

Dept. of Natural Resources: 2022 gun deer hunt harvest totals and license sales now available

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MADISON, Wis. – The 2022 gun deer hunt in Wisconsin kicked off the holiday season with plenty of opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors, put delicious, wild-harvested protein on the table and make memories with family and friends. Preliminary license sales, harvest registration and hunting incident numbers are now available.

Preliminary License Sales Totals

As of 11:59 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 27, sales for gun, bow, crossbow, sports and patron licenses reached 795,072. Of that total, 436,423 were for gun privileges only and 554,898 were for all gun privileges including gun, sports and patron licenses. The year-to-date sales for all deer licenses are down 1.6% from the same time last year.

Of the licenses sold to date, 63% were purchased online. The remaining 37% were sold in-person through transactions at DNR license agent locations. Deer hunting license and harvest authorization sales will continue throughout the remaining deer hunting seasons.

This year, licenses were sold to hunters in all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico. Additionally, hunters came from 21 different countries to deer hunt in Wisconsin.

Preliminary Registration Totals

Preliminary figures show that hunters registered 203,295 deer during the 2022 gun

deer season, including 98,397 antlered and 104,898 antlerless deer. Since archery seasons opened on Sept. 17, hunters have registered 301,540 deer statewide.

Compared to 2021, the total firearm deer harvest was up 14.4% statewide, with the antlered harvest up 14.7% and antlerless harvest up 14.1%.

All four deer management zones showed harvest increases from 2021 for both antlered and antlerless harvests. The Central Forest Zone (+30.6%) saw the most significant increase, with the Northern Forest Zone (+19.3%) also seeing a considerable increase. The Central Farmland Zone was up 13.5%, while the Southern Farmland Zone was up 10.2%.

The Central Farmland Zone in Adams County led the state with over 12 deer registered per square mile. Vernon County led the Southern Farmland Zone with almost seven deer registered per square mile. The Central Forest Zone in Eau Claire County registered 4.8 deer per square mile. Taylor County registered the most per square mile in the Northern Forest Zone at four.

Opening weekend saw cold temperatures and snow throughout the state, with ideal conditions except for the strong winds on Saturday, Nov. 19. DNR staff across the state reported good weather throughout the weekdays of the season. Warm weather later in the season melted snow, reducing deer and hunter activity.

For the gun deer season, [the 2022 regional harvest breakdown by deer management zone is available online](#).

More information regarding preliminary registration totals, including county-level numbers, is available on [the DNR website](#).

[A 2021-2022 comparison of preliminary gun deer season registration totals is also available online](#).

Registration Of Deer Required With GameReg

As a reminder, hunters must register their deer by 5 p.m. the day after recovery through GameReg, the game registration system. Harvested deer may be registered in one of three ways:

- Online: gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method)
- Phone: 1-844-426-3734

- *When prompted, use your phone keypad to spell the first three letters of the county. For example, a registrant in Adams County would spell A-D-A by pressing "232."*
- In-Person: Find a station that offers a phone or computer for registration through the online hunting resources stations portal.

Reminder: When registering, you will need your unique harvest authorization number to begin the process.

Gun Deer Season Hunting Incidents

At the publication time of this news release, the DNR reports eight firearm-involved injuries and one fatality for the entire 2022 gun deer season.

- **Sauk County, Woodland Township:** On Nov. 19, 2022, at approximately 11:10 a.m., a 22-year-old male was the victim of a gunshot wound to the thigh. During a deer drive, a 20-year-old male shooter, who was a driver in the hunting party, shot at a running deer, striking the victim, who was a stander in the hunting party. The victim was transported to the hospital and treated.
- **Marquette County, Mecan Township:** On Nov. 19, 2022, at approximately noon, while in a ground blind in a field, a 69-year-old female was the victim of a gunshot wound to the thigh. A 16-year-old male shooter was hunting from his ground blind in an open field, separated by a pond from the victim, when he shot at a deer, striking the victim. The victim was transported to a nearby hospital and treated. The shooter and victim were members of the same hunting party.
- **Oneida County, Little Rice Township:** On Nov. 19, 2022, at approximately 1:30 p.m., a 24-year-old male suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the foot. The victim was repairing his rifle sling when his hand froze to the firearm. As he pulled his hand off the firearm, he hit the trigger, causing an unwanted discharge. The victim received medical treatment for the injury.
- **Iowa County, Mifflin Township:** On Nov. 19, 2022, at the close of hunting hours, a 15-year-old male suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the foot. The victim was unloading his firearm while sitting in the passenger seat of a truck when the firearm discharged. The victim was transported to a local hospital and treated.
- **Green Lake County, Seneca Township:** On Nov. 20, 2022, shortly after 9 a.m., an 11-year-old male was the victim of a gunshot wound to the chest. A 41-year-old male shooter attempted to unload his firearm while the firearm

was placed in the backseat of a vehicle. The firearm discharged, striking the victim. The victim was flown via Med Flight to a hospital, where he died. The shooter and victim were members of the same hunting party.

- **Forest County, Town of Hiles:** On Nov. 20, 2022, in the afternoon hours, a 33-year-old male suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his little finger. The victim was manipulating his handgun when it discharged. The victim was treated for the injury.
- **Jefferson County, Palmyra Township:** On Nov. 25, 2022, at approximately 3:20 p.m., a 36-year-old male was the victim of a gunshot wound to the leg. The victim was deer hunting from a ground blind on private property adjacent to public hunting land when a group of seven individuals conducting a deer drive shot at two running deer. A 51-year-old male was identified as the responsible shooter. The victim was driven to the hospital and treated. The victim and shooter were not members of the same hunting party.
- **Sauk County, Sumpter Township:** On Nov. 26, 2022, at approximately noon, a 27-year-old male suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the leg. The victim was attempting to sit on the ground by a boulder when he lost his balance. He then had an unwanted discharge from his firearm. The victim was flown to the hospital via Med Flight for treatment.

The average hunting incidents per year for the last 10 gun deer seasons (2013-2022) is 6.4. In addition, there were zero fatalities in 6 of those 10 years.

Wardens remind all hunters to use the four firearm safety rules as a cornerstone for safe and successful outings:

- **T**- Treat every firearm as if it is loaded;
- **A** - Always point the muzzle in a safe direction;
- **B** - Be certain of your target, what's before it and what's beyond it;
- **K** - Keep your finger outside your trigger guard until you are ready to shoot.

[More tips for safe hunting in Wisconsin are available on the DNR website.](#)

DNR VIOLATION HOTLINE: Anyone with information regarding natural resource violations may confidentially report by calling or texting: 1-800-TIP-WDNR or 1-800-847-9367. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained staff relay the information to conservation wardens. [File a report online.](#)

Deer Hunter Wildlife Survey Remains Open Through Late Seasons

The [Deer Hunter Wildlife Survey](#) will remain active until all deer seasons have ended. Wildlife managers ask that hunters submit a report of what they observe during their time in the field. This information provides valuable data to County Deer Advisory Councils, which make recommendations for future deer seasons. [Additional information is available on the DNR website.](#)

First Harvest Certificates Available To Help Remember Time In The Outdoors

Hunters of all ages who head out for their first hunt are encouraged to mark the occasion by creating a [first harvest and first hunting experience certificate](#).