

2013-14 Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits

These are the seasons and bag limits for most hunting and trapping seasons from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

SQUIRRELS, Red, Gray, Black and Fox (Combined): Special season for eligible junior hunters, with or without required license, and mentored youth – Oct. 12 –18 (6 daily, field possession limit of 12).

SQUIRRELS, Red, Gray, Black and Fox (Combined): Oct. 19–Nov. 30; Dec. 16–24 and Dec. 26–Feb. 22 (6 daily, field possession limit of 12).

RUFFED GROUSE: Oct. 19–Nov. 30, Dec. 16 –24 and Dec. 26 –Jan. 25 (2 daily, field possession limit of 4).

RABBIT (Cottontail) Special season for eligible junior hunters, with or without required license: Oct. 12 –19 (4 daily, field possession limit of 8).

RABBIT (Cottontail): Oct. 26 –Nov. 30, Dec. 16–24 and Dec. 26–Feb. 22 (4 daily, field possession limit of 8).

PHEASANT: Special season for eligible junior hunters, with or without required license – Oct. 12–19 (2 daily, field possession limit of 4). Male pheasants only in WMUs 2A, 2C, 4C, 4E, 5A and 5B. Male and female pheasants may be taken in all other WMUs. There is no open season for the taking of pheasants in any Wild Pheasant Recovery Areas in any WMU.

PHEASANT: Male only in WMUs 2A, 2C, 4C, 4E, 5A and 5B – Oct. 26 –Nov. 30, Dec 16 –24 and Dec. 26 –Feb 22.

Male and female may be taken in all other WMUs – Oct. 26 –Nov. 30, Dec. 16 –24 and Dec. 26 –Feb. 22 (2 daily, field possession limit of 4). No open season for pheasants in any Wild Pheasant Recovery Areas.

BOBWHITE QUAIL: Oct. 26 –Nov. 30 (4 daily, field possession limit of 8). (Closed in WMUs 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D.)

HARES(SNOWSHOE RABBITS) OR VARYING HARES: Dec. 26–Jan. 1, in all WMUs except WMUs 3B, 3C and 3D, where season will run from Dec. 26–28 (1 daily, field possession limit of 2).

WOODCHUCKS (GROUNDHOGS): No closed season, except on Sundays and during the regular firearms deer seasons. No limit.

PORCUPINES: Sept. 1–Mar. 31 (3 daily with a season limit of 10). Closed during the overlap with the regular firearms deer seasons.

CROWS: July 5 –April 6, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday only. No limit.

WILD TURKEY (Male or Female): WMU 1B – Nov. 2 –9 and Nov. 28 –30; WMU 2B (Shotgun and bow and arrow) – Nov. 2 –22 and Nov. 28 –30; WMUs 1A, 2A and 2D – Nov. 2 –16 and Nov. 28 –30; WMUs 2C, 2E, 4A, 4B and 4D – Nov. 2 –22 and Nov. 28 –30; WMUs 2F, 2G and 2H – Nov. 2 –16 and Nov. 28 –30; WMUs 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C and 4E – Nov. 2 –22 and Nov. 28 –30; WMU 5A – Nov. 5 –7; WMUs 5B, 5C and 5D – CLOSED TO FALL TURKEY HUNTING.

SPRING GOBBLER (Bearded bird only): Special season for eligible junior hunters, with required license, and mentored youth – April 26, 2014. Only 1 spring gobbler may be taken during this hunt.

SPRING GOBBLER (Bearded bird only): May 3 –31, 2014. Daily/season limit is 1; season limit may be expanded to 2 by persons who possess a valid special wild turkey license. From May 3 –17, legal hunting hours are one –half hour before sunrise until noon; from May 19 –31, legal hunting hours are one –half hour before sunrise until one –half hour after sunset.

BLACK BEAR (Statewide) Archery: Nov. 18 –22. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (Statewide): Nov. 23 –27. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 4C, 4D and 4E): Dec. 4 –7. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 2B, 5B, 5C and 5D): Dec. 2 –14. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D): Dec. 2 –7. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D) Archery: Sept. 21 –Nov. 16. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 5B) Archery: Oct. 5 –Nov. 16. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 2B, 5B, 5C and 5D) Muzzleloader: Oct. 19 –26. Only 1 bear may be taken during the license year.

BLACK BEAR (WMUs 2B, 5B, 5C and 5D) Special Firearms: Oct. 24 –26, for junior and senior license holders, disabled hunters with a permit to use a vehicle as a blind and resident active duty military.

ELK (Antlered or Antlerless): Nov. 4 –9. Only one elk may be taken during the license year.

ELK, EXTENDED (Antlered and Antlerless): Nov. 11 –16. Only one elk may be taken during the license year. Eligible elk license recipients who haven't harvested an elk by Nov. 9, in designated areas.

Elk, Special Conservation Tag (Antlered or Antlerless): Sept. 2 –Nov. 9. One elk tag for one antlered or antlerless elk that was auctioned at the annual Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Banquet.

DEER, ARCHERY (Antlerless Only) WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D: Sept. 21 –Oct. 4, and Nov. 18 –30. One antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ARCHERY (Antlered and Antlerless) WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D: Jan. 13 –25. One antlered deer per hunting license year. One antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ARCHERY (Antlered and Antlerless) Statewide: Oct. 5 –Nov. 16 and Dec. 26 –Jan. 11. One antlered deer per hunting license year. One antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER (Antlered and Antlerless) WMUs 1A, 1B, 2B, 3A, 3D, 4A, 4C, 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D: Dec. 2 –14. One antlered deer per hunting license year. An antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER Antlered Only) WMUs 2A, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3B, 3C, 4B, 4D and 4E: Dec. 2 –6. One antlered deer per hunting license year. (Holders of valid DMAP antlerless deer permits may harvest antlerless deer on DMAP properties during this period.)

DEER (Antlered and Antlerless) WMUs 2A, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3B, 3C, 4B, 4D and 4E: Dec. 7 –14. One antlered deer per hunting license year. An antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERLESS (Statewide): Oct. 24 –26. Junior and Senior License Holders, Disabled Person Permit (to use a vehicle) Holders, and Pennsylvania residents serving on active duty in U.S. Armed Services or in the U.S. Coast Guard only, with required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERLESS MUZZLELOADER (Statewide): Oct. 19 –26. One antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERED OR ANTLERLESS FLINTLOCK (Statewide): Dec. 26 –Jan. 11. One antlered deer per hunting license year, or one antlerless deer and an additional antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERED OR ANTLERLESS FLINTLOCK (WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D): Dec. 26 –Jan. 25. One antlered deer per hunting license year, or one antlerless deer and an additional antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

DEER, ANTLERLESS EXTENDED REGULAR FIREARMS: (Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties): Dec. 26 –Jan. 25. One antlerless deer with each required antlerless license.

FURBEARER HUNTING SEASONS

COYOTES: No closed season. Unlimited. Outside of any big game season (deer, bear, elk and turkey), coyotes may be taken with a hunting license or a furtaker license, and without wearing orange. During any big game season, coyotes may be taken while lawfully hunting big game or with a furtakers license.

RACCOON and FOXES: Oct. 26–Feb. 22, unlimited.

OPOSSUM, SKUNKS and WEASELS: No closed season, except Sundays. No limits.

BOBCAT (WMUs 2A, 2C, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4C, 4D and 4E): Jan. 21 –Feb. 11. One bobcat per license year, but all licensed furtakers may obtain one permit.

TRAPPING SEASONS

MINK and MUSKRAT: Nov. 23–Jan. 5. Unlimited.

COYOTE, FOXES, OPOSSUM, RACCOON, SKUNKS and WEASELS: Oct. 27–Feb. 23. No limit.

COYOTE and FOXES (Statewide) Cable Restraints: Dec. 26 –Feb. 23. No limit. Participants must pass cable restraint certification course.

BEAVER (Statewide): Dec. 26–Mar. 31 (Limits vary depending on WMU).

BOBCAT (WMUs 2A, 2C, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4C, 4D and 4E): Dec. 21 –Jan. 12. One bobcat per license year, and all licensed furtakers may obtain one permit.

FISHER (WMUs 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3A, 3D, 4D and 4E): Dec. 21 –26. One fisher per license year, and all licensed furtakers may obtain one permit.

FALCONRY

Squirrels (Statewide): Sept. 1–Mar. 31. (6 daily, field possession limit of 12)

Quail (Statewide): Sept. 1–Mar. 31. (4 daily, field possession limit of 8).

Ruffed Grouse (Statewide): Sept. 1–Mar. 31. (2 daily, field possession limit of 4).

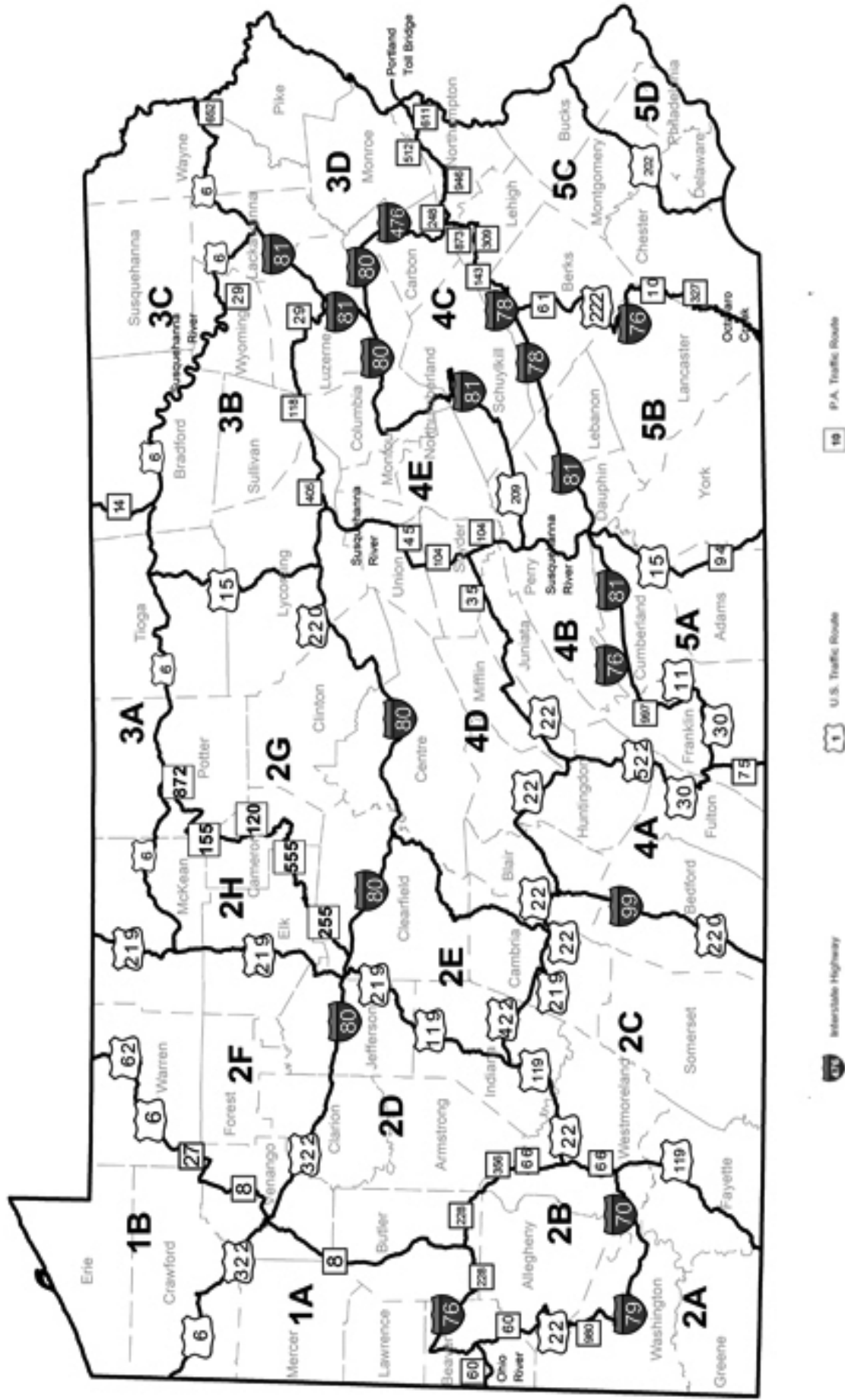
Cottontail Rabbits (Statewide): Sept. 1–Mar. 31. (4 daily, field possession limit of 8).

Snowshoe or Varying Hare (Statewide): Sept. 1–Mar. 31. (1 daily, field possession limit of 2).

Ring-necked Pheasant –Male and Female (Statewide): Sept. 1 –Mar. 31. (2 daily, field possession limit of 4).

Migratory Game Birds (Statewide): Seasons and bag limits shall be in accordance with Federal regulations.

Wildlife Management Units



The former WMU 2G will split into two WMUs beginning with the 2013-14 season. A boundary description for the new WMU, 2H, follows:
 2H: From Lantz Corners, US Rt. 6 east to Coudersport. South on Rt. 872 to Austin. Northwest on Rt. 607 to Keating Summit, and then south on Rt. 155 to Rt. 120. Follow Rt. 120 south to Driftwood, and then west on Rt. 555 to Rt. 255 in Weedville. South on Rt. 255 to I-80. West on I-80 to US Rt. 219 near DuBois. North US Rt. 219 to Rt. 6 at Lantz Corners.

Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners

The Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners is comprised of eight board members, each selected by the Governor, and confirmed by majority vote of the state Senate. Title 34, the law that governs the Board, requires that each member be a citizen of the Commonwealth, and well informed about wildlife conservation and restoration. Commissioners are appointed from various geographical districts of the state to ensure uniform representation for all residents. These districts are not the same as Game Commission agency regions.

Game Commissioners individually hold office for terms of eight years, but may remain seated for an additional six months if no successor is named. Commissioners receive no compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for travel expenses.

Commissioners function as a board of directors, establishing policy for the agency. They are not agency employees. Although they are selected by district, they represent all Pennsylvanians and the state's 467 species of wild birds and mammals. The current Commissioners and their hometowns follow. Click on their names for more biographical information.



Robert W. Schlemmer, President

District 2: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington and Westmoreland counties

Term: June 16, 2009 to May 16, 2017

Hometown: Export



David J. Putnam, Vice-President

District 3: Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, and Potter counties

Term: May 5, 2009 to May 5, 2017

Hometown: Centre Hall



Brian H. Hoover, Secretary

District 8: Schuylkill, Berks, Chester, Northampton, Lehigh, Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia and Delaware counties

Term: June 25, 2012 to June 25, 2020

Hometown: Glenolden

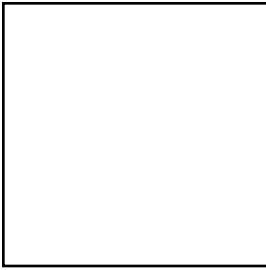


Ralph A. Martone, Commissioner

District 1: Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Lawrence, Venango, Butler, Warren, Forest and Clarion counties

Term: July 15, 2009 to October 16, 2014

Hometown: New Castle



Timothy S. Layton, Commissioner

District 4: Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset counties
Term: June 29, 2013 to June 29, 2021
Hometown: Windber



Charles E. Fox, Commissioner

District 5: Bradford, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Sullivan, Tioga, and Union counties
Term: October 15, 2012 to October 15, 2020
Hometown: Troy



Ronald A. Weaner, Commissioner

District 6: Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder and York counties
Term: June 3, 2008 to June 3, 2016
Hometown: Biglerville



Jay Delaney, Jr., Commissioner

District 7: Carbon, Luzerne, Lackawanna, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming counties
Term: April 17, 2007 to April 17, 2015
Hometown: Wilkes-Barre

The Board of Game Commissioners holds quarterly meetings, generally in January, April, June and October, and at other necessary times, if necessary. By law, it is the duty of the commission to protect, propagate, manage and preserve the game or wildlife of Pennsylvania. Specific duties include:

- Fix seasons, bag limits and hunting hours;
- Remove protection, declare an open season, or change or close a season;
- Revise bag limits;
- Define geographic limitations for hunting;
- Limit the number of hunters or trappers in an area;
- Prescribe methods of hunting and trapping;
- Govern the use of calls for taking game or furbearers;
- Prohibit the possession, importation, exportation, or release of animals considered harmful to the state;
- Revise the state classification of any wild bird or mammal, such as threatened or endangered;
- Manage and develop state game lands and private lands under public access programs;
- Collect data and preserve statistics about wildlife;
- Select an agency Executive Director; and
- Serve the interests of sportsmen and sportswomen by preserving and promoting recreational hunting and trapping by providing adequate opportunity to hunt or trap out wildlife resources.

Contact Us

Send Us An Email

E-Mail Comments and Suggestions to the Game Commission: pgccomments@pa.gov. Although we can't respond to every question or comment, we do our best to answer and carefully review all the e-mails we receive.

State Headquarters

PA Game Commission
2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797
[View map](#)

To contact the Game Commission Harrisburg headquarters by phone call 717-787-4250. If you know your party's 4-digit extension enter it next. If you know your party's last name enter the first four letters of the last name.

- 1 For information about hunting licenses and to reach the Bureau of Administration press 1.
- 2 For special permits, revocation information and the Bureau of Wildlife Protection press 2.
- 4 For Game News, Hunter Education and the Bureau of Information and Education press 4.
- 5 For the Bureau of Wildlife Management and Pheasant Propagation press 5.
- 6 For the Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management press 6.
- 7 For the Bureau of Automated Technology press 7.
- 8 For the Training School and Executive Office press 8.
- 0 To reach the operator press zero.

Region Offices

Northwest Region

Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Warren counties
Post Office Box 31
Franklin, PA 16323
Phone: 814-432-3187, 814-432-3188, 814-432-3189
[View Map](#)

Southwest Region

Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland counties
4820 Route 711
Bolivar, PA 15923
Phone: 724-238-9523, 724-238-9524, 724-238-5639
[View Map](#)

Northcentral Region

Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Union counties
Post Office Box 5038
Jersey Shore, PA 17740-5038
Phone: 570-398-4744, 570-398-4745, 570-398-3423
[View Map](#)

Southcentral Region

Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder, York counties

8627 William Penn Highway

Huntingdon, PA 16652

Phone: 814-643-1831, 814-643-9635

[View Map](#)

Northeast Region

Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming counties

3917 Memorial Highway

Dallas, PA 18612-0220

Phone: 570-675-1143, 570-675-1144

[View Map](#)

Southeast Region

Berks, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill counties

448 Snyder Road

Reading, PA 19605

Phone: 610-926-3136, 610-926-3137, 610-926-1966

[View Map](#)

2013-2014 Hunting License Information

On June 10, the Pennsylvania Automated License System (PALS) will be activated fully for the sale of 2013 hunting licenses. This new automated licensing system is a joint project with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and our contractor, Active Outdoors.

All hunting licenses will be issued through PALS. Pre-printed, paper licenses no longer will be used. The new automated system provides licensing options that hunters have not had previously. A summary of the basic changes follows.

● **Customer Identification Number (CID):** If you already have purchased a hunting or fishing license through PALS, you were assigned a CID number which was printed on your license. Please use this number when applying for a license through PALS since this will identify you in the database and speed the license issuance process. If you have never purchased a license through PALS, you will need to provide your social security number when applying. This is a one-time only requirement, and will not be needed again unless you don't have or can't remember your CID. PALS provides more licensing options for and greater convenience, customer service and equal opportunity to all hunters. PALS provides improved information security to issuing agents and the Game Commission. As well as streamlined financial reporting and accountability and immediate and greater access to data. It's simply a better, more efficient and contemporary way to sell licenses.

● **Senior Lifetime License Holders:** If you are a resident senior lifetime hunting or combination license holder, and have not purchased or renewed your license through PALS, you will need to provide your social security number (SSN) when applying. This is a one-time only requirement, and will not be needed again, unless you don't have or can't remember your CID. Senior lifetime license ID cards are no longer required since PALS will recognize your record through your SSN or CID. You will still need to provide proof of residency when you renew your license, usually done through a valid PA driver's license.

● **Carcass Tags:** The big game tags that come with the license have two perforated holes in the center. These will be used with a string or twist tie to attach the tag to the carcass.

● **Harvest Reporting:** There are 3 methods of harvest reporting available to hunters and trappers. The first method may be accessed through this website. When the PGC is accepting harvest reports there will be a "Report Your Harvest" button in the upper right corner of each page on our website. This method is the easiest to use and provides the Commission with the most reliable data. Sportsmen will be provided with a receipt page at the end of the harvest reporting routine which they should print for their records.

Secondly, harvest reports may be filed using our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. By calling toll free 1-855-PAHUNT1 (1-855-724-8681) sportsmen can report their harvests from any touchtone phone using the phone's numeric keypad and spoken responses. We ask that callers speak clearly and distinctly when speaking responses. Callers will receive a confirmation number for each harvest reported which they should record for their records.

Lastly, harvest reports may be submitted using the traditional paper harvest report card. While harvest report cards are no longer issued with hunting and trapping licenses, generic cards may be found in the hunting and trapping digest and are postage paid.

Please note – when using any of these methods to report a harvest you will need your CID (Customer Identification Number), the Tag Number of the license or permit used, and the species specific information for each harvest you are reporting. Website and IVR harvest reports may be used for deer, wild turkey, bobcat and fisher reporting, while paper harvest cards may only be used to report deer and wild turkey harvests. If you are reporting a bobcat or fisher harvest and do not want to use the website or IVR systems, you will have to call one of the Commission's regional offices.

●Display: Licenses are no longer required to be displayed on an outer garment. If you are checked by a wildlife conservation officer or the landowner while afield, you must have all applicable hunting and furtaker licenses on your person, along with positive ID to confirm identification and residency.

●Antlerless Deer Licenses: Hunters will mail their applications directly to a County Treasurer of their choice, not the Game Commission. County Treasurers can issue antlerless deer licenses for any wildlife management unit (WMU), not just those their county is a part of. Hunters may use the application panel that comes with the license or the forms contained in the Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations. Either type of application is valid. Hunters may select their first, second and third WMU preferences on the application. That way, if the first WMU of choice is sold out, the Treasurer can issue a license for the second or third WMU preference based on license availability. Official application envelopes are pink in color and still available through all hunting license issuing agents. PALS automatically tracks allocations and monitors personal license limits so that hunters are not issued more licenses than they are entitled at any given point. Please refer to the Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations and the “Antlerless Deer License” section elsewhere on this website for details on the application schedule and process.

●License/Permit Availability: Commercial issuing agents and County Treasurers are now able to offer more specialized licenses and permits through PALS that were not available at their locations in the past. These specialized licenses include the resident senior lifetime license categories (hunting, furtaker, combination and combo upgrades), disabled veteran lifetime renewals, resident landowner reduced-fee hunting licenses, special spring gobbler licenses, bobcat, fisher permits and reduced fee military licenses. In June, DMAP harvest permits also will be available for sale through any issuing agent.

STATE'S SECOND DISEASE MANAGEMENT AREA CREATED IN RESPONSE TO CWD

DMAs now in parts of six counties: Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Huntingdon and York

HARRISBURG – The Pennsylvania Game Commission has established the state's second Disease Management Area in parts of four counties in response to three hunter-killed deer that tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease.

Through an executive order, PGC Executive Director Carl G. Roe has created the state's second Disease Management Area (DMA) in parts of Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Huntingdon counties. The first, in Adams and York counties, was established by executive order in October, 2012. Within these DMAs, there are special restrictions for people to minimize the risk of spreading CWD.

The executive order sets in place a variety of restrictions, including the following: it is illegal to remove or export high-risk cervid parts – including head, spine, spleen – from DMAs; all cervids killed in the DMAs are subject to testing by PGC; cervids within the DMAs cannot be rehabilitated, including injured and reportedly orphaned deer; the use or possession of cervid urine-based attractants is prohibited in DMAs; direct or indirect feeding of wild, free-ranging deer is illegal in DMAs; no new PGC permits will be issued to possess or transport live cervids.

Road-killed deer can be picked up under certain conditions, and those looking to do so can call their PGC regional office for approval.

“The second executive order creates a second Disease Management Area over nearly 900 square miles in Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Huntingdon counties and changes laws, regulations and restrictions related to free-ranging deer and other cervids,” Roe explained. “They are steps we have taken to provide additional protections to the state's invaluable populations of wild deer and elk.

“We are counting on all Pennsylvanians to help us in this important endeavor,” Roe said. “Their cooperation will play a major role in helping to contain or limit the spread of CWD within the Commonwealth.”

The executive order and maps with descriptions of both DMAs have been posted on the Game Commission's website, www.pgc.state.pa.us, in the CWD Info Section, which can be accessed from the website's homepage. They also will be published in the 2013-14 Pennsylvania Hunting and Trapping Digest. Combined, both DMAs total nearly 1,500 square miles of the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth's CWD Interagency Task Force went into action to address the threat of the disease to captive and wild deer and elk populations in the state as soon as a captive white-tailed deer tested positive for CWD in October. Task force members include representatives from the state departments of Agriculture, Environmental Protection and Health, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Geological Survey/Pennsylvania Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and Penn State University/Cooperative Extension Offices. Generally, the state Department of Agriculture manages threats from captive deer and other cervids, while the Game Commission manages threats from wild deer and elk. The task force works to carry out an established response plan, which includes education and outreach with public meetings and minimizing risk factors through continued surveillance, testing and management.

Pennsylvania's first case of CWD was reported by the state Department of Agriculture October 11, 2012; it involved a captive-born and -raised white-tailed deer from a farm near New Oxford in Adams County. The sample tissue was tested at the Pennsylvania Veterinary Laboratory in Harrisburg and verified at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa. The Game Commission on March 1 announced the state's first three cases of CWD in free-ranging deer.

CWD attacks the brains of infected deer, elk and moose. It is transmitted by direct animal-to-animal contact, such as through saliva, feces and urine, or indirectly by exposure to a contaminated environment. The disease is fatal and there is no known treatment or vaccine. CWD was first discovered in Colorado captive mule deer in 1967, and has since been detected in 21 other states and two Canadian provinces, including Pennsylvania's neighboring states of New York, West Virginia and Maryland. Pennsylvania is the 22nd state to find CWD in a captive or wild deer population.

The 2012 hunter-killed deer from Bedford and Blair counties that tested positive for CWD were the first since the PGC began testing for the disease in 1998. Prior to that, more than 43,000 free-ranging deer and elk had tested negative for CWD.

For additional information on CWD visit our website at www.pgc.state.pa.us

GAME COMMISSION LAUNCHES INTERACTIVE MAPPING CENTER

New online feature helps with locating, exploring state game lands.

HARRISBURG – Looking to spend some time outdoors, but don't know where to go?

A new offering from the Pennsylvania Game Commission might hold the answer.

The Game Commission has launched on its website a new Mapping Center that will help users to locate state game lands and other hunting grounds, view topography and aerial photos for tracts, and even find a place to park when they arrive.

Those searching for outdoor-recreation opportunities can search by game lands number, county, region or wildlife management unit. Users also can click on any game lands defined on the map to see a more detailed layout of access roads, parking areas and buildings there. The map can also be set to show hunter access points on private lands.

Outdoor enthusiasts can customize their own maps and bookmark their favorites, and print them out to use afield or to leave directions for where they'll be.

"The new Mapping Center represents a big upgrade in terms of the quantity and quality of information available," said Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe. "Anyone interested in spending time on state game lands, or other public-access properties, will find it useful."

A short video on how to use the Mapping Center is available at the www.pgc.state.pa.us, and can be found by clicking on the icon titled "State Game Lands Mapping Center." The Mapping Center can be accessed directly at <http://pgcmaps.pa.gov/pgcpublicviewer>.

The Mapping Center was developed in partnership with GeoDecisions.

This Mapping Center is part of a larger three-year initiative for the Game Commission to improve GIS mapping for state game lands.

"The Mapping Center allows the public to view all the latest information on game lands, as well as locations of hunter access cooperators," said David B. Gilbert, project manager for GeoDecisions. "The overlay of Wildlife Management Units allows sportsmen to plan their next day in the field."

DOE LICENSE UPDATES AVAILABLE ONLINE

Hunters can check how many tags remain, and see if they got one.

Hunters who are anxious to know if they've been issued an antlerless deer license can track the status of their applications online.

Antlerless licenses for the 2013-14 season went on sale July 8, and as county treasurers process applications and allocate licenses, the information immediately is updated within the Pennsylvania Automated License System (PALS).

Hunters also can check the latest information on the number of licenses that have been allocated, and how many remain for sale in each wildlife-management unit.

To check on the status of an application, go to the Game Commission's website (www.pgc.state.pa.us), and click on the blue "Buy a License" box in the upper right corner of the homepage.

That click will take you to The Outdoor Shop, where the first option on the page begins "Purchase Fishing and/or Hunting License Permit and or Application." Click on that option, then scroll down to the bottom of the page and click "Start Here."

You then will need to enter identifying information, and click "Continue." Next, verify whether you are a resident or nonresident, then scroll to the end of your personal information and choose "Check on the status of an Antlerless Deer or Elk Application." Click "Continue," and any licenses that have been allocated to you will appear.

Many hunters report they appreciate the ability to check the status of antlerless licenses online. Before the updates were available electronically through PALS, hunters curious about an application's status needed to contact their banks to see if checks were cashed by a county treasurer.

Hunters also can use PALS to verify their applications for the elk-license drawing are recorded accurately. The hunters whose names are drawn also can see their status information online.

The application period for antlerless deer licenses started July 8, when county treasurers began accepting applications from residents. Nonresident applications for regular antlerless deer licenses will be accepted beginning on July 29. After that, residents and nonresidents may apply for the first round of unsold antlerless deer licenses on Aug. 5, then a second round of unsold antlerless deer licenses on Aug. 19.

Beginning Aug. 5, for WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D only, there is no limit to the number of unsold antlerless deer license applications an individual can submit until the allocations are exhausted. This must be done by mail only, and there is a limit of three applications per pink envelope.

Beginning Aug. 26, county treasurers will accept applications over-the-counter for WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D, and may immediately issue antlerless deer licenses. Hunters may apply over-the-counter to county treasurers for any other WMU with antlerless licenses for sale on Oct. 7.

Updated allocation totals for antlerless deer licenses also are available at the Game Commission's website. Select "Doe License Update" from the "Quick Clicks" box along the right side of the homepage. This update provides a real-time status of antlerless license allocations and availability by WMU, and helps license applicants to determine which WMUs to list as their first, second and third preferences when they submit applications.

EARLY MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS SET

Changes this year will allow hunters to keep more birds in their possession.

Pennsylvania's early migratory bird seasons have been approved, and changes this year will increase the number of birds hunters can keep in their possession.

The early seasons for mourning doves, Canada geese, woodcock and other migratory bird species break down similarly to last year.

The biggest difference is in regard to possession limits. A change in federal regulations has allowed Pennsylvania this year to increase possession limits for most migratory game birds from two times the daily bag limit to three times the daily bag limit.

Those changes are taking place across the board in the early seasons.

The calendar has had an influence on the opening days for some seasons.

Dove hunters will be able to take to the field Monday, Sept. 2 in the first segment of a triple-split season. The first segment ends on Saturday, Sept. 28 and daily hunting hours during the first segment are from noon to sunset.

Other dove-hunting segments run from Oct. 26 to Nov. 30 and from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1, with hunting hours during those segments set at one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

The daily bag limit in each dove-hunting segment has been set at 15, with a possession limit of 45.

The September statewide season for resident Canada geese also will open Sept. 2, and continue through Sept. 25. The September season retains a daily bag limit of eight Canada geese, but the possession limit has climbed to 24.

Shooting hours during the September goose season are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset, except for on Sept. 14 and Sept. 21, when the season overlaps with youth waterfowl hunting days. On those days, shooting hours end at sunset.

There are special regulations – including smaller bag limits and possession limits – in a couple of areas of the state.

In most of the Southern James Bay Population Goose Zone, and on the Pymatuning Reservoir and the area extending 100 yards inland from the shoreline of the reservoir, excluding the area east of state Route 3011 (Hartstown Road), hunters will have a daily limit of three and a possession limit of nine.

Also, in a portion of western Crawford County, the daily bag limit is one goose and possession limit is three geese. That area begins south of state Route 198 from the Ohio state line to intersection of state Route 18, then follows state Route 18 south to state Route 618; follows state Route 618 south to U.S. Route 6; U.S. Route 6 east to U.S. Route 322/state Route 18; U.S. Route 322/state Route 18 west to intersection of state Route 3013; and state Route 3013 south to the Crawford/Mercer County line. The exception to the rules in this area is State Game Lands 214, where September goose hunting is closed. This restriction does not apply to youth participating in the expanded youth waterfowl hunting days, which are set for Sept. 14 and 21, when regular season regulations apply.

The controlled hunting areas at the Game Commission's Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area in Lebanon and Lancaster counties, as well as all of State Game Lands 46, will remain closed to September goose hunting to address the decline in the resident Canada goose flock.

And, in the area of Lancaster and Lebanon counties north of the Pennsylvania Turnpike (Interstate 76) and east of state Route 501 to state Route 419; south of state Route 419 to Lebanon-Berks county line; west of Lebanon-Berks county line and Lancaster-Berks county line to state Route 1053 (also known as Peartown Road and Greenville Road); west of state Route 1053 to Pennsylvania Turnpike (Interstate 76), the daily bag limit is one goose, with a possession limit of three geese. This restriction does not apply to youth participating in the youth waterfowl hunting days, which are set for Sept. 14 and 21, when regular season regulations apply.

Kevin Jacobs, a waterfowl biologist with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, noted that recent liberalizations in Canada goose hunting opportunities, along with control programs being implemented by many municipalities and public and private landowners, appear to be stabilizing the growth of the state's resident Canada goose population. The 2013 Pennsylvania spring resident Canada goose population was estimated at 279,212, which is statistically similar to the recent eight-year average of 265,905.

However, populations remain significantly above the management goal of 150,000.

"Hunting remains the most effective and efficient way to manage resident Canada geese, provided hunters can gain access to geese in problem areas," Jacobs said.

Youth waterfowl days are open to licensed junior hunters who are 12 to 15 years old. To participate, a youngster must be accompanied by an adult, who may assist the youth in calling, duck identification and other aspects of the hunt. During those hunts, youth can harvest ducks, mergansers, coots and moorhens, and both youth and licensed adults can harvest Canada geese.

During youth waterfowl days, youth and adults have the same daily limit for Canada geese in the area being hunted. Bag limits for ducks, mergansers, coots and moorhens will be consistent with the limit for the regular season, which will be announced in mid-August, after the annual Waterfowl Symposium on Aug. 9.

Pennsylvania's woodcock season retains its longer format this year, opening on Oct. 19 and closing on Nov. 30. The daily limit remains three, but the possession limit increases to nine.

The season for common snipe also will run from Oct. 19 to Nov. 30, which is the same structure as previous years. The daily limit is 8, and the possession limit is 24.

Virginia and sora rail hunting will run from Sept. 2 to Nov. 9. Bag limits, singly or combined, are three daily or nine in possession. The season for king and clapper rails remains closed.

Hunting for moorhen and gallinules also runs from Sept. 2 to Nov. 9, and the bag limits are three daily and nine in possession.

Migratory game bird hunters, including those afield for doves and woodcock, are required to obtain and carry a Pennsylvania migratory game bird license (\$3.70 for residents, \$6.70 for nonresidents), as well as a general hunting, combination or lifetime license. All waterfowl hunters age 16 and older also must possess a federal migratory game bird and conservation (duck) stamp.

Hunting hours for all migratory birds close at sunset, except for September Canada geese, as noted above, and the snow goose conservation season.

Annual migratory bird and waterfowl seasons are selected by states from a framework established by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The "Pennsylvania 2013-14 Guide to Migratory Bird Hunting" brochure will be posted on the Game Commission's website (www.pgc.state.pa.us) in mid-August.

Hunters are encouraged to report leg-banded migratory game bird recoveries online at www.reportband.gov, or use the toll-free number (1-800-327-BAND). Hunters will be requested to provide information on where, when and what species were taken, in addition to the band number. This information is crucial to the successful management of migratory game birds.

Mentored Youth Hunting Program FAQs

In 2006, the Pennsylvania Game Commission launched the Mentored Youth Hunting Program. The objective behind the Mentored Youth Hunting Program is simple and clear: create expanded youth hunting opportunities while maintaining safety afield.

This program provides additional means for youngsters to nurture their early interest in hunting and allows them to take a more active role in those formative trips afield with mentoring adults. The program increases hands-on use of sporting arms and can promote a better understanding and interest in hunting and wildlife conservation that will help assure hunting's future, as well as reinforce the principles of hunting safely through the close supervision provided by dedicated mentors.

Following are a few of the answers to some of the more frequent questions being asked about the program.

Who Qualifies as a Mentor? Under the program, a mentor is defined as a properly licensed individual 21 years of age or older, who serves as a guide to a mentored youth while engaged in hunting or related activities, such as scouting, learning firearm or hunter safety and wildlife identification.

Does a Mentor Need to Obtain a Permit? Yes, beginning with the 2009-10 license year, a mentored youth will need a permit. The permit costs \$2.70 (\$1 for the Game Commission, \$1 for the issuing agent and 70 cents for the transaction fee). Benefits of this permit include that the youth will be provided with the necessary field harvest tags for one antlered deer and one spring gobbler. Also, by capturing data about how many youth are participating in the program and where they live, the Game Commission will be able to better plan on when, where and how many basic Hunter-Trapper Education courses will need to be held as these mentored youth approach 11 years of age, which is when a youth is eligible to take the course.

Who Qualifies as a Youth to Participate in the Program? A mentored youth is defined as an unlicensed individual under 12 years of age who is accompanied by a mentor while engaged in hunting or related activities.

Does the Youth Need to Be Hunter-Trapper Education Certified? No, the youth does not need to take and pass the Game Commission's mandatory Hunter-Trapper Education course to participate in the Mentored Youth Hunting Program. However, it is the responsibility of the mentor to ensure that each youth is trained in firearm and hunter safety before heading afield. Successfully completing a Hunter-Trapper Education course is required for all first-time license buyers.

What Details Do I Need to Know About the Program? The Program stipulates that the mentor to mentored youth ratio be one-to-one, which means that the mentor may not have more than one youth hunting with them at a time. Also, the pair may possess only one sporting arm while hunting. While moving, the sporting arm must be carried by the mentor. When the pair reaches a stationary hunting location, the mentor may turn over possession of the sporting arm to the youth, and then must keep the youth within arm's length at all times while he or she is in possession of the sporting arm. The program also requires that both the mentor and the youth must abide by fluorescent orange regulations for the species being hunted.

Are There Safety Concerns With the Program? Based on data from other states - many of which have no hunting age limitations - there are no facts showing a decrease in safety by allowing individuals of any age to go hunting. As with any hunting situation, it is the responsibility of the hunter - and in this case, more specifically, the Mentor - to make sure that the youth is prepared to go hunting. Preparation includes, but is not limited to,

firearm safety, hunting safety and physical and mental preparedness. Also, the Mentored Youth Hunting Program has several safety precautions built into it, such as the one-to-one ratio limitation on the mentor-to-youth; the pair may only have one sporting arm; the youth may possess the sporting arm and hunt only from a stationary position; and the youth must be within arm's length of the mentor at all times while in possession of the sporting arm.

What Species Can Be Taken By a Youth Participating in the Program? The species identified as legal for the Mentored Youth Hunting Program are squirrels, woodchucks (groundhogs), antlered and antlerless deer, fall turkey, spring gobbler and coyotes. When hunting for antlered deer, those youth participating in the Mentored Youth Hunting Program are permitted to follow the same antler restrictions as a junior license holder, which is one antler of three or more inches in length or one antler with at least two points.

Is the Addition of Antlerless Deer New? Yes, antlerless deer hunting was added to the line up of legal species in 2011-12. When hunting antlerless deer, the adult mentor must be in possession of a valid antlerless deer license that can be transferred to the youth if he/she harvests an antlerless deer. The field harvest tag is to be completed by the youth and attached to the carcass. The harvest of the antlerless deer is to be reported by the adult mentor within five days of harvest, and a box is to be checked "taken by mentored youth."

Is the Addition of Fall Turkey New? Yes, fall turkey hunting was added to the line up of legal species for 2012-13. When hunting fall turkey, the adult mentor must be in possession of a valid fall turkey tag that can be transferred to the youth if he/she harvests a fall turkey. The field harvest tag is to be completed by the youth and attached to the carcass. The harvest of the fall turkey is to be reported by the adult mentor within five days of harvest, and a box is to be checked "taken by mentored youth."

What About Tagging and Reporting Requirements for Big Game Taken By the Youth ? The mentored youth must tag and report any antlered deer or spring gobbler taken using the harvest tags that come with the Mentored Youth Hunting Program permit issued to them. Also, the youth must report his or her harvest, which can be done online, through the toll-free telephone number (1-855-724-8681) or by mail within five days. Mentored youth can see a sample carcass tag and use the harvest report card available in the Digest, or in the Forms and Brochures section of the agency's website. The mentored youth may not use the mentor's tags or harvest report cards if the youth harvests an antlered deer or spring gobbler.

Turn in a Poacher

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has established a "Turn-In-a-Poacher" program to strengthen the Commonwealth's efforts to apprehend people who are suspected of killing threatened or endangered species or big game animals, and a witness report was instrumental in securing a successful conviction. You can get involved by either calling a toll-free-telephone number - **1-888-PGC-8001** - or filling out a "TIP" Reporting Form.

The TIP program was authorized by the General Assembly as part of a legislative package to deter crimes against wildlife. The act authorizes the Game Commission to increase by \$500, fines against individuals convicted of killing threatened or endangered species or unlawfully taking big game animals. That money is then placed in a special fund from which \$250 will be used to pay the individual providing the "tip," as long as the district justice imposes the additional \$500 fine. The additional fine money will be used to maintain the TIP Hotline.



Calls to the TIP telephone number are always answered by a secure recording device. Tips submitted using the new on-line reporting system will be delivered electronically to a special email account in the agency's Bureau of Wildlife Protection. Access to the recording device and e-mail account is limited to ensure confidentiality and program integrity. Both methods of reporting are available to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

People who provide "tips" can choose to remain completely anonymous, particularly if you're not interested in a reward for your efforts to help wildlife and fight criminal activity against it. But if you would like to claim a reward you're entitled to, you'll have to provide a way for the agency to let you know that your information led to the successful prosecution of the accused individual and that the reward is yours.

Information about other crimes against wildlife - the illegal harvest of a single deer, bear or elk, crimes on state game lands, etc. - is still of great interest to the Game Commission, but should be reported to the appropriate agency Region Office serving the county in which the violation(s) occurred. Remember, every time another individual gets involved with reporting crimes against wildlife and wild places, Pennsylvania's great outdoors improves.

Safety Tips

Positively identify that target! - Be sure your shooting at legal game and not another hunter. **Never shoot at sounds or movement!**



Stay in the zone! - Know your zone of fire - that area where you can safely shoot at game and not endanger your partners. Never shoot at game moving between you and someone else.

Be seen! - Wear fluorescent orange clothing. Check your hunting regulations to determine specific amounts for each season.

Plan your hunt, then hunt your plan! - Let someone know where you're hunting and when you'll return. Provide a detailed plan and stick to it!

Buckle up! - If you hunt from an elevated stand, always wear a fall-restraint device whenever your feet leave the ground until they return. A full-body harness is best!

Dress for success! - Layers of clothing that wick moisture, insulate and block wind or rain will keep you safe and comfortable all day.

Keep fit! - Hunting is hard work. Don't become a statistic - stay physically fit and enjoy your outdoor experience. Start with a check-up and follow the doctor's advice.

Do your homework! - Scout your hunting area and learn the habits of the game you hunt. Practice with your sporting arms to become a skilled and proficient shooter.

Stay found! - Become familiar with your hunting area. Learn how to use a map and compass or GPS unit.

Be prepared! - Anticipate problems and emergencies. Always carry a basic survival kit and know how to use it!



Safe hunting is NO accident! - Follow all firearm-handling and safe hunting rules

Safety Tips

Treestands

Stay away! - Avoid permanent stands; they weaken with age, damage trees and are eyesores.



Smart choice! - Used stands certified by the Treestand Manufacturers Association (TMA). They are commercially designed and tested to meet high standards.

Read the directions! - Read and follow manufacture's guidelines. Practice with stands before hunting.

Look carefully! - Inspect all stands and climbing equipment before each use.

Choose wisely! - Select only suitable trees. Avoid dead trees or those with loose bark.

Buckle up! - Use a fall-restraint device, preferably a full-body harness, any time your feet leave the ground! This includes climbing up and down the tree. Choose a harness that will keep you upright and will not restrict your breathing.

Keep it short! - Make sure there is no slack in the fall-restraint tether when you are in a sitting position.

Hold on tight! - Maintain three points of contact with the climbing system, ladder or tree at all times while climbing.

Climb safely! - Use a haul line to pull up gear. If hunting with a firearm, make sure it is unloaded and the muzzle is covered! Never attach the line near the trigger or trigger guard.

Ask a friend! - Use 3 persons to set-up any ladder-type treestand.

Hunt with a plan! - In the event of a fall, be prepared to help yourself. Have someone contact authorities if you don't return at an established time.

Firearms

Handle all firearms as if they're loaded! - Never assume they're unloaded. Double check to be sure.



Take charge of that muzzle! - Always point it in a safe direction.

Identify your target! Don't rush. - Look for unmistakable, positive proof your shot will be safe. Make sure the area in front of and beyond your target is safe, too!

Don't ride the trigger! - Don't put your finger on the trigger until you're ready to shoot.

Keep the barrel and action clear! - Check for obstructions like mud or jammed cartridges. Only carry ammunition matching the caliber or gauge of the firearm you're using.

Unload all firearms not in use! - It eliminates unintentional discharges and saves lives. Transport unloaded firearms in cases with the action open.

Cross or climb safely! - Unload and place your firearm on the ground before crossing a fence, log or other obstacle, or climbing a tree. Retrieve it with your hand or hoist rope butt first.

Check your backstop! - Shoot only when a safe and adequate backstop exists. Don't shoot at hard, flat surfaces; water; or a target on the horizon.

Store firearms and ammunition separately! - Keep them locked and away from children or other inexperienced people.

Don't mix guns with drugs or alcohol! - Never take or drink anything that impairs your senses either before or while you're shooting.

Public Shooting Ranges



Beginning April 1, 2011, those who shoot firearms at one of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's State Game Lands public shooting ranges must possess and carry with them either an annual \$30 range use permit or a current general hunting or furtaker license. Individuals without a range use permit or hunting or furtaker license may be fined.

For your shooting enjoyment and to make you a better hunter, the Game Commission maintains numerous public shooting ranges across the state.

Unless otherwise posted, these ranges are open year-round, from 8 a.m. until sunset, Monday through Saturday, and noon to sunset on Sundays. And with stable benches, large backstops and well maintained grounds, they're great places to sight-in your rifles, test ammunition and hone your shooting skills.

Especially prior to the bear and deer seasons and on weekends, these ranges can be busy places. Users should review and follow the posted regulations, and be considerate of others, too. Of course, all rules of safety need to be followed, and by all means wear proper eye and ear protection. Also, anyone under 16 must be accompanied by someone 18 or older.

Users should also practice good shooting etiquette. The regulation, for example, that limits a shooter to having no more than three rounds in a rifle (six in a handgun) may not seem to make much sense.

What it does, though, is give shooters a chance to check their targets without having to wait for those who may want to shoot long strings. This same regulation prohibits people using firearms with large capacity magazines from monopolizing time on the range, and also causing inordinate damage, particularly to backstops.

The Game Commission has completed lead remediation and safety upgrade projects at all public shooting ranges. However, routine maintenance at these ranges will require closing them for several hours every month. This routine maintenance includes rebuilding target-line stations, cutting grass and other clean-up activities that vary depending on range use. Please contact the appropriate agency Region Office to check the daily status of the range(s) you wish to visit.

Shooters also should show consideration for others waiting for an open bench. It's not uncommon, especially leading up to the bear and deer seasons, to find an adult teaching a youngster how to shoot, or to find someone having difficulty sighting-in a rifle. Show some patience in such circumstances, and if it seems appropriate, offer some assistance.

Groups may reserve ranges from January 1 through October 1 by calling the region office at least 20 days in advance. The range is closed to individuals when it is reserved, and signs may be posted at other times indicating a closed range.

More than \$200,000 is spent annually on shooting range maintenance. So providing this service is not cheap. To help keep maintenance costs down, which will allow these funds to be diverted to other projects and programs, there are some things we, as users, should do:

First, don't shoot up the framework used to hold the backstop material. Second, clean up your spent cases, remove targets from backstops, keep shooting benches clean and dispose of all other litter.

Offering shooting ranges is a valuable service the Game Commission provides. Use them, take care of them, and by all means, enjoy them. After all, they're provided for your shooting enjoyment.



Northwest Region

County	SGL	Rifle Range		Pistol Range	
		Firing Points	Yards	Firing Points	Yards
Clarion	24	4	200	--	--
Clarion	72	6	100	--	--
Erie	109	6	100	3	25

Southwest Region

County	SGL	Rifle Range		Pistol Range	
		Firing Points	Yards	Firing Points	Yards
Allegheny	203	20	100	10	50
Cambria	108	2	100	3	25
Fayette	51	4	100	--	--
Greene	179	7	300	--	--
Greene	223	5	100	--	--
Indiana	248	4	100	5	25
Somerset	50	6	100	4	25
Washington	245	6	100	--	--
Westmoreland 42	6	100	3	25	
Westmoreland 42	4	100	--	--	

Northcentral Region

County	SGL	Rifle Range		Pistol Range	
		Firing Points	Yards	Firing Points	Yards
Centre	176	25	200	25	50
Clearfield	77	6	100	--	--

Southcentral Region

County	SGL	Rifle Range		Pistol Range	
		Firing Points	Yards	Firing Points	Yards
Cumberland	230	9	300	25	25

Northeast Region

County	SGL	Rifle Range		Pistol Range	
		Firing Points	Yards	Firing Points	Yards
Carbon	141	7	300	11	50
Columbia	58	7	150	7	150
Lackawanna	300	17	50/100/200	6	50
Luzerne	91	10	100	--	--
Luzerne	206	10	100	8	25
Monroe	127	12	50/100	12	10/25
Pike	183	11	100	6	25
Wayne	159	11	100	12	25

Southeast Region

County	SGL	Rifle Range		Pistol Range	
		Firing Points	Yards	Firing Points	Yards
Berks	106	10	100	--	--
Chester	43	12	100	--	--
Dauphin	211	8	100	--	--
Lehigh	205	13	100	--	--
York Closed August 19 & 20 for maintenance.	242	8	100	12	50

White-Tailed Deer & Bear Harvest Information 1915 - Present

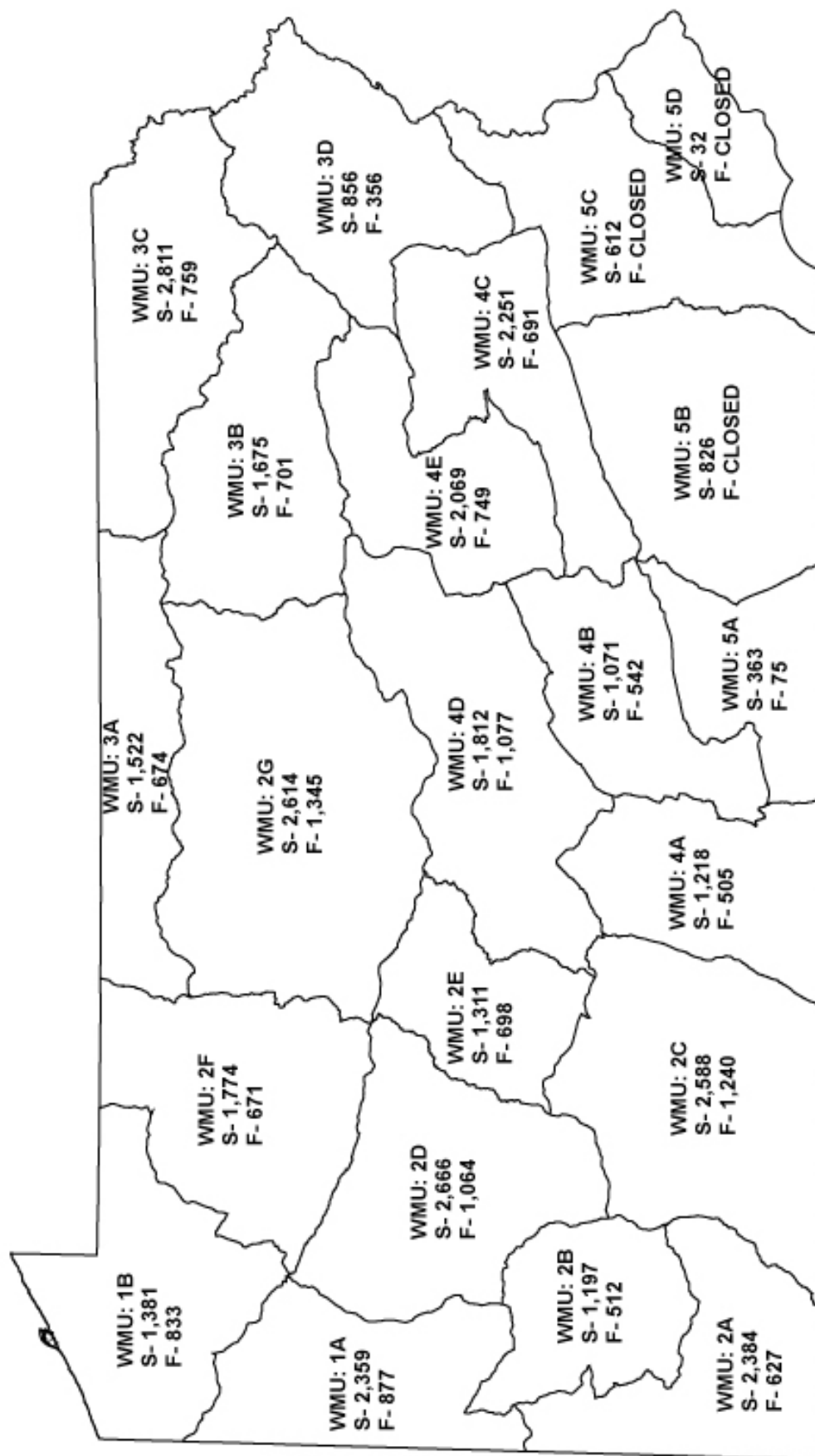
Year	Antlered Harvest	Antlerless Harvest	Total Deer	Bear Harvest
<u>1915</u>	1,287	CLOSED	1,287	188
1916	1,722	CLOSED	1,722	435
1917	1,725	CLOSED	1,725	368
1918	1,754	CLOSED	1,754	387
1919	2,939	CLOSED	2,939	472
<u>1920</u>	3,300	CLOSED	3,300	420
1921	4,840	CLOSED	4,840	510
1922	6,115	CLOSED	6,115	563
1923	6,452	8	6,460	500
1924	7,778	126	7,904	929
1925	7,287	1,029	8,316	470
1926	11,646	1,295	12,941	660
1927	14,374	CLOSED	14,374	321
1928	CLOSED	25,097	25,097	427
1929	22,822	CLOSED	22,822	447
<u>1930</u>	20,115	5,979	26,294	707
1931	24,796	70,255	95,051	501
1932	19,724	CLOSED	19,724	216
1933	20,480	CLOSED	20,480	586
1934	21,137	CLOSED	21,137	CLOSED
1935	23,802	46,668	70,470	402
1936	18,804	CLOSED	18,084	356
1937	39,347	CLOSED	39,347	537
1938	CLOSED	171,662	171,662	384
1939	49,106	14,581	63,687	535
<u>1940</u>	40,995	145,580	186,575	524
1941	19,271	CLOSED	19,271	593
1942	30,860	CLOSED	30,860	149
1943	23,931	14,951	38,882	307
1944	28,411	CLOSED	28,411	295
1945	24,575	1,085	25,660	366
1946	31,110	4,209	35,319	325
1947	31,475	63,568	95,043	569
1948	33,608	CLOSED	33,608	388
1949	46,602	84,121	130,723	411
<u>1950</u>	23,302	31,515	54,817	354
1951	34,582	37,952	72,534	429
1952	27,164	37,829	64,993	261
1953	37,384	16,252	53,636	303
1954	40,915	CLOSED	40,915	403
1955	45,044	41,111	86,155	335
1956	41,921	CLOSED	41,921	335
1957	49,254	55,862	105,116	294
1958	46,738	65,187	111,925	439
1959	38,270	51,902	90,172	296

<u>1960</u>	38,776	29,887	68,663	392
1961	38,705	17,327	56,032	237
1962	42,266	30,647	72,913	554
1963	48,204	36,212	84,416	280
1964	49,231	41,903	91,134	526
1965	65,150	34,638	99,788	347
1966	58,722	60,031	118,753	605
1967	78,268	66,147	144,415	568
1968	62,038	79,836	141,874	218
1969	59,923	56,761	116,684	295
<u>1970</u>	53,350	46,336	99,686	CLOSED
1971	55,602	48,625	104,227	488
1972	62,633	44,582	107,215	370
1973	70,316	56,575	126,891	299
1974	70,689	54,963	125,652	223
1975	71,986	66,209	138,195	388
1976	64,084	57,949	122,033	605
1977	74,879	71,199	146,078	CLOSED
1978	61,698	59,543	121,241	CLOSED
1979	58,864	55,930	114,794	736
<u>1980</u>	73,196	62,281	135,477	921
1981	73,322	75,208	148,530	819
1982	72,113	66,109	138,222	588
1983	70,233	66,060	136,293	1,529
1984	76,500	63,680	140,180	1,547
1985	76,097	85,331	161,428	1,029
* 1986	150,359	149,655	300,014	1,362
* 1987	157,547	177,242	334,789	1,556
* 1988	163,106	218,293	381,399	1,614
* 1989	169,795	218,806	388,601	2,213
* <u>1990</u>	170,101	245,460	415,561	1,200
* 1991	149,598	238,417	388,015	1,687
* 1992	163,159	198,065	361,224	1,589
* 1993	165,214	243,343	408,557	1,790
* 1994	157,030	238,051	395,081	1,365
* 1995	182,235	248,348	430,583	2,190
* 1996	153,432	197,565	350,997	1,796
* 1997	176,677	220,339	397,016	2,110
* 1998	181,449	196,040	377,489	2,598
* 1999	194,368	184,224	378,592	1,740
* <u>2000</u>	203,221	301,379	504,600	3,075
* 2001	203,247	282,767	486,014	3,063
* 2002	165,416	352,113	517,529	2,686
* 2003	142,270	322,620	464,890	3,000
* 2004	124,410	284,910	409,320	2,976
* 2005	120,500	233,890	354,390	4,164
* 2006	135,290	226,270	361,560	3,124
* 2007	109,200	213,870	323,070	2,362

* 2008	122,410	213,440	335,850	3,458
* 2009	108,330	200,590	308,920	3,512
* 2010	122,930	193,310	316,240	3,090
* 2011	127,540	208,660	336,200	4,350
Year	Antlered Harvest	Antlerless Harvest	Total Deer	Bear Harvest

* Deer harvests in these years are calculated harvest, rather than reported. The adjustment was made to reflect declines in successful hunter reporting rates.

2012 TURKEY HARVESTS



Spring Season Total (S) ..35,392
 Fall Season Total (F)13,995*
 Total Turkey Harvest.....49,387

Spring harvests include harvests from special spring license, which allows for the taking of a second bird in the spring.

*preliminary totals, final figures available summer 2013



Wildlife Note — 28

White-Tailed Deer

by Chuck Fergus

The white-tailed deer, *Odocoileus virginianus*, was so named because the underside of its tail is covered with white hair, and when it runs it often holds its tail erect so that the white undersurface is visible. Whitetails belong to the Cervidae family, which in North America includes elk, moose, caribou and mule deer. Cervids are split-hoofed mammals with no incisor teeth in the front of the upper jaw. They are classed as ruminant animals, meaning they have a four-chambered stomach and frequently chew a "cud." Adult male whitetails grow and shed a set of antlers each year. On rare occasions, adult females also grow antlers.

Scientists have identified 30 subspecies of whitetails in Central and North America. Whitetails occur from southern Canada south through the United States and Mexico to Panama, but they are absent from most of Canada, Nevada and Utah. They occur commonly throughout Pennsylvania.

The largest of the subspecies is the northern woodland whitetail, and the smallest is the endangered Florida Key deer. The subspecies throughout most of Pennsylvania is the northern woodland whitetail.

In Pennsylvania the average adult buck weighs about 140 pounds live weight and stands 32 to 34 inches at the shoulder. He is about 70 inches long from the tip of his nose to the base of his tail. His tail vertebrae add only

about 11 inches, but the long hair makes it far more conspicuous. Does tend to average less in weight and body length than males of the same age from the same area.

Deer weights vary considerably, depending upon age, sex, diet and the time of year. For example, breeding-age bucks may weigh 25 to 30 percent more at the



onset of the breeding season

than they do at its conclusion.

Hence, a 140-pound buck in December might have weighed 180 pounds in September.

Hair color is alike in both sexes. In adults, the belly, throat, areas around the eyes, insides of the ears and the underside of the tail are white all year long. During summer, the upper parts of the body are reddish brown, and in winter they are grayish brown.

Summer hairs are short, thin, straight and wiry. Winter hairs are long, thick, hollow and slightly crinkled. Winter hairs afford the deer excellent protection against the cold. Summer coats are shed in August and September, winter coats in May and June.

Melanistic and albino deer occur but they are rare. Partial albinos, sometimes called "piebalds" or "calico" deer, occur more frequently.

Fawns are born with white spots in the upper coat. When a fawn is lying on the ground or in dry leaves this coat looks like the sun hitting the ground after it passes through the treetops. This provides excellent camouflage for the fawns. Their summer coats are molted about the same time as the fall molt in adults, and fawns take on the same coat colors as adults in the fall.

Whitetails have scent-producing glands: two tarsals, one inside each hind leg at the hock joint; two metatarsals, one on the outside of each hind leg between the hock and the foot; four interdigitals, one between the toes of each foot; and two preorbitals, one below inside corners of each eye. The tarsals and metatarsals release scents conveying excitement or fear, while the interdigitals produce odors which let deer trail each other by smell. The preorbitals are used to personalize the prominent overhanging branch at "scrapes" — thrown-up dirt patterns — used to attract does during the rut.

Deer can run at 40 miles per hour for short bursts and maintain speeds of 25 miles per hour for longer periods.



They are also good jumpers capable of clearing obstacles up to nine feet high or 25 feet wide. The air-filled hairs of their coats enable them to swim easily.

Although whitetails are color-blind and sometimes have a hard time identifying stationary objects, they are easily alerted by movement. Their keen senses of smell and hearing also help them detect danger.

Usually deer are silent, but they can bleat, grunt, whine, and when alarmed or suspicious, make loud "whiew" sounds by forcefully blowing air through their nostrils. Does whine to call their fawns and fawns bleat to call their mothers.

Although antler growth is evident on male fawns, the button-like protrusions are not prominent. A buck's first set of antlers begins to grow when it's about 10 months old. Each year after the buck reaches this age, it will grow and shed a new set of antlers. Typical antlers curve upward and outward to point forward, and consist of two main beams with individual tines growing upward from them.

If the yearling buck comes from an area with poor food conditions, his first set of antlers may be only "spikes" — antlers consisting of single main beams only. Spikes are more common in yearling deer than older ones because antler growth starts at a time when the young buck's body is still growing rapidly. But because antler development is tied in closely with the animal's nutritional status, older bucks might also carry spikes if they come from an area with poor food conditions. More of the nutrients in the young buck's body are going for body growth than in older bucks, hence, less are available for antler development. Fifty percent or more of the yearling bucks from poor deer range in Pennsylvania may produce only spikes, compared to 10 percent or less from good deer range.

Antlers generally begin to grow in March or April. Growing antlers are covered by a skin called "velvet." This velvet is covered with soft hairs and contains blood vessels which supply nutrients to the growing antlers. The solid bone-like substance which makes up the polished antler is secreted by cells on the inside of the velvet. By August or early September antler growth ceases and the velvet is shed or rubbed off by the buck as he rubs saplings, shrubs or rocks with his antlers. Polished antlers are carried throughout most of the breeding season, which can last into late February. The antlers are

shed at the end of this period, and a new set begins to grow in March or April.



While antlers grow they're soft and subject to injury. Bent and twisted tines and main beams are a result of injury to the antler while it was growing. Broken antlers occur after the antler has stopped growing and is hard. The small cavities sometimes seen in polished antlers are a result of botfly larvae damage during the growing period.

The antler cycle is influenced by secretions from the pituitary gland. Changes in length of daylight periods and, to a lesser degree, temperature influence the hormone secretions from this gland. Hormones are believed to be a factor in the initiation of new antler growth. Increases in the amount of testosterone in the blood of whitetail bucks in late August and early September cause blood flow to the antlers to stop. The velvet dies and is shed or rubbed off. Throughout the breeding season, testosterone levels continue to increase until they peak in November, usually coinciding with the height of breeding. After that, testosterone abates, apparently triggering antler shedding.

Shedding usually occurs earlier in northern states than southern ones. Spike bucks tend to retain their velvet longer and shed their antlers sooner than bucks with branched antlers. The roles of age and nutrition in the length of antler retention are not fully understood at present.

Social Organization

The social organization of the whitetail is largely matriarchal. Although large numbers of deer are sometimes seen together in feeding areas or wintering areas, these associations are usually temporary and do not reflect the same strong ties as family associations between related does. The most common social group is an adult doe, her fawns and her yearling female offspring. Sometimes three or four generations of related does are present in a family group. When fawning season rolls around in late May, adult does leave the family group and remain alone to bear and rear their fawns. Once a pregnant doe leaves the family circle to bear her fawns, her yearling offspring are left on their own for the summer.

Siblings tend to remain together throughout most of summer. Sibling groups with yearling bucks separate in September as the rut approaches. Yearling bucks tend to disperse from the mother's home range at this time. Yearling does remain in the mother's home range and generally rejoin their mother and her new fawns between September and October.

During the breeding season adult and yearling bucks tend to stay alone except when in pursuit of a female approaching estrus. After the breeding season, in late January, yearling and adult bucks form loose associations of small groups, usually two to four animals, which remain together throughout most of the winter and summer months. These groups break up around September when the rut starts.

Reproduction

The mating season of white-tailed deer begins as early as September and can last into late January. Breeding

activity reaches its peak in early November, and most adult females have been bred by the end of December. Some females are capable of reproducing at seven or eight months of age and give birth at 14 or 15 months of age. Most of these animals breed a month or two later than older does, and they usually produce a single fawn.

The age and health of a doe influence her reproductive capacity. Females from the best range produce more fawns than those from poor range. Adult females (2.5 years and older) usually produce twins, and triplets are not uncommon. There is a tendency for young females to produce a larger percentage of male offspring than older does.

Food Habits

Whitetails eat a wide variety of herbaceous and woody plants. In a Pennsylvania study where biologists examined and measured the food contained in the rumens of vehicle-killed deer, about 100 different plant species were identified. More than half were tree, shrub or vine species, the remainder, herbaceous plants. A good number of ingested plants could not be identified.

Whitetail food preferences are largely dependent on plant species occurring in an area and the time of year. Green leaves, herbaceous plants and new growth on woody plants are eaten in the spring and summer. In late summer, fall and early winter, both hard and soft fruits such as apples, pears and acorns are a major component of their diet. In winter, evergreen leaves, hard browse and dry leaves are eaten. Good supplies of a variety of natural foods at all times of the year are essential if an area is to carry a healthy deer population.

Habitat

A seedling-sapling forest satisfies two deer needs: (1) concealment, and (2) food in the form of buds, stems and leaves of shrubs and young trees. Seedling-sapling stands are created most frequently by timber harvesting. Clearcutting, or even-aged timber management, means cutting most trees larger than saplings, but leaving an area of land looking "clear." This cutting technique should be restricted to areas where sufficient regeneration is present to guarantee a sustainable forest. In the timber cut, snags, den trees, mast trees and rare tree species should be left behind to assure a good habitat diversity for an abundance of wildlife.

Newly cut treetops provide an immediate source of browse in winter months when snow cover makes other sources of food unavailable. Therefore, when possible, the actual cutting operations should be carried out when the trees are dormant. However, the greatest benefit of clearcutting to deer lies in the often abundant new growth vegetation and succulent sprouts and seedlings that flourish in the sunlight following the cutting. Once established, this new thick growth also provides concealment for deer, not only in the early years following the cutting, but for a longer period, after much of the browse has grown out of their reach.

While most deer habitat management should revolve around a forest cutting program, including the establishment of herbaceous openings, a conifer tree planting pro-

gram to shelter deer in severe winter weather is sometimes necessary where suitable cover of that type is absent. The value of these plantations to deer is low during most of the year but high during winter. As with clearcutting, conifer plantations should be kept small and scattered. Large plantations are unnecessary. Small clumps of only 30 to 60 trees will suffice. Individual trees within the plantation can be spaced as far apart as eight to ten feet. Preferably, these clump plantings should be located in lowlands or on south-facing slopes.

Management

Deer are a valuable natural resource, but they must be closely managed or they'll quickly overpopulate the range they inhabit. When overpopulation occurs, deer strip their habitat of its life-supporting qualities, not just for deer, but for many woodland wildlife species. Crop and other property damage problems also increase, as well as deer-vehicle collisions.

Pole timber and over-browsed woodland cannot support large densities of deer. Without adequate food sources and cover, deer populations are stressed. Deer must work harder for daily nourishment and often have not built up the energy reserves they need to make it through winter. Young deer, because they require food for both growth and energy reserves, are most susceptible to winter starvation and exposure. They simply don't have the muscle to push away older, more dominant deer at feeding locations.

Under-nourished deer are more prone to succumb to exposure and disease. In addition, unhealthy deer typically have smaller body size, lower reproductive rates and smaller antlers. So the key to managing deer is keeping their populations at healthy levels. This essentially entails ensuring they don't exceed their range's ability to support them. We use hunting to adjust deer populations.

Population control can be accomplished only through a rationed harvest of female deer. The Game Commission issues permits entitling hunters to take antlerless deer in particular management units, areas where the agency continually collects deer population data. Deer populations and density goals based upon habitat, along with hunter success rates, are used to gauge how many hunting permits should be issued.

Public support of our management program is essential to maintaining the deer population as a public asset to be enjoyed by future generations of Pennsylvanians and visitors to Pennsylvania.





Wildlife Note — 17
LDR0103

Wild Turkey

by Chuck Fergus

The wild turkey is a shy, permanent resident of Pennsylvania's woods and mountains. Infiltrating a flock of these big birds is no easy feat, and when the hunter or naturalist is finally discovered, he's treated to a spectacle as the flock breaks up. Turkeys flap upward on loud wings. Some run full tilt, heads extended on serpentine necks. Others sneak along through the understory. Eventually, quiet returns to the woods. And, with time the first tentative calls of regrouping birds break the silence

Turkeys have long been important to man in North America. Indians hunted them for food, and some even



domesticated the big birds. Later, the wild turkey became a steady food source for white settlers. It earned a symbolic role as the main course of the Thanksgiving meal, which epitomized the successful harvest. Benjamin Franklin so admired the big bronze bird that he wanted it for our national emblem. Comparing it to the bald eagle, he said: "The turkey is a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original Native of America."

Several theories explain how the bird got its name. Early naturalists may have confused it with a species of Old World guinea fowl found in Turkey. Or the word may describe one of the bird's calls, which sounds a bit like "turk, turk, turk." Still a third explanation is that the word sprang from an American Indian name for the bird, "firkee."

By whatever name, the fact remains that this big bird was nearly exterminated by the ax, the plow and the gun.

As our nation grew, settlers cleared forests for farms. And they shot turkeys for food. By 1800, market hunters were selling the birds for as little as six cents each. By the early 1900s — when eastern forests had been lumbered and periodic fires hampered their regeneration — the turkey was in trouble.

Fortunately, here in Pennsylvania, the newly-formed Game Commission stepped in. Through seasons and bag limits, the agency succeeded in safeguarding what remained of the state's once-thriving population. It was found in the mountains of the state's southcentral counties. Over time, the agency experimented with ways to return turkeys to the rest of Penn's Woods. A turkey farm was tried. So was placing hen turkeys in holding pens for wild gobblers to breed with. But neither technique fared well. What turkeys needed was habitat improve-

ments. In the 1950s, as the state's forests began to mature, turkeys began to expand their range. Expansion was furthered through a Game Commission wild turkey trap-and-transfer program that would become a model for every state interested in turkey restoration. Today, turkeys are found in every county, and this wily bird has developed quite a following among hunters.

Biology

North American turkeys — including the domesticated bird — belong to the single and highly variable species *Meleagris gallopavo*. Taxonomists recognize at least five subspecies; the variety found in Pennsylvania is known as the Eastern wild turkey. Turkeys are gallinaeous — “chicken-like” — birds (order Galliformes), related to grouse, quail, pheasants and chickens.

Adult males, also called “gobblers” or “toms,” stand 2½ to 3 feet tall and 3 to 4 feet long. Females (hens) are shorter by about a third and weigh about half as much. Gobblers weigh up to 25 pounds, averaging 16. Adult hens weigh 9 to 10 pounds, and six-month-old birds, 6 to 13 pounds.

The wild turkey looks much like the domesticated subspecies, except the wild bird is slimmer, has a smaller head, a longer neck, longer, rangier legs, and smaller fleshy head and neck adornments. Tail feathers and tail coverts are tipped chestnut brown on wild birds, white on domesticated ones.

Plumage is an overall rich brown. In shadows, turkeys appear black; in bright sunlight, their feathers gleam with copper, blue, green and mahogany highlights. A hen's plumage is duller and not quite as iridescent, and her breast feathers end in a brown or buff band, while those of a gobbler are tipped with black.

Gobblers have spurs — sharp, bony spikes on the backs of their legs that are used in fighting — and rough, black “beards,” growths of rudimentary, hair-like feathers called mesofiloplumes, which protrude from their breasts. These beards grow quickly for the first four or five years, then more slowly, until they're about 12 inches long. The ends may break off, though, so beard length isn't a reliable indicator of age. Usually, hens have neither spurs nor beards.

A gobbler's head is practically bare, while that of a hen is covered with hair and fine feathers. A fleshy, pencil-like appendage called a caruncle, or snood, dangles from between the gobbler's eyes. Heads of both sexes are bluish-gray, and their necks may have a pinkish flush. During mating season, a gobbler's head and neck are more red; during courtship display, his snood may become long and swollen, and the color of his head and neck changes quickly from red to blue, purple and white.

Food: In spring, turkeys eat tender greens, shoots, tubers, left-over nuts and early insects. As the weather

warms up, they eat more insects, including grasshoppers, walking-sticks, beetles, weevils, dragonflies and larvae. They also consume spiders, harvestmen, ticks, millipedes, centipedes, snails and slugs. But even in summer, a majority of the diet (perhaps 90 percent) is vegetable. A wide variety of plant species are eaten, as well as a number of plant parts, including fruits, seeds, seedheads, tubers, roots, bulbs, stems, leaves, flowers and buds.

In fall, turkeys eat mast (beechnuts, acorns); fruits (dogwood, grape, cherry, gum, thornapple); and seeds (grasses and sedges, ash, corn, oats, weeds). During winter, they rely on seeds, nuts, and fruits left over from autumn, and on green plants, crustaceans and insect larvae found in and around spring seeps. Temperature of this water is above freezing, so the seeps remain open all winter, providing food for turkeys and other wildlife.

A turkey often scratches for its food, kicking forest duff and leaves behind. If the bird finds an acorn, it picks up the nut in its beak, straightens its neck, and swallows. The nut is stored in the bird's crop, a flexible bag in which juices and body heat work to soften it. Then the nut passes into the gizzard, an enlarged, thick-walled section of the food canal which contains small stones and gravel called grit. Strong muscles use the grit to grind down the acorn.

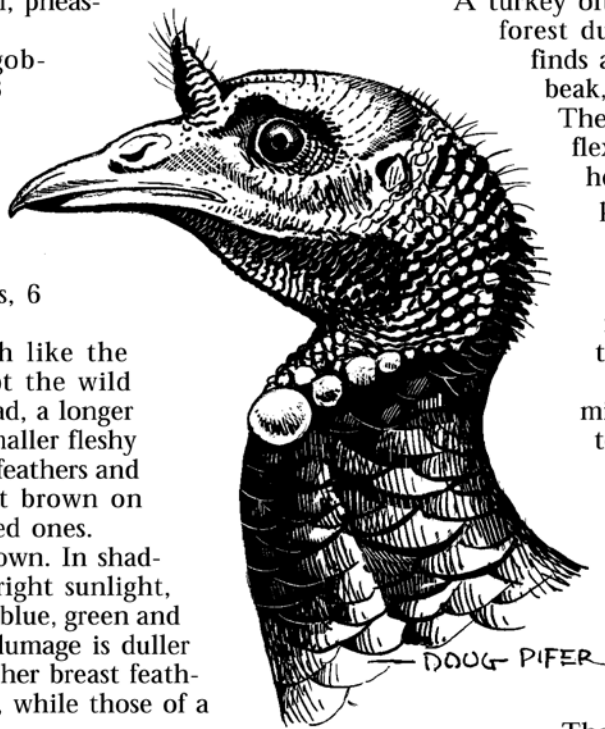
Turkeys may range up to several miles a day in search of food and water, sometimes establishing regular feeding areas if left undisturbed. In autumn, hunters “read” the food scratchings to determine when a flock passed by, what size the flock was, and which way the birds were headed.

Physical properties, behavior: Like most birds, turkeys have keen eyesight and hearing.

They hide cleverly, fly 40 to 55 mph, cover more than a mile while airborne, swim with ease — but they usually rely on their feet to escape danger. The strides of chased gobblers have been measured at four feet and their top speed estimated at 18 mph. Tracks vary somewhat by the age of the bird (a young tom, for example, might have a shorter print than an adult hen) but any track larger than 4¼ inches, from the back of the heel pad to the tip of middle toe, was probably made by a male.

Each evening, turkeys fly into trees to spend the night. A flock of up to 40 or more birds may roost in the same tree or in adjacent trees. They prefer the shelter of conifers during inclement weather. In early morning, the birds glide to the ground, call, and regroup for feeding.

Turkeys make a wide range of sounds. Best known is the male's gobble (described ill-obble-obble-obble), used in spring to attract females and proclaim territory. Other calls include yelps (keouk, keouk, keouk), made by both sexes; the cluck (kut), an assembly note; the whistle, or “kee-kee run” of a young bird (kee, kee, kee); and the



alarm note (putt). Gregarious birds, turkeys call when separated from the flock. By imitating such calls, hunters attract birds.

Reproduction: Toward the end of March, a male turkey changes physically. His fleshy crown swells and turns pale, his wattles redden and hang from his head, and he develops a thick, spongy breast layer containing oils and fats to help sustain him over breeding season. Toms gobble loudly in early morning and sometimes in late evening. Blowing a car horn, beating a tin pan, or making almost any loud noises may provoke lusty gobbles.

If hens are present, a gobbler will display by fanning his tail, erecting his feathers, and tucking his head back against his body. He will strut back and forth, hissing and dragging his wing tips on the ground. Rival males fight: each grasps the other's head or neck in his bill and tries to shove or pull his foe off balance. The first bird to let go or lose balance gets thrashed with wing and spur.

Year-old birds are sexually mature; hens often mate during their first spring, but young males usually can't compete with mature gobblers. A dominant male may collect a harem of 8 to 12 or even more hens. Males are polygamous: a gobbler mates with several hens and plays no part in nest site choice, brooding eggs or rearing young.

In late April, mated females slip away from the flock. They choose nesting spots in wooded or brushy areas, near water sources and usually close to forest clearings or old fields. Nest: a leaf-lined depression in the ground. It may be located under the curve of a fallen log, concealed by vegetation or fallen branches or at the base of a tree.

The gobbler's sperm is stored in the hen's oviduct, so that fertilized eggs may be laid up to four weeks after mating. One mating is usually sufficient to fertilize an entire clutch. A hen lays an egg nearly every day until her nest contains 8 to 15 (average, 12; smaller clutches by younger birds), but won't begin incubating constantly until after all eggs are laid.

Eggs are oval and pointed markedly at one end. The smooth, dull shells are colored pale buff and are evenly marked with reddish-brown spots or fine dots. Foxes, bobcats and great horned owls prey on nesting hens; eggs are eaten by the aforementioned predators plus mink, raccoons, opossums, black snakes, skunks, crows and red squirrels.

Incubation takes about 28 days. After young hatch, the hen broods them until they're dry and then, if the weather is mild, leads them away from the nest.

Poults: Young turkeys are called poults. They're covered with a fine, brownish fuzz and even at hatching have a wild turkey's distinctive long neck and legs. Easy game for predators, their main defense is to hide. They scatter and freeze at the hen's warning call, remaining motionless until she sounds the all-clear. A hen may feign injury to lure intruders away from her young.

Poults need high-protein food, and the hen soon leads them to open areas where insects abound. Poults eat leafhoppers, crickets, other insects and larvae, tender greens and fruits. The hen broods them nightly for at least two weeks, until their wings develop and they can roost in trees. When poults are about three weeks old, several family groups may merge to form a flock of hens and poults.

Six-week-old poults are fairly strong fliers, and by au-

tumn they're practically self-sufficient. Birds of the year can be identified by their middle tail feathers, which are longer than the others. In adults, the edge of the fanned tail forms an unbroken curved line.

In autumn, flocks often contain several old hens and their young, and occasionally hens that have not raised broods, for a total of 40 or more birds. Old toms usually remain apart, in pairs or trios. During early winter, family groups disperse and form new flocks by sex and age: hens, young toms and old toms.

Although susceptible to diseases turkeys are hardy animals. Disease outbreaks have been verified in the past, but none has had substantial population impacts over large areas. Periodically, a harsh winter may lead to starvation, especially if there is deep, powdery snow which makes it difficult for birds to become airborne.

Population

In 1900, few turkeys were left in the eastern United States, largely because widespread logging had destroyed their woodland habitat. An estimated 5,000 birds remained in Pennsylvania, a far cry from the large, healthy population that had existed here (mainly in southcentral Pennsylvania's oak and American chestnut forests) a century earlier.

Restoration of the species involved several steps. First, refuges were established and new game laws strictly enforced to protect remaining local populations. Half-wild turkeys were bred on the Game Commission's wild turkey farm, beginning in 1930. These birds proved to be nearly useless. As cut-over forests began to regrow, existing wild flocks began to move into new areas on their own. In addition, wild birds were trapped in areas where they were abundant and transferred to suitable, but unoccupied, habitat to speed up the dispersal that was naturally occurring. The superiority of this approach over game farm turkey releases has been obvious. Today turkeys are found throughout the state and are abundant in areas where, in the past, continual releases of game farm turkeys failed to establish even limited self-sustaining populations.

The Game Commission also works to improve turkey habitat, especially brood and winter range, which are necessary for population expansion to occur. Penn's Woods is currently home to about 250,000 wild turkeys.

What are a turkey's chances of survival, from egg to adult? The following statistics are from *The Wild Turkey - Biology and Management*, edited by James G. Dickson and published in 1992 by Stackpole Books: (a) nesting success of the turkey is 31 to 45 percent, about normal for a ground-nesting species; (b) 53 to 76 percent of poults perish, mostly within two weeks of hatching; (c) life expectancy of a turkey surviving its first two weeks of life is still less than 1½ years, although a few have been known to survive more than 10 years in the wild; (d) annual turkey survival generally ranges from 54 to 62 percent; (e) predation is generally the most common cause of wild turkey mortality; and (f) hunting-related turkey mortality is highly variable, depending largely on varying hunting season regulations, but can range from less than five percent to more than 50 percent of all losses.

Habitat

Turkeys have shown more tolerance for fragmented habitat (woodlots) and human disturbance than previously believed, but they still depend on forested habitats and do best with limited human activity. Habitat diversity — varying habitat types and differing ages — is the key to good turkey habitat. Turkeys seem to do best with a mix of forested, actively farmed and reverting farmland habitat types.

A turkey flock uses an extensive area — several thousand acres — during a year to meet its needs, so small landowners shouldn't expect to have resident flocks. However, anyone with forested land can do something to benefit turkeys, especially if neighboring landowners will cooperate.

Trees such as oaks, beech, cherries, etc., are most beneficial to turkeys when producing the maximum mast; this occurs when trees are 50 to 100 years old. Landowners can manage their woodlands for saw-timber by conventional even- or uneven-age silvicultural approaches and "pushing" young hardwood stands to maturity by culling out less-vigorous and non-mast-producing trees. Some woodland cuttings — which aren't economical in terms of timber management — can be made to allow more sunlight to reach grape, dogwood, greenbrier, hawthorn, viburnum and other food-producing understory species. Planting shrubs such as Asiatic crabapple and Washington hawthorne will provide abundant and persistent winter foods.

Forest clearings are especially used by hens and poults. Here, sunlight penetrates the tree canopy and allows

grasses and forbs to spring up; increased plant life gives rise to increased insect life, and insects form a key part of a young turkey's diet. Thus, forest openings resulting from cleared timberlands, old logging roads and logging camp sites, power line rights-of-way and old beaver meadows should be preserved, or planted with a grass-legume mixture if needed. Spring seeps are also important, as they provide insect and vegetable food over winter.

Free water (streams, lakes, ponds, springs, seeps, rain-water in shallow depressions) has never been demonstrated to be lacking for wild turkeys in the eastern United States. Artificial feeding? Turkeys don't generally need it, especially if they live in good habitat. Such feeding may actually pose a hazard by unnaturally concentrating a local population, thus increasing the danger of poaching and disease spread, and giving predators an unnatural advantage.

Every day, expanding towns and new roads cut into our state's limited amount of wildlife habitat. Second home development — booming in the northcentral's prime turkey range — is especially threatening. We cannot expect to continue taking land at this rate and still have animals like turkeys and bears which don't coexist well with man. Snowmobiles, trailbikes and four-wheel-drives disturb turkeys, even though the drivers of these vehicles may never see a single bird; if such intrusion goes on too long, it can cause flocks to leave a given area for good.

Pennsylvanians can be proud of the wild turkey's restoration to this state. With enough concern for meeting *all* the birds' needs, we can enjoy them well into the future.

**Wildlife Notes are available from the
Pennsylvania Game Commission
Bureau of Information and Education
Dept. MS, 2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797**

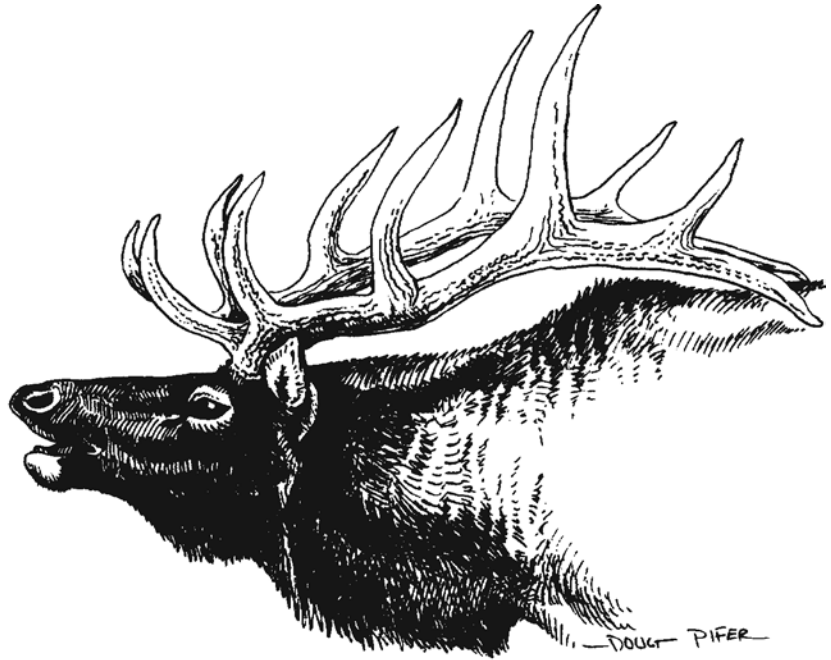
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Wildlife Note—33
LDN0713

Elk



Before white settlers arrived in Pennsylvania, elk (*Cervus elaphus*) lived throughout the state, with concentrations in the northcentral and Pocono Mountains. By 1867 the species had been extirpated; ultimately it became extinct throughout its range, which included New York and New England.

Today, elk inhabit portions of Elk and Cameron counties, and are being seen more and more in Clinton and Clearfield counties. The animals are descendants of elk released by the Pennsylvania Game Commission between 1913 and 1926.

The word “elk” comes from the German “elch,” the name for the European moose. The elk is also called “wapiti,” an Indian word meaning “white deer,” probably referring to animal’s sun-bleached spring coat or its light-colored rump.

The elk is the second largest member of the deer family in North America; only the moose is larger. Many Western states, several Canadian provinces, and a few Eastern states – including Pennsylvania – support thriving elk populations, and in those places the elk is a popular big game animal.

Biology

Elk are much larger and heavier than white-tailed deer. A mature male elk, called a bull, stands 50-60 inches at the shoulder and weighs 600-1000 pounds. Females, or cows, weigh 500-600 pounds.

Elk have a summer and a winter coat. The summer pelage is short, thin and colored reddish brown. In winter, long,

coarse guard hairs overlay woolly underfur. At this time, an elk’s body is tawny brown or brownish gray, with the neck, chest and legs dark brown, and the underparts darker than the back. Buffy or whitish fur covers the rump and the 4- to 5-inch tail. Sexes are colored essentially alike. Young elk, called calves, are dappled with spots.

Strong muscular animals, elk can run 30 miles per hour for short distances, and can trot for miles. They jump well and swim readily. Their senses of smell and hearing are keen.

Cow elk often bark and grunt to communicate with their calves, and calves make a sharp squealing sound. The best known elk call, however, is the bull’s bugling. Bugling occurs primarily during the mating season. It consists of a low bellow that ascends to a high note, which is held until the animal runs out of breath, followed by guttural grunts. Cows also bugle at times.

Each year, a bull grows large branching antlers that sweep up and back from the head. In May, two bumps start to swell on the animal’s skull, pushing up about half an inch per day. The growing antlers are covered with a soft skin called velvet. This covering contains blood vessels which supply growth materials to the enlarging antlers.

Yearlings usually grow single spikes 10-24 inches in length, while older bulls may produce racks with main beams 4-5 feet in length and having 5 to 9 tines to a side. An elk with a total of 12 antler points is called a “royal” bull; one with 14 points is an “imperial.” Before the autumn rutting season, the velvet dries and is shed or rubbed off. Bulls carry their antlers into late winter or early spring.

Elk are primarily grazers, eating a variety of grasses and forbs. In winter, they paw through snow to reach grass, or turn to twigs, buds and the bark of trees. Among trees and shrubs, early successional species such as aspen, willow, and flowering dogwood are important to Pennsylvania elk. When available, acorns will make up a portion of elk’s fall diet. They also browse oak, striped maple, black cherry, Juneberry and witch hazel. They drink from streams and springs and, if necessary, during the winter they get water by eating snow.





The mating season is September and October. Bulls bugle invitations to cows and challenges to other bulls. The bulls fight with each other, joining antlers and pushing and shoving. Battles rarely end in serious injury; the weaker bull usually breaks off the confrontation and trots away.

Like their western counterparts, Pennsylvania bull elk amass harems of 15-20 cows. Most harems are controlled by large mature bulls, although younger males, which hang around on the fringes of the groups, may also share in the breeding.

About 8 1/2 months after she is bred, a cow gives birth to a single calf rarely twins - in May and June. A calf weighs about 30 pounds and can stand when only 20 minutes old. Within an hour it starts to nurse, and it begins feeding on vegetation when less than a month old.

In spring and summer, bulls go off by themselves, living alone or in small groups. Cows and calves tend to remain in family units composed of a mature cow, her calf, and immature offspring from the year before. Sometimes several families band together. An old cow will lead the group, barking out alarm calls and guiding the band away from intruders. In hot weather, elk bed down in the shade of dense timber. They prefer not to move about in heavy wind.

Potential lifespan for an elk is more than 20 years. Pennsylvania elk die from hunting, old age, disease, vehicle collisions, and poaching.

Brainworm is a parasitic nematode (*Parelaphostrongylus tenuis*) that sometimes kills Pennsylvania elk. The nematode is common in the eastern United States and Canada. Its primary host is the white-tailed deer, which it does not normally harm. Elk pick up the parasite from snails - an intermediate brainworm host - which they inadvertently consume while grazing. The worm eventually reaches the brain and spinal column, causing death.

Habitat

Elk are attracted to forest clearcuts, revegetated strip mines, grassy meadows, open stream bottoms, and agricultural lands. Shy animals, they tend to avoid contact with humans, although they will venture into settled areas to reach favored food sources.

Pennsylvania's elk live in northcentral Pennsylvania.

The Game Commission and state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) manage public lands to make them more attractive to elk. The agencies create and maintain high-quality foraging areas and limit disturbance by humans. Elk habitat enhancement projects also benefit deer, wild turkeys, grouse and other wildlife.

Population

From 1913 to 1926 the Game Commission released a total of 177 elk in Blair, Cameron, Carbon, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Monroe and Potter counties. From 1923 to 1931 a hunting season on antlered bulls; hunters took 98. Elk were then protected for 70 years.

By 1940, the released elk and their offspring died or were killed everywhere in the state except for those in Elk and Cameron counties, which was, interestingly, the area where last native elk was killed. In the first elk survey conducted by the Game Commission and DCNR in 1971, 65 were counted by ground and aerial spotters. By 1980, the number of elk counted rose to 114. In 1992, the ground spotters were eliminated from the survey and the herd was estimated to number 183. In 2001, survey work indicated the herd contained more than 700 elk. That same year, the Game Commission once again had an open, but highly regulated elk hunt. Pennsylvania's elk herd continues to thrive and provide unique hunting opportunities for a limited number of hunters each year.

**Wildlife Notes are available from the
Pennsylvania Game Commission
Bureau of Information and Education
Dept. M5, 2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797**


www.pgc.state.pa.us

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Living with Pennsylvania Black Bears



Living with Pennsylvania Black Bears

 **BLACK BEARS** have been roaming our forests, wallowing in our bogs and swamps, and living around our farms since the days before the earliest human settlements. Today, bears are many things to many people, from valued game animals to the highlight of an outdoor experience, to farm pillagers and neighborhood pests, to even a dangerous threat. Our perceptions of bears are a product of their mostly shy, mysterious nature and powerful presence, not to mention the timeless tales that have been told about them. Unfortunately, there's as much misinformation about bears in circulation as there is fact. And that's too bad, because bears needn't be feared, nor should they be dismissed as harmless. They simply need to be respected.

Pennsylvania's bear population has been increasing for decades, and at the same time, many people have moved into the areas where bears reside. As a result, bears and people are coming into contact more than ever. And most of these encounters occur when bears learn that where people live there's easy-to-obtain food. Learning about bears and being aware of their habits is important for people who live in bear country, which now includes most of the state.

The bear facts

Ursus americanus is the black bear's scientific name; it means "American bear." Although three species of bears inhabit North America, only the black bear is found in Pennsylvania. Population estimates in recent years have ranged up around 15,000. Black bears appear heavy, but they are surprisingly agile; they can run up to 35 mph, climb trees and swim well. They may live up to 25 years in the wild.

Black bears are intelligent and curious. Studies show that bears can see colors, recognize human forms, and notice even the slightest movement. However, bears usually rely on their acute sense of smell and, to a lesser degree, hearing to locate food and warn them of danger.

Despite their common name, black bears are not always black. They may be cinnamon or, even more rare, blond. Many bears have a white blaze or "V" on their chest.

Adults usually weigh around 200 pounds, with males being heavier than females, often more than twice as much. Some weigh up to 600 or more pounds and rare individuals up to 900 have been found. Males are called boars; females, sows. Black bears measure about three feet high when on all fours or about five to seven feet tall when standing upright.

Bear signs and sounds

Black bear tracks are distinctive. The hind footprint resembles a human's. Bears have five toes. The front foot is shorter than the rear, which is long and narrow. Claw marks may or may not be visible.



Bears use trails, just like people do. Look for tracks in soft earth or around mud puddles, and for claw marks on smooth-bark trees or rotten logs that have been ripped apart for insects. It's also easy to recognize a black bear's sizeable droppings of partly digested berries, corn or animal hair.

Adult black bears make a variety of sounds that include woofing, growls and jaw-popping. Sows communicate with their cubs by using low grunts or huffs. Cubs whimper, chuckle and bawl.



Feeding habits

Bears may be on the move at any time, but they're usually most active at dusk and dawn. Bears are omnivorous, eating almost anything, from berries, corn, acorns, beechnuts and even grass, to table scraps, carrion, honey and insects. During late summer and fall, black bears fatten up for winter hibernation. At this time they may actively feed for up to 20 hours a day, ingesting up to 20,000 calories.



Bears and winter

Bears are usually dormant in winter, remaining in their dens, which can be rock caverns, excavated holes beneath shrubs, trees or dead falls, in hollow trees or brushy thickets. A hibernating bear's heart rate and breathing slow, and its body temperature drops slightly. During this time they do not eat or pass body wastes. A hibernating bear relies on stored fat to make it through the winter, however, they may emerge if they're disturbed.



Mating and breeding

In Pennsylvania, bears mate primarily from early June to mid-July. Males are very aggressive towards each other at this time. Sows give birth in January; litters number one to five. The newborns, cubs, are blind, toothless, and covered with short, fine hair that seems to inadequately cover their pink skin. Cubs nurse in the den while the sow sleeps. Nurtured with the sow's rich milk, they grow from as light as 10 ounces at birth to as much as 10 pounds by the time they leave the den in early April. Males do not help rear young.

Most cubs stay with the sow for a little more than a year. They watch her every move and learn by imitating her. Cubs are playful, regularly romping and wrestling with their littermates. The sows are very protective of cubs, sending them up trees if danger threatens. Adult males occasionally kill and eat cubs. The family group disbands when the cubs are about a year and a half old and the sow is again ready to breed.



If you live in bear country

If you live or have a summer home in bear country, you may need to make some accommodations to coexist peacefully with these large animals. Make sure you don't encourage bears to become problem bears by putting your garbage where it's available to them or, even worse, by intentionally feeding them.

Black bears will consume almost anything. They will eat human food, garbage, bird feed, pet foods and livestock feed. They also raid cornfields and beehives. Once bears find easily accessible food sources, whether on a farm or in a housing development, they lose their wariness of people and will keep coming back as long as food is available. The best way to get rid of these unwanted visitors is to remove the food source for a month or more, but even then, there are no guarantees. A persistent bear may damage property, increase the risk of human injury, or become an unwanted visitor in other parts of the neighborhood. And, all too often,

fed bears become dead bears.

Perhaps the best way to keep bears from being attracted to your home is to keep them from finding food there in the first place. Store trash, bird seed and pet food inside a



building, garage or secure shed. Don't put out your trash until the morning of collection day. Be sure garbage cans are cleaned regularly, with hot water and chlorine bleach.

If you have pets, bring their food pans inside at night. And when it comes to dogs, bears generally steer clear of chained or penned dogs. Unleashed dogs that approach bears, however, may be injured or killed. If you have a dog in bear country, don't let it roam far from the house, leash it whenever you hike in the woods, and keep it in the house or in a kennel at night.

Other tips include cleaning the grill after every use, and properly disposing of grill grease. Don't dump the grease out back. If you feed birds during summer (and if you're living in bear country, you shouldn't be), you may want to bring all bird feeders, including hummingbird feeders, in at night. Bears also are attracted to fruit, vegetable wastes and other tasty items in mulch or compost piles, so keep your gardens and areas around fruit trees cleaned up, too.

Beehives attract bears, especially right after the bruins come out of hibernation in the spring and during the peak honey production period of late summer and fall. Electric fences are the best way to protect bees, honey and equipment. Contact the Pennsylvania Game Commission for more information about fencing.

Black bears are also attracted to corn, especially in the milk stage. Bears can devastate cornfields. Call the Game Commission if bears are causing extensive damage; officers may be able to help.

Recreational feeding areas — dumpsters, garbage pits and wildlife feeders where people gather to see bears — are particularly bad. Bears that frequent these areas often lose their natural fear of humans, and they're also the ones most likely to be found climbing onto porches or even breaking into houses to investigate enticing smells. Other times they raid bird feeders, clean out dog dishes, kill domestic animals, or rifle through garbage containers.

If a bear is visiting your property, there are two possible courses of action. The first is to make loud noises or shout at the bear, like you'd react to a dog getting into your trash, but keep your distance. The second option is to leave the bear alone, and clean up the bear's mess after it leaves. Follow up by making sure you eliminate whatever attracted the bear in the first place. You may need to talk to your neighbors, as well.

If bears are regularly feeding at a site, encourage your neighbors or community to clean up and close the area. Don't wait until bears start roaming the neighborhood or spectators become a problem. Eliminate the feeding source; it's what lured the bears to your area.

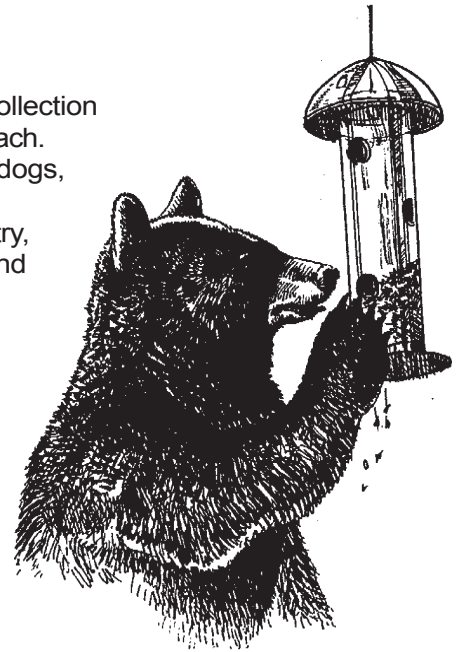
Because the feeding of bears is the cause of so many bear related problems, it is now against the law to put out food for bears. It's also against the law to put out any feed, for any wildlife, that is causing bears to congregate in or habituate to an area.



Camping and hiking in bear country

Although black bears are generally shy and avoid contact with humans, it's important to remember that bears must be respected for their size and strength. Do not deliberately approach a bear or try to become chummy with one, especially one that appears unafraid of you. Be smart: Keep your distance.

If you camp or hike in bear country, do everything you can to prevent close encounters and conflicts with bears. Giving a bear food will encourage it to approach other, unsuspecting people, which could then lead to an unpleasant or possibly dangerous encounter, and could lead to the bear having to be destroyed. In essence, never reward a bear for associating with people. It's what's best for you, the next person and the bear.



When afield in Penn's Woods:

1. Keep your camp clean and odor free. Wipe tables and clean eating utensils thoroughly after every meal. Burn all grease off grills and camp stoves.
 2. Store your food in safe or bear-proof places, in your car trunk, for example, or suspended from a tree branch. **Never have food in your tent.**
 3. Dispose of garbage properly. Use the camp receptacles if provided, or store trash in your vehicle. Pack out your garbage if you must, but never leave your garbage behind.
 4. If you hike at dawn or dusk, or where hearing or visibility is impaired (roar of fast moving water, thick vegetation), reduce your chances of surprising a bear by talking or making noise.
 5. Leave dogs at home or keep them on a leash.
- In short, keep your entire campsite free of all food smells.



What to do if you meet a bear

Bear attacks are extremely rare, especially considering how often people encounter them. In most cases, a bear will detect you first and leave the area long before you'll ever see it. However, if you do meet a bear before it's had time to leave, here are some suggestions. But remember, every bear encounter is different.

Stay calm — If you see a bear and it hasn't seen you, leave the area calmly. While moving away, talk to help the bear discover your presence.

Get back — If you have a close encounter, back away slowly while facing the bear. Avoid direct eye contact, which a bear may perceive as a threat. Give the bear plenty of room to escape.

Wild bears rarely attack people unless they feel threatened or provoked. If you're on a trail, step off on the downhill side and slowly leave the area.

Don't climb or run — If a cub is nearby, try to move away from it. But be alert, there could be other cubs. Never climb a tree to escape, because sows chase their cubs up trees when they detect danger. If you climb a tree, a sow may interpret that as an attempt to get her cubs. Stay on the ground and don't make any sudden movements. Running may prompt the bear to give chase; nobody can outrun a bear.

Pay attention — Bears will use all of their senses to figure out what you are. If they recognize you as a person, some may stand upright or move closer in their efforts to detect odors in the air currents. Don't consider this a sign of aggression. Once a bear identifies you, it will usually leave.

However, if the bear stays, it may pop its jaws as a warning sign that it's uncomfortable.

That's a sign for you to leave. Back away and slowly leave the area. If the jaw popping warning is ignored, some bears have been known to bluff charge to within a few feet. If this occurs, wave your arms wildly and shout at the bear.

Fight Back — Again, black bear attacks are extremely rare. However, they have occurred. If a bear attacks, fight back. Bears have been driven away when people have fought back with rocks, sticks, binoculars and even their bare hands.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is responsible for managing, conserving and protecting all wildlife, and is committed to doing everything possible to keep bear problems to a minimum. Extending the bear season where bear problems are most common, and prohibiting the feeding of bears are but the latest measures taken to help alleviate problems with bears. If you are having a problem with a bear and have no success using these suggestions, or if you have been attacked by a bear, please contact the Pennsylvania Game Commission at the following telephone numbers:



Northwest Region Office	877-877-0299	Southcentral Region Office	877-877-9107
Southwest Region Office	877-877-7137	Northeast Region Office	877-877-9357
Northcentral Region Office	877-877-7674	Southeast Region Office	877-877-9470

Harrisburg Headquarters

717-787-4250

For more on the Pennsylvania Game Commission, visit www.pgc.state.pa.us

RCM 4/04



Pennsylvania Game Commission

PGC-707-LE
09/2007

Application for Disabled Person to Use a Vehicle as a Blind

Notice: Use of this form is required by the PGC for any application filed pursuant to Title 34, Pa. C.S., section 2923. The PGC will not consider your application unless you complete and submit this form. Personal information provided may be used to determine the identity of the applicant, eligibility for approvals and for other enforcement purposes.

Return completed form to:

Pennsylvania Game Commission, Bureau of Wildlife Protection, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797

APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY

SECTION I – TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT. TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Applicant's Name	Driver's License Number	Date of Birth
Street or Route #, Apartment #	Home Telephone Number(with area code)	Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
City, State, Zip Code	County of Residence	Township of Residence
I hereby certify that the above information is true and correct, and I authorize my physician to release to the Pennsylvania Game Commission all records regarding my medical history and condition.		
Applicant's Signature	Date Signed	

SECTION II – TO BE COMPLETED BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN (Please refer to physician's notice)

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL ENTRIES

Indicate 'yes' or 'no' to all questions

PERMANENT CONDITION

Complete this section only for conditions where the patient has reached Maximal Medical Improvement.

A. MOBILITY

- 1a. Does applicant have a permanent or irreversible physical disability and requires one or more of the following support devices for mobility? **Applicant must be unable to walk without one of the devices listed below**..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 1b. Which of the following does applicant require for mobility? Check all that apply.
- a. Wheelchair ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - b. Walker ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - c. One leg brace or external prosthesis above the knee ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - d. Two leg braces or external prostheses below the knees ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - e. Two crutches or two canes (single crutch or cane does not qualify) ☐ Yes ☐ No

DESCRIBE SPECIFIC CONDITION THAT REQUIRES SUPPORT DEVICE AND PART OF BODY AFFECTED. If condition is the result of a specific incident (motor vehicle accident, work related injury, stroke, amputation, etc.) please give the date and nature of that incident. Attach additional sheets as needed.

CONTINUED ON BACK

2. Does the applicant have a disability or combination of disabilities creating a minimum impairment equivalent to 90% loss of function in one leg or no more than 10% maximal functional use in one leg regardless of the functional level of the other leg..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

DESCRIBE SPECIFIC CONDITION AND HOW IT LIMITS FUNCTIONAL USE OF LOWER EXTREMITY(S) TO THE DEGREE REQUIRED. Attach additional sheets as needed.

B. LUNG DISEASE

Does applicant suffer from lung disease to the extent that at least one of the following is met:

1. Forced expiratory volume for one second when measured by spirometry is less than one liter ☐ Yes ☐ No
DATE OF TEST AND ACTUAL MEASUREMENT _____
2. The arterial oxygen tension is less than 60 millimeters of mercury on room air at rest ☐ Yes ☐ No
DATE OF TEST AND ACTUAL MEASUREMENT _____
3. Dependent upon oxygen apparatus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.. ☐ Yes ☐ No

C. CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Does applicant suffer significantly from cardiovascular disease to the extent that functional limitations are classified in severity as **Class 3 or 4** according to current standards accepted by the American Heart Association?

The applicant must exhibit fatigue, palpitation, dyspnea or anginal pain with ordinary exertion such as light walking...... ☐ Yes ☐ No
DATE OF ORIGINAL EVALUATION AND ACTUAL CLASSIFICATION _____

SECTION III – TO BE COMPLETED BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN (IF APPLICABLE)

TEMPORARY CONDITION

Complete this section only for conditions where the patient has not reached Maximal Medical Improvement.

Does applicant have a temporary disability that restricts mobility or walking of any distance due to illness, injury or operative procedures and who either has a leg, hip or back, or any part thereof, casted by a licensed physician due to a fracture or had leg, hip or back surgery..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

Describe specific condition and body part effected:

Temporary permits expire June 30th of each year.

Physician Certification: I certify below that I have examined the applicant named above and read the physician's notice included with the application. I completed the application according to the instructions included and the information provided is true and correct and is an accurate and medically documented evaluation of the patient's condition and disability at the time of application. I understand that I may be required to appear and answer questions regarding this information at a hearing or other legal proceeding.

DATE OF PATIENT'S MOST RECENT EXAMINATION _____.

Name of Physician (Please Print)	Medical License Number	Date Signed
Signature of Physician	Telephone # (include area code)	Fax #
Address	(PGC USE ONLY)	
	APPROVED [] TEMP PERM DISAPPROVED []	
City, State, Zip Code	Chief, Technical Services Signature _____ Date _____	

TO THE APPLICANT

You are applying for a special permit to use a motor vehicle as a blind. This permit allows a person, who otherwise qualifies for a hunting license, to sit inside or on a stationary vehicle with a loaded firearm and shoot at game from the vehicle subject to all related laws and regulations.

Before applying, please consider that the law allows a person to hunt and discharge a firearm next to a legally parked vehicle without any special permits. Persons who have medical issues that restrict walking long distances or over rough terrain, but are able to exit their vehicles are encouraged to hunt outside, but next, to their vehicles. Remember that, without a permit, possessing a loaded firearm in, on or against any vehicle, parked or in motion, is a violation of game laws.

Possession of a similar permit issued by another state or a handicapped parking permit does not necessarily fulfill the requirements for this permit. This permit does not relate to an applicant's potential inability to field dress or remove downed game from the field. Permits are not granted for the purpose of operating motorized vehicles on State Game Lands.

To apply, the applicant completes Section I only. All spaces must be filled in, typewritten or legibly printed in ink. If you do not have a driver's license or phone number, enter 'none' in that blank. Applications with incomplete or illegible information will be returned to the applicant with all medical information attached. Only the physician may complete Section II or III. Be sure to provide them with the attached physicians notice along with the application. It will be helpful for you to read the application and be familiar with the information your doctor will be asked to provide. Please check with your doctor to be sure that all necessary releases have been signed allowing them to provide the PGC with your medical information. If your physician is unwilling to release information or discuss your medical condition and history with a PGC representative, the application will be returned to you. Any application that is returned may be resubmitted with additional information or necessary corrections.

After we receive the completed application, allow a minimum of 8 weeks for processing. During the months of August through November that period may be extended due to the large volume of applications received. If the application is approved, a permit certificate and a copy of the laws that apply to the permit will be sent by regular mail. This certificate will indicate if the permit is 'permanent' or 'temporary' and must be carried upon the person at all times while hunting. If the application is disapproved, a letter notifying the applicant of this will be sent by regular mail. Applicants who are denied the permit are encouraged to reapply if they have significant additional medical information to be considered or if their medical condition has changed over time. Physicians are encouraged to contact us to provide clarification or additional information. The denial letter will explain options allowing you to hunt next to the vehicle as well as the procedure for requesting an administrative hearing.

Applications will not be accepted or processed in person at any of our offices. Please send them via first class mail to the address on the face of the application.

Applicants with questions may contact us at: (717) 783-8164.

APPLICANT: GIVE THIS NOTICE TO YOUR PHYSICIAN WITH THE APPLICATION

TO THE PHYSICIAN

Your patient is applying for a special permit to use a vehicle as a blind to hunt. Simply put, with this permit, the applicant will be authorized to park a vehicle along a public highway and shoot at game from inside the vehicle, subject to all other hunting laws and regulations. Your part in the application process is important. Please devote the necessary time to the completion of this application and give each question due consideration. We depend on you to provide us with an honest and fair evaluation of the applicant's medical condition and resulting impairment from which an appropriate determination can be made. The standards, as listed to qualify for this permit, reflect the patient's *need* above their convenience or preference. This permit is designed for those individuals who, due to one of the listed conditions, would be unable to exit their vehicle and hunt outside or to do so would create a serious medical risk. It does not relate to their ability to walk long distances or over rough or difficult terrain as it is legal to hunt next to a parked vehicle.

Section 2741 a (2) of the Game and Wildlife Code provides that any person who is evaluated by a licensed medical authority or court and who has been certified to the commission as mentally or physically unfit or addicted to alcohol or a controlled substance to the degree that they are unfit to exercise any privilege granted by this title, including hunting, shall be denied a license to do so. Determining the suitability of the applicant to hunt is perhaps the greatest responsibility of the physician as to the welfare of the patient and the protection of the public. Comments on this issue may be included in a narrative.

The applicant will complete Section I, and the physician will complete Section II or III and the physician's certification. It will be helpful to read the application completely prior to filling it out. This will help eliminate common mistakes that may delay processing. Please type or print all entries and narratives. You may use commonly accepted medical abbreviations and symbols but the information should be in a form understandable to someone with basic medical knowledge. Provide detailed and complete narratives of the patient's condition and an assessment of impairment as a result of that condition where it is requested. Narratives may be done in the space provided or on separate sheets. Medical reports may be attached. Answer every question 'yes' or 'no' and provide information in the blanks where requested. Forms with unanswered questions or insufficient information will be returned to the applicant.

Determine if your patient's condition is permanent or temporary. Both sections may be completed only if the applicant suffers from two or more unrelated conditions involving both types, and this is clearly explained by narrative. Do not complete both sections for disabilities resulting from a single medical condition.

A temporary condition is one where recovery is expected, generally within a year and for which the patient has not reached maximal medical improvement. If recovery does not progress as expected, the patient may reapply as a temporary for an additional year. Common examples of temporary conditions are broken weight-bearing bones; knee, hip or back surgery; and certain serious illnesses or medical procedures. They must have a leg, hip or body cast or have undergone surgery on one or more of these areas and be disabled after the surgery. It must be a condition that reasonably restricts walking of any distance. Broken arms, ribs, clavicles, separated shoulders, for example, would not qualify.

Progressive diseases should be evaluated as permanent conditions.

Old injuries, surgeries or conditions for which the patient has reached maximal medical improvement should be evaluated as permanent conditions.

(over)

Permanent conditions are of three types: restricted mobility, lung disease or cardiovascular disease.

In order to qualify in the mobility category A.1, the condition must meet two criteria: 1) it is permanent and irreversible, and 2) the applicant is unable to walk without one or more of the artificial support devices listed. Occasional use of only one device is not acceptable. The patient must *require* a device for mobility and be unable to walk without one.

Category A.2 allows for other cases of restricted mobility. This may apply to a single, or multiple conditions that result in a minimum 90% loss of use of a lower extremity. This standard is substantial and is seldom met where the patient does not require artificial support to perform the activities of daily living. This category, in particular, requires a narrative description that accounts for loss of use of an extremity to this degree.

Permits will not be granted based solely on disability from pain, fatigue, etc. Due to their subjective nature, impairment due to pain and fatigue must be supported by specific causes and the loss of function due to such conditions substantiated.

Evaluate your patient's capabilities, including the effects of medication, for those conditions where medication is successfully controlling symptoms and improving their ability to ambulate.

Advanced age may be considered a contributing factor in a medical condition but will not be considered by itself as a qualifying condition.

The standards for lung disease are defined. Documentation of specific pulmonary function testing is required. The patient must have met the standard continuously from the date of the test to the date of application. A permit may be granted if any one of the three conditions is met.

The standards for cardiovascular disease are defined. The applicant must have functional limitations of class 3 or 4 as defined by the American Heart Association standards. The patient must experience fatigue, palpitation, dyspnea or anginal pain while performing ordinary physical activity such as light walking. The patient must meet this standard continuously from the date of evaluation to the date of application.

It may be necessary for us to contact you with questions about the information on the application. Please include a phone and fax number in the spaces provided.

Licensed chiropractors may complete the application as to mobility but not as to lung disease or cardiovascular disease. Chiropractors should refer their patients to the appropriate physician to evaluate those conditions.

Physicians may contact us at (717) 783-8164 to discuss any application.

CAMP ROSTER FOR HUNTING DEER, BEAR OR ELK

NAME OF CAMP OR PARTY _____

LOCATED IN _____ TOWNSHIP _____ COUNTY CAPTAIN OR LEADER _____

	Name	Customer Identification (CID) Number	Date Arrived	Date Departed	Caliber of Firearm	Big Game Killed	Sex	Approximate Weight (Hog Dressed)	Total No. of Points	Date Killed
1										
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SAFE HUNTING IS ALWAYS IN SEASON

IMPORTANT - The Game and Wildlife Code and related regulations require FIVE OR MORE PERSONS who are members of a permanent camp and hunt together for deer, bear or elk or cooperate with others to hunt for deer, bear or elk, to maintain a roster. The roster shall be prepared in duplicate, with one copy being carried by the leader, and the other permanently posted at the headquarters so it can be read from outside the camp. The posted copy shall remain posted for 30 days after the close of the season. ALL INFORMATION REQUIRED ON THE ROSTER MUST BE COMPLETED. Each member of the hunting party may be liable for the penalties provided for roster violations. PARTIES HUNTING DEER, BEAR OR ELK SHALL BE LIMITED TO 25 PERSONS. GAME KILLED SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY RECORDED ON COPY OF ROSTER CARRIED BY THE LEADER AND THE ROSTER AT THE HEADQUARTERS COMPLETED IMMEDIATELY UPON RETURN TO THE HEADQUARTERS.

