close December 31. During this special season, seven deer may be taken which do not count toward the regular archery deer season bag limit. This is the 12th year that homeowner associations have taken advantage of the special urban archery deer season to address deer population management. For information regarding implementing a special season contact your local city government or homeowner's association.

In the special split Youth, Class Q/QQ and Senior Lifetime Class XS deer season, a total of 2,862 antlerless deer were harvested and are included in antlerless deer harvest tables 3, 5, and 6. This season was open on private land and public land in any county open to a firearms deer season on October 17, 2015, and again December 26 and 28, 2015. This was the 18<sup>th</sup> year a Youth special season was held. To participate, hunters had to hold a Class Q license, or be a youth at least eight and less than 18 years of age on the day of the season, or possess a Senior Lifetime Class XS license. Youth hunters, age 8-14, must be accompanied by a licensed adult at least 21 years of age and youths age 15-17 must comply with all regular season license requirements for junior sportsman hunting or hunt with resident landowner privileges. The 2015 season was the sixth year for participation by the 15 -17 age youths and the fourth year for participation by Class XS license holders. The daily bag limit was one antlerless deer, which did not count against the hunter's annual antlerless deer season bag limit. Hunters harvested 1,974 deer on the first day, October 17<sup>th</sup> and an additional 443 and 445 deer on December 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Overall the harvest for the 2015 special Youth, Class Q and Senior Lifetime Class XS deer season increased 13% from 2014. The harvest for the 2015 first day was up 10% from the first day of the 2014 season and the second and third days of the 2015 season were up 22% from the reported harvest in 2014.

Special controlled deer hunts were held in 2015 at Pipestem State Park and Cacapon State Park. Fifty-one deer were harvested at Pipestem state Park during a three-day hunt November 16, 17, and 18, 2015. Thirteen deer were harvested on Cacapon State Park during a three-day controlled hunt December 7, 8, and 9, 2015. This was the first time for such hunts on both parks. It is anticipated that controlled deer hunts on additional state park land will be held in the future. Deer are a keystone species in West Virginia's natural world and proper stewardship of our State's flora and fauna require that deer management be addressed on all lands.

## Nonseasonal Mortalities

Nonseasonal mortalities are those deer deaths that are not associated with the harvest of deer by hunters. Figure 3 depicts nonseasonal deer mortalities that are associated with human/deer conflicts (i.e., vehicle collisions and crop damage). The public, DNR Natural Resource Police Officers, and DNR Wildlife Resources personnel routinely report nonseasonal mortalities. The WV Department of Transportation, Division of Highways (DOH) -Traffic Engineering Division, provides monthly summaries of vehicle killed deer that are encountered by DOH personnel. DNR Natural Resource Police Officers provide wildlife damage investigation reports from which the number of deer killed for crop damage is obtained.

The reported nonseasonal mortalities from vehicle collisions and crop damage decreased 7% from 17,380 in 2014 to 16,114 in 2015. Deer killed on crop damage permits decreased in all DNR Districts. Overall, deer killed through the crop damage permit system in 2015 decreased by 45%, with 3,833 deer killed on crop damage permits in 2014 and 2,122 recorded in 2015. Reported vehicle kills increased statewide by 3% in 2015, from 13,547 in 2014 to 13,992 in 2015 and represents an 8.5% decline from the 5-year average of 15,290. Percent change by DNR Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 were -1%, -6%, +21%, +47%, -5%, and -1%, respectively.

The occurrence of deer reportedly killed by collisions with vehicles and deer reported as killed for crop damage follow similar trends. Although other factors such as deer food supply (such as acorns), number and average speed of vehicles, and crop growing conditions like drought influence these trends, a major factor is deer population (Fig. 3).

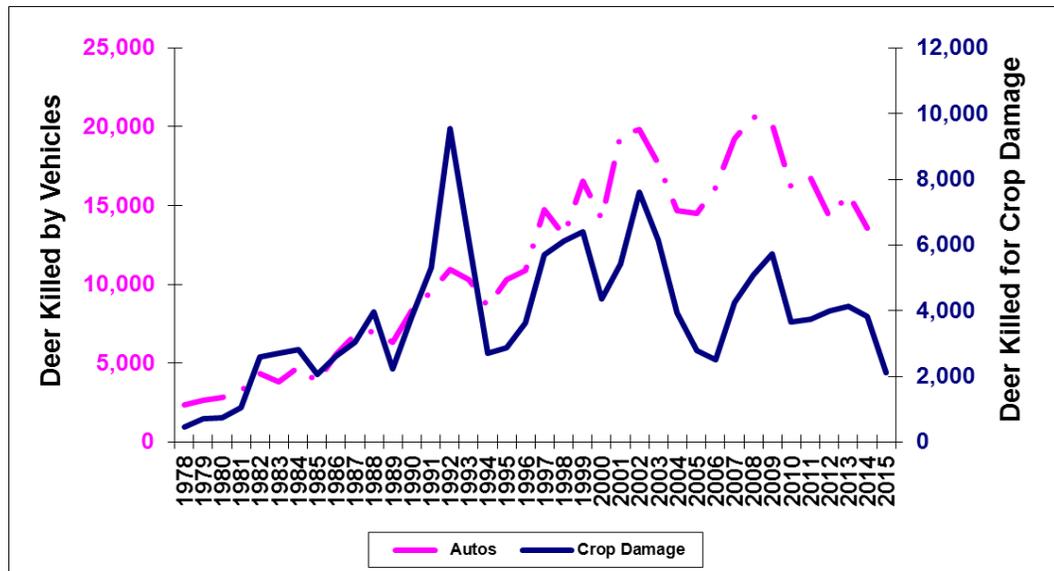


Figure 3. Vehicle and crop damage kills in West Virginia from 1978-2015.

## Deer Hunting Outlook

Overall deer hunting opportunities for hunters across the state in 2016 are proposed to be similar to those in 2015 with the exception of increased antlerless deer season bag limits and more hunting opportunities in counties where recorded deer harvest data indicates female deer harvest should be increased to stabilize or decrease current deer populations. The substantial changes made in 2012 and continued in 2013 through 2015, to the deer season framework as recommended in the revised White-tailed Deer Operational Plan completed in late December 2011 are proposed to remain in place for the 2016 deer season. However, the White-tailed Deer Operational Plan is undergoing a scheduled 5-year revision that will extend the plan through 2020. This revision is expected to be completed by November 2016. In general, earlier changes to increase the diversity of deer hunting opportunities, simplify hunting regulations, better distribute antlerless deer harvest to meet deer population goals and limit conflict among wildlife resource user groups will be evaluated and modified to better meet these initiatives. The revised White-tailed Deer Operational Plan may also include alternative efforts to monitor the deer herd through examination of hunter harvested animals for collection of biological information and tissue samples for disease testing. The 2015 deer seasons was the first year for the electronic game checking system. Other states, Virginia, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois have similar electronic game checking systems and have directed hunters to take deer harvested on specific days to special designated locations where wildlife agency personnel can examine the hunter harvested deer. Similarly, in the future West Virginia hunters may be asked in select areas of the state to take harvested deer to special designated locations so the physical condition of their deer can be evaluated and recorded. Hunters are reminded that recording their harvest is an integral part to the DNR's ability to manage deer in West Virginia. Hunters have helped manage deer in the state since mandatory game checking began in 1929 and the information provided by hunters is the foundation for tracking deer herd trends and monitoring doe harvest impacts.

The 2016 deer archery (bow/crossbow) season opening date is proposed to open the last Saturday in September (September 24<sup>th</sup>) which is the earliest a statewide either sex archery deer season has ever occurred in West Virginia. Uniform and more liberal deer bag limits and season lengths for the urban archery deer seasons available to incorporated cities and homeowner associations put in place for the fall of 2012 are proposed to remain available in 2016. The more liberal bag limit and earlier opening available for the season has provided incorporated cities and homeowner associations a reliable and efficient method to address locally over abundant deer populations.

The 2016 muzzleloader deer season is proposed to open the Monday following the end of the two-week buck firearm season (December 5, 2016). Antlerless deer hunting opportunities for the 2016 muzzleloader season are proposed to follow guidelines adopted in 2012 muzzleloader deer season regulations. In counties with unlimited Class N/NN antlerless deer permits and an antlerless Class N/NN season bag

limit of one or more, hunters would be able to take two deer of either sex during the muzzleloader season, provided the second muzzleloader deer is taken on an additional muzzleloader deer stamp (RM for residents and RMM for nonresident hunters). In counties with limited lottery Class N/NN antlerless season and a one antlerless deer Class N/NN season bag limit, hunters in the 2016 muzzleloader season can take one deer of either sex but the second muzzleloader season deer taken on the RM or RMM additional muzzleloader deer stamp can only be an antlered deer, provided the hunter has not filled the maximum annual bag limit (excluding special urban archery hunts) of three antlered bucks.

In 2016 51 counties or portions thereof, are proposed to have a Class N/NN antlerless deer season for 22 days on private land and selected public lands. Overall the Class N/NN antlerless deer season will remain the same in 2016 as it was in 2015 in 29 counties and portions of four counties. A three-day October Class N/NN antlerless deer season is again proposed for the fall of 2016. Twenty-seven counties and portions of three counties are proposed to have a three antlerless deer bag limit. Seventeen counties and portions of seven counties are proposed to have a one antlerless deer bag limit with six counties and portions of six counties of the one antlerless deer bag limit counties or portions restricted to resident and non-resident hunters chosen by lottery. Again, as in the past two years, a split three-day Special Youth, Class Q/QQ and Senior Lifetime Class XS deer season is proposed to be held on October 15th and December 26th and 27th on private and public lands in the 51 counties open to firearms deer season. This season **would be closed** in Logan, Mingo, McDowell, or Wyoming counties.

In seven counties and portions of two more counties during the 2015 deer seasons, hunters had to harvest an antlerless deer before taking a second antlered buck during archery and gun seasons, respectively. This regulation is proposed again for the 2016 season with the number of counties increased to 12 counties and portions of two counties. This increase reflects the White-tailed Deer Operational Plan guidelines to encourage deer hunters to harvest antlerless deer only where needed and not penalize those that wish to only harvest one antlered buck. Please refer to the 2016-2017 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary for further details on all deer hunting seasons because the above proposed seasons and bag limits have not been approved by the Natural Resources Commission at this time. White-tailed deer hunting season regulations for 2016 will be published and available to hunters in July of 2016. This newsprint-like pamphlet contains complete information on gun, archery, muzzleloading, and antlerless deer hunting, plus other hunting regulations on turkey, bear, boar, and small game. Hunters will be able to obtain a copy from any DNR office or any business that sells West Virginia hunting licenses or visit the Wildlife Resources Section on the web at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov).

Efforts to control the spread and monitor chronic wasting disease (CWD) in free-ranging deer in Hampshire and Hardy Counties by DNR, landowners, and hunters are ongoing. In the 2015 deer seasons, samples taken from 202 hunter-harvested deer

brought to DNR staffed stations in Hampshire County and two stations in northern Hardy County were tested for CWD. Eight samples were found to have the abnormal protein associated with CWD. CWD has now been detected in a total of 188 deer in Hampshire County and four deer in Hardy County. Lowering encounter rates between infected and non-infected animals by prohibiting artificial supplemental feeding and baiting are generally accepted management practices for slowing the spread of an infectious disease among wildlife and initiating these prohibitions on a statewide or regional basis for deer is a major tool used by other states combating CWD. Currently (March 2016) in West Virginia in all of Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral and Morgan counties **it is illegal to bait or feed deer any time**. In addition, hunters are **prohibited from transporting dead deer or their parts beyond the boundary of Hampshire, Hardy, and Morgan counties** except for the following: meat that has been boned out, quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached, cleaned hide with no head attached, clean skull plate (no meat or tissue attached) with antlers attached, antlers with no meat or tissue attached, and finished taxidermy mounts. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources have detected CWD positive deer adjacent to Hampshire County in Frederick and Shenandoah County VA and Allegany County MD. In addition, PA Game Commission has detected CWD positive deer in Bedford and Blair counties adjacent and north of Allegany County MD. To reduce the risk of spreading CWD to new areas, other states have made it illegal to possess or use deer scents/lures that contain natural deer urine or other bodily fluids while taking, attempting to take, attracting, or scouting wildlife. All West Virginia deer hunters are urged to use caution in spreading natural deer urine based lures in the environment and ask not to place deer urine lures on the ground or on vegetation where deer can reach them. Additionally, a well-documented method of spreading CWD across long distances is the movement of live species of deer for commercial purposes. Many organizations such as the Quality Deer Management Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and The Wildlife Society have recognized the threat the pen propagation and translocation of deer species represent to the wild deer and elk resources that are enjoyed by all citizens. This threat is not only from CWD but also from the introduction of other pathogens and genetic consequences, which have the potential to devastate our revered deer resource. For more information on CWD and the current status of the disease in West Virginia contact any DNR office or visit the Wildlife Resources Section on the web at [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov).

Table 1. West Virginia antlered buck harvest, 2011-2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Barbour	1,372	1,177	1,109	886	1,281
Brooke	413	407	389	251	286
Hancock	324	320	273	200	208
Harrison	1,494	1,385	1,301	930	1,418
Marion	1,249	1,089	1,130	702	1,190
Marshall	1,407	1,309	1,051	707	818
Monongalia	1,508	1,297	1,107	689	1,023
Ohio	467	466	399	232	290
Preston	2,224	2,158	1,741	1,526	2,046
Taylor	768	684	635	453	732
Tucker	738	649	527	494	783
Wetzel	1,615	1,471	1,537	891	1,144
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>13,579</b>	<b>12,412</b>	<b>11,199</b>	<b>7,961</b>	<b>11,219</b>
Berkeley	835	767	871	522	908
Grant	1,266	1,250	1,135	783	1,304
Hampshire	1,676	1,588	1,846	1,094	1,947
Hardy	1,589	1,429	1,447	920	1,709
Jefferson	447	526	445	385	499
Mineral	1,286	1,181	1,345	835	1,335
Morgan	601	602	743	412	678
Pendleton	1,391	1,373	1,163	861	1,297
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>9,091</b>	<b>8,716</b>	<b>8,995</b>	<b>5,812</b>	<b>9,677</b>
Braxton	1,468	1,401	1,626	921	1,660
Clay	519	528	475	329	618
Lewis	1,586	1,365	1,692	1,166	1,875
Nicholas	1,279	1,212	824	871	1,274
Pocahontas	1,106	1,152	961	831	1,008
Randolph	2,032	1,804	1,329	1,291	1,659
Upshur	1,612	1,283	1,396	1,009	1,704
Webster	1,063	817	717	632	1,080
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>10,665</b>	<b>9,562</b>	<b>9,020</b>	<b>7,050</b>	<b>10,878</b>
Fayette	1,005	996	835	725	1,214
Greenbrier	1,783	1,875	1,509	1,372	1,816
McDowell	C	C	C	C	C
Mercer	647	682	536	402	843
Monroe	1,364	1,569	1,466	1,004	1,462
Raleigh	739	749	579	506	895
Summers	865	1,077	973	657	999
Wyoming	C	C	C	C	C
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>6,403</b>	<b>6,948</b>	<b>5,898</b>	<b>4,666</b>	<b>7,229</b>
Boone	653	898	725	519	868
Cabell	705	750	763	421	641
Kanawha	1,275	1,164	1,380	730	1,547
Lincoln	1,146	1,319	1,124	720	1,312
Logan	C	C	C	C	C
Mason	1,944	1,676	1,495	1,002	1,488
Mingo	C	C	C	C	C
Putnam	1,170	1,191	1,210	565	1,114
Wayne	894	1,041	870	528	963
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>7,787</b>	<b>8,039</b>	<b>7,567</b>	<b>4,485</b>	<b>7,933</b>
Calhoun	962	770	1,164	504	1,063
Doddridge	1,000	950	1,243	615	1,376
Gilmer	1,029	911	1,427	669	1,435
Jackson	1,962	1,630	1,917	1,107	1,870
Pleasants	512	371	438	273	492
Ritchie	1,701	1,512	2,091	1,123	2,024
Roane	1,694	1,391	1,893	927	1,846
Tyler	1,189	922	1,000	566	1,064
Wirt	944	846	1,091	681	1,152
Wood	1,639	1,403	1,580	1,011	1,556
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>12,632</b>	<b>10,706</b>	<b>13,844</b>	<b>7,476</b>	<b>13,878</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>60,157</b>	<b>56,383</b>	<b>56,523</b>	<b>37,450</b>	<b>60,814</b>

Table 2. West Virginia white-tailed deer archery (bow/crossbow) harvest, 2011-2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Barbour	509	383	544	416	623
Brooke	259	312	271	303	278
Hancock	377	439	432	373	344
Harrison	544	653	658	502	702
Marion	516	484	541	413	640
Marshall	393	406	382	307	353
Monongalia	776	779	785	584	781
Ohio	255	318	304	250	272
Preston	1,322	1,140	1,069	999	1,415
Taylor	287	285	266	265	346
Tucker	405	295	332	312	420
Wetzel	326	292	418	248	357
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>5,969</b>	<b>5,786</b>	<b>6,002</b>	<b>4,972</b>	<b>6,531</b>
Berkeley	436	419	639	397	554
Grant	404	355	402	300	423
Hampshire	245	256	393	275	457
Hardy	358	287	396	231	404
Jefferson	382	392	425	363	374
Mineral	351	303	398	275	394
Morgan	159	146	274	163	253
Pendleton	367	293	326	279	391
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>2,451</b>	<b>3,253</b>	<b>2,283</b>	<b>3,250</b>
Braxton	520	412	589	380	593
Clay	240	253	299	194	339
Lewis	433	376	517	372	712
Nicholas	883	701	753	630	799
Pocahontas	402	325	345	288	318
Randolph	1,163	781	786	779	921
Upshur	748	488	627	472	906
Webster	728	520	436	420	626
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>5,117</b>	<b>3,856</b>	<b>4,352</b>	<b>3,535</b>	<b>5,214</b>
Fayette	791	722	806	666	801
Greenbrier	738	758	661	556	739
McDowell	464	571	699	447	673
Mercer	589	574	667	419	817
Monroe	551	534	661	460	632
Raleigh	812	899	876	640	1,032
Summers	484	538	543	341	563
Wyoming	772	765	1,062	686	1,039
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>5,201</b>	<b>5,361</b>	<b>5,975</b>	<b>4,215</b>	<b>6,296</b>
Boone	317	442	485	433	486
Cabell	357	389	436	288	365
Kanawha	884	872	1,041	771	1,069
Lincoln	467	558	535	418	643
Logan	591	753	841	608	924
Mason	788	666	789	628	786
Mingo	284	368	490	284	579
Putnam	561	539	663	437	599
Wayne	307	388	406	304	451
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>4,556</b>	<b>4,975</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>4,171</b>	<b>5,902</b>
Calhoun	241	212	353	213	433
Doddridge	217	204	284	210	390
Gilmer	280	212	403	174	448
Jackson	669	600	783	495	759
Pleasants	116	95	114	92	163
Ritchie	473	377	489	404	713
Roane	484	418	643	356	707
Tyler	298	256	326	256	366
Wirt	332	299	405	267	459
Wood	749	676	911	638	909
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>3,859</b>	<b>3,349</b>	<b>4,711</b>	<b>3,105</b>	<b>5,347</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>27,404</b>	<b>25,778</b>	<b>29,979</b>	<b>22,281</b>	<b>32,540</b>

Table 3. West Virginia antlerless harvest, 2011-2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Barbour	1,025	897	1,222	1,074	911
Brooke	385	596	604	411	346
Hancock	389	484	465	354	210
Harrison	1,323	1,491	1,580	1,255	1,228
Marion	965	1,132	1,391	943	984
Marshall	1,075	1,307	1,104	940	554
Monongalia	1,273	1,326	1,255	866	968
Ohio	351	495	470	366	361
Preston	1,974	2,341	2,317	1,818	1,437
Taylor	709	747	680	620	486
Tucker	440	459	428	397	47
Wetzel	974	1,172	1,646	934	957
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>10,883</b>	<b>12,447</b>	<b>13,162</b>	<b>9,978</b>	<b>8,489</b>
Berkeley	674	647	941	752	813
Grant	622	661	915	559	592
Hampshire	1,089	1,103	1,571	1,054	1,240
Hardy	874	987	1,370	825	967
Jefferson	461	517	566	488	442
Mineral	861	993	1,194	880	899
Morgan	380	470	754	531	551
Pendleton	576	705	717	597	547
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>5,537</b>	<b>6,083</b>	<b>8,028</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>6,051</b>
Braxton	1,368	1,239	1,524	1,266	1,193
Clay	38	151	249	127	184
Lewis	1,511	1,575	2,073	1,414	1,753
Nicholas	348	589	539	454	606
Pocahontas	556	384	405	355	238
Randolph	1,434	1,331	1,138	1,094	533
Upshur	1,361	1,587	1,769	1,359	1,271
Webster	246	501	405	138	174
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>6,862</b>	<b>7,357</b>	<b>8,102</b>	<b>6,207</b>	<b>5,952</b>
Fayette	186	401	436	294	392
Greenbrier	777	818	1,108	856	821
McDowell	C	C	C	C	C
Mercer	54	76	415	253	337
Monroe	823	916	1,710	1,194	1,220
Raleigh	193	131	356	219	291
Summers	128	1,165	1,119	917	689
Wyoming	C	C	C	C	C
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>2,161</b>	<b>3,507</b>	<b>5,144</b>	<b>3,733</b>	<b>3,750</b>
Boone	61	89	251	203	93
Cabell	377	420	734	491	419
Kanawha	674	631	829	484	558
Lincoln	120	659	949	739	872
Logan	C	C	C	C	C
Mason	2,142	2,007	2,487	1,425	1,593
Mingo	C	C	C	C	C
Putnam	838	1,113	1,430	800	1,048
Wayne	290	369	496	288	38
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>4,502</b>	<b>5,288</b>	<b>7,176</b>	<b>4,430</b>	<b>4,621</b>
Calhoun	644	765	1,044	594	802
Doddridge	741	730	946	731	914
Gilmer	708	639	1,230	779	1,017
Jackson	1,800	1,807	2,467	1,304	1,521
Pleasants	329	363	452	254	260
Ritchie	1,184	1,339	1,902	1,303	1,622
Roane	1,204	1,154	2,119	1,244	1,514
Tyler	1,023	920	1,237	742	901
Wirt	986	952	1,404	919	1,002
Wood	1,698	1,659	2,223	1,529	1,436
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>10,317</b>	<b>10,328</b>	<b>15,024</b>	<b>9,399</b>	<b>10,989</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>40,262</b>	<b>45,010</b>	<b>56,636</b>	<b>39,433</b>	<b>39,852</b>

Table 4. West Virginia muzzleloader harvest, 2011-2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Barbour	186	131	152	159	116
Brooke	72	49	64	30	18
Hancock	97	75	72	42	23
Harrison	240	135	168	183	128
Marion	152	85	119	106	124
Marshall	201	119	134	108	76
Monongalia	230	111	142	92	117
Ohio	63	45	40	37	44
Preston	294	243	255	267	182
Taylor	119	66	100	84	75
Tucker	163	85	101	88	16
Wetzel	185	136	165	91	88
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>2,002</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>1,512</b>	<b>1,287</b>	<b>1,007</b>
Berkeley	142	64	111	83	74
Grant	139	120	98	115	112
Hampshire	180	81	165	122	127
Hardy	172	83	131	109	80
Jefferson	73	46	61	56	48
Mineral	168	99	116	91	75
Morgan	74	46	88	52	70
Pendleton	139	81	93	98	67
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>653</b>
Braxton	362	238	327	197	189
Clay	17	36	52	26	25
Lewis	301	157	233	198	165
Nicholas	46	244	256	259	265
Pocahontas	120	64	130	120	77
Randolph	450	253	332	304	202
Upshur	234	154	216	145	155
Webster	26	200	199	33	28
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>1,556</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>1,745</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>1,106</b>
Fayette	38	200	241	166	183
Greenbrier	175	114	212	128	108
McDowell	C	C	C	C	C
Mercer	34	27	142	36	114
Monroe	150	134	139	131	105
Raleigh	19	12	134	85	83
Summers	42	122	136	112	88
Wyoming	C	C	C	C	C
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>681</b>
Boone	23	24	172	132	39
Cabell	80	66	100	60	45
Kanawha	173	72	119	57	88
Lincoln	57	81	167	86	159
Logan	C	C	C	C	C
Mason	311	173	215	157	150
Mingo	C	C	C	C	C
Putnam	152	100	158	89	90
Wayne	60	74	69	55	31
<b>Dist. V. Subtotal</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>602</b>
Calhoun	120	62	155	79	71
Doddridge	136	55	127	77	104
Gilmer	189	91	160	111	126
Jackson	358	178	222	155	183
Pleasants	64	30	46	30	34
Ritchie	192	101	213	96	167
Roane	223	101	213	100	129
Tyler	166	93	110	94	75
Wirt	216	94	161	87	86
Wood	250	135	208	125	154
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>1,914</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>1,615</b>	<b>954</b>	<b>1,129</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>7,873</b>	<b>5,385</b>	<b>7,739</b>	<b>5,543</b>	<b>5,178</b>

Table 5. Deer mortality by type of season in West Virginia, 2015.

<b>County</b>	<b>Buck Gun</b>	<b>Antlerless</b>	<b>Archery</b>	<b>Muzzleloader</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total</b>
Barbour	1,281	911	623	116	2	2,933
Brooke	286	346	278	18	1	929
Hancock	208	210	344	23	0	785
Harrison	1,418	1,228	702	128	2	3,478
Marion	1,190	984	640	124	0	2,938
Marshall	818	554	353	76	0	1,801
Monongalia	1,023	968	781	117	0	2,889
Ohio	290	361	272	44	1	968
Preston	2,046	1,437	1,415	182	0	5,080
Taylor	732	486	346	75	0	1,639
Tucker	783	47	420	16	12	1,278
Wetzel	1,144	957	357	88	0	2,546
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>11,219</b>	<b>8,489</b>	<b>6,531</b>	<b>1,007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27,264</b>
Berkeley	908	813	554	74	0	2,349
Grant	1,304	592	423	112	0	2,431
Hampshire	1,947	1,240	457	127	0	3,771
Hardy	1,709	967	404	80	0	3,160
Jefferson	499	442	374	48	0	1,363
Mineral	1,335	899	394	75	0	2,703
Morgan	678	551	253	70	0	1,552
Pendleton	1,297	547	391	67	0	2,302
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>9,677</b>	<b>6,051</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19,631</b>
Braxton	1,660	1,193	593	189	0	3,635
Clay	618	184	339	25	0	1,166
Lewis	1,875	1,753	712	165	1	4,506
Nicholas	1,274	606	799	265	0	2,944
Pocahontas	1,008	238	318	77	0	1,641
Randolph	1,659	533	921	202	0	3,315
Upshur	1,704	1,271	906	155	0	4,036
Webster	1,080	174	626	28	10	1,918
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>10,878</b>	<b>5,952</b>	<b>5,214</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23,161</b>
Fayette	1,214	392	801	183	0	2,590
Greenbrier	1,816	821	739	108	0	3,484
McDowell	0	0	673	0	8	681
Mercer	843	337	817	114	1	2,112
Monroe	1,462	1,220	632	105	1	3,420
Raleigh	895	291	1,032	83	0	2,301
Summers	999	689	563	88	0	2,339
Wyoming	0	0	1,039	0	14	1,053
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>7,229</b>	<b>3,750</b>	<b>6,296</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17,980</b>
Boone	868	93	486	39	18	1,504
Cabell	641	419	365	45	0	1,470
Kanawha	1,547	558	1,069	88	0	3,262
Lincoln	1,312	872	643	159	0	2,986
Logan	0	0	924	0	13	937
Mason	1,488	1,593	786	150	0	4,017
Mingo	0	0	579	0	7	586
Putnam	1,114	1,048	599	90	1	2,852
Wayne	963	38	451	31	16	1,499
<b>Dist. V Subtotal</b>	<b>7,933</b>	<b>4,621</b>	<b>5,902</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>19,113</b>
Calhoun	1,063	802	433	71	0	2,369
Doddridge	1,376	914	390	104	0	2,784
Gilmer	1,435	1,017	448	126	0	3,026
Jackson	1,870	1,521	759	183	0	4,333
Pleasants	492	260	163	34	0	949
Ritchie	2,024	1,622	713	167	1	4,527
Roane	1,846	1,514	707	129	0	4,196
Tyler	1,064	901	366	75	0	2,406
Wirt	1,152	1,002	459	86	0	2,699
Wood	1,556	1,436	909	154	0	4,055
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>13,878</b>	<b>10,989</b>	<b>5,347</b>	<b>1,129</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31,344</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>60,814</b>	<b>39,852</b>	<b>32,540</b>	<b>5,178</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>138,493</b>

Table 6. West Virginia 2015 deer kill per square mile of habitat by season (calculated using deer habitat open by county for season, all seasons combined kill based on total deer habitat for county).

County	Area	Bucks	Antlerless	Muzzleloader	Archery	All Seasons
					(Bow/Crossbow)	Combined
Barbour	328	3.90	2.78	0.35	1.90	8.94
Brooke	72	3.96	4.79	0.25	3.85	12.87
Hancock	64	3.27	3.30	0.36	5.41	12.35
Harrison	379	3.74	3.24	0.34	1.85	9.18
Marion	286	4.16	3.44	0.43	2.24	10.28
Marshall	294	2.79	1.89	0.26	1.20	6.14
Monongalia	310	3.30	3.12	0.38	2.52	9.32
Ohio	82	3.52	4.39	0.53	3.31	11.76
Preston	632	3.24	2.27	0.29	2.24	8.04
Taylor	160	4.58	3.04	0.47	2.16	10.25
Tucker	402	1.95	0.12	0.04	1.04	3.18
Wetzel	350	3.27	2.73	0.25	1.02	7.27
<b>Dist. I Subtotal</b>	<b>3,359</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>8.12</b>
Berkeley	297	3.06	2.74	0.25	1.87	7.91
Grant	471	2.77	1.26	0.24	0.90	5.16
Hampshire	631	3.08	1.96	0.20	0.72	5.97
Hardy	569	3.00	1.70	0.14	0.71	5.55
Jefferson	198	2.52	2.23	0.24	1.89	6.88
Mineral	319	4.19	3.90	0.24	1.24	8.48
Morgan	213	3.18	2.59	0.33	1.19	7.29
Pendleton	690	1.88	1.03	0.10	0.57	3.34
<b>Dist. II Subtotal</b>	<b>3,388</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>1.93</b>	<b>0.19</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>5.79</b>
Braxton	501	3.31	2.38	0.38	1.18	7.26
Clay	338	1.83	1.69	0.07	1.00	3.45
Lewis	373	5.02	4.70	0.44	1.91	12.07
Nicholas	632	2.02	1.57	0.42	1.26	4.66
Pocahontas	911	1.11	0.26	0.08	0.35	1.80
Randolph	1,019	1.63	0.52	0.20	0.90	3.25
Upshur	343	4.97	3.71	0.45	2.64	11.77
Webster	535	2.02	0.33	0.05	1.17	3.59
<b>Dist. III Subtotal</b>	<b>4,652</b>	<b>2.34</b>	<b>2.09</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>1.12</b>	<b>4.98</b>
Fayette	629	1.93	0.98	0.29	1.27	4.12
Greenbrier	991	1.83	2.34	0.11	0.75	3.52
McDowell	515	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.31	1.32
Mercer	380	2.22	0.89	0.30	2.15	5.55
Monroe	463	3.16	2.64	0.23	1.37	7.39
Raleigh	562	1.59	0.82	0.15	1.84	4.10
Summers	341	2.93	2.02	0.26	1.65	6.86
Wyoming	481	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.16	2.19
<b>Dist. IV Subtotal</b>	<b>4,361</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>1.64</b>	<b>0.20</b>	<b>1.44</b>	<b>4.12</b>
Boone	485	1.79	0.19	0.08	1.00	3.10
Cabell	240	2.67	1.75	0.19	1.52	6.13
Kanawha	798	1.94	1.95	0.11	1.34	4.09
Lincoln	426	3.08	2.05	0.37	1.51	7.01
Logan	422	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.19	2.22
Mason	413	3.60	3.85	0.36	1.90	9.72
Mingo	404	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.43	1.45
Putnam	320	3.48	3.27	0.28	1.87	8.90
Wayne	485	1.99	0.08	0.06	0.93	3.09
<b>Dist. V Subtotal</b>	<b>3,993</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>2.74</b>	<b>0.19</b>	<b>1.48</b>	<b>4.79</b>
Calhoun	276	3.85	2.91	0.26	1.57	8.59
Doddridge	316	4.36	2.90	0.33	1.24	8.82
Gilmer	330	4.34	3.08	0.38	1.36	9.16
Jackson	447	4.18	3.40	0.41	1.70	9.69
Pleasants	125	3.92	2.07	0.27	1.30	7.57
Ritchie	443	4.56	3.66	0.38	1.61	10.21
Roane	476	3.88	3.18	0.27	1.49	8.82
Tyler	252	4.22	3.58	0.30	1.45	9.55
Wirt	230	5.01	4.36	0.37	2.00	11.75
Wood	325	4.79	4.42	0.47	2.80	12.48
<b>Dist. VI Subtotal</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>1.66</b>	<b>9.73</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>22,972</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>1.88</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>1.42</b>	<b>6.03</b>

\*Note counties or portions thereof not open to Class N antlerless deer season include special youth, Class Q/QQ and Class XS season harvest however antlerless kill per square mile is calculated only on area open to Class N season if a portion of the county is closed to Class N

# WV GAMECHECK

## LOG IN. STOP IN. CALL IN.

You must have your DNR ID number (valid for your lifetime) before you check your game in by phone.

**Non-licensed hunters:** If you are not required to buy a license (e.g., landowner, underage, senior citizens who turned 65 before 1/1/12, etc.), visit [www.wvhunt.com](http://www.wvhunt.com) or a license agent to obtain your DNR ID Number.

**Lifetime license holders:** If you have a lifetime license, you have already been entered into the system. To obtain your DNR ID Number, visit [www.wvhunt.com](http://www.wvhunt.com) or a license agent. This number is different than your lifetime license number.

**License buyers:** When you buy a base license, a DNR ID Number will be assigned to you and printed on the upper left of your license.

**All game must be checked using one of these three methods:**



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**2. Telephone – Call 1 844 WVCheck**



**3. Visit a license agent**

You do not have to bring the animal.

When you check your game, you will be given a 13-digit game tag number that must be recorded on a DNR field tag or on a sheet of paper that displays the hunter's or trapper's name and address.





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