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New York State

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Albany, NY 12233-4754
Website: www.dec.ny.gov

Division of Fish and Wildlife's Mission:

The mission of DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife is to serve the interests of current and future generations of New Yorkers by using our collective skills, in partnership with the public, to describe, understand, manage, and perpetuate a healthy and diverse assemblage of fish, wildlife, and ecosystems.

This guide is a summary that is intended for convenience only. For complete references, consult the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and Volume 6 of the Codes, Rules and Regulations of New York State. These are available at:

www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/regulations.html
www.assembly.state.ny.us/leg/ (Environmental Conservation Law)

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ON THE COVER:

(Left to right) Top right: Jaida M. with dog Sidney; Jarod R. with dog Cooper. Middle row 1: Kelly M. with a Chocolate Lab; Mark C. with dogs Haz and Xo. Middle row 2: Mark C. and Johnathan D. with dog Roxy; McKenna D. with an Irish Setter and a Lab; Ryan M. with dog George; Jackson K. with dog Oakley. Bottom row 3: Susan J. with a Brittany; Selma A. with a Weimaraner; Melissa F. with two Wirehaired Pointing Griffons.



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Highlights of Changes for 2023–2024

Increased Mallard and Canada Goose Opportunities

- The mallard bag limit increased to no more than 4 mallards per day, of which 2 may be hens.
- Canada goose season length and bag limits increased to 45 days with a bag limit of 3 per day in the West Central, East Central, Northeast, Lake Champlain, and Hudson Valley Zones.

For more information on waterfowl seasons go to www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/28888.html.

Modernized Turkey Hunting Regulations

- Due to advances in shot shell technology, the minimum shot size allowed for turkey hunting (fall and spring) has been reduced from no smaller than #8 to no smaller than #9 shot.
- May 2023 marked the first regulated spring turkey hunting season in Suffolk County (Wildlife Management Unit 1C). The new hunting opportunity will continue in May 2024.

Hunter Education: Next Step Courses

The DEC's Hunter Education Program (HEP) is now offering *Next Step* courses for those who have already completed a hunter education, bowhunter education, or trapper education certification course and want more education and hands-on experience. All *Next Step* courses are free, but registration is required. Please read more about this program on page 28.

Use of Semi-Automatic Rifles for Hunting and Firearm Possession, Storage, and Transport

In 2022, New York State adopted new requirements for the purchase and transfer of ownership of semi-automatic rifles and the purchase, possession, storage, and transport of firearms and ammunition in New York. At press time, additional legislation is pending that may affect these requirements. See www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/hunting.html and gunsafety.ny.gov for more information and guidance about how these laws affect hunters and hunting-related activities.

Non-lead Ammunition Rebate Program

The DEC is partnering with researchers to implement a multiyear study to determine the reduction in eagle deaths resulting from use of non-lead ammunition for deer hunting. Researchers are offering a rebate of up to \$60 for purchase of certified non-lead ammunition. For more information about this program, please refer to page 32.

Reminder: Recent Deer and Bear Hunting Opportunities and Requirements Continue

- 12- and 13-year-old hunters can hunt deer (not bear) with a firearm or crossbow under the supervision of a licensed adult hunter in counties that have passed a local law to participate. Check the DEC website for an updated list of participating counties.
- Holiday Deer Hunt is an extension of the late bow and muzzleloading season for deer in the Southern Zone from December 26 through January 1.
- Daily hunting hours for deer and bear are 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.
- Hunters must wear a fluorescent orange/pink hat or vest when hunting deer or bear with a firearm. See page 18 for details.
- An antlerless-only deer season will occur from Sept. 9–17, 2023, with firearms, crossbows, and vertical bows allowed in WMUs 3M, 3R, 8A, 8F, 8G, 8J, 8N, 9A, and 9F, and vertical bows in WMUs 1C, 3S, 4J, and 8C. Hunters may only use DMPs and DMAP tags during this early antlerless season.

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To make your donation today, go to www.dec.ny.gov/permits/47452.html, visit your local license issuing agent or call 1-866-933-2257.



Williamstown, MA | Birmingham, AL

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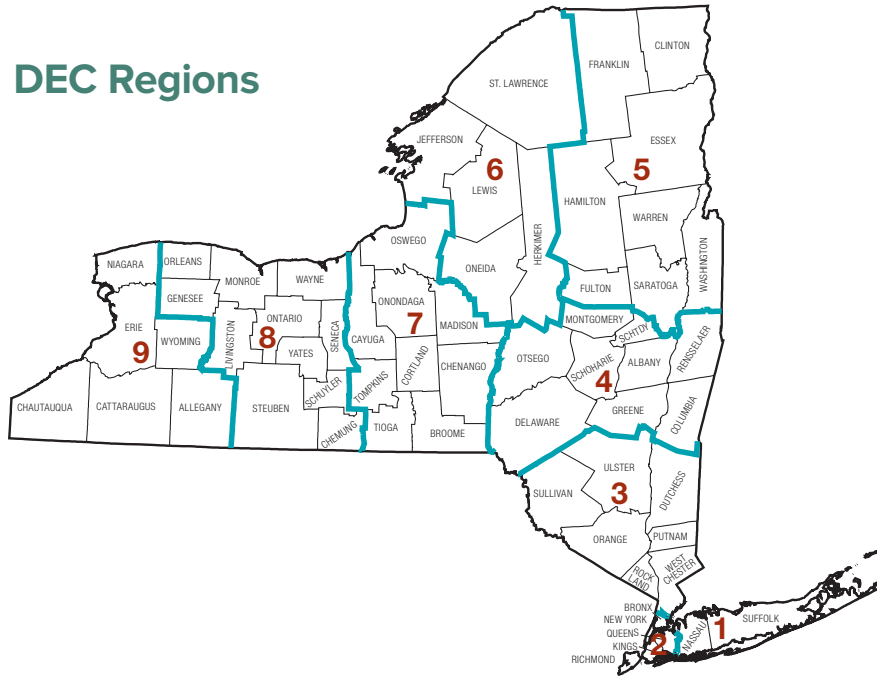


This guide is also available online at

eRegulations.com

Important Numbers

DEC Regions



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Hands-on workshops where adult women can learn outdoor skills like how to fish, hunt, shoot, kayak, or backpack in a supportive atmosphere with patient, enthusiastic instructors.

Other Important Numbers

DEC Automated Licensing System	1-866-933-2257 M-F 8AM-5PM, Sat 9AM-5PM
Lifetime License Information	(518) 402-8843
NYC Watershed Hunting Permits	1-800-575-5263
Hunter Ed	1-888-HUNT ED2 (1-888-486-8332)
Deer Management Hotline	1-866-472-4332
Report Game Take via DECALS	1-866-GAME-RPT (1-866-426-3778)
Reporting Banded Waterfowl	www.reportband.gov 1-866-933-2257
Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP)	decals.licensing.east.kalkomey.com/
Information on NY SAFE Act	1-855-LAW-GUNS (1-855-529-4867)
Forest Rangers	1-833-NYS-RANGERS (1-833-697-7264)
Law Enforcement (ECOs)	1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

Important Numbers					
Region	Offices	Wildlife	Law Enforcement	Hunter Ed	Forest Rangers
1	Stony Brook University 50 Circle Rd. Stony Brook, NY 11790-3409	(631) 444-0310	(631) 444-0250	(631) 444-0255	(631) 444-0291
2	1 Hunters Pt. Plaza 47-40 21st St. Long Island City, NY 11101-5407	(718) 482-4922	(718) 482-4885	(631) 444-0255	(631) 444-0291
3	21 South Putt Corners Rd. New Paltz, NY 12561	(845) 256-3098	(845) 256-3013	(845) 256-3063	(845) 256-3026
4	1130 North Westcott Rd. Schenectady, NY 12306-2014	(518) 357-2355	(518) 357-2047	(518) 357-2355	(518) 357-2161
	65561 State Hwy 10, Suite 1 Stamford, NY 12167-9503	(607) 652-7367	—	—	
5	1115 Route 86, PO Box 296 Ray Brook, NY 12977-0296	(518) 897-1291	(518) 897-1326	—	(518) 897-1303
	232 Golf Course Rd. Warrensburg, NY 12885	(518) 623-1240	—	(518) 623-1240	
6	317 Washington St. Watertown, NY 13601-3787	(315) 785-2263	(315) 785-2231	(315) 785-2533	(315) 785-2263
	225 North Main St. Herkimer NY 13350	(315) 866-6330	—	—	
	190 Outer Main St, Suite 103 Potsdam, NY 13676	(315) 265-3090	—	—	
	17893 Game Farm Rd. Dexter, NY 13634	(315) 639-6122	—	—	
7	615 Erie Blvd. West Syracuse, NY 13204-2400	—	(315) 426-7431	—	(607) 753-3095 x.223
	1285 Fisher Ave. Cortland, NY 13045	(607) 753-3095 ext. 247	—	(607) 753-3095 ext. 242 or 247	
8	6274 E. Avon-Lima Rd. Avon, NY 14414-9519	(585) 226-5380	(585) 226-6706	(585) 226-5463	(607) 622-8287
	7291 Coon Rd. Bath, NY 14810-9728	(607) 776-2165	—	—	
9	700 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209	(716) 851-7010	(716) 851-7050	—	(716) 372-0645
	182 East Union St., Suite 3 Allegany, NY 14706	(716) 372-0645	—	(716) 372-0645	

Message from the Commissioner

New York is reaping the benefits of our shared efforts to ensure a safe hunting experience for all. The past two years have been the safest for New York hunters, and the 2022 hunting season tied 2021 for the lowest number of hunting-related shooting incidents since record keeping began.

I am proud of the progress of New York's hunter education instructors and the hunting community to make hunting safer than ever. Although even with this success, every incident is still too many, so please remain vigilant and continue to adhere to the hunting safety tenets: point your muzzle in a safe direction, treat every firearm as if it is loaded, keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot, be sure of your target and beyond, and always wear hunter orange or pink.

Even though New York hunters have an excellent safety record, elevated hunting incidents, most often involving tree stands, are a growing concern. There is something you can do to prevent severe injuries if you fall from a tree stand or elevated platform — wear and properly use a fall-arrest system and stay connected from the time you leave the ground until you get back down to earth. Remember, a safety harness alone does not protect you if it isn't attached to the tree the entire time you are off the ground.

To hunt safely, be sure your fall-arrest system includes:

1. A vest style full-body harness with shoulder, chest, and leg straps;
2. A strap that attaches to the tree when in the stand;
3. A tether strap that attaches the harness to the tree strap;
4. A "lifeline" to keep you safe while climbing and descending; and
5. A suspension relief strap to be used in the event of a fall.

If you hunt from a tree stand, wear a fall-arrest system, and encourage your friends and family who hunt from tree stands to do the same.

Be safe. Be seen. And good luck this season.

Basil Seggos

Commissioner, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



Game Harvest Reporting

Hunters are required to report the harvest of deer, bear, and turkey within 7 days of take. You may report your harvest using one of these methods:

- **Online:** www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html
- **By phone:** 1-866-GAME-RPT (1-866-426-3778).
- **Game Harvest Mobile App** (see below for details).

DID YOU KNOW?

You may be fined up to \$250 for failing to report your deer, bear, or turkey take.

Take it • Tag it • Report it

Harvest reporting is the **LAW** and necessary for wildlife management!

Report your Game Harvests via Mobile App!

DEC's mobile app, *HuntFishNY* provides hunters with an e-license and game harvest reporting tool. Hunters now have a quick, user-friendly way to:

- gain instant, mobile access to an electronic version of sporting licenses and privileges;
- report the harvest of deer, bear, and turkey on a smartphone immediately while afield, even when out of cellular range;
- view current and past harvest reports
- view PDFs of season maps and sunrise/sunset table
- access an electronic version of regulations guides

The *HuntFishNY* App can be downloaded from the **Apple App store** or **Google Play store**.

NOTE: You will need a DEC Automated Licensing System (DECALS) user name and password in order to access your license documents through the app. If you have not yet created an online user name and password, visit www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6101.html today. Questions? Call our sporting license hotline at 1-866-472-4332.



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A Primer on Hunting with Dogs

The New York State Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) allows hunting with dogs throughout the state. Hunting dogs improve your chances of finding and recovering game, but the true advantage of having a hunting dog is having a companion in the field. The bond between hunter and dog is a friendship unlike any other — one that teaches patience, devotion, and allows for serenity in the outdoors. People who hunt with dogs are guided by several important rules and considerations:

- Get permission of all landowners in the area you plan to hunt before heading afield.
- A hunter may not go on posted property, even to retrieve a dog, without landowner permission.
- It is not lawful for a hunter to knowingly release a dog on posted lands.
- In general, dogs are not allowed to run “at large” on lands occupied by deer, but as long as a dog is being used to hunt small game species (this includes game birds as well as raccoons, foxes, bobcats, and coyotes) during an open season under the control of a licensed hunter, it is not considered at-large.
- Some forms of hunting with dogs involve traveling long distances. In these cases, the dogs do not need to be within sight of the hunter, but hunters should avoid releasing the dogs in areas where they may run onto private land on which you do not have permission. Hunters may use radio tracking devices to help them follow their dog.

Hunters should remember that every time you go afield, you are an ambassador of the hunting community:

- Respect our natural resources and be considerate of both the hunting and non-hunting public by obeying all hunting laws and regulations.
- Respect private property owners. Some species, like coyotes, foxes, and raccoons, can travel large distances when being pursued. Get permission from all landowners in any area where your dogs may travel.
- Be a good steward of the resource — information you provide through surveys and harvest reporting is essential for sound game management.



Merganzer, Josh S.'s hunting companion sporting a hunter orange hat to remind others to hunt safe this season

General License Information

Purchasing a License

Hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses can be purchased at over 1,200 agent locations throughout New York State, over the phone via the DEC call center at 1-866-933-2257/M–F, 8AM–5PM, Sat. 9AM–5PM (extended hours Aug 1–Nov 30, M–F 7AM–7PM, Sat 9AM–5PM), and online through DEC’s Automated Licensing System (DECALS) at www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6101.html.

You can also locate a license issuing vendor from the DECALS website. All major credit cards are accepted online and over the phone.

Mandatory Hunter Education

A hunter education course is required for persons who cannot provide proof that they have ever possessed a hunting license. You must be at least 11 years of age to take this class. The general course is an in-person or online course offered by DEC and is a minimum of seven hours in length. Once the course is complete, the individual must have the DEC hunter education certificate added to their DEC licensing profile. This can be done anywhere licenses are sold or by calling 1-866-933-2257. DEC honors hunter education certificates and sporting licenses from all other states and countries that meet IHEA-USA requirements.

Mandatory Bowhunter Education

Hunters wishing to bowhunt for big game must present either:

1. Proof that they successfully completed an approved bowhunter education course (in-person or online). (Note: Approved courses are International Bowhunter Education Program courses or an equivalent course. If in doubt, call toll free — 1-888-HUNT-ED2); OR
2. Proof that they previously held a New York State bowhunting license or stamp issued in 1980 or later; if proof is from prior to 1980, they must take an additional 7-hour minimum bowhunter education course.

Mandatory Crossbow Requirement

Hunters wishing to use a crossbow must complete qualifications in the safe use of hunting with a crossbow and responsible crossbow hunting practices. See page 23 for details.

Residency

To qualify for an annual resident license, a person must live in New York State for more than 30 days immediately preceding the date of application. To qualify for a Lifetime License, a person must live in New York State for at least one year immediately preceding the date of purchase. Land ownership in New York does not make you a resident. Residency is that place where a

Continued on page 12

Licenses, Privileges, and Permits

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
Hunting (Ages 16+) Privileges: Hunt small game species with gun, bow, or crossbow (see page 23). Hunt deer or bear with gun, muzzleloader, bow (with proof of bow education or a bow privilege), or crossbow (see page 23) during the regular season, or hunt with shotgun or muzzleloader during the January firearms season (permit required — see page 18) in Suffolk County (WMU 1C). You may hunt frogs with a valid hunting or fishing license. Qualifications: Hunter Education Certificate OR previous hunting license. Certificates to possess firearms do not qualify. Note: Those less than 18 years of age who are hunting big game for the first time as a holder of a hunting license must be accompanied for the entire season by a parent or legal guardian, or a person 18 years of age or older designated in writing (see permission form on page 37) with at least one year’s experience hunting bear or deer. Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$22
	70+ (NYS Resident)	\$5
	Military Disabled ¹	\$5
	Patriot ²	FREE
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$100
Junior Hunting (Ages 12–15)	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$5
Privileges:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages 12–13: Hunt small game species with gun or bow and deer with gun or crossbow during appropriate seasons when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian, or person 21 years of age or older with written permission from parent or guardian (see permission form on page 37). Check DEC’s website (www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/46245.html) for a list of counties where 12- and 13-year-olds can hunt deer with a gun or crossbow and page 37 for details.) • Ages 14–15: Hunt small game with gun, bow, or crossbow (see page 23) when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian or person 18 years of age or older with written permission from parent/guardian. Hunt deer or bear with a gun, bow (with proof of bow education or a bow privilege), or crossbow (see page 23) during the regular season, or hunt with shotgun or muzzleloader during the January firearms season (permit required — see page 18) in Suffolk County, when accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or youth mentor 21 years of age or older designated in writing (see permission form on page 37). 		
* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.		
Qualifications: Hunter Education Certificate OR previous hunting license (certificates to possess firearms do not qualify). Must be accompanied by parent/legal guardian to purchase. First-time applicants must show proof of age (birth certificate or passport). Junior hunters do not need a Federal Duck Stamp, but are required to register in the NYS Harvest Information Program (www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6405.html) to hunt migratory game birds.		
Bowhunting Privilege (Ages 16+) Privileges: Hunt deer and bear with a bow during bowhunting seasons. Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license, PLUS acceptable Bowhunter Education Certificate, OR NYS Bowhunting Stamp issued in 1980 or later, OR NYS Junior Bowhunting License issued 1980 or later. Note: To hunt deer or bear with a bow during the regular season, hunter must possess both a valid hunting license and either a current bowhunting privilege or a valid Bowhunter Education Certificate. This includes Westchester and Suffolk counties.	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$15
	70+ (NYS Resident)	FREE
	Military Disabled ¹	FREE
	Patriot ²	\$15
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$30
Junior Bowhunting (Ages 12–15)	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$4
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$4
Privileges:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages 12–13: Hunt deer and bear with a bow during the bowhunting season or the regular season, or bear during the early bear season when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian, or youth mentor 21 years or older and designated in writing (see permission form on page 37). Youth hunter will receive a deer of either sex carcass tag for use in the regular season, instead of a regular season buck tag. • Ages 14–15: Hunt deer and bear with a bow during the bowhunting season and the regular season when accompanied* by a parent, legal guardian or youth mentor 18 years of age or older designated in writing (see permission form on page 37). 		
* Accompanist must have a current hunting license and meet all requirements as specified on page 37.		
Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license, PLUS acceptable Bowhunter Education OR previous Junior Bowhunting License. Must be accompanied by parent/legal guardian to purchase.		
Muzzleloader Privilege (Ages 12+) Privileges: Hunt deer (ages 12+) and bear (ages 14+) with a muzzleloading firearm during muzzleloading season, and the January special firearms season in Suffolk County (WMU 1C; ages 14+). Hunt deer (ages 12+) and bear (ages 14+) with a crossbow (see page 23). Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license.	12–69 (NYS Resident)	\$15
	70+ (NYS Resident)	FREE
	Military Disabled ¹	FREE
	Patriot ²	\$15
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
	12+ (Non-Resident)	\$30

Licenses, Privileges, and Permits

Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
Deer Management Permit Application (Ages 12+) Privileges: Application for up to two antlerless deer tags issued through a random computer selection process. Tags are valid for hunting antlerless deer only (both antlers less than 3" long) in a specified Wildlife Management Unit (WMU). See DMP information on pages 28–29. Application deadline is October 1 annually. Qualifications: Must hold a current year NYS hunting license to apply and pay a non-refundable \$10 application fee. Fee is waived for hunters 12–15 years of age and holders of Lifetime (Sportsman) Licenses purchased prior to October 1, 2009.	12–15 (NYS Resident)	FREE
	16+ (NYS Resident)	\$10
	Military Disabled ¹	\$10
	Patriot ²	\$10
	Indigenous Peoples ³	\$10
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	FREE
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$10
Turkey Permit (Ages 12+) Privileges: Hunt turkey during fall and spring turkey seasons (see page 45). To hunt turkey, all hunters must possess a turkey permit. There are no exceptions. Qualifications: Current year NYS hunting license. Turkey tags are included with a Lifetime License.	12+ (NYS Resident)	\$10
	Military Disabled ¹	\$10
	Patriot ²	\$10
	Indigenous Peoples ³	\$10
	12+ (Non-Resident)	\$20
Trapping Privileges: Set traps for species during their appropriate seasons (see page 59 for detailed information). Qualifications: Trapper Education Certificate or previous trapping license. See page 37 for additional information on the mentoring program for trappers under 12 years of age.	12–15 (NYS Resident)	\$5
	16–69 (NYS Resident)	\$20
	70+ (NYS Resident)	\$5
	Military Disabled ¹	\$5
	Patriot ²	FREE
	Indigenous Peoples ³	FREE
	12–15 (Non-Resident)	\$5
	16+ (Non-Resident)	\$275

Lifetime Sporting Licenses

The following Lifetime Licenses are available to New York State residents only and may be purchased at all license-issuing outlets throughout New York State. Applicants must prove NYS residency for one year prior to application (see **Residency information** on page 10). For additional information and clarification on Lifetime License sales, contact our License Sales Unit, NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4790, call 518-402-8843, or visit www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6099.html. Lifetime License Holders should expect to receive their annual carcass tags in the mail no later than Sept. 1 annually. License Issuing Agents will replace licenses and tags free of charge between Sept. 1 and Nov. 1. After Nov. 1, there will be a replacement charge up to \$15. If you have a lifetime license card, you will only have to replace carcass tags at a fee of \$10.

Lifetime License (Sportsman) (combined hunting and fishing licenses, includes turkey permits):

For a person age 0–4	\$380
For a person age 5–11	\$535
For a person age 12–69	\$765
For a person age 70 or older	\$65

Other Lifetime Licenses/Privileges

Hunting License	\$535
Fishing License (age 0–69)	\$460
Fishing License (age 70 and older)	\$65
Trapping License	\$395
Bowhunting	\$235
Muzzleloading	\$235

¹ **Military Disabled:** Must be a NYS resident and provide a letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs showing a 40% or greater service-connected disability. Once the disability is confirmed and entered, it will stay in your customer profile. **Note:** The first purchase of either a hunting, fishing, or trapping license within a calendar year will cost \$5. Subsequent purchases of these license types within the same calendar year will be free for qualifying customers.

² **Patriot:** Free hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses are available to NYS residents who have the appropriate hunting or trapping education and are active members of the NYS National Guard, US Reserve Forces, or certain members of the US Armed Forces. For more detailed information, visit our website or call 518-402-8843.

³ **Indigenous Peoples:** Recognizing the sovereignty of Indigenous Nations and their governments, tribal members do not need a hunting, fishing, or trapping license from DEC when engaged in these activities on Nation territory. Members of the Shinnecock and Unkechaug Nations, and members of the Haudenosaunee Nations enrolled on reservations wholly or partially in New York State may hunt, fish, and trap off of tribal lands using their tribal identification card or by obtaining a free hunting, fishing, and trapping license from DEC. Licenses can be obtained from participating tribal and nation councils or DEC headquarters in Albany 518-402-8843.

Deer Hunting Privileges and Tags

Resident and non-resident hunter licenses

- **Hunting or Junior Hunting (ages 12–15):** Hunters ages 12 and older will receive a Regular Season Deer Tag and hunters ages 14 and older will receive a Regular Season Deer Tag and Regular Season Bear Tag.
- **Muzzleloading privilege:** You will receive a Bow/Mz Season Either Sex Tag.
- **Junior bowhunting or bowhunting privilege:** You will receive a Bow/Mz Season Either Sex Tag. Junior bowhunters ages 12–13 will

receive an Either Sex Tag and a Bear Tag. Junior bowhunters ages 14–15 will receive an Either Sex Tag. Junior bowhunters may use the Either Sex Deer Tag during the regular season, with bowhunting equipment.

Residents and non-residents must purchase a hunting license to be eligible for bowhunting and muzzleloading privileges. **If you purchase both bowhunting and muzzleloading privileges, you will receive one Bow/Mz Either Sex Deer Tag and one Bow/Mz Antlerless Deer Tag.** Both tags may be used in either season, with the appropriate implement.

Lifetime Licenses and Tags for Young Hunters

Young hunters who hold a lifetime hunting privilege and wish to receive their tags must first take the appropriate hunter safety training course and have it entered in their DECALS profile. To have the course added, please call the DEC call center at 1-866-933-2257 (M–F, 8AM–5PM). Young hunters should take the appropriate training course well in advance of the season to allow adequate time for their tags to be mailed. Tags cannot be obtained from a license-issuing agent.

When purchasing a lifetime license for a child, the purchaser must bring proof of the child's age (e.g., birth certificate or passport) and a copy of the parent's proof of residency.

Remember to Report Your Game Harvest

Visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html for details. It's the law!

See page 13.

General License Information

Residency continued from page 10

person maintains a fixed, permanent and principal home (regardless of where temporarily located), such as where a person is registered to vote. If under 18, the residence of parents or legal guardian shall be deemed such person's residence. For a complete list of valid residency proof documents please see www.dec.ny.gov/permits/95452.html#Res.

Active members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in New York and full-time college students in residence in the state during the school year (proof required) qualify for annual resident licenses.

Minimum Hunting Age

Minors under the age of 12 may not obtain a hunting license or hunt wildlife.

License Year

Licenses and permits are valid from September 1 through August 31.

License Responsibilities

- A license or tag is not transferable and may be used only by the person to whom it was issued (except for Deer Management Permits (DMPs)—see pages 28–29).
- It is illegal to possess another person's license while hunting.
- A license to hunt, trap, or fish does not give the holder any right to go on private property without permission of the landowner.
- You can legally purchase and possess only one hunting license per year.
- Your license must be carried on your person when hunting or trapping.
- It is illegal to refuse to show your license on demand to a law enforcement officer or the owner, lessee, or person in control of the lands (or their designees) while on their property.
- Make sure that your license has all the correct information. Carefully check it immediately after receipt. If you discover an error, have it corrected as soon as possible.



Annie A. with wirehaired pointing griffon, showing off her successful hunt.

Stamps / Donations		
Type	Age or Special Qualifier	Price
Habitat & Access Stamp Donations are used to create or improve fish and wildlife habitat and improve access to those resources for recreational or educational activities.	Any	\$5
Venison Donation Help feed the hungry by supporting NY's venison donation program.	Any	\$1 or more
Federal Duck Stamp Available at most post offices and some sporting goods stores.	16+	\$25
Privileges: Hunt migratory waterfowl. It is not needed for gallinules, coot, crows, rails, woodcock, or snipe. All migratory game bird hunters, including junior hunters, must register with the Harvest Information Program by calling toll free 1-866-933-2257 or www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6405.html . Qualifications: Validated by holder's signature on the face of the stamp. Hunter must also possess a current-year NYS hunting license.		

- Do NOT heat laminate your license. High temperatures will destroy the license and tags and turn them black. If destroyed, there is a fee for replacement.
- Sign the back of your license/privilege panel.

Back Tags

Must be visibly displayed on the middle of your back while hunting, except in the Northern Zone and Catskill Park.

Hunting License Exceptions

All residents must have a valid hunting license in their possession except:

- Resident owners primarily engaged in farming, lessees, and members of their immediate families do not need a hunting license when hunting small game on farmlands they are occupying and cultivating.
- Native Americans living on a reservation do not need a hunting license while hunting on reservation lands.

Free Licenses/ Patriot Licenses

Free hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses are available to members of the Shinnecock and Unkechaug Nations and members of the Six Nations residing on reservations in the state. They must be obtained from some Nations councils or by calling DEC headquarters in Albany 518-402-8843.

Free hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses are also available to NYS residents who have the appropriate hunter education and are active service members of the NYS Guard, US Reserve Forces or certain members of the US Armed Forces. For more detailed information, visit our website or call 518-402-8843.

Lost Licenses

A lost current-year license may be replaced at any license-issuing outlet at a cost of \$5 for a license panel. Big game carcass tag sets or turkey carcass tag sets may be replaced at a cost of

\$10. There is no charge to replace a lost backtag.

Special Licenses for Hunters with Disabilities

Non-ambulatory hunter permit

This permit allows qualified hunters to shoot a firearm from a motorized vehicle (including an off-road vehicle) that has the motor turned off and that is completely off the highway right-of-way.

To qualify for a Non-Ambulatory Hunter Permit, a person must be physically unable to move about except with the use of a mechanized aid such as a wheelchair.

Modified longbow authorization

This authorization allows qualified people to hunt big or small game with a legal bow that is equipped with a device to hold it in a drawn and cocked position. It does not allow for the use of a crossbow.

To qualify for a Modified Longbow Authorization, a person must be permanently physically unable to draw and hold a legal bow.

Modified crossbow permit

This permit allows qualified people to hunt big or small game during bowhunting season with a crossbow that has been specifically modified with a device that only allows it to be discharged (fired) by means of a breath tube. This permit does not allow the use of an unmodified crossbow in place of a bow for the entire bow season.

To qualify for a Modified Crossbow Permit, a person must be permanently physically unable to hold or draw a legal bow or to fire a legal bow that has been modified to hold and release the string.

If a person can pull the trigger on a gun, he or she will not qualify for a Modified Crossbow Permit.

For more information on these permits, write the NYS DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752, email speciallicenses@dec.ny.gov or call 518-402-8985. The application process takes time; write or call well before you intend to hunt.

How To Properly Fill Out Your Carcass Tag and Report Your Harvest

Doc# 23-03-12345678 2023-24

Reg Season Deer Tag
Pete Moss 08/02/1989
 ID: 99999999999 Issued 08/14/2023 12:26 PM

Fill out both sides immediately upon harvest

Kill Info
 Date 11-27-23
 County Greene
 Town Cairo
 WMU 4H

Sex M F
 Antler Pts L 3 R 3

Reg Season
 Bowhunting
 Muzzleloading
 Youth



It's as Easy as 1 - 2 - 3!

- 1 Fill in the date, location, biological, and season information on the front of your tag.
- 2 Mark or cut out month and day of kill AND sign the back of your tag.
- 3 Report your harvest! See details below.

Use pen or permanent marker.

Mark or Cut Out month & day of kill

HuntFishNY
 Check out DEC's mobile app!
NY Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife
 Download FREE from the
 Apple App Store or Google Play!
 Now includes an electronic license & game
 harvest reporting feature!

For more information on the app & game harvest reporting, visit:
www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html
 Report by phone: 866-426-3778

EnCon Officer 247 Dispatch - call 844-332-3267

All Licensees: I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. False statements are punishable as a Class A misdemeanor pursuant to Section 210.45 of the Penal Law.

Signature Jane Doe Hole

Parents of Junior Licensees must sign and provide supervision.
 Parent's Signature _____

It is against the law to improperly or incompletely fill out your carcass tag.

Hole for attaching to your game

Remember: Take It • Tag It • Report It

3 Reporting Your Game Harvest

- Deer, Bear, and Turkey harvests must be reported within 7 days of take.
- You can report your harvest by phone, online, or through our HuntFishNY mobile app (see page 8 for details).
- Reporting online and through the mobile app is simple, fast, and convenient!
- Visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html.



Remember to save the bear's skull so DEC can collect a tooth to age the bear.

Information You Will Need When Reporting

CUSTOMER ID #

12 DIGIT DOC #

Correct Tag Type

Doc# 23-03-12345678 2023-24

Reg Season Deer Tag
Pete Moss 08/02/1989
 ID: 99999999999 Issued 08/14/2023 12:26 PM

Fill out both sides immediately upon harvest

Kill Info
 Date 11-27-23
 County Greene
 Town Cairo
 WMU 4H

Sex M F
 Antler Pts L 3 R 3

Reg Season
 Bowhunting
 Muzzleloading
 Youth

Jane Doe
 ID# 314114431020 Valid 09/01/2023
 08/31/2024

You must call to report your deer, turkey or bear within 7 days of take.
 To report Call Toll-free : 1-866-426-3778(GAMERPT) or visit www.dec.ny.gov

Date of Kill Reported

DMP Deer Tag-4H 23-04-12345 8

Reg Season Deer 23-03-87654321 11-27-23

Bear Tag 23-02-12345689

If you SEE something, SAY something

Report Poachers and Polluters

Call an Environmental Conservation Officer at
1-844-DEC-ECOS



- For Spring Turkey:
 - » Spur length (none, less than 1/2", 1/2" or longer)
 - » Beard length (less than 3", 3" or greater but less than 7 1/2", or 7 1/2" or longer.
 - » Estimated weight

- For Fall Turkey:
 - » Remember to save a leg. We will request it to determine age and sex.

General Hunting Regulations

The following are general hunting regulations. Specific regulations for various game species are in the Small Game, Big Game, and Trapping sections of this booklet.

Definitions

Air gun—a firearm that uses spring or compressed air (not gunpowder) to propel a single projectile that is .17 caliber or larger and produces a muzzle velocity of at least 600 feet per second. You may use a smooth or rifled bore.

Bow—includes long (stick), compound, or recurve bow.

Crossbow—consists of a bow, a string, and either compound or recurve limbs with a minimum width of 17 inches (tip of limbs, uncocked), mounted on a stock. The stock shall have a trigger with a working safety that holds the string and limbs under tension until released. It shall have a minimum overall length from the butt of the stock to the front of the limbs of 24 inches and be able to launch a minimum 14-inch arrow/bolt, not including the legal arrowhead. It shall have a draw weight of 100 to 200 pounds. Optical sights are allowed on crossbows.

Firearm—all guns, including handguns, rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, BB, and pellet guns.

Handgun—is any pistol or revolver intended to be aimed and fired with one hand and having a barrel length not exceeding 16 inches. Possession of handguns in New York State requires a NYS Pistol Permit. New York does not recognize permits issued by other states.

Muzzleloading firearm—is a firearm loaded through the muzzle, shooting a single projectile and having a minimum bore of .44 inch. Scopes or fiber-optic sights may be used at any time. You must possess a New York State Pistol Permit to hunt with a muzzleloading pistol.

Rifle—is a firearm with a barrel length of 16 inches or more with rifling in the barrel that uses metallic cartridges.

Shotgun—is a firearm with a barrel length of 18 inches or more that uses shells that are non-metallic except for the base.

Motor vehicle—means every vehicle or device operated by any power other than muscle power including but not limited to automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, tractors, trailers, motorboats, snowmobiles, and all-terrain vehicles, whether operated on or off public highways.

Public highway—means any road maintained by a state, county, or town. A private road is one maintained by a person or corporation.

To hunt—means to pursue, shoot, kill, or capture (other than trap) wildlife and includes all lesser acts that disturb or worry wildlife, whether or not they result in taking. Hunting also includes all acts to assist another person in taking wildlife.

Be Safe — Be Seen

- Assume every gun to be loaded.
- Control the muzzle, point in a safe direction.
- Keep finger off the trigger until firing.
- Be sure of your target and beyond.
- Wear hunter orange or pink.

To take—means to pursue, shoot, hunt, kill, capture, trap, snare, or net wildlife and game—and all lesser acts that disturb or worry wildlife—or to place or use any net or other device commonly used to take wildlife.

To trap—means to take, kill, or capture wildlife with traps, deadfalls, and other devices commonly used to take wildlife, including the shooting or killing of lawfully trapped animals. It also includes all related activities such as placing, setting, staking, or checking traps, or assisting another person with these activities.

Manner of Taking

It is illegal to take or hunt wildlife:

- While in or on a motor vehicle (except by special permit—see page 12)
- With the aid of a vehicle's lights
- On or from any public road
- With any firearm equipped with a silencer
- With any firearm which continues to fire as long as the trigger is held back (an automatic firearm)
- With any semi-automatic firearm with a capacity to hold more than 6 rounds, except:
 1. Firearms using .22 or .17 caliber rimfire ammunition, or
 2. Firearms altered to reduce their capacity to no more than 6 shells at one time in the magazine and chamber combined, or
 3. Autoloading pistols with a barrel length of less than 8 inches
- With a spear
- With a bow equipped with any mechanical device which is attached to the bow (other than the bowstring) for drawing, holding, or releasing the bowstring except for a person with a physical disability in possession of a Modified Longbow Authorization (compound bows are legal)
- With a spear gun or modified crossbow except for a person with a physical disability in possession of a Modified Crossbow Permit
- With an arrow with an explosive head or shaft
- With any device designed or intended to deliver drugs to an animal

Baiting—It is illegal to hunt with the aid of bait or over any baited area when hunting big game, upland game birds, turkey, or waterfowl.

Fish—Crossbows may not be used to take carp or any other fish.

Spotlighting

You may use lights to observe wildlife under the following conditions:

- You are not within 500 feet of a home or farm building, unless you have permission from the

owner or lessee (when looking for deer or bear)

- While in or on a motor vehicle and operating a light and no person has a firearm, bow, or crossbow, or if:
 - » the implement is taken down, or
 - » the implement is securely fastened in a case, or
 - » the implement is locked in the trunk of the vehicle, or
 - » the implement is a handgun

For information on hunting furbearers at night, see page 58.

Possession of Firearms and Crossbows

During the open season for deer, it is illegal to:

- Possess shotgun shells loaded with slug or ball, unless holding a valid license (including carcass tags) or permit to take deer or bear, or
- Possess a rifle larger than a .22-caliber rimfire in areas where rifles are banned for taking deer. A rifle larger than .22-caliber rimfire means a rifle chambered for a rimfire cartridge greater than .22-caliber or any centerfire rifle. Centerfire rifles less than .22-caliber and muzzleloading rifles are legal.

In Westchester County and on Long Island, it is illegal to use any rifle for hunting or to carry one afield. In Suffolk, Nassau, and Westchester counties, it is illegal to use a crossbow to hunt wildlife.

In the Northern Zone, it is illegal to carry a rifle larger than .22 rimfire or a shotgun loaded with slug, ball, or buckshot afield if accompanied by a dog, except when coyote hunting.

Possession of handguns in New York requires a NYS Pistol Permit. New York does not recognize permits issued by other states.

New York State recently adopted legislation governing the purchase or transfer of ownership of semi-automatic rifles. Go to www.dec.ny.gov or <https://safeact.ny.gov/resources-hunters> for more information.

Transportation of Firearms

A person may not transport or possess a shotgun, rifle or crossbow in or on a motor vehicle unless the firearm is unloaded in both chamber and magazine or the crossbow is taken down or unloaded (bolt removed and crossbow uncocked).

A muzzleloader is considered unloaded when the cap is off the nipple, the primer is removed, the primer powder is removed from the flintlock pan, or the battery is removed from an electric-fired muzzleloader.

A crossbow is considered unloaded when the arrow/bolt is removed and the crossbow is uncocked. While legally hunting migratory game birds, a loaded firearm may be possessed in a motorboat not under power or in a motorboat under power only while retrieving dead/crippled birds.

Whenever a gun is in a vehicle and an adult is not present, the gun must be locked in a plastic or metal, hard-sided case or safe and be hidden from view. See www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/hunting.html for more details about gun transportation.

Discharge of Firearms, Crossbows, and Bows

It is illegal to discharge a firearm, crossbow, or bow:

- So that the load or arrow/bolt passes over any part of a public highway
- Within 500 feet for a firearm, 250 feet for a crossbow, or 150 feet for a bow of any school, playground, or an occupied factory or church
- Within 500 feet for a firearm, 250 feet for a crossbow, or 150 feet for a bow of a dwelling, farm building, or structure in occupation or use unless you own it, lease it, are an immediate member of the family, an employee, or have the owner's consent

You may hunt waterfowl over water within 500 feet of a dwelling or public structure as long as

Hunter Education
Hunter Education Program Requirements All first-time hunters, bowhunters, and trappers must pass one or more courses before they can purchase a license. Traditionally, hunter, bowhunter, and trapper education have been in-person courses taught by trained volunteer instructors certified by DEC. In 2020, DEC began offering an online hunter education course and an online bowhunter education course. Be sure to check the DEC website about the availability of both in-person and online courses.
In-Person Hunter Education Program Courses In-person courses have a field day where new hunters and trappers can get hands-on experience. All in-person courses are free of charge, but space may be limited. As hunting and trapping seasons approach, classes fill quickly. SIGN UP EARLY! All in-person hunter, bowhunter, and trapper education courses require the completion of homework prior to attending the course. Proof of completed homework must be brought to the course. Homework may take several hours to complete, so start it well in advance. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/92267.html for more information on materials, including a list of courses and course registration.
Online Hunter Education Program Courses All the requirements to earn a New York State hunter education certificate or a New York State bowhunter education certificate can be met by completing DEC's online courses and passing the exams. Upon passing, you will receive your certificate so you can purchase a hunting license or a bowhunter education certificate that enables you to purchase a bowhunting privilege. An online trapper education course may be available in 2023. There is a fee and you must be a New York State resident to take the online courses. They can be accessed at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/92267.html .

neither are within 500 feet in the direction you are shooting.

Protected and Unprotected Wildlife

In New York State, nearly all species of wildlife are protected. Most species, including endangered species, songbirds, hawks, and owls are fully protected and may not be taken. The few unprotected species include porcupine,

red squirrel, woodchuck, chipmunk, English sparrow, starling, rock pigeon, and monk parakeet. Unprotected species may be taken at any time without limit. However, a hunting license is required to hunt unprotected wildlife with a bow, crossbow, or firearm.

Game species may be taken only during their open seasons and as summarized in this guide. Persons taking wildlife on licensed shooting preserves must comply with regulations governing those shooting preserves.