

WEST VIRGINIA

# DNR

2024 BIG GAME BULLETIN



*almost heaven*

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## WILDLIFE RESOURCES SECTION BULLETIN 25-1

# BLACK BEAR

BY COLIN CARPENTER

## Season Results and Highlights

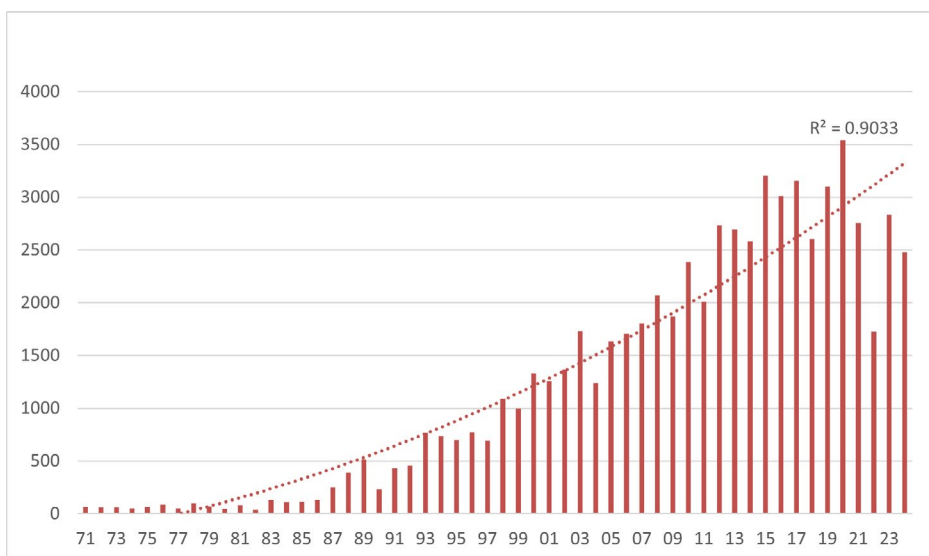
West Virginia hunters harvested 2,479 black bears during the combined 2024 archery and firearms seasons (Tables 1, 2 and 3). While the 2024 harvest was 12% below the 2023 harvest of 2,830 bears, the 2024 harvest was the 12th highest recorded harvest (Figure 1, Table 4).

The statewide mast index for all species combined in 2024 was down 7% compared to 2023. The best hard mast production in 2024 was recorded for white oak (+76% over 2023) and chestnut oak (+24% over 2023). The 2024 Mast Survey and Hunting Outlook predicted a similar bow/crossbow harvest compared to 2023 and a higher firearms harvest over the levels observed in 2023.

Hunters harvested 899 bears during the first segment of the 2024 bow/crossbow season (September 28 – November 24), 431 were taken with vertical bows and 468 were taken with crossbows. The top five counties were Fayette and Preston (55 each), Webster (48), Boone (43) Nicholas (42) and Wyoming (40).

Firearms hunters harvested 1,580 bears in 2024. Hunters harvested 611 bears in September and October (166 bears during the September youth, Class Q/QQ, XS season, 20 bears during the October youth, Cass Q/QQ, XS season, 57 bears during the concurrent antlerless deer/bear season and 368 bears during three early firearms seasons). Hunters harvested 271 bears during the concurrent buck-gun bear season, and 697 bears during the traditional December season. One bear was harvested with a muzzleloader during the Mountaineer Heritage Season. The top five counties were Nicholas (167), Boone (153), Kanawha (115), Fayette (109) and Logan (92).

Figure 1. West Virginia black bear harvest, 1971–2024



## Non-hunting Mortalities

Of the non-hunting bear mortalities, 138 bears were killed on highways, killed illegally, destroyed or succumbed to other non-hunting causes of death (electrocution, mange, etc.) (Tables 4 and 5). This is down 19% from the 170 non-hunting mortalities recorded in 2023 (Table 4). There were 80 deaths from vehicles in 2024 compared to 101 in 2023. The one illegal bear kill recorded in 2024 was down from the three recorded in 2023. Miscellaneous deaths increased from two in 2023 to three in 2024. In 2024, all miscellaneous deaths were attributed to unknown causes. In addition, 54 bears were killed for nuisance or damage activity in 2024, which is a slight decrease over the 64 killed in 2023.

## 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 were down 26% from 114 in 2023 to 84 in 2024 (Table 6). Total payments of \$175,931 were 37% lower than the \$279,283 paid out in 2023. Claims were reported in 25 counties in 2024, which is a decrease from the 28 counties reporting damage claims in 2023. There were 13 damage claims for bees (compared to 21 in 2023) totaling \$16,549, 10 for livestock at \$2,883 (10 in 2023), 40 for corn at \$139,646 (43 in 2023) and 21 (40 in 2023) miscellaneous claims at \$16,853.

Greenbrier County had the greatest dollar amount in compensation at \$56,013, followed by Monroe (\$53,336), Hardy (\$17,670), Preston (\$15,261) and Pocahontas (\$9,784). Greenbrier County had the highest number of claims (15), followed by Preston (10), Pocahontas (8), Monroe (7) and Mercer and Pendleton (4).

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) employees received 554 nuisance bear calls in 2024 compared to 1,227 in 2023. The five counties with the most complaints were Raleigh (72), Fayette (48), Kanawha (42), Greenbrier (39) and Preston (33).



## Black Bear Monitoring

Radio collars have only been left on a small number of females in the northern and southern part of the state (four in 2024). These sows are used as surrogates for orphaned cubs whenever possible. In 2024, three sows had yearlings and one den was inaccessible.

Monitoring the status of West Virginia's black bear population has always been a top priority for the WVDNR. Trends in bear population size are more realistic to obtain than absolute population numbers. Trends in bear population size are calculated by reconstructing the bear population using bear ages from the harvest. These data allow managers to make informed decisions regarding bear seasons and bag limits. Liberal hunting seasons in the eastern mountain counties from 2008–2021 (excluding 2009) reduced the bear population to the point where reduced hunting opportunities were justified. The decreasing trend in the bear population in the eastern mountain counties was detected in the reconstructed estimates of abundance derived from the bear teeth submitted by bear hunters.

### TOOTH COLLECTIONS

Age data from the 2023 tooth samples have been received and hunters have been notified of their bear's age. Hunters submitted for age consideration 1,919 usable teeth (correct tooth, tooth not broken, etc.). There were 29 cubs (2%), 31% (602) were yearlings, 27% (512) were 2-year olds, 13% (245) were 3-year olds and the remaining 27% (531) 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 1,214 usable teeth submitted in 2023 represent 68% of the total black bear harvest. Hunters submitted 49% of the harvest in 2016, 53% of the harvest in 2017, 63% in 2018, 68% in 2019, 67% in 2020, 72% in 2021 and 70% in 2022.

### REPRODUCTIVE TRACT COLLECTIONS

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 19 reproductive tracts in 2023 that supplied useful information. Reproductive tract data lags one year behind because researchers are waiting on age data. Information from reproductive tracts obtained in 2023 cannot be fully analyzed until ages are determined. Four yearling tracts were examined in 2023. None contained corpora lutea, indicating they had not bred. Two 2-year olds were examined in 2023 with both tracts containing two corpora lutea ( $\chi=2$ ). These bears would have given birth at age 3 to their first litters. Seven sows over the age of 3 showed evidence of breeding and averaged 2.43 corpora lutea. Three females over the age of 3 showed evidence of giving birth in 2023 and averaged 3.33 placental scars. One 3-year-old sow showed no evidence of corpora lutea or placental scars. Two sows had both corpora lutea and placental scars, indicating they had given birth in 2023, lost their litters and then bred again.

The WVDNR offered hunters who turned in complete reproductive tracts a \$20 gift card for their cooperation for the eighth time in 2023.

**Table 1. 2024 West Virginia Black Bear Harvest**

COUNTY	BOW/ CROSSBOW	SEPT./OCT. GUN	BUCK GUN	DECEMBER FIREARMS	MOUNTAINEER HERITAGE	TOTAL
Barbour	27	8	4	2	0	41
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	7	3	0	0	0	10
Marion	5	0	0	0	0	5
Marshall	3	0	0	0	0	3
Monongalia	7	3	2	0	0	12
Ohio	0	0	0	1	0	1
Preston	55	8	0	36	0	99
Taylor	10	3	3	0	0	16
Tucker	11	7	0	12	0	30
Wetzel	12	0	4	0	0	16
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>233</b>
Berkeley	5	0	1	0	0	6
Grant	23	8	1	12	0	44
Hampshire	6	3	5	0	0	14
Hardy	23	11	1	12	0	47
Jefferson	2	0	0	0	0	2
Mineral	4	2	1	1	0	8
Morgan	1	0	1	0	0	2
Pendleton	22	9	0	23	1	55
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>178</b>
Braxton	25	7	6	24	0	62
Clay	8	4	1	36	0	49
Lewis	18	8	10	0	0	36
Nicholas	42	68	27	72	0	209
Pocahontas	18	12	1	57	0	88
Randolph	39	27	0	43	0	109
Upshur	16	8	5	3	0	32
Webster	48	21	1	42	0	112
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>697</b>
Fayette	55	37	44	28	0	164
Greenbrier	27	7	1	51	0	86
McDowell	30	36	3	49	0	118
Mercer	22	4	11	2	0	39
Monroe	31	11	7	9	0	58
Raleigh	38	37	13	14	0	102
Summers	27	11	16	2	0	56
Wyoming	40	39	1	13	0	93
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>716</b>
Boone	43	83	25	45	0	196
Cabell	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kanawha	32	45	31	39	0	147
Lincoln	5	0	7	0	0	12
Logan	37	44	1	47	0	129
Mason	2	0	0	0	0	2
Mingo	23	22	1	14	0	60
Putnam	0	1	1	0	0	2
Wayne	8	0	6	0	0	14
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>563</b>
Calhoun	4	1	7	0	0	12
Doddridge	5	1	0	1	0	7
Gilmer	8	7	9	4	0	28
Jackson	2	0	0	0	0	2
Pleasants	1	0	2	0	0	3
Ritchie	10	2	2	2	0	16
Roane	3	3	7	1	0	14
Tyler	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wirt	7	0	2	0	0	9
Wood	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2479</b>

Bears listed for Logan, McDowell, Mingo and Wyoming counties as "Buck Gun" are bow or crossbow harvests from November 25 - December 8.

Bow/Crossbow refers to bears harvested with a bow or crossbow from September 28, 2024 - November 24, 2024. All other bow and crossbow harvests have been separated based on the seasons in which they were harvested.

Sept/Oct Gun includes bears harvested during the youth, Class Q/qq and Class XS seasons (166 bears; September 14-15); (20 bears; October 19-20); 57 bears harvested during the concurrent deer/bear season (October 24-27); and 368 bears harvested during early firearms seasons.

**Table 2.** Sex ratios of West Virginia black bears for September or November gun season, bow season, December and Mountaineer Heritage season, 1964-2024.

YEAR	BOW OR GUN SEASON SEPT./OCT.		BOW SEASON AND/OR EARLY NOV. GUN SEASON		LATE NOV. OR DEC. OR JAN. GUN SEASON		ANNUAL HARVEST		TOTAL*
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
<b>1964-1993</b>	0	0							
<b>30-Year Total</b>	0	0	561	417	1,531	890	2,092	1,307	4,671
<b>Sex Ratios</b>	0	0	57%	43%	63%	37%	62%	38%	
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	1048	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
2016	457	426	600	419	741	369	1,798	1,214	3,012
2017	349	274	399	212	1,220	704	1,968	1,190	3,158
2018	319	246	421	216	965	439	1,705	901	2,606
2019	507	374	636	330	779	473	1,922	1,177	3,099
2020	652	573	641	454	796	425	2,089	1,452	3,541
2021	430	350	426	213	857	480	1,713	1,043	2,756
2022	125	88	330	191	680	313	1,135	592	1,727
2023	299	239	594	338	942	418	1,835	995	2,830
2024	376	235	623	276	667	302	1,666	813	2,479
<b>31-YEAR TOTAL</b>	<b>5,970</b>	<b>4,922</b>	<b>12,609</b>	<b>7,625</b>	<b>19,917</b>	<b>10,656</b>	<b>38,496</b>	<b>23,203</b>	<b>61,699</b>
<b>Average Sex Ratios</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>	
<b>2024 Sex Ratios</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>33%</b>	

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

**Table 3.** West Virginia total black bear harvest by county, 2020-2024.

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	69	32	31	51	41
Brooke	2	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	22	6	11	13	10
Marion	3	1	4	4	5
Marshall	1	2	5	3	3
Monongalia	6	3	10	9	12
Ohio	0	0	2	0	1
Preston	144	76	68	59	99
Taylor	18	7	16	13	16
Tucker	98	90	39	82	30
Wetzel	14	8	11	7	16
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>233</b>
Berkeley	2	3	6	3	6
Grant	109	75	31	47	44
Hampshire	40	20	24	19	14
Hardy	82	36	16	41	47
Jefferson	5	4	4	3	2
Mineral	25	12	10	14	8
Morgan	9	10	2	7	2
Pendleton	166	147	47	104	55
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>178</b>
Braxton	89	62	38	75	62
Clay	69	36	29	26	49
Lewis	26	28	34	33	36
Nicholas	249	209	119	206	209
Pocahontas	177	199	101	137	88
Randolph	231	185	100	171	109
Upshur	42	33	17	36	32
Webster	204	145	70	158	112
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>1087</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>697</b>
Fayette	172	174	118	186	164
Greenbrier	199	152	86	151	86
McDowell	168	119	72	151	118
Mercer	37	45	19	51	39
Monroe	73	76	48	69	58
Raleigh	112	98	59	136	102
Summers	46	33	30	45	56
Wyoming	142	98	49	126	93
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>716</b>
Boone	192	188	132	193	196
Cabell	0	1	0	2	1
Kanawha	167	130	94	150	147
Lincoln	11	6	7	6	12
Logan	169	91	59	99	129
Mason	2	0	1	1	2
Mingo	84	52	42	42	60
Putnam	2	3	4	1	2
Wayne	6	7	2	8	14
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>563</b>
Calhoun	10	8	7	8	12
Doddridge	3	2	3	9	7
Gilmer	16	14	22	25	28
Jackson	2	1	2	5	2
Pleasants	1	1	1	0	3
Ritchie	9	12	4	17	16
Roane	2	4	6	12	14
Tyler	1	3	3	1	1
Wirt	13	7	8	10	9
Wood	0	2	4	5	0
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>3,541</b>	<b>2,756</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>2,830</b>	<b>2,479</b>

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

YEAR	BOW	GUN	ILLEGAL	ROADKILLS	DESTROYED	MISC.	TOTAL
<b>70s SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>70s AVERAGE ANNUAL BAG: BOW 2; GUN 65</b>				
<b>80s SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>80s AVERAGE ANNUAL BAG: BOW 26; GUN 154</b>				
<b>90s SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2,363</b>	<b>4,506</b>	<b>90s 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>00s SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>5,935</b>	<b>10,123</b>	<b>00s 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
2016	1,019	1,993	1	108	127	8	3,256
2017	611	2,547	1	63	73	3	3,298
2018	637	1,969	0	119	72	6	2,803
2019	966	2,133	7	100	128	30	3,364
<b>10s SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>7,563</b>	<b>19,913</b>	<b>10s AVERAGE ANNUAL BAG: BOW 756; GUN 1,991</b>				
2020	1,095	2,446	7	125	254	11	3,938
2021	639	2,117	1	103	51	6	2,917
2022	521	1,206	1	63	57	3	1,851
2023	932	1,898	3	101	64	2	3,000
2024	899	1,580	1	80	54	3	2,617

November Gun Seasons held in 1989, and 2002-2024 in certain counties.

September Season held in 2008-2024 in certain counties.

Check tags without season (<0.05 percent) marked were assumed gun harvests for this table.

Bow harvest for 2015-2024 indicates bears killed between the first day of archery season and the first day of buck firearms season, not all bears killed with a bow or crossbow.



**Table 5.** West Virginia 2024 non-hunting black bear mortalities by county and type.

COUNTY	ROADKILLS	ILLEGAL	DESTROYED	MISC.	TOTAL
Barbour	1	0	0	0	1
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	1	0	0	0	1
Marion	0	0	0	0	0
Marshall	0	0	0	0	0
Monongalia	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Preston	0	0	0	0	0
Taylor	0	0	0	0	0
Tucker	0	0	0	0	0
Wetzel	0	0	0	0	0
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Berkeley	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	0	0	0	0	0
Hampshire	0	0	1	0	1
Hardy	0	0	3	0	3
Jefferson	0	0	1	0	1
Mineral	0	0	1	0	1
Morgan	0	0	0	0	0
Pendleton	1	0	2	0	3
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
Braxton	14	0	4	0	0
Clay	1	0	0	0	1
Lewis	8	0	0	0	8
Nicholas	5	0	4	0	9
Pocahontas	0	0	0	0	0
Randolph	0	0	6	2	8
Upshur	5	1	0	0	6
Webster	3	0	0	0	3
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>35</b>
Fayette	5	0	1	0	6
Greenbrier	5	0	14	0	19
McDowell	0	0	2	0	2
Mercer	9	0	1	0	10
Monroe	0	0	1	0	1
Raleigh	7	0	6	1	14
Summers	2	0	0	0	2
Wyoming	2	0	1	0	3
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>57</b>
Boone	3	0	1	0	4
Cabell	0	0	1	0	1
Kanawha	3	0	3	0	6
Lincoln	4	0	0	0	4
Logan	0	0	1	0	1
Mason	0	0	0	0	0
Mingo	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	1	0	0	0	1
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	0
Doddridge	0	0	0	0	0
Gilmer	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	0
Ritchie	0	0	0	0	0
Roane	0	0	0	0	0
Tyler	0	0	0	0	0
Wirt	0	0	0	0	0
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>138</b>

**Table 6.** Black bear damage claims paid and payments by county 2020-2024.

COUNTY	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	CLAIMS	PAYMENTS	CLAIMS	PAYMENTS	CLAIMS	PAYMENTS	CLAIMS	PAYMENTS	CLAIMS	PAYMENTS
Barbour	1	\$331	1	\$1,050	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Berkeley	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$330	0	\$0
Boone	3	\$1,635	2	\$2,079	2	\$647	1	\$725	1	\$953
Braxton	5	\$2,004	2	\$439	0	\$0	0	\$0	3	\$750
Brooke	0	\$0	1	\$8,479	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Cabell	1	\$1,079	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$3,147
Calhoun	1	\$184	1	\$69	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Clay	1	\$115	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Doddridge	0	\$0	1	\$832	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Fayette	11	\$7,531	4	\$949	4	\$5,091	2	\$403	0	\$0
Gilmer	2	\$1,307	2	\$951	2	\$1,486	1	\$3,200	3	\$1,141
Grant	1	\$170	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Greenbrier	32	\$105,142	19	\$35,612	8	\$68,325	22	\$143,522	15	\$56,013
Hampshire	2	\$1,351	1	\$1,428	3	\$5,735	1	\$483	2	\$3,007
Hancock	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Hardy	7	\$6,397	1	\$5,758	1	\$227	0	\$0	3	\$17,670
Harrison	1	\$225	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$2,528
Jackson	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$1,882
Jefferson	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Kanawha	3	\$873	0	\$0	1	\$1,594	3	\$3,702	2	\$367
Lewis	0	\$0	1	\$451	2	\$620	3	\$754	1	\$154
Lincoln	4	\$2,498	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Logan	6	\$4,251	5	\$2,087	0	\$0	3	\$1,698	0	\$0
Marion	0	\$0	2	\$610	0	\$0	2	\$807	0	\$0
Marshall	0	\$0	1	\$560	0	\$0	0	\$0	3	\$1,039
Mason	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$733
McDowell	4	\$1,530	0	\$0	1	\$226	1	\$200	0	\$0
Mercer	9	\$4,568	1	\$319	3	\$2,099	4	\$4,606	4	\$2,041
Mineral	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Mingo	3	\$1,970	1	\$3,081	0	\$0	1	\$630	0	\$0
Monongalia	0	\$0	4	\$2,342	1	\$491	0	\$0	0	\$0
Monroe	15	\$31,785	9	\$16,045	6	\$27,402	10	\$65,036	7	\$53,336
Morgan	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$1,000	0	\$0
Nicholas	3	\$1,097	6	\$3,428	5	\$868	5	\$2,619	2	\$581
Ohio	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Pendleton	12	\$7,291	8	\$2,098	4	\$930	3	\$2,124	4	\$1,678
Pleasants	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Pocahontas	12	\$34,913	6	\$3,210	5	\$4,454	5	\$4,059	8	\$9,784
Preston	12	\$33,350	2	\$1,866	5	\$11,411	9	\$9,768	10	\$15,261
Putnam	1	\$500	1	\$486	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Raleigh	5	\$2,911	4	\$1,936	7	\$3,470	13	\$19,491	2	\$371
Randolph	7	\$6,205	3	\$905	0	\$0	11	\$5,985	2	\$627
Ritchie	1	\$537	1	\$227	1	\$1,630	0	\$0	0	\$0
Roane	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Summers	1	\$96	2	\$2,758	0	\$0	1	\$1,874	1	\$360
Taylor	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	4	\$3,304	0	\$0
Tucker	3	\$2,524	2	\$1,534	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$1,358
Tyler	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Upshur	1	\$432	2	\$159	0	\$0	3	\$401	2	\$753
Wayne	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Webster	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$120	1	\$500	0	\$0
Wetzel	0	\$0	1	\$130	1	\$1,526	2	\$0	2	\$397
Wirt	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$1,785	0	\$0
Wood	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Wyoming	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$277	0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>\$264,802</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>\$101,878</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>\$138,352</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>\$279,283</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>\$175,931</b>

## Harvest

### SPRING HARVEST

Before 1966, turkey hunting in West Virginia was limited to only a fall season. The spring gobbler season, in which only bearded turkeys can be harvested, was introduced in 1966 on West Virginia's wildlife management areas. In 1968, the spring gobbler season was expanded statewide to include private land. Ever since 1983, the spring harvest (2,627 birds) exceeded the fall harvest (2,224 birds).

West Virginia hunters harvested 11,650 bearded turkeys during the 2024 spring turkey season (Table 7). This is 4.64% below last year's harvest (12,217), 6.52% above the five-year average (10,937) and 6.75% above the 10-year average (10,913). It is also the second largest harvest since 2018 when 12,287 birds were taken (Fig. 2). With 53.1% of the total harvest occurring the first week of the five-week season, the first week remained the primary week to harvest a bird followed by the second week (19.2%), the third week (10.8%) and the fourth and fifth week (6.5% and 5.2%, respectively) (Table 8). Bearded hens remained a small portion of birds harvested, making up only 0.22% of the total harvest.

This was the fifth year the youth season included two days (i.e., the Saturday and Sunday prior to the opening day). Youth hunters harvested 601 birds, 353 and 248 on Saturday and Sunday, respectively. The youth season harvest made up 5.2% of the entire 2024 spring turkey harvest and was 23.0% below last year's youth harvest of 781 birds (Table 8).

The only WVDNR district where the harvest increased over last year was District 1 (Table 7). The District 4 and 6 harvests were similar to last year's, and Districts 2, 3 and 5 harvests decreased. District 1 harvested the most birds (2,748), followed by District 6 (2,208), District 5 (1,897), District 4 (1,864), District 3 (1,585) and District 2 (1,348). The top five counties with the highest turkey harvest were Mason (501), Preston (441), Jackson (400), Marshall (337) and Harrison (336) counties.

### FALL HARVEST

All 55 counties had at least a one week fall turkey season with a one bird either sex bag limit. Twenty-six counties had a one-week season. Fifteen counties, which had a spring harvest of at least 0.75 birds per square mile, were open to a split two-week season. Fourteen "traditional" counties had a four-week split season, and one had a two-week split season. Hunters harvested 1,130 turkeys during the 2024 fall season (Table 9), which was 16.9% above 2023, 16.7% above the five-year average and similar to the 10-year average (-0.18%) (Fig. 3). This was the largest fall harvest since 2018 when 1,215 birds were checked in. The 2024 harvest consisted of 653 females (58%) and 477 males (42%).

The fall turkey harvest depends on hunter participation, the current year's brood production and mast conditions. Although this year's poult per hen (pph) were the lowest it has been statewide in the past five years (2.0 pph), the number of observed broods (164 observations) was 4.5% above last year's (157 observations) and 5.1% above the five-year average (156 observations), indicating that the 2024 harvest may be slightly above last year's harvest. This year's increased fall harvest was also in spite of three more counties going from a two-week season to a one-week season due to a reduced harvest this past spring.

All but District 4 increased their harvest over last year's harvest. District 3 harvested the most birds (289), followed by District 1 (191), District 4 (180), District 2 (169), District 5 (160) and District 6 (141).

Leading the state was Randolph County with hunters harvesting 77 birds, followed by Nicholas (66), Greenbrier (57), Pocahontas (53) and Mason (41). All of these counties, except Mason, had a four-week season.

Overall, the combined 2024 spring and fall turkey harvest was 12,780 birds (Table 10). This is down 3.2% from 2023's total harvest (13,198). Since 1966, 2024 ranked 17th in the highest total harvest.

### MOUNTAINEER HERITAGE SEASON

The 2025 Mountaineer Heritage Season was the fourth year hunters could harvest turkeys during this season. During the season, which ran from Jan. 9–12, hunters harvested 21 birds (nine females and 12 males). All 21 birds were harvested on private land. Birds were killed under landowner privilege (six), lifetime (four), resident (seven), senior (two) and non-resident (two) licenses. Twenty were killed with a muzzleloader and one with a bow. Thirty-one birds were harvested during the 2024 season and 36 in 2023.

## Surveys

### SPRING GOBBLER SURVEY

The WVDNR's Wildlife Resources Section and the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) conduct an annual spring gobbler survey with hunters who volunteer their time and effort to gather information to help the WVDNR manage wild turkeys. Typically, the West Virginia chapter of NWTf 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. The results of this survey were not available at the time of this printing.

Hunters who want a copy of the annual survey report need to participate in the survey. Spring gobbler hunters who want to help are encouraged to contact:

Spring Gobbler Survey  
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241  
Phone: (304) 637-0245

Those who want to participate will be sent the necessary forms and a questionnaire prior to the spring hunting season. The survey is simple 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 have an opinion on in relation to turkeys.

### BROOD SURVEY

Statewide, 30 observers (out of a potential 58) documented 469 encounters with turkeys in 2024, including 631 hens, 1,095 poults, 374 gobblers, 161 unknown birds and 51 "seen before" observations. This was a 4% increase compared to 2023 (451 encounters). Removing the repeated observations yielded 558 hens, 978 poults, 278 gobblers, 161 unknowns, with a 1.75 poult-per-hen ratio for the entire observation period. The 2024 poult-per-hen ratio was 5.4% above 2023 observations (1.66 poults/hen).

Slight modifications were made to West Virginia's observations to standardize them with the Northeast and Southeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for regional indices. Currently both associations and the NWTf Technical Committee have adopted the SEAFWA methodology for a standardized national survey. This index uses the average of poults per hen for each observation of hens with broods compared to all observations of hens during July and August. This index takes into consideration those hens that either lost their nests or broods, which more accurately reflects the status of recruitment. There were 174 observations statewide of hens or hens with broods in July and August. This included 377 hens and 663 poults. The statewide poult-per-hen ratio in 2024 was 2.00, down 5.7% from 2023 (2.12 poults/hen) and the lowest ratio in the past five years. The Eastern Panhandle Region had the highest poults-per-hen ratio (2.64 poults/hen), followed by the Mountain Region (2.60 poults/hen), Southern Region (2.04 poults/hen) and the Western Region observing the lowest ratio (1.60 poults/hen) (Table 11).

A total of 18,391.86 hours were worked between July 1 and August 31 by 59 potential observers. Using the national standardized method above resulted in a statewide 0.11 poults/hen/1,000 hours. This is tied with the lowest estimate of production associated with effort since we began looking at this metric (2023: 0.12 poults/hen/1,000 hours, 2022: 0.30 poults/hen/1,000 hours, 2021: 0.14 poults/hen/1,000 hours, 2020: 0.11 poults/hen/1,000 hours).

A total of 164 turkey broods were observed in 2024 (Table 12). This is a 4.5% increase compared to last year's observations and 5.1% above the five-year average.

## Research

The WVDNR is in its second year of multi-year statewide wild turkey hen study. This is a cooperative project between the agency, West Virginia University and the West Virginia Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Unit. It is funded through hunting license dollars, federal grant money and NWTF.

The main objective is to repeat and compare the results of this study with the previous hen study (1989–1994), which focused on reproductive parameters and hen survival and mortality. This study is taking advantage of new advanced technologies for tracking and monitoring hens and their activities and will provide additional confidence in current and future management and harvest strategies. In addition, a human dimensions portion of the study will provide information needed to develop a spring and fall turkey hunter profile as well as identifying the elements of hunter satisfaction, both necessary to recognize and address the desires of hunters. By combining the biological and sociological aspects of the study, the WVDNR plans to develop predictive population models looking at varying season lengths of the spring and fall season. This study will produce two Master and one Doctorate candidate.

In 2024, 208 hen turkeys were leg banded with 118 GPS transmitters being deployed. Transmitters are equipped with accelerometers enabling the detection of movement and non-movement activities (e.g. feeding, roosting and nesting). The WVDNR anticipates deploying an additional 113 transmitters in the spring of 2025.

Twenty-eight Autonomous Recording Units (ARUs) were placed in three study regions across the state in the spring of 2024. The goal is for these units to detect gobbling activity to identify peak gobbling, allowing gobbling activity to be compared to nesting activity. These units will be used again in the spring of 2025.

Preparations are being made for both a spring and fall turkey hunter survey, with plans to conduct these surveys shortly after the close of their respective seasons.



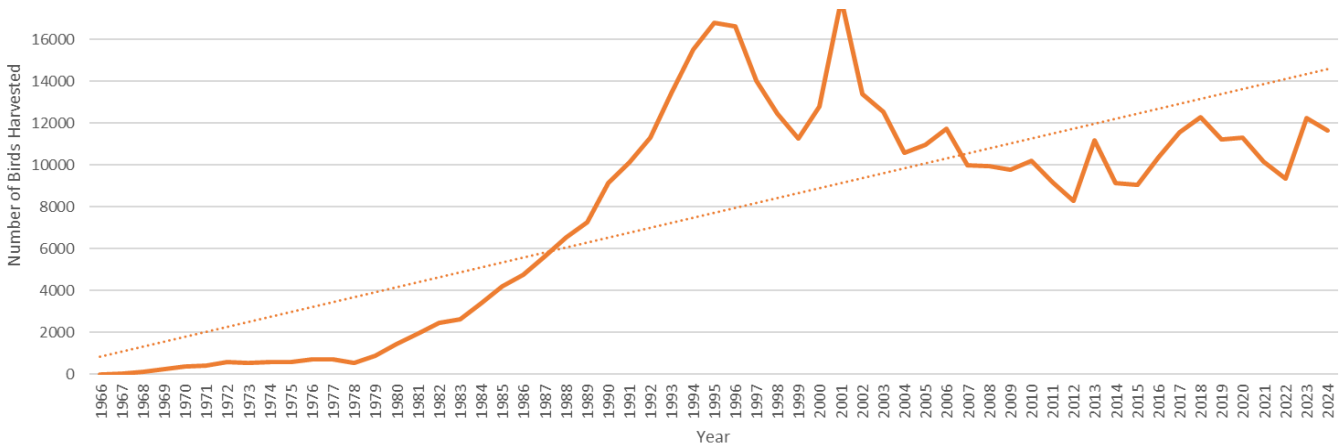
**Table 7.** Spring harvest of wild turkeys in West Virginia, 2020-2024.

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	234	163	139	216	199
Brooke	131	134	106	115	129
Hancock	146	190	123	131	134
Harrison	339	271	224	357	336
Marion	289	226	191	228	238
Marshall	296	252	247	291	337
Monongalia	270	235	229	258	307
Ohio	130	119	111	122	128
Preston	434	343	357	390	441
Taylor	146	102	100	129	131
Tucker	86	87	80	83	114
Wetzel	248	176	159	243	254
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>2,298</b>	<b>2,066</b>	<b>2,563</b>	<b>2,748</b>
Berkeley	151	131	170	236	190
Grant	124	146	141	207	172
Hampshire	176	209	210	347	232
Hardy	123	137	154	267	205
Jefferson	121	115	135	162	128
Mineral	113	114	145	215	151
Morgan	93	58	92	147	113
Pendleton	111	138	126	185	157
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>1,766</b>	<b>1,348</b>
Braxton	234	183	157	207	185
Clay	102	123	73	126	87
Lewis	250	225	183	212	238
Nicholas	265	219	217	256	258
Pocahontas	109	146	165	193	186
Randolph	214	225	223	261	275
Upshur	255	260	209	265	244
Webster	93	103	84	143	112
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,522</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>1,311</b>	<b>1,663</b>	<b>1,585</b>
Fayette	290	254	284	300	261
Greenbrier	248	259	321	288	315
McDowell	122	118	65	124	143
Mercer	174	194	248	203	239
Monroe	201	256	295	255	254
Raleigh	212	218	276	255	272
Summers	182	194	230	236	194
Wyoming	190	180	158	210	186
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,619</b>	<b>1,673</b>	<b>1,877</b>	<b>1,871</b>	<b>1,864</b>
Boone	169	119	86	150	129
Cabell	182	127	109	149	129
Kanawha	310	299	210	310	278
Lincoln	218	174	144	214	179
Logan	172	151	113	178	149
Mason	457	364	351	559	501
Mingo	147	119	75	146	127
Putnam	287	222	199	284	255
Wayne	190	126	105	158	150
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,132</b>	<b>1,701</b>	<b>1,392</b>	<b>2,148</b>	<b>1,897</b>
Calhoun	147	154	96	155	153
Doddridge	198	143	134	177	231
Gilmer	140	133	85	158	119
Jackson	404	323	309	416	400
Pleasants	109	97	76	106	98
Ritchie	283	252	176	271	288
Roane	252	244	166	272	251
Tyler	209	157	138	192	237
Wirt	200	157	125	174	148
Wood	344	270	242	285	283
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,286</b>	<b>1,930</b>	<b>1,547</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>2,208</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>11,320</b>	<b>10,134</b>	<b>9,366</b>	<b>12,217</b>	<b>11,650</b>

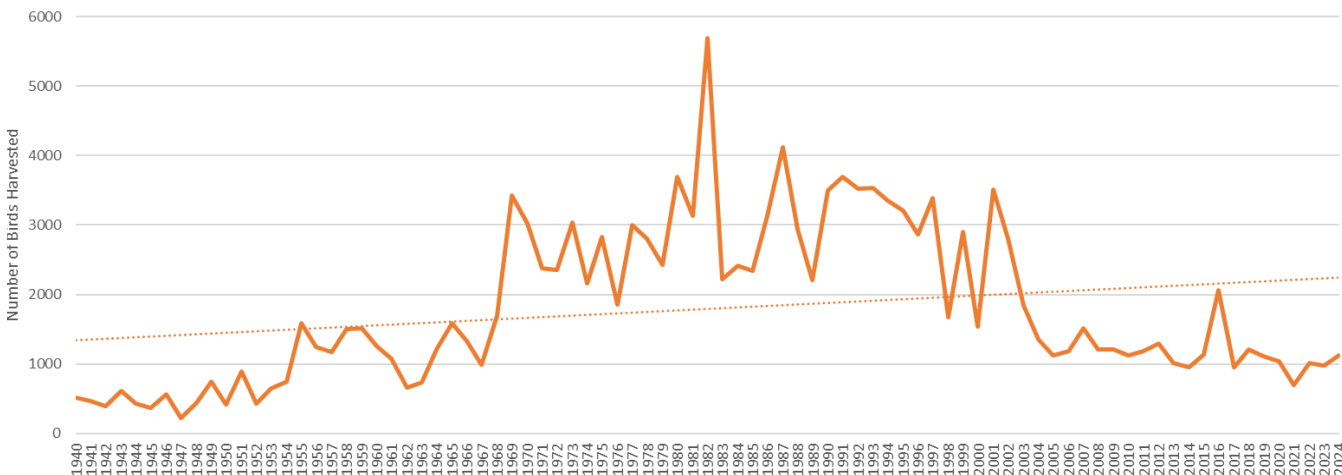
**Table 8.** Spring wild turkey harvest in West Virginia by week of season, 2023–2024.

WEEK OF SEASON	2023		2024	
	BIRDS HARVESTED	%	BIRDS HARVESTED	%
Youth	781	6.39	601	5.2
Week 1	6,420	52.56	6,183	53.1
Week 2	2,131	17.44	2,238	19.2
Week 3	1,265	10.35	1,262	10.8
Week 4	822	6.73	757	6.5
Week 5	798	6.53	609	5.2
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>12,217</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11,650</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 2.** West Virginia’s spring turkey harvest, 1966–2024.



**Figure 3.** West Virginia’s fall turkey harvest, 1940–2024.



**Table 9.** Fall harvest of wild turkeys in West Virginia, 2020-2024.

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	14	6	13	13	18
Brooke	12	1	11	6	4
Hancock	11	6	6	8	10
Harrison	18	9	6	24	16
Marion	22	9	8	20	26
Marshall	14	2	16	12	16
Monongalia	21	12	14	11	16
Ohio	8	4	7	7	3
Preston	42	10	33	27	34
Taylor	13	3	7	17	15
Tucker	18	3	16	17	24
Wetzel	6	7	13	3	9
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>191</b>
Berkeley	17	17	20	14	21
Grant	32	26	25	25	26
Hampshire	19	31	29	26	30
Hardy	12	36	37	25	27
Jefferson	4	4	5	6	4
Mineral	19	18	26	13	22
Morgan	13	17	23	11	13
Pendleton	34	19	22	22	26
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>169</b>
Braxton	7	8	11	14	17
Clay	5	7	4	13	9
Lewis	16	5	10	11	6
Nicholas	45	23	65	57	66
Pocahontas	37	34	34	28	53
Randolph	64	16	72	42	77
Upshur	37	16	26	24	26
Webster	20	12	39	26	35
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>289</b>
Fayette	35	7	15	32	29
Greenbrier	53	41	57	46	57
McDowell	6	7	3	11	5
Mercer	26	16	8	27	14
Monroe	46	36	41	43	39
Raleigh	23	20	15	23	14
Summers	16	19	8	25	10
Wyoming	19	16	19	22	12
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>180</b>
Boone	17	13	14	12	21
Cabell	9	5	11	6	7
Kanawha	19	10	10	20	23
Lincoln	9	13	15	6	12
Logan	15	16	14	7	13
Mason	23	33	21	20	41
Mingo	10	7	10	14	9
Putnam	17	10	27	22	31
Wayne	11	2	6	4	3
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>160</b>
Calhoun	5	5	4	14	7
Doddridge	8	8	9	7	9
Gilmer	3	2	5	6	7
Jackson	18	12	25	14	30
Pleasants	3	1	1	5	3
Ritchie	9	6	12	7	18
Roane	11	8	20	21	17
Tyler	9	2	9	14	15
Wirt	10	3	13	10	7
Wood	28	15	22	21	28
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>1,038</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>1,130</b>

**Table 10.** Total spring and fall turkey harvest West Virginia, 1966-2024.

YEAR	SPRING	FALL	TOTAL	RANK
1966	12	1,334	1,346	58
1967	42	989	1,031	59
1968	134	1,697	1,831	57
1969	243	3,430	3,673	47
1970	370	3,020	3,390	50
1971	421	2,374	2,795	54
1972	589	2,353	2,942	53
1973	554	3,038	3,592	48
1974	596	2,158	2,754	55
1975	585	2,827	3,412	49
1976	721	1,860	2,581	56
1977	719	2,998	3,717	46
1978	566	2,803	3,369	51
1979	873	2,421	3,294	52
1980	1,459	3,696	5,155	43
1981	1,970	3,135	5,105	44
1982	2,458	5,684	8,142	39
1983	2,627	2,224	4,851	45
1984	3,387	2,414	5,801	42
1985	4,215	2,343	6,558	41
1986	4,774	3,130	7,904	40
1987	5,665	4,114	9,779	35
1988	6,526	2,939	9,465	37
1989	7,245	2,204	9,449	38
1990	9,152	3,504	12,656	18
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	25
2005	10,957	1,130	12,087	24
2006	11,735	1,186	12,921	16
2007	9,965	1,511	11,476	26
2008	9,929	1,206	11,135	28
2009	9,787	1,208	10,995	29
2010	10,209	1,126	11,335	27
2011	9,190	1,186	10,376	32
2012	8,303	1,294	9,597	36
2013	11,162	1,019	12,181	23
2014	9,128	956	10,084	34
2015	9,037	1,140	10,177	33
2016	10,361	2,066	12,427	20
2017	11,545	948	12,493	19
2018	12,287	1,215	13,502	14
2019	11,215	1,113	12,328	22
2020	11,320	1,038	12,358	21
2021	10,134	694	10,828	30
2022	9,366	1,012	10,378	31
2023	12,217	981	13,198	15
2024	11,650	1,130	12,780	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>454,004</b>	<b>131,040</b>	<b>585,044</b>	

**Table 11.** Wild turkey poults per hen (pph) reported in July and August by region and statewide, 2020-2024.

YEAR	REGION	PPH
2020	1 E. Panhandle	1.88
	2 Mountains	4.24
	3 Western	1.39
	4 Southern	2.19
	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>2.01</b>
2021	1 E. Panhandle	3.00
	2 Mountains	2.00
	3 Western	2.67
	4 Southern	2.95
	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>2.70</b>
2022	1 E. Panhandle	0.91
	2 Mountains	2.77
	3 Western	3.12
	4 Southern	2.23
	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>2.63</b>
2023	1 E. Panhandle	2.19
	2 Mountains	1.98
	3 Western	2.64
	4 Southern	1.46
	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>2.12</b>
2024	1 E. Panhandle	2.64
	2 Mountains	2.60
	3 Western	1.60
	4 Southern	2.04
	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>2.00</b>
<b>FIVE YEAR AVERAGE</b>		<b>2.29</b>

**Table 12.** Wild turkey broods reported by ecological region and month, 2020-2024.

YEAR	REGION	MONTH			TOTAL
		JUNE	JULY	AUG.	
2020	1 E. Panhandle	5	1	3	9
	2 Mountains	1	2	5	8
	3 Western	16	14	16	46
	4 Southern	8	35	26	69
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>132</b>
2021	1 E. Panhandle	3	0	6	9
	2 Mountains	2	4	6	12
	3 Western	17	49	25	91
	4 Southern	29	27	17	73
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>185</b>
2022	1 E. Panhandle	1	0	2	3
	2 Mountains	3	6	7	16
	3 Western	17	32	17	66
	4 Southern	17	25	16	58
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>143</b>
2023	1 E. Panhandle	8	7	6	21
	2 Mountains	2	10	8	20
	3 Western	28	23	25	76
	4 Southern	13	9	18	40
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>157</b>
2024	1 E. Panhandle	1	8	6	15
	2 Mountains	4	8	6	18
	3 Western	14	16	20	50
	4 Southern	34	18	29	81
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>FIVE YEAR TOTAL</b>		<b>223</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>781</b>
<b>FIVE YEAR AVERAGE</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>156</b>



# WILD BOAR

BY NICK HUFFMAN

**Table 13.** Wild boar harvest by weapon, 2024.

COUNTY	CROSSBOW	ARCHERY	FIREARM	TOTAL
Boone	7	6	26	39
Logan	10	14	28	52
Raleigh	0	0	0	0
Wyoming	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>91</b>

**Table 14.** West Virginia wild boar harvest, 1979–2023.

YEAR	TOTAL HARVEST
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
2016	46
2017	91
2018	137
2019	88
2020	145
2021	144
2022	111
2023	142
2024	91
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,150</b>

Hunters harvested 91 boars during the 2024 season, representing the lowest reported harvest during the past five seasons (Table 13). Hunters once again had the opportunity to hunt in early February, which produced a harvest of 41 boars. During the winter firearms season, hunters harvested 23 boars in Logan County and 18 in Boone County. The February harvest was down from the six-year average (54). Rainfall during this three-day season reduced hunter effort, contributing to the lower harvest.

Firearms hunters harvested a total of 54 boars (28 in Logan County and 26 in Boone County) and archers harvested 37 (24 in Logan County and 13 in Boone County). Crossbow hunters accounted for 17 of the archery harvests. No harvests were reported in Raleigh County or Wyoming County. The abundant white oak crop significantly contributed to the lower archery harvest, which declined 46% from 2023.

Wild Boar were introduced in 1971 to supplement big game populations and did well enough to accommodate a hunting season in 1979. Harvests have ranged from three in 1979 to 158 in 1995 (Table 14). During the 46-year history of wild boar hunting in West Virginia’s southern coalfields, regulated hunting seasons have enabled the successful management of this game species. Utilizing the February season provides hunters a unique big game hunting opportunity coupled with stabilizing the wild boar population. Biologists will continue to monitor the impact of this February season and make proposals accordingly. The February season is proposed to continue for next year. Annual big game seasons are set by the West Virginia Natural Resources Commission at their spring meeting.

## Deer Season 2024 and January 2025

Tables 15–22 contain the 2024 white-tailed deer hunter harvest information for West Virginia's 55 counties. During the 2024 and January 2025 seasons, hunters harvested 111,646 deer. This was an increase of 2% from the 2023 and January 2024 harvest of 109,246 and was 1% above the previous five-year harvest average of 110,296. The total deer harvest represents one deer killed for every 132 acres of deer habitat in the state (Table 21). From 1945 through January 2025, a total of 7,112,903 deer harvests have been recorded in West Virginia.

In 2024, the traditional buck-only firearms season harvest of antlered bucks was 41,435, a 7.7% decrease from the 2023 harvest (Table 15). This is 4.1% less than the five-year average buck-only firearms season harvest of 43,212.

A total of 33,057 antlerless deer (Table 18) were harvested with a firearm during the antlerless deer season and the Youth, Class Q/QQ and Senior Lifetime Class XS deer seasons. This is an increase of 14% compared to 2023 and was 9% above the five-year average of 30,464. This year marked the 13th year for an October firearm antlerless deer season and was the seventh year for a four-day season (Oct. 24–27). For the seventh year, the traditional December antlerless season was increased from three to four days (Dec. 12–15) and followed buck firearms season rather than muzzleloader season. For the sixth-year, qualifying youth, Class Q/QQ and Senior Lifetime Class XS license holders had an additional day in 2024, which totaled to a four-day, antlerless-only season on private and public land in counties having a firearms deer hunting season.

The 2024 deer statewide archery (bow/crossbow) season opened September 24, 2024, six days earlier than the 2023 season. In the 2024 archery season, a harvest of 32,240 was recorded, which includes 19,320 deer harvested with a crossbow during the archery season (Table 17). Deer reported as harvested with a crossbow represented 60% of the total archery season harvest and ranges from 23% to 77% of the archery antlered deer harvested by county. This year's archery harvest was 6% above the 2023 archery season and 2% above the five-year average of 31,527.

The 2024 muzzleloader harvest was 4,173, which was 8% less than the 2023 harvest of 4,521 but does not include 695 deer taken with side lock and flintlock muzzleloaders in the Mountaineer Heritage season. This is 5% below the five-year average of 4,404.

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 limits of deer the land can support. To avoid these problems, a minimum harvest of 70 females for every 100 bucks is generally required to stabilize the deer herd. If a decrease in the herd is warranted, the percentage of females needs to be above 40%. The 2024 deer harvest records indicate the percentage of female deer in the harvest was 38%, which is expected to slightly increase to stabilize the statewide deer herd. However, the percentage of female deer in the harvest of individual counties in 2024 varied from 22–49%, which reflects the antlerless deer season frameworks designed for individual counties to grow, reduce or stabilize the deer population on a county basis.

Overall deer hunting opportunities for hunters across the state in 2025 are proposed to be similar to those in 2024 with the exception of increased antlerless deer season hunting opportunities in counties where recorded deer harvest data and habitat impacts indicate female deer harvest should be increased to stabilize or decrease current deer populations. 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. To register your harvest, visit [WVdnr.gov](http://WVdnr.gov), call 1-844-982-4325 (1-844-WVCheck) or visit a license agent.

Proposed seasons and bag limits for 2025 have not been approved by the West Virginia Natural Resources Commission at this time. For details on future deer hunting seasons, please refer to the 2025–2026 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary, which will be published and available to hunters in July 2025. This publication 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 at [WVdnr.gov](http://WVdnr.gov), from any WVDNR office and at any business that sells West Virginia hunting licenses.

**Table 15. West Virginia Antlered Buck Harvest, 2020-2024.**

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	846	732	938	710	780
Brooke	221	241	318	317	302
Hancock	135	197	227	232	236
Harrison	663	658	993	822	769
Marion	675	570	945	667	578
Marshall	680	703	941	871	650
Monongalia	731	629	937	740	608
Ohio	234	276	342	355	288
Preston	1,469	1,239	1,726	1,412	1,565
Taylor	384	345	547	434	396
Tucker	633	616	765	664	763
Wetzel	688	713	994	718	773
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,359</b>	<b>6,919</b>	<b>9,673</b>	<b>7,942</b>	<b>7,708</b>
Berkeley	597	544	682	637	636
Grant	1,088	1,065	1,070	1,217	1,179
Hampshire	1,382	1,475	1,428	1,121	1,231
Hardy	1,171	1,254	1,160	1,331	1,188
Jefferson	381	386	496	395	359
Mineral	891	990	961	834	970
Morgan	500	491	560	426	536
Pendleton	1,296	1,180	1,130	1,408	1,329
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,306</b>	<b>7,385</b>	<b>7,487</b>	<b>7,369</b>	<b>7,428</b>
Braxton	1,088	1,230	1,137	1,389	853
Clay	380	601	449	631	275
Lewis	952	944	1,261	1,080	932
Nicholas	806	916	1,065	1,161	1,013
Pocahontas	1,082	1,021	1,185	1,231	1,269
Randolph	1,429	1,338	1,644	1,593	1,583
Upshur	1,055	1,049	1,170	853	1,033
Webster	646	662	842	723	797
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,438</b>	<b>7,761</b>	<b>8,753</b>	<b>8,861</b>	<b>7,755</b>
Fayette	828	993	1,123	1,222	859
Greenbrier	1,318	1,595	1,838	1,884	1,756
McDowell	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	490	692	697	1,014	531
Monroe	887	1,212	1,168	1,389	1,095
Raleigh	617	793	844	1,039	722
Summers	500	716	663	913	592
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>4,640</b>	<b>6,001</b>	<b>6,333</b>	<b>7,461</b>	<b>5,555</b>
Boone	599	637	769	733	523
Cabell	397	459	496	441	463
Kanawha	1,019	1,200	1,319	1,233	902
Lincoln	752	1,045	906	765	645
Logan	0	0	0	0	0
Mason	1,001	1,122	1,397	905	1,097
Mingo	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	662	739	974	571	680
Wayne	650	818	679	702	645
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>5,080</b>	<b>6,020</b>	<b>6,540</b>	<b>5,350</b>	<b>4,955</b>
Calhoun	504	776	625	855	530
Doddridge	705	640	1,035	654	846
Gilmer	611	796	906	945	639
Jackson	1,062	1,336	1,509	992	1,285
Pleasants	258	200	397	288	305
Ritchie	1,010	996	1,620	946	1,229
Roane	899	1,186	1,081	1,163	891
Tyler	548	505	900	687	734
Wirt	527	617	783	630	606
Wood	838	1,005	1,168	945	969
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>6,962</b>	<b>8,057</b>	<b>10,024</b>	<b>8,105</b>	<b>8,034</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>38,785</b>	<b>42,143</b>	<b>48,810</b>	<b>44,888</b>	<b>41,435</b>

# WHITE-TAILED DEER

**Table 16.** West Virginia White-Tailed Deer Archery Harvest (Traditional Bow Only), 2020–2024.

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	271	197	206	180	217
Brooke	135	105	103	136	170
Hancock	159	156	104	120	208
Harrison	264	226	200	178	241
Marion	228	213	238	202	169
Marshall	182	141	165	179	147
Monongalia	416	309	274	293	419
Ohio	168	132	100	114	124
Preston	635	444	500	412	534
Taylor	144	118	142	142	100
Tucker	157	146	154	131	142
Wetzel	116	124	139	115	112
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,875</b>	<b>2,311</b>	<b>2,325</b>	<b>2,202</b>	<b>2,583</b>
Berkeley	368	232	245	219	306
Grant	199	148	165	152	149
Hampshire	255	215	218	147	192
Hardy	199	155	159	169	161
Jefferson	243	209	222	185	217
Mineral	168	144	177	138	171
Morgan	147	105	114	69	140
Pendleton	224	166	161	187	183
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>1,461</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>1,519</b>
Braxton	271	298	243	288	221
Clay	101	128	72	106	62
Lewis	229	188	236	201	177
Nicholas	237	225	274	257	250
Pocahontas	140	95	132	107	120
Randolph	299	259	255	225	266
Upshur	274	264	292	200	233
Webster	130	149	132	97	111
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>1,606</b>	<b>1,636</b>	<b>1,481</b>	<b>1,440</b>
Fayette	328	318	328	324	297
Greenbrier	267	264	252	227	228
McDowell	392	551	478	586	490
Mercer	333	382	291	372	251
Monroe	242	211	209	213	178
Raleigh	432	429	410	445	400
Summers	183	206	167	211	171
Wyoming	687	945	826	1,036	723
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,864</b>	<b>3,306</b>	<b>2,961</b>	<b>3,414</b>	<b>2,738</b>
Boone	230	182	198	199	207
Cabell	171	146	152	144	170
Kanawha	581	533	408	388	468
Lincoln	210	268	205	195	197
Logan	510	593	553	559	469
Mason	375	378	415	340	431
Mingo	349	425	305	464	355
Putnam	288	268	273	203	236
Wayne	212	193	167	179	173
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,926</b>	<b>2,986</b>	<b>2,676</b>	<b>2,671</b>	<b>2,706</b>
Calhoun	103	132	106	117	68
Doddridge	128	122	158	101	156
Gilmer	99	119	117	110	63
Jackson	408	416	474	340	455
Pleasants	63	42	68	57	58
Ritchie	266	221	261	192	264
Roane	242	289	191	213	197
Tyler	142	104	139	111	131
Wirt	152	163	148	131	139
Wood	375	330	350	281	403
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,978</b>	<b>1,938</b>	<b>2,012</b>	<b>1,653</b>	<b>1,934</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>14,127</b>	<b>13,521</b>	<b>13,071</b>	<b>12,687</b>	<b>12,920</b>

# WHITE-TAILED DEER

**Table 17. West Virginia White-Tailed Deer Archery Harvest (Crossbow Only), 2020-2024.**

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	459	332	398	290	434
Brooke	92	129	129	157	167
Hancock	149	170	157	170	254
Harrison	275	261	308	291	349
Marion	320	290	418	354	310
Marshall	195	194	276	275	246
Monongalia	436	337	391	414	400
Ohio	140	154	120	157	150
Preston	1,107	813	1,033	852	969
Taylor	239	201	237	193	210
Tucker	358	307	367	291	328
Wetzel	242	211	296	219	270
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>4,012</b>	<b>3,399</b>	<b>4,130</b>	<b>3,663</b>	<b>4,087</b>
Berkeley	489	384	419	354	460
Grant	293	264	239	255	301
Hampshire	306	278	312	216	270
Hardy	248	262	255	230	297
Jefferson	292	308	320	247	245
Mineral	313	283	297	255	341
Morgan	231	201	283	144	235
Pendleton	313	310	272	278	339
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,485</b>	<b>2,290</b>	<b>2,397</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>2,488</b>
Braxton	358	427	374	532	343
Clay	170	239	155	231	146
Lewis	310	366	437	324	335
Nicholas	433	454	522	520	501
Pocahontas	244	217	234	249	281
Randolph	780	764	831	670	878
Upshur	617	586	668	474	640
Webster	279	341	385	297	341
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>3,191</b>	<b>3,394</b>	<b>3,606</b>	<b>3,297</b>	<b>3,465</b>
Fayette	541	546	616	665	575
Greenbrier	460	511	511	483	559
McDowell	123	173	187	223	176
Mercer	383	432	405	536	378
Monroe	329	391	364	401	398
Raleigh	575	650	584	721	736
Summers	243	295	261	318	233
Wyoming	164	225	224	286	221
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,818</b>	<b>3,223</b>	<b>3,152</b>	<b>3,633</b>	<b>3,276</b>
Boone	250	257	268	237	285
Cabell	209	216	189	185	231
Kanawha	597	693	654	571	631
Lincoln	246	322	247	253	275
Logan	130	191	176	186	172
Mason	355	348	414	313	491
Mingo	101	131	132	197	178
Putnam	265	289	352	217	349
Wayne	180	173	160	194	176
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,333</b>	<b>2,620</b>	<b>2,592</b>	<b>2,353</b>	<b>2,788</b>
Calhoun	202	326	244	312	195
Doddridge	182	186	251	139	254
Gilmer	197	253	256	297	199
Jackson	339	386	474	294	494
Pleasants	100	86	136	81	124
Ritchie	359	316	524	317	511
Roane	266	427	343	394	309
Tyler	193	171	232	166	234
Wirt	199	207	229	193	255
Wood	561	514	613	482	641
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,598</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>3,302</b>	<b>2,675</b>	<b>3,216</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>17,437</b>	<b>17,798</b>	<b>19,179</b>	<b>17,600</b>	<b>19,320</b>



**Table 18. West Virginia Antlerless Deer Harvest, 2020–2024.**

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Barbour	945	725	849	754	859
Brooke	227	189	201	251	315
Hancock	127	104	135	138	162
Harrison	653	492	597	615	622
Marion	661	471	655	616	585
Marshall	475	384	463	524	467
Monongalia	755	534	673	680	626
Ohio	183	155	151	217	273
Preston	2,041	1,327	1,516	1,485	1,657
Taylor	470	320	407	365	440
Tucker	418	328	425	318	419
Wetzel	504	454	568	465	554
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,459</b>	<b>5,483</b>	<b>6,640</b>	<b>6,428</b>	<b>6,979</b>
Berkeley	711	543	676	629	689
Grant	655	558	552	520	651
Hampshire	1,132	1,031	1,056	739	793
Hardy	773	778	777	721	796
Jefferson	450	363	427	386	406
Mineral	733	693	786	628	790
Morgan	545	464	589	394	520
Pendleton	662	585	495	532	579
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>5,661</b>	<b>5,015</b>	<b>5,358</b>	<b>4,549</b>	<b>5,224</b>
Braxton	748	821	739	947	860
Clay	167	216	187	301	213
Lewis	1,130	913	1,244	1,090	1,262
Nicholas	434	317	406	509	480
Pocahontas	260	308	314	321	412
Randolph	851	674	815	738	1,101
Upshur	1,282	1,048	1,228	1,050	1,203
Webster	238	221	320	278	297
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>4,518</b>	<b>5,253</b>	<b>5,234</b>	<b>5,828</b>
Fayette	497	403	400	601	543
Greenbrier	741	594	686	759	817
McDowell	419	375	381	502	0
Mercer	0	0	0	0	393
Monroe	898	891	863	921	998
Raleigh	241	211	237	315	484
Summers	420	391	358	494	471
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>3,216</b>	<b>2,865</b>	<b>2,925</b>	<b>3,592</b>	<b>3,706</b>
Boone	218	197	213	211	190
Cabell	312	246	249	208	261
Kanawha	417	391	376	314	387
Lincoln	387	472	492	411	477
Logan	0	0	0	0	0
Mason	875	1,078	1,240	837	1,298
Mingo	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	606	633	711	456	746
Wayne	141	218	228	200	215
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>2,956</b>	<b>3,235</b>	<b>3,509</b>	<b>2,637</b>	<b>3,574</b>
Calhoun	561	579	533	619	569
Doddridge	535	411	620	429	605
Gilmer	490	568	617	629	603
Jackson	1,065	1,092	1,314	890	1,321
Pleasants	197	174	170	130	210
Ritchie	1,079	883	1,234	891	1,129
Roane	771	945	926	955	925
Tyler	614	489	728	559	648
Wirt	497	451	566	434	494
Wood	1,044	906	1,060	964	1,242
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>6,853</b>	<b>6,498</b>	<b>7,768</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>7,746</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>31,255</b>	<b>27,614</b>	<b>31,453</b>	<b>28,940</b>	<b>33,057</b>

**Table 19.** West Virginia Muzzleloader Harvest, 2020–2024.

COUNTY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023
Barbour	161	107	117	95	119
Brooke	30	14	37	27	31
Hancock	33	30	44	39	30
Harrison	85	49	65	74	75
Marion	104	59	82	84	55
Marshall	89	74	74	97	79
Monongalia	104	53	74	86	60
Ohio	46	25	45	46	28
Preston	277	138	202	187	171
Taylor	60	38	56	58	46
Tucker	70	49	66	90	72
Wetzel	69	53	96	70	85
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,128</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>851</b>
Berkeley	65	60	77	76	68
Grant	84	75	64	83	74
Hampshire	98	99	72	84	93
Hardy	64	69	71	93	75
Jefferson	49	51	52	54	36
Mineral	85	72	52	54	73
Morgan	68	42	46	35	41
Pendleton	62	59	66	74	57
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>517</b>
Braxton	134	133	137	193	100
Clay	16	22	39	61	40
Lewis	139	111	139	104	101
Nicholas	209	116	187	225	207
Pocahontas	66	52	52	72	70
Randolph	218	125	193	199	206
Upshur	168	131	154	134	150
Webster	126	67	106	98	110
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>1,076</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>1,007</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>984</b>
Fayette	119	88	125	127	102
Greenbrier	146	116	153	160	145
McDowell	0	0	0	0	0
Mercer	54	60	72	98	55
Monroe	77	66	76	95	82
Raleigh	87	66	90	116	76
Summers	59	59	72	90	72
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>532</b>
Boone	77	57	98	97	96
Cabell	38	41	53	38	33
Kanawha	76	59	79	68	87
Lincoln	87	95	85	61	82
Logan	0	0	0	0	0
Mason	143	107	133	111	110
Mingo	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	64	59	84	60	74
Wayne	39	45	31	43	42
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>524</b>
Calhoun	56	62	57	71	54
Doddridge	66	44	78	60	63
Gilmer	56	67	77	72	65
Jackson	131	140	152	114	114
Pleasants	31	17	37	19	29
Ritchie	98	63	132	84	116
Roane	91	90	107	106	82
Tyler	76	43	69	60	63
Wirt	56	63	69	71	50
Wood	109	89	136	108	129
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>765</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>3,569</b>	<b>4,530</b>	<b>4,521</b>	<b>4,173</b>

**Table 20.** Deer Mortality by Type of Season in West Virginia, 2024.

COUNTY	BUCK GUN	ANTLERLESS	ARCHERY	CROSSBOW	MUZZLELOADER	MOUNTAINEER HERITAGE	TOTAL
Barbour	780	859	217	434	119	21	2,430
Brooke	302	315	170	167	31	6	991
Hancock	236	162	208	254	30	10	900
Harrison	769	622	241	349	75	23	2,079
Marion	578	585	169	310	55	7	1,704
Marshall	650	467	147	246	79	6	1,595
Monongalia	608	626	419	400	60	19	2,132
Ohio	288	273	124	150	28	10	873
Preston	1,565	1,657	534	969	171	47	4,943
Taylor	396	440	100	210	46	19	1,211
Tucker	763	419	142	328	72	4	1,728
Wetzel	773	554	112	270	85	8	1,802
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,708</b>	<b>6,979</b>	<b>2,583</b>	<b>4,087</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>22,388</b>
Berkeley	636	689	306	460	68	18	2,177
Grant	1,179	651	149	301	74	7	2,361
Hampshire	1,231	793	192	270	93	16	2,595
Hardy	1,188	796	161	297	75	8	2,525
Jefferson	359	406	217	245	36	6	1,269
Mineral	970	790	171	341	73	9	2,354
Morgan	536	520	140	235	41	14	1,486
Pendleton	1,329	579	183	339	57	11	2,498
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,428</b>	<b>5,224</b>	<b>1,519</b>	<b>2,488</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>17,265</b>
Braxton	853	860	221	343	100	16	2,393
Clay	275	213	62	146	40	8	744
Lewis	932	1,262	177	335	101	16	2,823
Nicholas	1,013	480	250	501	207	26	2,477
Pocahontas	1,269	412	120	281	70	5	2,157
Randolph	1,583	1,101	266	878	206	31	4,065
Upshur	1,033	1,203	233	640	150	27	3,286
Webster	797	297	111	341	110	19	1,675
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>7,755</b>	<b>5,828</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>3,465</b>	<b>984</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>19,620</b>
Fayette	859	543	297	575	102	20	2,396
Greenbrier	1,756	817	228	559	145	16	3,521
McDowell	0	0	490	176	0	0	666
Mercer	531	393	251	378	55	16	1,624
Monroe	1,095	998	178	398	82	11	2,762
Raleigh	722	484	400	736	76	18	2,436
Summers	592	471	171	233	72	12	1,551
Wyoming	0	0	723	221	0	2	946
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>5,555</b>	<b>3,706</b>	<b>2,738</b>	<b>3,276</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>15,902</b>
Boone	523	190	207	285	96	11	1,312
Cabell	463	261	170	231	33	3	1,161
Kanawha	902	387	468	631	87	27	2,502
Lincoln	645	477	197	275	82	13	1,689
Logan	0	0	469	172	0	4	645
Mason	1,097	1,298	431	491	110	15	3,442
Mingo	0	0	355	178	0	1	534
Putnam	680	746	236	349	74	15	2,100
Wayne	645	215	173	176	42	9	1,260
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>4,955</b>	<b>3,574</b>	<b>2,706</b>	<b>2,788</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>14,645</b>
Calhoun	530	569	68	195	54	9	1,425
Doddridge	846	605	156	254	63	13	1,937
Gilmer	639	603	63	199	65	8	1,577
Jackson	1,285	1,321	455	494	114	25	3,694
Pleasants	305	210	58	124	29	3	729
Ritchie	1,229	1,129	264	511	116	27	3,276
Roane	891	925	197	309	82	7	2,411
Tyler	734	648	131	234	63	8	1,818
Wirt	606	494	139	255	50	12	1,556
Wood	969	1,242	403	641	129	19	3,403
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>8,034</b>	<b>7,746</b>	<b>1,934</b>	<b>3,216</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>21,826</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>41,435</b>	<b>33,057</b>	<b>12,920</b>	<b>19,320</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>111,646</b>

# WHITE-TAILED DEER

**Table 21.** West Virginia 2024 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	ARCHERY BOW/CROSSBOW	MUZZLELOADER	ALL SEASONS COMBINED
Barbour	328	2.38	2.62	1.98	0.36	7.41
Brooke	72	4.19	4.38	4.68	0.43	13.76
Hancock	64	3.69	2.53	7.22	0.47	14.06
Harrison	379	2.03	1.64	1.56	0.20	5.49
Marion	286	2.02	2.05	1.67	0.19	5.96
Marshall	294	2.21	1.59	1.34	0.27	5.43
Monongalia	310	1.96	2.02	2.64	0.19	6.88
Ohio	82	3.51	3.33	3.34	0.34	10.65
Preston	632	2.48	2.62	2.38	0.27	7.82
Taylor	160	2.48	2.75	1.94	0.29	7.57
Tucker	402	1.90	1.04	1.17	0.18	4.30
Wetzel	350	2.21	1.58	1.09	0.24	5.15
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>3,359</b>	<b>2.29</b>	<b>2.08</b>	<b>1.99</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>6.67</b>
Berkeley	297	2.14	2.32	2.58	0.23	7.33
Grant	471	2.50	1.38	0.96	0.16	5.01
Hampshire	631	1.95	1.26	0.73	0.15	4.11
Hardy	569	2.09	1.40	0.80	0.13	4.44
Jefferson	198	1.81	2.05	2.33	0.18	6.41
Mineral	319	3.04	2.48	1.61	0.23	7.38
Morgan	213	2.52	2.44	1.76	0.19	6.98
Pendleton	690	1.93	0.84	0.76	0.08	3.62
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>3,388</b>	<b>2.19</b>	<b>1.54</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>5.10</b>
Braxton	501	1.70	1.72	1.13	0.20	4.78
Clay	338	0.81	0.63	0.62	0.12	2.20
Lewis	373	2.50	3.38	1.37	0.27	7.57
Nicholas	632	1.60	0.76	1.19	0.33	3.92
Pocahontas	911	1.39	0.45	0.44	0.08	2.37
Randolph	1,019	1.55	1.08	1.12	0.20	3.99
Upshur	343	3.01	3.51	2.55	0.44	9.58
Webster	535	1.49	0.56	0.84	0.21	3.13
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>4,652</b>	<b>1.67</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>4.22</b>
Fayette	629	1.37	0.86	1.39	0.16	3.81
Greenbrier	991	1.77	0.82	0.79	0.15	3.55
McDowell	515	0.00	0.00	1.29	0.00	1.29
Mercer	380	1.40	1.03	1.66	0.14	4.27
Monroe	463	2.37	2.16	1.24	0.18	5.97
Raleigh	562	1.28	0.86	2.02	0.14	4.33
Summers	341	1.74	1.38	1.18	0.21	4.55
Wyoming	481	0.00	0.00	1.96	0.00	1.97
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>1.27</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>3.65</b>
Boone	485	1.08	0.39	1.01	0.20	2.71
Cabell	240	1.93	1.09	1.67	0.14	4.84
Kanawha	798	1.13	0.48	1.38	0.11	3.14
Lincoln	426	1.51	1.12	1.11	0.19	3.96
Logan	422	0.00	0.00	1.52	0.00	1.53
Mason	413	2.66	3.14	2.23	0.27	8.33
Mingo	404	0.00	0.00	1.32	0.00	1.32
Putnam	320	2.13	2.33	1.83	0.23	6.56
Wayne	485	1.33	0.44	0.72	0.09	2.60
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>3,993</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>0.13</b>	<b>3.67</b>
Calhoun	276	1.92	2.06	0.95	0.20	5.16
Doddridge	316	2.68	1.91	1.30	0.20	6.13
Gilmer	330	1.94	1.83	0.79	0.20	4.78
Jackson	447	2.87	2.96	2.12	0.26	8.26
Pleasants	125	2.44	1.68	1.46	0.23	5.83
Ritchie	443	2.77	2.55	1.75	0.26	7.40
Roane	476	1.87	1.94	1.06	0.17	5.07
Tyler	252	2.91	2.57	1.45	0.25	7.21
Wirt	230	2.63	2.15	1.71	0.22	6.77
Wood	325	2.98	3.82	3.21	0.40	10.47
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>1.60</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>6.78</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>22,974</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>1.44</b>	<b>1.40</b>	<b>0.18</b>	<b>4.86</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. Antlerless kill per square mile is calculated only for areas open to Class N hunting. All seasons combined totals are based on total deer habitat in the county.

**Table 22.** West Virginia 2024 Deer Harvest by Deer Type.

COUNTY	ANTLERED	ANTLERS LESS THAN 3 INCHES	BUTTON BUCK	FEMALE DEER	SHED	GRAND TOTAL
Barbour	1,258	52	62	1,051	7	2,430
Brooke	549	11	26	401	4	991
Hancock	522	17	22	337	2	900
Harrison	1,196	48	43	784	8	2,079
Marion	939	52	46	659	8	1,704
Marshall	968	24	27	570	6	1,595
Monongalia	1,131	65	68	862	6	2,132
Ohio	448	14	27	383	1	873
Preston	2,702	90	121	2,010	20	4,943
Taylor	646	33	38	491	3	1,211
Tucker	1,114	31	19	557	7	1,728
Wetzel	1,106	32	36	622	6	1,802
<b>District 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>12,579</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>8,727</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>22,388</b>
Berkeley	1,091	67	37	977	5	2,177
Grant	1,568	41	34	709	9	2,361
Hampshire	1,566	57	34	933	5	2,595
Hardy	1,476	55	49	943	2	2,525
Jefferson	649	28	26	564	2	1,269
Mineral	1,333	51	44	919	7	2,354
Morgan	770	36	27	650	3	1,486
Pendleton	1,741	54	27	676	0	2,498
<b>District 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>10,194</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>6,371</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>17,265</b>
Braxton	1,215	84	69	1,021	4	2,393
Clay	429	21	16	278	0	744
Lewis	1,271	69	93	1,384	6	2,823
Nicholas	1,499	58	54	856	10	2,477
Pocahontas	1,523	31	36	563	4	2,157
Randolph	2,434	73	77	1,468	13	4,065
Upshur	1,631	73	74	1,497	11	3,286
Webster	1,109	27	34	497	8	1,675
<b>District 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>11,111</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>7,564</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>19,620</b>
Fayette	1,442	69	45	836	4	2,396
Greenbrier	2,300	63	54	1,095	9	3,521
McDowell	476	15	2	173	0	666
Mercer	976	51	32	562	3	1,624
Monroe	1,488	75	53	1,144	2	2,762
Raleigh	1,426	60	38	907	5	2,436
Summers	902	39	41	567	2	1,551
Wyoming	620	14	7	303	2	946
<b>District 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>9,630</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>5,587</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15,902</b>
Boone	867	19	17	409	0	1,312
Cabell	798	31	24	304	4	1,161
Kanawha	1,576	51	34	837	4	2,502
Lincoln	988	45	39	612	5	1,689
Logan	424	9	4	207	1	645
Mason	1,803	69	76	1,487	7	3,442
Mingo	402	4	7	121	0	534
Putnam	1,113	36	57	888	6	2,100
Wayne	941	27	16	273	3	1,260
<b>District 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>8,912</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>5,138</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14,645</b>
Calhoun	725	60	37	599	4	1,425
Doddridge	1,167	37	32	694	7	1,937
Gilmer	840	41	32	660	4	1,577
Jackson	1,978	81	77	1,547	11	3,694
Pleasants	453	12	15	247	2	729
Ritchie	1,789	67	72	1,338	10	3,276
Roane	1,252	61	58	1,032	8	2,411
Tyler	1,008	38	49	721	2	1,818
Wirt	877	39	39	596	5	1,556
Wood	1,644	72	104	1,572	11	3,403
<b>District 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>11,733</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>9,006</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>21,826</b>
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>64,159</b>	<b>2,479</b>	<b>2,327</b>	<b>42,393</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>111,646</b>

## Elk Restoraton Project

Elk disappeared from the mountains and hills of West Virginia in the late 1800s due to subsistence hunting, timbering and market hunting. Although the WVDNR and other eastern state agencies had often considered and studied reintroducing elk for most of the late 1900s, serious efforts were never undertaken until Kentucky's reintroduction success in the late 1990s.

West Virginia's interest began with habitat and social acceptance feasibility studies in 2005. The WVDNR identified possible sites to sustain an elk population in various regions of the state. The only area identified for social acceptance was the southwestern coalfield area, where large scale mining activity had generated suitable elk habitat and little to no agriculture existed. This potential Elk Management Zone consisted of Logan, Mingo, McDowell, Wyoming, southern Lincoln, southern Wayne and western Boone counties. Unfortunately, active reintroduction at that time was delayed, and a passive plan was put in place to protect any elk that may have wandered in from Kentucky.

Local support and interest from then-Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's office led to legislation in 2015 by the West Virginia Legislature, which authorized the WVDNR to proceed with an active elk restoration plan. This legislation recognized the Elk Management Zone from the existing passive plan as the West Virginia Elk Management Area to which elk management activities would be limited.

To better facilitate elk reintroduction, efforts have been made to add more public land access to the region. This has resulted in over 55,600 acres being permanently secured for public hunting, including the creation of the Tomblin Wildlife Management Area, which would serve as the first elk release site in late December 2016. With additional releases in 2018 and natural reproduction adding calves each year, the herd was stabilizing but growing at a slow rate due to mortalities. Many of these mortalities are attributed to meningeal worm (*Parelaphostrongylus tenuis*), a parasite that can cause severe neurologic disease and death of infected elk.

To give the population a boost, an agreement was reached with the Lands Between the Lakes National Recreation Area in western Kentucky to relocate an additional 40 elk from their herd to the West Virginia release site. In early 2024, WVDNR staff traveled to Land Between the Lakes to capture and prepare 20 cows and 20 bulls for transfer. The elk were later transported to, and subsequently released from, the West Virginia soft release pen with the assistance of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. This, coupled with the 2024 calving period, brings the current elk population to an estimated 120–130 animals.

All individual elk from each release event were marked and equipped with GPS telemetry collars to track movements. In addition to this, efforts continue each winter to capture, mark and collar calves and other un-collared elk. In cooperation with West Virginia University, the WVDNR will use this data to better understand elk movements and habitat utilization to aid in management efforts. Additionally, a DNA study is also ongoing with WVU to give insight into parentage of calves and potentially into which individuals may be more susceptible to diseases or parasites.







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