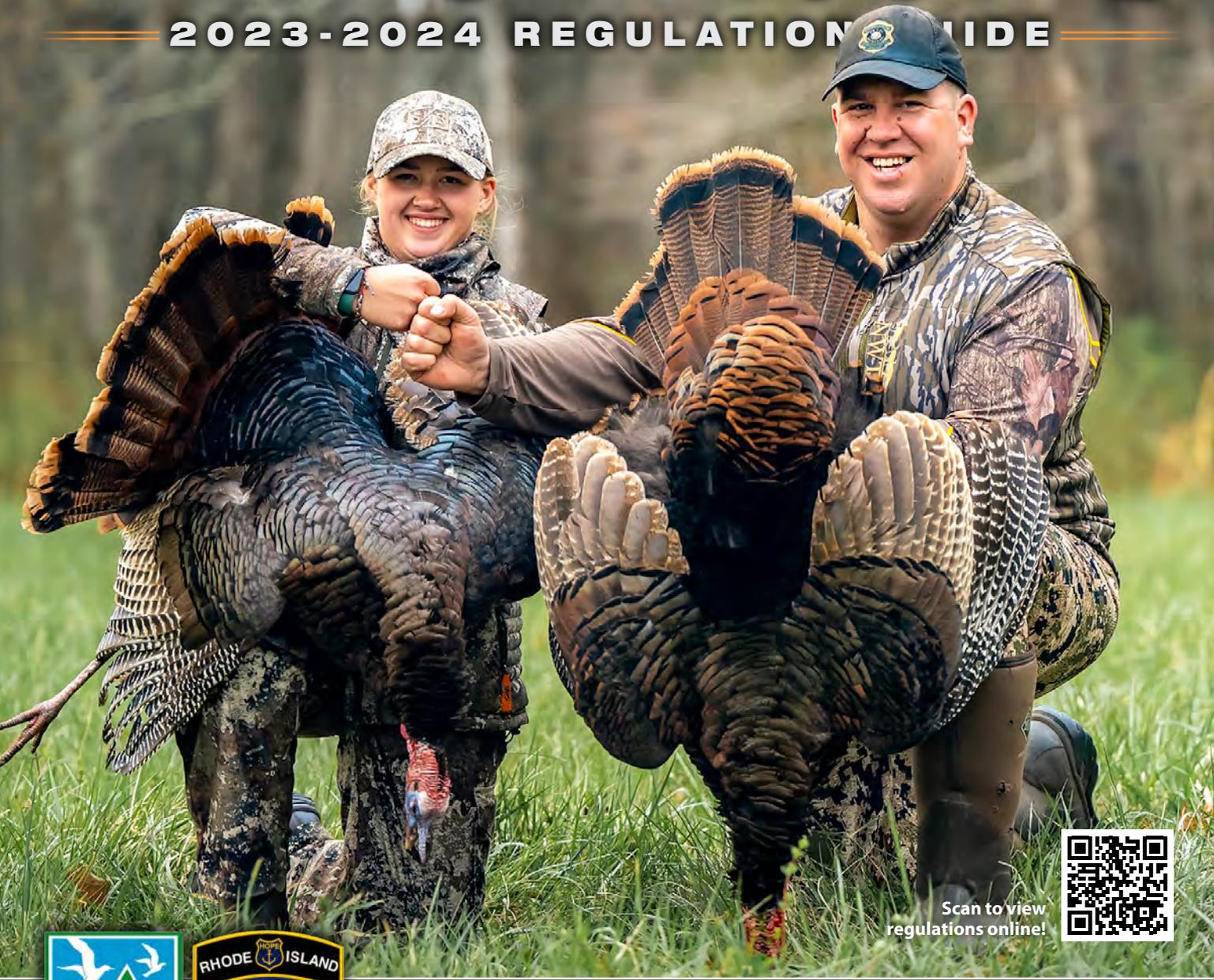


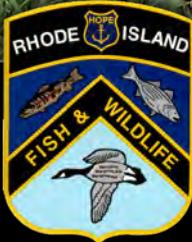
**RHODE ISLAND**

# Hunting & Trapping

**2023-2024 REGULATION GUIDE**



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State of Rhode Island  
Department of Environmental Management • Division of Fish & Wildlife





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**Governor**  
 Daniel McKee

RI Department of Environmental  
 Management  
**Director**  
 Terrence Gray  
**Deputy Director**  
**Natural Resources Bureau**  
 Jason McNamee

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**24hr Violation Line: (401) 222-3070**  
 Dean Hoxsie, Chief

**On the Cover:**  
 NEAFWA Conservation Law Officer of the  
 Year Josh Beuth and **youth hunter Emma  
 Roeben** during the Light Foundation and  
 RI DEM Mentored Youth Turkey Hunt!  
 Photo by Desmos Photo

# RHODE ISLAND Hunting & Trapping

2023-2024 REGULATION GUIDE



Photo by Desmos Photo

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Photo by Eric Call

# Welcome Letter



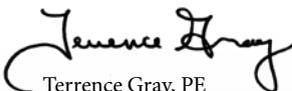
On behalf of Governor Dan McKee, I am excited to release the tenth annual **Rhode Island Hunting and Trapping Regulation Guide** for Rhode Islanders and visitors who enjoy wildlife and the great outdoors. We hope its information about the ins and outs of harvesting game animals will help novice and seasoned hunters alike.

Hunting has a long tradition in Rhode Island, supporting family customs, connecting people with nature, and attracting tourism to the state. Although I am not an active hunter, I know and respect the valuable history of hunting in Rhode Island and how hunting skills and experiences are passed on generation to generation in many Rhode Island families.

The support of Rhode Island hunters allows DEM to acquire and protect wildlife habitat, study local species, and educate the public on the importance of conservation and management. This year, the Division of Fish and Wildlife held its eighth consecutive Youth Waterfowl Mentored Hunt and also partnered with The Light Foundation for the third annual spring Mentored Youth Wild Turkey Hunt. These events continue to help instill responsibility and respect in Rhode Island youth hunters. DEM is committed to building opportunities for young people to experience and enjoy the outdoors and inspiring the next generation of responsible hunters, outdoor enthusiasts, and leaders.

New this year are many additional acres for open public hunting! Both through state land purchases including a new 128-acre parcel in North Kingstown and through solid partnerships and cooperation with towns and private organizations, hunters can find access to hunt and trap in every county within a short distance. We are proud of the partnerships that we have forged and know that respectful hunters in Rhode Island will help ensure that these partnerships, and these lands, stay open for recreational access.

I hope this guide, funded through your contributions to the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson Act), enhances your hunting experiences, while encouraging you to be respectful of the environment and fellow hunters. Enjoy the excitement of the outdoors in beautiful Rhode Island and the tranquility and connection to nature that hunting brings. And thank you for being part of conservation efforts that will provide benefits for generations to come!

  
Terrence Gray, PE  
Director

## Hunting Abstract

This hunting abstract is a summary of the rules, regulations, seasons and bag limits for the 2023-2024 Rhode Island hunting and trapping seasons. For more detailed information, see the General Laws of Rhode Island, obtainable at most public libraries. A complete copy of the Hunting and Trapping Regulations for the 2023-2024 Season can be viewed online at: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/documents/regulations/index.php#hunting-fishing>

Copies are also available by contacting the Division of Fish and Wildlife, 401-789-0281.

## Report Game Violations

RIDEM Environmental Police Officers have broad responsibilities associated with the statewide enforcement of various state environmental laws and regulations, including those associated with hunting, freshwater fishing, and marine fisheries. Officers are always present and on guard to protect these valuable natural resources for all of our citizens.

You can assist them by reporting wildlife violations to the 24 hour hotline at DEM.

**Turn In Poachers! – 401-222-3070  
– 24 Hours/7 days week**



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## About This Guide

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### Graphic Design:

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available online at

**eRegulations.com**

## Significant Regulation Changes & Highlights 2023-2024

1. The North West Cooperative in Gloucester is closed to hunting.
2. In addition to private lands, deer decoys may now be used on state-owned Wildlife Management Areas during archery only deer seasons.
3. Deer hunters may use one (1) dog to aid in the recovery of deer. See page 10 for details.
4. Shooting hours for all segments of the dove season are one half (1/2) hour before sunrise until sunset.
5. Dove bag limit may include Eurasian collared doves in aggregate.
6. Shooting hours for pheasant and small game hunting on opening day and all other hunting days starts at sunrise.
7. The Heritage Property on Prudence Island is closed to small game hunting during the archery only deer season.
8. The minimum amount of goose decoys required to be on the SSMA premises has been reduced from 24 to 12.
9. Mallard bag limit has been increased to four (4) of which two (2) may be hen mallards.
10. The brant season has been reduced to 30 days seen on page 22. The bag limit for brant has also been reduced to one (1).
11. Applications for Block Island and USFWS hunting lottery (Trustom Pond NWR) must be submitted by September 15th. The Block Island lottery applications are available at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov). The USFWS lottery applications are available at [rhodeislandpermits.recaccess.gov](http://rhodeislandpermits.recaccess.gov).

12. There are new cooperative hunting properties open to deer hunting seen on pages 16-19.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure that the Freshwater, Marine, and Wildlife resources of the State of Rhode Island will be conserved and managed for equitable and sustainable use.

## Definitions

**Antlerless deer** – deer having no antlers or antlers less than three (3) inches in length.

**Archery proficiency certification** – the measurable demonstration of skills with archery equipment using a set of standards as determined by the hunter education program.

**Bearded turkey** – a wild turkey that carries a visible beard, i.e., a tuft of stiff filament-like feathers projecting outward and downward from the center of the chest.

**Conibear-type trap** – “conibear” model traps and similar body-gripping traps and devices.

**Daily bag limit** – the maximum number of game of a single species or combination (aggregate) of species permitted to be taken by one person in any one day during the open season.

**Driving deer/cooperative drive** – to pursue, drive, chase, or otherwise frighten or cause a deer to move in a direction toward a person or persons known to be waiting for deer.

**Field possession limit** – the maximum number of game of a single species or combination of species permitted to be possessed by one person while in the field, in one’s vehicle, boat, trailer or other means of transportation when traveling between the field and one’s personal abode.

**Junior Hunter** – any person 12-14 years of age who possesses a hunter safety education certificate. Junior hunters may only hunt in the immediate company of an adult 21 years of age or older, who possesses a current RI hunting license.

**Personal abode** – one’s principal or ordinary home or dwelling place, as distinguished from one’s temporary or transient place of abode or dwelling, such as a hunting club, or any club house, cabin, tent or trailer house used as a hunting club, or any hotel, motel or rooming house used during a hunting, pleasure or business trip.

**Possess or Possession** – to exercise dominion or control over any wild animal, commencing at the time at which a decision is made not to return the wild animal to the immediate vicinity from which it was taken and lasting up until its ultimate disposition. The decision to possess or return the animal must be made at the first practical opportunity.

**Season bag limit** – the maximum number of game of a single species permitted to be taken by one person over the duration of the open season.

**Tidal Waters** – waters of the State extending from mean high water to the seaward limit of three (3) miles.

## Environmental Police Chief’s Message:

Welcome to the hunting and trapping abstract for the State of Rhode Island. You will find all the necessary information within this guide, and a list of resources, locations and programs that are offered. Rhode Island, while small, has a great deal to offer for outdoor enthusiasts such as white-tailed deer, waterfowl, small game, and upland game hunting, along with a tremendous trout stocking program for our freshwater bodies of water. Saltwater anglers can fish the many miles of shoreline, take a charter boat, or use recreational boating to access some of the best fishing on the east coast.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife offers hunter education courses operates a state-of-the-art shooting range at the Great Swamp and provides many other programs for you to learn from and explore. All of the programming is provided to ensure that those hunting and fishing in our state, do so in an

ethical manner with the greatest regard for the outdoor environment, and the wildlife inhabitants. Fish and Wildlife has a highly educated and dedicated staff that work to provide wildlife habitat, game management, and trout and salmon stocking programs to benefit the outdoorsmen.

The Environmental Police work together with all divisions of the department, to provide resource protection through conservation law enforcement. Our officers are highly educated and trained to provide a diverse and thorough background in natural resources. Officers are responsible for all state lands, private lands for hunting and fishing oversight, as well as the marine environment. Hunting, fishing, and boating safety and enforcement are the primary functions of the division. Officers are provided with an incredible assortment of tools to insure the protection of our natural resources for future generations.

Please venture into the great outdoors that Rhode Island has to offer. While we are called the Ocean State, our other natural resource divisions are as impressive as the water side vistas. We ask that you visit and enjoy in a manner that is respectful to the outdoor environment, lands and waters of our state and maintain these areas in a pristine condition so that others can enjoy them as you have.

As Chief, I welcome you to Rhode Island and ask that everyone do their part to protect the natural resources of this small but incredibly diverse state. Go out and explore, enjoy and take in all that Rhode Island has to offer.

Sincerely,

**Dean Hoxsie, Chief**  
RI Environmental Police  
(401-222-3070)

# General INFORMATION

License & Permits License year: March. 1, 2023 - February 29, 2024	Fee (online)	Fee (at vendor)
<b>Resident Hunting License</b> (must be 15 years old) <sup>1</sup>	\$21.00	\$23.00
<b>Resident Combination License</b> (Hunting & Fishing)	\$38.00	\$40.00
<b>Resident Junior Hunting License</b> (12-14 years old) <sup>1</sup>	\$14.00	\$17.00
<b>Permanent Resident Combination License</b> (over 65 or disabled)	No fee <sup>2</sup>	No Fee
<b>Resident Trapping License</b>	\$15.00	\$17.00
<b>Non-Resident Hunting License</b> (must be 15 years old) <sup>1</sup>	\$55.00	\$58.00
<b>Non-Resident Tourist Hunting License</b> (3-day)	\$20.00	\$23.00
<b>Non-Resident Junior Hunting License</b> (12-14 years old) <sup>1</sup>	\$40.00	\$43.00
<b>Non-Resident Trapping License</b> (if reciprocal privileges allowed)	\$50.00	\$53.00
<b>Active Military Personnel Hunting License</b>	\$21.00	\$23.00
<b>Resident All Outdoors Deer Package Permit<sup>3</sup></b>	\$78.00	\$81.00
<b>Resident Deer Permit<sup>4</sup></b>	\$13.00	\$13.50
<b>Non-Resident Deer Permit<sup>4</sup></b>	\$26.50	\$27.50
<b>Resident Turkey Permit</b>	\$8.00	\$8.50
<b>Non-Resident Turkey Permit</b>	\$21.50	\$22.50
<b>RI Game Bird Permit</b>	\$17.00	\$17.50 <sup>5</sup>
<b>State Waterfowl Stamp</b>	\$8.00	\$8.50 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Migratory Bird (H.I.P) Permit</b>	No fee	No Fee

- 1 Junior hunters must hunt in the immediate company of an adult, 21 years of age or older, holding a valid RI hunting license.
- 2 Any resident 65 years or older or with a permanent disability may obtain a free permanent license through the online system, at any license vendor, or at the DEM Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.
- 3 The All Outdoors Deer Permit Package consists of two (2) antlered deer permits and five (5) antlerless deer permits that may be used in any combination during the open deer seasons in Zones 1 and 2 in accordance with the zone bag limits.
- 4 Deer permits are sex, weapon, and zone specific.
- 5 Non-Residents pay a \$1.00 Enhanced access fee (\$18.00 Game Bird Permit and \$9.00 State Waterfowl Stamp).

## Licenses & Permits

No person shall hunt, pursue, take or kill any wild bird or animal in the state without first having obtained a Rhode Island hunting license (RIGL 20-13-1). Hunters must have a signed paper copy of their license and permits in possession, on their person, at all times and shall present it for inspection on demand by any authorized person. Failure to present a license shall make a person liable to the same penalties as if he or she was hunting without a license (RIGL 20-2-9). Licensed hunters and trappers are subject to inspection of any boat, vehicle, game bag, blind, stand, or other paraphernalia used in conjunction with licensed activity (RIGL 20-2-32). Licenses may be suspended or revoked because of violations of hunting rules and regulations (RIGL 20-2-13).

The possession of a valid Rhode Island hunting license, or combination hunting and fishing license, shall serve as a permit to hunt state management areas (RIGL 20-18-2 and 20-18-3), as well as on some TNC, and state co-op hunting areas, except when special permits are required for deer, waterfowl, or turkey hunting on state lands. These permits shall be valid only from the first day of season to the last day in February. The carrying of firearms on state management areas at any other time is prohibited.

Hunting licenses are available online at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov), at the DEM Office of Boating Registration and Licenses at 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908 (401) 222-3576, and from some sporting goods stores. Reprints of lost or damaged licenses are free through the online system. Purchases made at a full service vendor carry an Enhanced Access Fee (EAF) to offset the cost of administering the licensing system. The enhanced access fees are as follows:

- **Resident:** \$2 per license and \$0.50 per permit
- **Non-Resident:** \$3 per license and \$1.00 per permit
- No EAF for Recreational Saltwater Fishing or No Cost Licenses and permits.

## Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP)

All migratory bird hunters are required to obtain a HIP certification and answer a short survey. HIP permits are available free of charge through the online system, at license vendors, DEM Providence headquarters and the DEM Great Swamp Field Office. The HIP program provides state agencies and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agencies with better data that improves their ability to manage our nation's migratory bird resources.

## Hunter Safety Course Requirements & Licensing

Persons applying for a hunting license or archery permit for the first time or not having been a member of the armed forces must complete a course in safe hunting or archery practices and have been issued a Hunter Education Certificate to obtain a license. License applicants must present a valid hunter safety certificate from Rhode Island or other state, or possess a previous hunting license from RI or other state, or present proof of current or honorably discharged military status. Applicants for an archery deer permit or fall archery turkey permit must provide proof of successful completion of an Archery Safety Education course. A list of hunter safety classes, dates, and locations is available from the Hunter Safety Office: (401) 539-0019 or on the web: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/huntereducation>.

An online hunter education course is available at <https://www.hunter-ed.com/rhodeisland/> and an online bow hunter education course is available at <https://www.bowhunter-ed.com/rhodeisland/>.

## Prohibited Activities

- No loaded rifles or shotguns in or on vehicles (RIGL 20-13-8).
- No shooting at, hunting, or pursuing game along, upon, or across a public highway (RIGL 20-13-9).
- It is a violation of law, punishable by a fine and imprisonment, to fire "into" land for which one does not have landowner permission.

Hunting Licenses and Permits	Deer	Turkey	Pheasant & Quail	Small Game (Coyote <sup>1</sup> , Fox, Squirrel, Rabbit, and Raccoon)	Morning Doves, Crows <sup>3</sup> , Woodcock, Snipe and Rails	Waterfowl
<b>Hunting License</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Deer Permit<sup>2</sup></b>	•					
<b>Turkey Permit<sup>2</sup></b>		•				
<b>Game Bird Permit</b>			•			
<b>HIP Permit</b>					•	•
<b>Federal Duck Stamp</b>						•
<b>State Duck Stamp</b>						•

- 1 Deer permit required during deer seasons and turkey permit required during turkey season.
- 2 Each deer and turkey harvested requires an individual permit.
- 3 Crow hunters are not required to obtain a HIP Permit.

- No hunting on posted land without landowner permission (RIGL 11-44-4,5).
- No hunting in state parks, with the exception of undeveloped state parks as denoted in the regulations (RIGL 11-44-4,5).
- No more than five (5) persons to hunt in unison (RIGL 20-13-11).
- Target or trap shooting on state lands is only allowed on provided ranges (RIGL 32-2-4).
- No hunting while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs (RIGL 20-13-10).
- The use of drones or other remotely operated unmanned aircraft systems and devices to drive or disturb wildlife or aid in the take of wildlife for the purpose of hunting is prohibited (RIHR 9.17 N).
- Spot lighting for wild animals and birds is prohibited (statewide and islands) from September 15 through the last day of February (RIHR 9.7.2.F).
- Shooting at any animal at anytime while such animal is on a telephone or electric line, pole, or tower or any communication device (RIHR 9.17.H).
- The importation, exportation, possession, liberation, or sale of any mute swan and/or eggs thereof, or live pen-reared or hybrid wild turkey and/or eggs thereof (RIHR 9.17.B).
- Importing of live birds or animals without permit (RIGL 20-17-9).
- Taking of birds by any method other than shotgun, bow and arrow, or falconry without permit (RIGL 20-14-7).
- The sale of game, except as provided (RIGL 20-13-14).
- Feeding and baiting wildlife in the state of Rhode Island is not permitted at any time for any purposes except as defined (RIHR 9.17.J).

## Discharge and Firearm Restrictions

- It is unlawful to carry a loaded firearm (RIGL 11-47-2) or archery equipment outside legal shooting hours. Provided the hunter is stationary, his / her firearm or archery equipment may be loaded within fifteen (15) minutes prior to legal shooting hours (RIHR 9.17.L).
- The use or possession of laser sights that project a beam or night-vision equipment while hunting is prohibited (RIHR 9.7.2.G).
- No lead shot larger than No. 2 at any time (RIGL 20-13-13).
- No rifles larger than .22 caliber rimfire at any time; however, from Apr. 1 to Sept. 30, (both dates inclusive), centerfire rifles no larger than .229 caliber may be used during daylight hours (RIGL 20-13-13).
- Discharge of a firearm within 500 feet of an occupied dwelling without written permission is prohibited (RIGL 20-13-7, RIGL 20-15-1). Archery hunting within 200 feet of an occupied dwelling without written permission is prohibited (RIGL 20-15-1).

## Important Laws & Regulations Pertaining to Wildlife

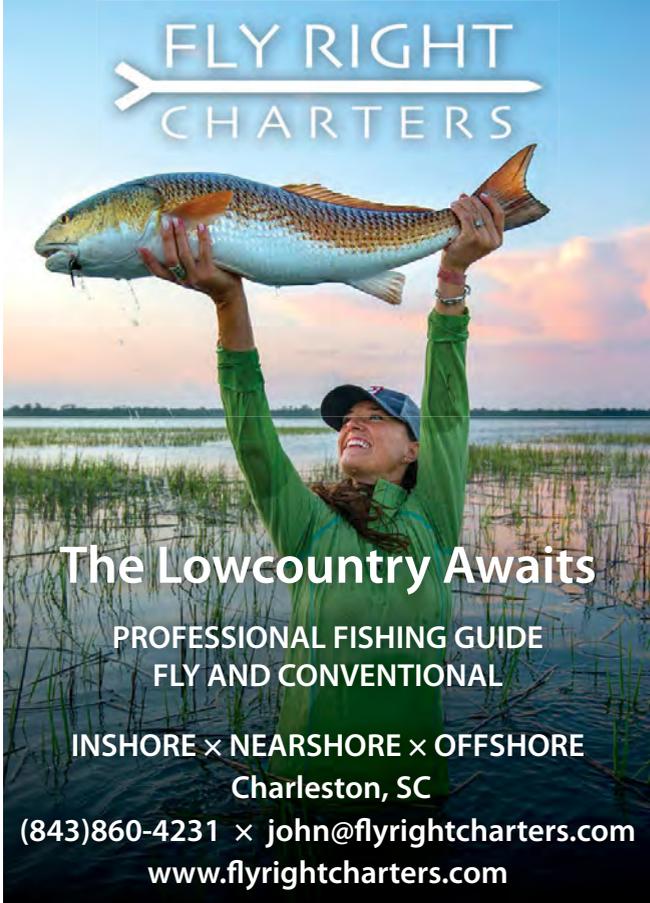
The Lacey Act of 1900, the first federal game law, regulates interstate and international commerce in wildlife. The term "wildlife", for the purposes of the act, means any wild animal, wild bird, amphibian, reptile, mollusk, or crustacean, or their dead bodies, parts, eggs, or offspring, but does not include migratory birds for which protection is afforded under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Briefly, action can be taken against anyone who transports, ships, or sells wildlife in interstate or foreign commerce contrary to state or foreign laws, or transports any package not properly labeled or tagged.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is an international agreement that was signed in 1918 for the protection of migratory bird populations. Migratory birds are protected by the federal government with provisions allowing state regulation. All birds, their parts, nests, and eggs are protected, except as provided by open hunting seasons.

## Fluorescent Orange Requirements

Solid fluorescent hunter orange must be worn above the waist and be visible in all directions. Examples are: a hat that covers 200 square inches or a combination of hat and vest covering 500 square inches. Fluorescent camouflage does not meet this requirement.

- 200 square inches by small game hunters during the small game season, fall turkey hunters while traveling, and muzzleloader deer hunters during the muzzleloader deer season.
- 200 square inches by archers when traveling to/from elevated stands during the muzzleloader season. Once in an elevated stand, archery deer hunters are exempt from the orange requirement during the muzzleloader season.
- 500 square inches by all hunters (including archers) and all users of management areas and undeveloped state parks during all portions of shotgun deer seasons.
- Hunters using pop-up blinds during the firearms deer season must display 200 square inches of fluorescent orange visible on the outside of the blind from all directions. Hunters must also wear orange in accordance with the rules for the specific seasons while in the blind.
- Exemptions: Raccoon hunters when hunting at night, crow hunters while hunting over decoys, spring turkey hunters, first segment dove hunters, and waterfowl hunters while hunting from a boat or a blind, over water or field, when done in conjunction with decoys. Fluorescent orange is not required in areas limited to archery-only hunting by regulation.
- All other users of State Management Areas and designated undeveloped State Parks, including but not limited to: hikers, bikers, and horseback riders are required to wear 200 square inches of solid daylight fluorescent orange from the second Saturday in September to the last day of February and the third Saturday in April to the last day in May.



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# Checking, TAGGING & REPORTING

## State Operated Check Stations

The state operated check stations provide biologists with information on hunter success and gives them a chance to inspect and sample harvested game.

### Deer Check Stations

- All deer taken during the first two days (**Saturday & Sunday, Nov. 4 & 5**) of the Muzzleloader Deer Season, and the first two days (**Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 2 & 3**) of Shotgun Deer Season, including deer taken with archery equipment, must be physically checked at a state operated biological check station, except those deer taken on Patience, Prudence, and Block Island, which must be reported using the online licensing system.
- **Operating Hours:** 8:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M. daily.
- **Arcadia Management Area:** Rt. 165, Ten Rod Road, at Wood River, Exeter, Phone: 401-539-7117. (41.57305, -71.72163)
- **Carolina Management Area:** Pine Hill Road, Richmond, Phone: 401-364-3483. (41.46618, -71.68860)
- **Durfee Hill Management Area:** Reynolds Road (Rte 94), Glocester, Phone: 401-568-6753 (41.90218, -71.78422)
- **Great Swamp Management Area:** 277 Great Neck Road, West Kingston, Phone: 401-789-1636 (41.47374, -71.57533)
- **Tiverton Rod and Gun Club:** 1529 Fish Rd, Tiverton, Phone: 401-624-3959 (41.62681, -71.18825)

# How to Tag and Report Your Wild Turkey

DEM launched the online hunting and fishing licensing system in 2018. In addition to using this system to purchase licenses, permits and tags electronically, you will also use this system to report your harvests. The following shows you how to properly tag and report your wild turkey harvest!

## 1. BAG IT!

Congratulations on your successful harvest!



## 2. TAG IT!

Your tag must be notched (day, month and hour of harvest) before moving the bird for photos or to leave the woods!

- The notched tag and turkey must remain in your possession when removing the turkey from the field.
- If you must leave the field prior to removing the turkey (to return gear to your vehicle or dwelling); the notched tag must be attached to and remain with the carcass.



## 3. REPORT IT!

Use your smart phone or desktop computer to report your harvest at:

**[rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov)**

- Measure the beard and spurs:
  - » Beard less than 6" and spurs less than 0.5" = Jake
  - » Beard longer than 6" and spurs longer than 0.5" = Tom
  - » No beard or spurs = Hen (fall archery season only!)
- You must report your harvest by **midnight** on the **day of the harvest**.
- If you do not have internet or cellular data access to report your turkey harvest, you may call the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (401) 789-0281 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. M-F to report your harvest.
- Write your harvest report confirmation number on your tag and keep the tag with your turkey until prepared for taxidermy or consumption.

**Questions:** Call the Division of Fish and Wildlife (401) 789-0281 or email [dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov](mailto:dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov).

# How to Tag and Report Your Deer

The online licensing system has brought changes to tagging and reporting your deer harvest that all hunters should be aware of. Before you leave the house or license vendor, sign your hunting license and deer tags! Now you will not need a pen until you report your harvest online or over the phone! Before heading afield, grab a zip tie or string along with a durable plastic bag and put your license and tags inside the bag to protect them from the elements!

## 1. BAG IT!

Congratulations on your successful deer harvest!



Photo by Sam Dalti

## 2. TAG IT!

Your tag must be notched (day, hour and month of harvest) before moving the deer for photos, field dressing or to leave the woods.

Per Rhode Island Law, the notched tag must be affixed to and remain with the carcass. Use care to securely affix the tag so that the tag will not be lost when removing the deer from the woods or transporting to a check station, butcher or your home.

**HELPFUL TIP:** It is recommended to place your tag in a durable, clear plastic bag (Ziploc bag) to make sure your tag will not rip, tear, or become illegible from water, blood or dirt. Consider rolling up the bag with the tag inside, and placing it inside the deer's ear and tie the ear shut with a piece of string or zip tie. Reminder: The notched tag must remain affixed to the deer at all times until the deer has been prepared for taxidermy or consumption.



## 3. REPORT IT!

Use your smart phone or desktop computer to report your harvest at:

[rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov)

- You must report your deer harvest within 24 hours. If you do not have internet or cellular data access to report your deer harvest, you may call the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (401) 789-0281 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday to report your harvest.
- Once on the harvest reporting site, you will be asked a few questions to determine the age and sex of the animal, the location and method of harvest and information about your time afield.
- When you are finished reporting your deer online or over the phone, you will be given a harvest report confirmation number. This number confirms that you have reported your harvest. Write the number on your tag and keep the tag affixed to the deer until prepared for taxidermy or consumption.

**REMINDER:** All deer taken during Nov. 4 & 5 and Dec. 2 & 3 must be physically checked, except those taken on Patience, Prudence, and Block Islands.



Photo by Northeast Woodsman

## Youth Hunting Opportunities

Season	Locations	Dates
Youth Deer Archery	Zone 1	September 9 - 10
	Zone 2	September 23 - 24
	Zone 3	October 28 - 29
Youth Deer Muzzleloader	Zones 1 & 2	October 28 - 29
Youth Waterfowl	Statewide	October 28 - 29
Youth Pheasant	Great Swamp WMA, South Kingstown Durfee Hill WMA, Glocester Eight Rod Farm WMA, Tiverton	October 14 - 15
Youth Turkey	Statewide	April 15 - 21, 2024

- All youth hunters ages 12 to 14 must be in possession of a resident or non-resident junior hunting license in order to hunt in RI. Youth hunters age 15 must possess a resident or non-resident hunting license. Licenses can be purchased after the completion of a Hunter Safety course.
- Youth hunters age 12 - 14 must hunt in the immediate company of an adult, 21 years of age or older, holding a valid RI hunting license. Hunters age 15 do not have to hunt in the immediate company of a licensed adult EXCEPT when waterfowl hunting during the youth waterfowl hunt when all youth hunters ages 12 - 15 must hunt in the immediate company of a licensed adult.
- An adult may accompany no more than two youth hunters at any one time. Adults are prohibited from hunting or carrying archery equipment/firearms during the youth-only hunting days.

- All other hunting permit requirements and hunting regulations per season remain.
- For more information on hunting, contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife at 401-789-0281 or by emailing DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov.
- For more information about youth hunting opportunities or our Hunter Education program, call 401-539-0019 or email madison.proulx@dem.ri.gov.

**Youth Deer Hunting:** Dates vary depending on Season and Zone. All other regulations and permit requirements apply. Please see page 10 for more deer hunting information.

**Youth Waterfowl Hunting:** Youth hunters may take ducks, sea ducks and geese following daily bag and possession limits for the regular seasons. All youth hunters (12 - 15), and those adults accompanying youth hunters, must have a current HIP Permit and RI hunting license. The accompanying adult must also possess a current RI State Waterfowl Stamp and Federal Duck Stamp.

**Youth Waterfowl Training and Mentored Hunt:** For the 9th consecutive year, the Division of Fish and Wildlife is partnering with Ducks Unlimited to offer a youth waterfowl training day (September date TBA) and mentored hunt opportunity on youth waterfowl weekend for those youths that attend the training. Space is limited for the training and mentored hunt.

**Youth Pheasant Hunting:** Youth Pheasant Hunt to be held on October 14 - 15 at Great Swamp, Durfee Hill, and Eight Rod Farm Wildlife Management Areas.

**Youth Turkey Hunting:** Youth hunters may take up to two (2) bearded turkeys during the spring season, provided they purchase a spring turkey permit for each bird. No more than one (1) bearded turkey may be taken on state lands during the spring season. All stipulations, permit requirements, and pertinent regulations apply. Accompanying adult may assist the youth hunter in calling the bird. No preregistration is required.

**Youth Turkey Training and Mentored Hunt:** For the 4th consecutive year, the Division of Fish and Wildlife is partnering with the Light Foundation to offer the youth turkey training and hunt (April Date TBD). It is open to minors 12 to 15 years of age. The goal is to create the next generation of conservation leaders by providing youth with an enjoyable and memorable outdoor experience that introduces them to safe and responsible hunting and teaches them fundamental leadership & life skills. Space is limited. For more information or to apply, visit [matlight72.com](http://matlight72.com)!

For more information about youth and/or disabled hunting opportunities, please contact our hunter education office by emailing madison.proulx@dem.ri.gov or by calling 401-539-0019.



Photo by S. Kraje

## Disabled Hunting Opportunities

Season	Locations	Dates
Special Deer Season for Disabled Hunters	Zone 3	October 24 - 27
Paraplegic Hunter Turkey Season	Statewide	April 20 - 21, 2024

**Patience and Prudence Islands (Zone 3) Special Deer Season for Disabled Hunters:** The taking of deer will be limited to paraplegic and double amputee hunters only.

- A special hunting permit must be obtained through the RI DEM Office of Boat Registration and Licensing Division, 235 Promenade St. Providence, RI 02908 (401) 222-3576 by each applicant prior to the hunt. None will be issued on the island. An application signed by a physician for a first-time hunter, or a photocopy of a previous paraplegic/double amputee hunting license, is required.
- None of the hunter's assistants will be allowed to hunt or carry loaded firearms at any time. No license is required of the assistants.

- All deer taken must be checked using the online harvest reporting system [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov).
- Disabled hunters may use shotgun or muzzleloader with ammunition and caliber restrictions consistent with regular deer season (see page 10).
- Hunters may use muzzleloading firearms on Prudence Island.

**Paraplegic Hunter Turkey Season:** Spring turkey permit required. Hunting in this season is limited to paraplegic hunters only as evidenced by possession of a permanent disability hunting license. Bag limit is two (2) provided no more than one (1) is taken on state land.

# BIG BEAR

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## Deer Hunting Seasons

Season	Dates
<b>Archery (includes Crossbow)</b>	September 9 - 10 (Youth only, Zone 1) September 23 - 24 (Youth only, Zone 2) September 15 - January 31, 2024 (Zone 1) October 1 - January 31, 2024 (Zone 2)
<b>Archery: Patience &amp; Prudence Islands (Zone 3)</b>	October 28 - 29 (Youth only) November 1 - January 31, 2024
<b>Archery: Block Island (Zone 4)</b>	October 12, 13, 16-20, 23-27, 30, 31 (Check local ordinance)
<b>Muzzleloader</b>	October 28 - 29 (Youth only Zones 1, 2) November 4 - 26 (Zones 1, 2) December 26 - January 2, 2024 (Zones 1, 2 Private land only, antlerless deer only)
<b>Shotgun</b>	December 2 - 17 (Zone 1) December 2 - 10 (Zone 2) December 26 - January 2, 2024 (Zones 1, 2 - Private land only, antlerless deer only)
<b>Archery, Muzzleloader, Shotgun (Zone 4)</b>	November 1-3, 6-9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 27-30 December 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-15, 18, 19, 21, 22 January 2-5, 8-12, 16-19, 22-26, 29-31, 2024 February 1, 2, 5-9, 12-16, 2024
<b>Special Season for Disabled Hunters: Patience &amp; Prudence Islands (Zone 3)</b>	October 24 - 27

### 2023-24 Season Bag Limits

<b>Statewide (all zones &amp; methods combined)</b>	2 Antlered Deer, (Zone 3: no more than 1 Antlered Deer)
<b>Zone 1</b>	3 Antlerless Deer*
<b>Zone 2</b>	2 Antlerless Deer*
<b>Zone 3</b>	2 Antlerless Deer*
<b>Zone 4</b>	Unlimited Antlerless Deer

\* Antlerless limits are per zone and hunters may harvest each limit within each zone in a hunting year cumulative across all weapons/seasons.

## RI Deer Management:

Deer management zones (see map on page 16 and 17) have been established for harvesting deer in accordance with specific management goals for RI. The need to reduce auto strikes and address nuisance deer complaints are important deer management issues in addition to DEM's goal to preserve and maintain quality deer hunting for sportsmen.

**Note:** All deer wounded, but not recovered, must be reported to DEM within 24 hours.

### Our goal is to:

- Provide a deer management program that maintains a healthy deer population that is sustainable and ecologically appropriate.
- Maintain quality deer hunting opportunities recognizing the strong tradition of hunting in Rhode Island and the important role hunting plays in wildlife conservation.

## Deer Hunting Methods

Please note: Only one firearm or bow may be possessed in the field per individual hunter while hunting deer. Check local ordinances for further restrictions in specific towns.

### Shotgun

- No person shall hunt, pursue, shoot or attempt to shoot any deer with a shotgun capable of holding more than five shells, unless it is plugged with one-piece filler, which is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
- Ammunition permitted for shotgun deer season is limited to a single lead or alloy projectile, including rifled slugs or sabot round. Buckshot is prohibited at all times.
- Shotguns of 10, 12, 16, or 20-gauge are allowed.
- Muzzleloaders will be permitted during the shotgun season provided hunters possess a current shotgun deer permit and comply with muzzleloader restrictions. Hunters taking a deer must tag the deer with the shotgun deer tag immediately after taking. All shotgun deer season fluorescent orange requirements will be enforced.

### Muzzleloader

- Firearms for muzzleloader deer season are limited to .45 caliber or larger using percussion caplock, flintlock, and in-line ignition systems using percussion caps, rifle, or shotgun primers. Only single barrel or double barrel firearms that must be loaded from the muzzle are permitted.
- Ammunition for muzzleloader deer season is limited to a single projectile, including round ball, maxi ball type, or sabots. Powder is limited to manufacturers' specifications. Telescopic sights are permitted. Possession of modern shotgun shells while hunting with a muzzleloader is prohibited.
- A muzzleloader is considered unloaded when the percussion cap, primer or pan powder is removed.

### Archery

- Archers may use a long bow, re-curve bow, compound bow or crossbow for hunting deer.
- Long bow, re-curve bow and compound bow must be set at not less than forty (40) pounds for archers using fixed blade broadheads, and a minimum of fifty (50) pounds for archers using mechanical broadheads.
- Only broadhead tipped arrows with at least two (2) metal cutting edges are allowed. All broadheads must be seven eighths (7/8) of an inch or greater at the widest point including mechanical broadheads measured in the "open" position.
- Crossbows must be set at not less than one hundred twenty five (125) pounds minimum draw weight. Expandable broadheads are permitted.
- All archery deer hunters must have taken and successfully completed bow hunter education classes or hold a prior year archery deer permit in order to obtain a current year archery deer permit.

### Dogs

Upon shooting a deer, a hunter with a current valid hunting license and deer permit may use one (1) dog or engage a second party to use one (1) dog to recover a wounded and lost or un-recovered deer within seventy-two (72) hours of shooting the deer provided that they comply with the following restrictions.

1. There shall be no firearms or archery devices carried by the hunter, dog handler, or any individual present at the time of tracking.
2. The dog shall be maintained under physical control of the dog handler at all times by the means of a lead no longer than fifty (50) feet that shall be attached to the collar or harness of the dog.
3. The hunter shall be present at all times.

- 4. All parties involved in recovering a deer with a dog shall wear 500 square inches of fluorescent orange.
- 5. If it is determined that the deer is still alive all parties will back away immediately and the dog will be taken out of the area.
- 6. Written permission required for deer hunting shall be possessed while tracking with a dog on private land.

- The placement or installation of tree stands on state land and co-op properties prior to August 15th.
- Failure to remove tree stands on state land and on co-op properties by February 15th.
- The construction and use of permanent tree stands, or the use of nails, spikes, bolts, or climbing devices, which may damage trees on state or co-op properties
- Hunting deer on private property without the permission of the landowner.
- Hunting, pursuing, or molesting deer in tidal waters or while deer are swimming in any waters of the state.
- Feeding or baiting: the act of using, placing, giving, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering any material, or any act to maintain the availability of such material that attracts deer to feed on such material.
- Driving deer by parties of over five (5) people.

**Adaptive Aids**

Special archery adaptive aids for use with vertical held bows may be used by all hunters without a special permit.

**Decoys**

Deer decoys may be used on private lands and state-owned Wildlife Management Areas (excludes State Parks, Public Reservations, Cooperative properties and Federal properties) during the archery only deer seasons while archery hunting only. This excludes youth muzzleloader and shotguns seasons. However, deer decoys may be used throughout the extent of the open archery season on private lands in towns where hunting with a firearm is prohibited but use of archery equipment is permitted. When transporting deer decoys for the purpose of hunting, persons must wear 500 square inches of fluorescent orange visible from all sides.

**Prohibited Deer Hunting Activities**

- The use or possession of deer scents/lures that contain natural cervid (including deer, moose, elk) urine, gland oil, feces, tissue, blood or any other bodily fluids.
- The use of electronic calls.

**Written Permission**

Annual written landowner permission is required for deer hunting on private land (RIGL 20-15-1) during the deer season. It is not required that deer permits (tags) be signed by the landowner, provided the hunter has other written permission in possession. Deer permits (tags) must be carried while hunting. Annual written permission must be shown to any authorized person upon demand, and must be presented when checking a deer. A valid hunting license constitutes written permission on state owned/managed land and applicable hunting cooperative properties for which a permit is not required.

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## Landowner Rights & Liability

Written landowner permission is required to hunt deer on private property. Hunters are urged to gain a landowner's permission prior to hunting for all other hunting activities as well. To maintain good landowner - hunter relations, always treat the landowner's private property with respect, and know and respect the property boundaries. It is also unlawful to shoot upon the land of another without their permission. Hunting on private land is a privilege not to be taken lightly.

To encourage landowners to make their lands available for recreational purposes, RI General Law (32-6-3) limits the liability of persons making private land available for recreational activities, including hunting and fishing.

Liability of Landowner: an owner of land who either directly or indirectly invites or permits without charge any person to use that property for recreational purposes does **not** thereby:

- extend any assurance that the premises are safe for any purpose;
- confer upon that person the legal status of an invitee or licensee to whom a duty of care is owed; nor
- assume responsibility for or incur liability for any injury to any person or property caused by an act of omission of that person.

### Limitations

(a) Nothing in the law limits in any way any liability which, but for this chapter, otherwise exists:

(1) For the willful or malicious failure to guard or warn against a dangerous condition, use, structure, or activity after discovering the user's peril; or

(2) For any injury suffered in any case where the owner of land charges the person or persons who enter or go on the land for the recreational use thereof, except that in the case of land leased to the state or a subdivision thereof, any consideration received by the owner for that lease shall not be deemed a "charge" within the meaning of this section.

(b) When the Coastal Resources Management Council designates a right-of-way as part of its designation process as specified in § 46-23-6(5), or when the Coastal Resource Management Council stipulates public access as a condition of granting a permit, the landowner automatically will have "limited liability" as defined in this chapter, except as specifically recognized by or provided in this section.

## Local Ordinances

Some towns restrict hunting or the discharge of firearms and, therefore, it is important to check town ordinances before hunting. Local municipalities may not prevent hunting on State-owned land. Towns closed to Sunday hunting on private lands include Portsmouth, Little Compton, Middletown, and Barrington. Some towns require written permission

of the landowner, and/or local police department. For local and Sunday hunting regulations, check with the town police department or town clerk.

### Patience and Prudence Islands

The only legal method of deer hunting on Prudence and Patience Islands is by archery, including crossbows, except for during the special hunting season (see page 8). Proficiency testing is required for all archery deer hunters on Prudence and Patience Islands. Archery deer hunting is permitted at the Heritage Property from December 1 - 15 only. Proficiency cards must be carried while hunting. All deer taken must be reported to DEM within 24 hours using the harvest reporting website [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) or be reported to an Environmental Police Officer as prescribed. The antlered deer (buck) bag limit is one (1).

### Block Island (New Shoreham)

Written permission from a landowner must be obtained before hunting on private land and presented to and countersigned by the Block Island Chief of Police. All deer taken must be reported to DEM within 24 hours using the harvest reporting website [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) or be reported to an Environmental Police Officer.

## Cooperative and Special Hunting Areas

See map and table on pages 16-19.

### Block Island State Land (Black Rock / Rodman Hollow)

Deer hunting is allowed by special permit only, selected by lottery. Applications are found on [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) to hunt Black Rock/Rodman Hollow, and must be submitted by September 15th, 2023.

### Block Island, John H. Chafee, Ninigret, and Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuges

Four National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) in the state are open for hunting on designated units with season and weapon restrictions. Hunters must possess and carry a signed refuge hunting brochure valid for the current season while hunting at Block Island, Ninigret, and John H. Chafee NWRs. Trustom Pond NWR is by lottery permit only. Archery proficiency certification is required to hunt at Block Island, John H. Chafee, and Trustom Pond NWRs. All State DEM, federal, and refuge regulations apply. For detailed information, regulations, locations and dates please visit [www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret) [fws.gov] or contact the USFWS at 401-364-9124.

To enter the Trustom Pond NWR lottery please visit <https://rhodeislandpermits.recaccess.com/> by September 15.

### The Nature Conservancy Deer Hunting Co-Op

- **Deer hunting only**, the hunting and/or take of other species of wildlife is prohibited
- **No Special Permits Required**, a valid hunting license constitutes as written permission.
- No vehicles of any kind are allowed on the property, except in designated parking areas.
- The construction or use of permanent treestands is prohibited. The use of nails, spikes, bolts, or devices that may damage trees is prohibited. Climbing tree stands are permitted.
- Treestands may not be installed on TNC property prior to August 15th and must be removed by February 15th annually.

### Beavertail (Jamestown)

No hunting prior to 11/1/2023. Archery hunting only (11/1/23-1/31/24) no hunting on weekends prior to 12/31/2023. Proficiency certification is required and cards must be carried while hunting. Permits must be returned by February 15 regardless of activity or success, to be eligible for next year's hunt. Permits are available at the Jamestown Police Department. Ten (10) hunters are allowed per day on a first-come first-served basis. Limit of 5 slots per week reserved no more than twenty (20) days in advance.

## Photo Submissions

Want to share your story or photo of a successful hunt in next year's magazine? If so, we want to know everything: time of day, location, target species, weight, length and any other animal specific data you wish to provide. We would love to share your success with everyone! That is, if you want to give up your secrets!

Send your photo of deer, turkey, pheasant, etc. to DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov and if space allows, it may be used in next year's edition.



Photo by Tyler Laplume

# HOW WILDLIFE IS THRIVING BECAUSE OF GUNS & HUNTING

Since the late 1930s, hunters, target shooters and the firearms industry have been the nation's **LARGEST** contributors to **conservation**, paying for programs that benefit America's wildlife and all who love the outdoors.

## HOW IT WORKS

- Hunters and target shooters purchase guns and ammunition.
- Manufacturers pay federal excise taxes on guns and ammunition.
- Revenue from these excise taxes is distributed to state wildlife agencies.
- State wildlife agencies use these funds to purchase land for wildlife habitat and to manage wildlife populations.
- In turn, millions of acres of important habitat have been set aside to help ensure future wildlife abundance.

This System Has Provided

**MORE THAN \$12.5 Billion**

For Conservation So Far

### Where the Money Goes

Buy, develop, maintain and operate wildlife management areas



Research projects focused on wildlife conservation

Hunter safety and education programs



Construction and maintenance of public target shooting ranges



### Quick History

- Early 1900s**  
As many wildlife species are dwindling in numbers or disappearing, firearms industry steps forward and asks Congress to redirect excise tax on sale of guns and ammo to help fund wildlife conservation.
- 1937**  
Congress passes and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act into law.
- 1938 to today:**  
Revenue from this act has purchased millions of acres of prime habitat that is maintained by state wildlife agencies. These lands, where game and non-game species flourish, are purchased with sportsmen's dollars but used by all Americans.

## THEN & NOW



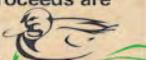
## OTHER WAYS SPORTSMEN CONTRIBUTE

Excise taxes combined with revenue from hunting and fishing license sales fund the majority of state wildlife agency budgets.



**\$81 Million**  
CONTRIBUTED ANNUALLY

Duck stamp proceeds are used by the government to buy or lease wetland habitat for ducks, geese and hundreds of non-game birds and animals.



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Aldo Leopold



Key Pittman



Willis Robertson



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# Turkey HUNTING

## Wild Turkey

Season	Dates	Season Limit
Fall Archery	October 1 - 31	1 either sex bird
Youth <sup>1</sup>	April 15 - 21, 2024	2 bearded birds <sup>2</sup>
Paraplegic <sup>1</sup>	April 20 - 21, 2024	
Spring	April 25 - May 19, 2024	

<sup>1</sup> See page 8 for more information on Youth & Paraplegic Hunt Opportunities.

<sup>2</sup> No more than one (1) turkey may be taken on state lands during the spring season. Each turkey harvested requires an individual permit.

## General Rules and Regulations

- The hunting of wild turkey is permitted statewide. Check local ordinances for firearm discharge restrictions. Firearms are permitted for turkey hunting during the Spring, Youth, and Paraplegic seasons only.
- Spring season, including Youth and Paraplegic season shooting hours are one half (1/2) hour before sunrise to 1:00PM.
- Authorized firearms and archery equipment: methods of take are limited to shotguns, no larger than ten (10) gauges with shot sizes no larger than four (4), and by archery equipment except for crossbows. Long bow, re-curve bow, and compound bow must be set at not less than forty (40) pounds for archers using fixed blade broadheads, and a minimum of fifty (50) pounds for archers using mechanical broadheads. Only broadhead tipped arrows with at least two (2) metal cutting edges are allowed. All broadheads must be seven eighths (7/8) of an inch or greater at the widest point including mechanical broadheads measured in the “open” position.
- Hunters must carry a turkey-calling device (non-electric) while hunting.
- The use of decoys while hunting is allowed.
- Each year, after the end of the spring turkey season, online surveys are issued to Rhode Island turkey permit holders who have a valid email address within the online licensing system. The completion of this survey is vital to the turkey management program in Rhode Island and assists DEM biologists in maintaining a successful wild turkey season for our hunters. The Division requests your cooperation in filling out the survey, regardless of success or participation in that year’s hunt.

### Permits and Tagging

- **A hunter may purchase, possess and use one (1) all lands turkey permit and one (1) private land only turkey permit for the taking of one (1) bearded turkey on each permit during the spring seasons.**
- Hunters may take two (2) turkeys on the same day or one (1) each on separate days provided they purchase two (2) spring turkey permits and at least one (1) turkey is taken on private land.
- A hunter may purchase, possess and use one (1) fall either sex archery permit, valid on both public and private property.
- A person killing a wild turkey must immediately notch the month, day, hour of kill and type of property taken on (private or public). The carcass and notched tag must remain in the possession of the hunter after the kill and while removing the carcass from the field. Should the hunter leave the carcass prior to removal from the field, the notched tag must be attached to and remain with the carcass. After removal from the field, the notched tag must be attached to and remain with the carcass until prepared for consumption or taxidermy.

### Prohibited

- The use of any unauthorized firearm, live decoy(s), dog(s), baiting, cooperative drive(s).
- The use of crossbows for turkey hunting.

- Electric calling devices, or any other devices, to capture or ensnare turkeys.
- The shooting of turkeys while roosting.
- Stalking or attempting to sneak up on a turkey to get a shot.
- The hunting, killing, taking, or attempting to take or possess, any wild turkey by any individual unless they possess a permit to do so. However, a person having a valid Rhode Island hunting license may call turkeys for individuals with a valid turkey permit.
- Possession of more than one firearm or archery implement while turkey hunting.
- Possession of a firearm while hunting for wild turkey during the fall archery season.

### Reporting Your Harvest

The killing of a wild turkey must be reported to DEM using the online harvest reporting website [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) by 11:59 p.m. on the date of the kill. The notched tag with harvest report confirmation number must remain attached to the carcass until prepared for consumption or taxidermy.

Please see page 6 for more details on tagging and checking wild turkeys.

## Safe Turkey Hunting Is No Accident!

When compared to other sports activities (baseball, basketball and swimming- injuries per hundred thousand participants) hunting is a relatively safe activity. These comparisons should not cause any hunter to take accident-free hunting for granted. Each and every hunter must make safety the top priority of the hunt.

Very few hunting experiences compare with the exhilaration of turkey hunting. A chance to spend a day afield in the turkey woods, enjoying not only the hunt but also the splendor of the outdoors in spring makes this experience worthwhile to sportsmen and sportswomen. This is a privilege not to be taken for granted. Be sure that your turkey hunting experience is an enjoyable one by observing these key ingredients for a safe hunt:

## Turkey Hunting Safety

- NEVER crowd another hunter working a bird and avoid high-pressure areas.
- “Mistaken for game” accounts for 87% of all turkey hunting accidents — Be sure of your target and what’s beyond.
- Use proper setup techniques — Sit against a wide tree to shield head, neck and back. A tree is an effective blind as it breaks your outline.
- Never wear the colors red, white or blue while turkey hunting. These colors mimic the colors of a male turkey’s (gobbler’s) head and can draw fire. Be totally camouflaged.
- Never stalk turkey sounds or turkeys — it’s unsafe and illegal. Never use the sounds of a turkey to warn approaching hunters.
- Avoid using gobbling calls — which draw more hunters than game.

## How to Tell the Sex & Age of a Turkey

Determination of the sex and age of a wild turkey is vital to the hunter, since only bearded wild turkeys are “legal birds” in the spring season. Proper identification of your target before shooting protects vulnerable hen turkeys from accidental shooting during the spring nesting season. The composition of the harvest provides biologists with information about the flock and is important for making conservation and management decisions.

Hunters are reminded they should use a variety of characteristics to identify a legal bird, including behavior (strutting, gobbling) and color (black body coloration, bright red, white and blue head color).

# National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP)

The RI DEM Division of Fish and Wildlife is pleased to announce the official launch of the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), bringing the sport of Olympic-style target archery to nine Rhode Island schools and counting, and the next generation of young academic athletes.

Established just over 20 years ago in Kentucky middle-school gymnasiums, NASP has promoted the instruction in international-style target archery as an in-school program for grades 4-12 nationwide through a 48-state collaboration under the guidance of a national leadership team and state wildlife agencies.

“Archery is a sport accessible to anyone,” said Branton Elleman, RI DEM’s team member coordinating the NASP® RI program. “Since its inception two decades ago, NASP® has safely helped students learn skills required to be successful both in the classroom and in life, such as focus, self-control, discipline, and patience. With a standardized set of lessons and equipment put to use during school hours and opportunities for scholastic tournaments and post-secondary scholarships, NASP® also opens the door to competitive sport for those who never found their place in ‘traditional’ athletic pursuits. While DEM has always promoted archery as a safe, accessible sport and hobby, we are excited to be partnering with the NASP® organization to offer this opportunity to Rhode Island teachers and schools.”

NASP is typically taught as part of a Physical Education class by the students’ usual teacher over the course of two weeks. However, archery isn’t limited to being part of physical education and can also be incorporated into other classes with the right scheduling, time, and space. After school clubs can also supplement in-school teaching and provide a space for competitive teams to practice for state or national tournaments, often with scholarship opportunities. Seeing the many benefits the program could bring to RI students, the Division of Fish & Wildlife began the coordination of the program in late 2022 – early 2023 and have been working to expand the roster of active schools since.

Rhode Island schools who participated in the Division of Fish and Wildlife’s inaugural NASP certification class include:

- Chariho Middle School, Chariho
- Cranston West High School, Cranston
- Cranston East High School, Cranston
- Hugh B Bain, Cranston
- Park View Middle School, Cranston



- Central Elementary School, Lincoln
- Northern Elementary School, Lincoln
- Frank E Thompson Middle School, Newport
- Rocky Hill Country Day School, Warwick

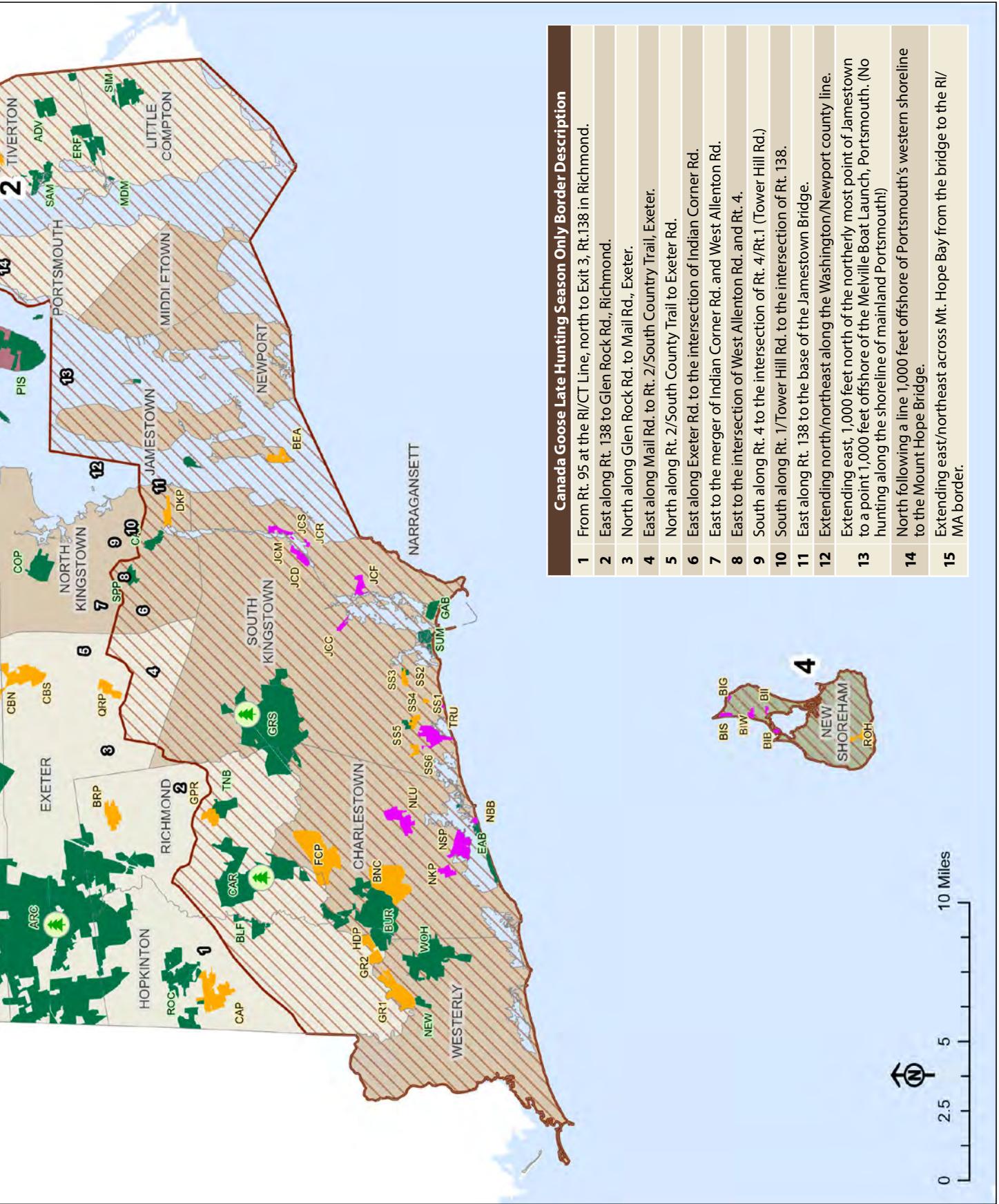
Joining the program starts with motivated teachers. Interested teachers and schools should contact the RI Division of Fish and Wildlife to learn more about how the program operates and how the program could fit within their curricula and facility. Once their school administration approves the program, teachers who will be facilitating the NASP curricula are required to attend a Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) certification training offered through the Division of Fish & Wildlife.

Over an 8-hour class, or 4-hour field day following online training, teachers learn more about the program’s history, the many proven benefits to student confidence and behavior, and specific coaching instruction. Once certified, arrangements are made where the RI Division of Fish and Wildlife will lend a standardized NASP archery kit to the school to utilize long-term and free of charge.

If you are a grade 4-12 Rhode Island teacher, or know one who might be interested, and are curious about the NASP program, contact the RI NASP Coordinator, Branton Elleman, at [Branton.Elleman.CTR@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Branton.Elleman.CTR@dem.ri.gov) or 401-575-6331.







# Public Lands AND HUNTING AREAS

Initials	Property Name		Town	Type	Acres	Deer	Deer Mng Zone	Turkey	Pheasant & Quail	Small Game	Migratory Birds	Waterfowl	Permit Required	Archery Proficiency Card Required	Notes
ADV	Adamsville		Tiverton	WMA	270	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
ARC	Arcadia		Hpktn, Extr, Rchmd, Wst Gnch	WMA	14,692	✓	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			1
BRP	Beaver River Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Richmond	Co-op	271	0	2	X	X	X	X	X			
BEA	Beavertail		Jamestown	SP	169	0	1	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	2
BIR	Big River		Wst Gnch, Cvntry, Extr	WMA	8,434	✓	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			
BLF	Black Farm		Hopkinton	WMA	312	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			1
BLH	Black Hut		Burrillville	WMA	1,682	✓	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			
BIB	Block Island National Wildlife Refuge	Beane Point	New Shoreham	NWR	22	✓	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3
BIG		Grove Point	New Shoreham	NWR	10	0	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3
BIS		Sandy Point	New Shoreham	NWR	42	✓	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3
BII		Skippers Island	New Shoreham	NWR	17	0	4	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	3
BIW		Wash Pond	New Shoreham	NWR	38	0	4	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	3
MIT	Town of Bristol	Minturn	Bristol	Co-op	35	0	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓	
HPW		Hopeworth	Bristol	Co-op	41	0	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓	
SKP		Skaters Pond	Bristol	Co-op	26	0	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓	
OHW		100 Acre Woods	Bristol	Co-op	104	0	1	X	X	X	X	X		✓	
BUH	Buck Hill		Burrillville	WMA	2,245	✓	2	✓	∅	∅	✓	✓			
BUR	Burlingame		Hopkinton, Charlestown	WMA	1,779	✓	1,2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
BNC	Burlingame North Camp		Charlestown	SP	884	✓	1	✓	X	X	X	X			2
CAN	Camp Nokewa		North Kingstown	WMA	84	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
CAP	Canonchet Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Hopkinton	Co-op	642	0	2	X	X	X	X	X			
CAR	Carolina		Richmond	WMA	2,151	✓	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			
COP	Cocomussoc Park		North Kingstown	SP	420	✓	1	✓	X	✓	X	X			
CBN	Cuttyhunk Brook Preserve	North <b>TNC</b>	Exeter, West Greenwich	Co-op	361	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			
CBS		South <b>TNC</b>	Exeter, West Greenwich	Co-op	428	0	2	X	X	X	X	X			
DKP	Dave King Preserve <b>TNC</b>		North Kingstown	Co-op	161	0	1	X	X	X	X	X			
DIH	Diamond Hill		Cumberland	PR	408	✓	1	X	X	✓	✓	X			
DUH	Durfee Hill		Glocester	WMA	2,011	✓	2	✓	∅*	✓	✓	✓			1
-	Dutch Island		Jamestown	WMA	102			<b>Closed to All Hunting</b>						10	
EAB	East Beach		Charlestown	SP	214	0	1	X	X	✓	X	X			
ERF	Eight Rod Farm		Tiverton, Little Compton	WMA	419	✓	2	✓	∅*	✓	✓	✓			
FCP	Francis Carter Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Richmond, Charlestown	Co-op	1,089	0	1,2	X	X	X	X	X			
GAB	Galilee Bird Sanctuary		Narragansett	WMA	135	0	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
GEW	George Washington		Burrillville, Glocester	WMA	3,503	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
GOI	Gould Island		Jamestown	WMA	38			<b>Temporarily Closed to All Access/Hunting due to Remediation</b>							
GPR	Grass Pond Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Richmond	Co-op	174	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			
GRS	Great Swamp		Richmond, S. Kingston	WMA	3,615	✓	1,2	✓	∅*	✓	✓	✓			
GR1	Grills Preserve I		Westerly	Co-op	514	#	1	✓	X	X	X	X			
GR2	Grills Preserve II		Hopkinton	Co-op	163	#	2	✓	X	X	X	X			
-	Hillsdale		Richmond	WMA	1,825			<b>Closed to All Hunting</b>							
HOI	Hope Island		Portsmouth	WMA	72	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
HDP	How Davey Preserve <b>TNC</b>		Hopkinton	Co-op	71	#	2	X	X	X	X	X			
JLC	J. L. Curran		Cranston	SP	178	@	1	X	X	X	✓	X			2, 4
JCC	John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge	Congdon Cove	South Kingstown	NWR	50	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	✓	✓	✓	3
JCF		Foddering Farm	Narragansett	NWR	130	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	✓	✓	✓	3
JCM		Middlebridge	Narragansett	NWR	100	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	✓	✓	✓	3
JCS		Sedge Island	Narragansett	NWR	6	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	3
JCR		Starr Drive	Narragansett	NWR	31	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	✓	✓	✓	3
JCD	Stedman		South Kingstown	NWR	134	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	✓	✓	✓	3
KIP	Killingly Pond		Foster, Glocester	WMA	767	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
MDM	Mary Donovan Marsh		Little Compton	WMA	15	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
NEW	Newton Swamp		Westerly	WMA	84	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
NIF	Nicholas Farm		Coventry	WMA	1,597	✓	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			1
NBB	Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge	Barrier Beach Unit	Charlestown	NWR	32	✓	1	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓		3
NKP		Kettle Pond Unit	Charlestown	NWR	114	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	X	✓		3
NLU		Lewis Unit	Charlestown	NWR	332	✓	1	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓		3
NSP		Salt Pond Unit	Charlestown	NWR	348	0	1	O, Fall	X	0	X	X	✓		3
OHA	One Hundred Acre Cove		Barrington	WMA	47	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			2
PAI	Patience Island		Portsmouth	WMA	203	0	3	X	X	0	X	X	✓		2, 9, 5
PRA	Pocasset Ridge Conservation Area <b>TNC</b>		Tiverton	Co-op	488	0	2	X	X	X	X	X			2, 9, 5

Initials	Property Name	Town	Type	Acres	Deer	Deer Mng Zone	Turkey	Pheasant & Quail	Small Game	Migratory Birds	Waterfowl	Permit Required	Archery Proficiency Card Required	Notes
PRC	Ponagansett River Corridor	Foster, Gloucester	WMA	486	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
PWA	Providence Water Supply	Ashland	Co-op	942	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWB		Betty Pond	Co-op	173	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWC		Cork Brook	Co-op	346	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWJ		Joslin Farm	Co-op	1,188	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWP		Peepthead	Co-op	186	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWQ		Quonopaug	Co-op	457	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWR		Riverview	Co-op	731	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWS		Swamp Brook	Co-op	482	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWT		Trimtown	Co-op	985	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWH		Tunk Hill	Co-op	1,065	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWM		Waterman	Co-op	412	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PWW		Westconnaug	Co-op	678	✓	2	X	X	X	X	X			6
PIN	Prudence Island	North	WMA	688	O	3	X	X	✓	X	✓		✓	2,9,5
PIS		South	WMA	740	O	3	X	X	✓	X	✓		✓	2,9,5
QRP	Queens River Preserve	TNC	Exeter	Co-op	187	O	2	X	X	X	X			
RIV	Rhode Island Veterans Home	Bristol	Co-op	50	O	1	X	X	X	X	X			
ROC	Rockville	Hopkinton	WMA	998	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
ROH	Rodman Hollow	New Shoreham	WMA	119	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			2
ROT	Round Top	Burrillville	WMA	182	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
-	Sachuest	Middletown	NWR	242			Closed to All Hunting							
SAM	Sapowet Marsh	Tiverton	WMA	322	O	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			7
SSP	Silver Spring	North Kingstown	WMA	125	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
SIM	Simmons Mill	Little Compton	WMA	433	✓	2	✓	∅	✓	✓	✓			8
SND	Snake Den	Johnston	SP	480	O	1	X	X	X	X	X			
SS1	South Shore Wildlife Management Area	Field # 1	USFWS	21	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SS2		Field # 2	Co-op	40	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓		2
SS3		Field # 3	WMA	29	O	1	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SS4		Field # 4	WMA	25	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓		2
SS5		Field # 5	WMA	54	#	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SS6		Field # 6	WMA	64	✓	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓		2
SUM	Succotash Marsh	South Kingstown	WMA	162	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
TNB	Taney Brook	Richmond	WMA	243	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
TIL	Tillinghast	West Greenwich	WMA	1,566	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
TOP	Town Pond	Portsmouth	WMA	54	X	2	X	X	✓	X	✓			
TRU	Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge	South Kingstown	NWR	358	O	1	X	X	O	X	X		✓	3
WAG	Washington Grove	Smithfield	SP	86	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
WIC	Wickaboxet	West Greenwich	WMA	669	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
WOH	Woody Hill	Westerly	WMA	735	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Legend	
✓	All legal methods for that species as defined in regulations/required
O	Archery Only
#	Archery or Muzzleloader
@	Archery or Shotgun
∅	Pheasants stocked
∅*	Youth pheasant hunt
X	Closed to hunting/not applicable
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
Small Game	rabbit, squirrel, coyote, raccoon and fox
Migratory Birds	doves, crows, woodcock, snipe and rails (not waterfowl)
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
PR	Public Reservation
Co-op	Cooperative hunting property
SP	State Park

Notes	
1	Dog training area and field trials by permit.
2	See regulations for additional information.
3	See USFWS brochure for additional regulations. <a href="http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Ninigret/visit/visitor_activities.html">www.fws.gov/refuge/Ninigret/visit/visitor_activities.html</a>
4	Closed to dove hunting.
5	Special Deer Season for Disabled Hunters. Taking of deer is limited to paraplegic and double amputee hunters.
6	Permit through Providence Water Supply.
7	Old Main Road Babot Unit safety zones and private land off Sapowet Avenue closed to hunting.
8	Waterfowl hunters must have (a) waterfowl decoys; (b) retrieving breed of hunting dog and/or a motorless boat/canoe.
9	Paraplegics may use shotguns.
10	Closed to the public.

## State Lands

There are over 55,000 acres of land designated as state management areas in Rhode Island. Maps of management areas are available from the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife at the Great Swamp Field Office or online at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/maps/>. Regulations are designed and enforced to promote conservation of the states natural resources for their future enjoyment and to ensure human safety in the outdoors. Hunting and trapping is allowed

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during the open seasons. In order to effectively manage and safeguard these open areas for people, wildlife, and habitat, the following regulations are to be followed:

- Except for fishing, hunting, launching, and/or mooring of boats, all management areas are closed ½ hour after sunset to 5:00 a.m., except by written permit (RIGL 32-2-4).
- Camping is prohibited on all areas with the exception of portions designated at Arcadia and George Washington Management Areas. Contact the Division of Forest Environment for camping information (401) 539-2356.
- The use of motorcycles is prohibited except in designated portions of Arcadia Management Area.
- The use of ATVs is prohibited statewide.
- The blocking of any gate, road, or access in state management areas is prohibited and subject to fines (RIGL 8-8.2-2).
- Horseback riding is prohibited in the Great Swamp Management Area during small game and shotgun deer season (RIGL 32-2-4).
- Groups consisting of 10 or more persons must obtain a special use permit available from the DEM Land Management Council, (401) 539-2356.
- Sapowet Marsh Management Area is open to deer hunting using archery equipment only.

### Undeveloped State Parks and Other Public Reservations

Hunting is permitted in the following:

- Galilee Bird Sanctuary is open to hunting. Deer hunting is limited to archery equipment only.
- Cocumcussoc and Washington Grove
- Burlingame State Park North Camp is open to deer and turkey hunting only
- Snake Den is open to archery deer hunting only.
- Ninigret Conservation Area/East Beach is open to small game hunting and archery deer hunting only.
- J.L. Curran is open to shotgun and archery hunting only, within the posted designated areas; this area is closed to mourning dove hunting.

### Dogs on Management Areas

No dogs shall be trained, run, exercised or be permitted to run at large on state management areas from March 15 - August 15, inclusive, without written permission of the State Lands Management Council, except in specified dog training areas (below). Walking of dogs on a leash of not more than twenty-five (25) feet in length shall be permitted on roads and trails only. All dogs being utilized in hunting or training activities must wear a collar bearing the name and address of the owner and the

handler must hold in possession a valid dog license or tag but it does not need to be on the dog.

### Special Dog Training Areas

Dog training is allowed in designated areas located within Arcadia Management Area (Midway Trail) in Exeter, Nicholas Farm Management Area (north of Trestle Trail) in Coventry, and Black Farm Management Area in Hopkinton open January 1 - September 30, from sunrise to sunset. The use of live birds is by special permit only. A hunting license is required when training dogs on wild game on state management areas, except when participating in state sanctioned field trials.

## Bay Islands

### Prudence Island

Written permission of the landowner, countersigned by the Portsmouth police chief, must be obtained to hunt private property on Prudence Island. Small game hunting is allowed on Prudence Island except on the Heritage Property during the open archery deer season. North Prudence is located north of the State gate, at the northern terminus of Neck Farm Road. Raccoon open hunting season for Prudence Island is the first day of January through the last day of February with written permission of the landowner. Bow hunters with a valid archery deer permit may take raccoon on Prudence Island during legal deer hunting hours beginning on the first day of November and ending on the last day of January.

Waterfowl hunting is permitted no more than 10 feet above mean high water on Prudence Island, except during the early waterfowl season, as established by federal regulation, and during November 1 - 30. The special deer season for disabled hunters is limited to paraplegic and double amputee deer hunters by special permit only. Permits are available at the RI DEM Office of Boat Registration and Licensing (401-222-3576).

### Other Restrictions

**Dutch Island:** Closed to hunting and all other access.

**East and West Island:** No trespassing April 1 - August 15, for nesting birds.

**Dyer Island and Hope Island:** No trespassing April 1 - August 15, for nesting birds. All domestic animals prohibited except hunting dogs during small game, migratory upland game bird and waterfowl seasons.

**Gould Island:** Temporarily closed to all access and hunting due to remediation.

**Patience Island:** Closed to small game and upland game bird hunting, except for coyote. All domestic animals prohibited except hunting dogs during the waterfowl season.

# State Land Spotlight: DURFEE HILL WMA



Photo by Alyssa Grayson

By John Veale, Habitat Biologist, RI DEM

Durfee Hill Management Area lies in the Northwestern part of Rhode Island along the Connecticut border in the town of Glocester. It is only a 35 minute drive from Providence and neighbors George Washington State Forest, Pulaski State Forest and several town forest properties making for a large collection of conservation areas within a short drive.

The property's 2063 total acreage has come from many small acquisitions, beginning in 1940 with a 95 acre transfer, with the most recent acquisition in 2018. Its largest addition of 539 acres came in 1974 with the acquisition of the Burlingame Reservoir and its surrounding area. Within Durfee Hill are several different habitat types offering a variety of opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking and exploration. Habitat management activities have largely been focused on 2 aspects of the property: the upland fields, and the waterfowl impoundment they flank.

Grassland fields have been a focus of active management here since they were acquired, and methods have changed over the years. In the past, many of these fields had been planted in switchgrass. This provided fast growing and thick cover for stocking pheasants, but became a dense monoculture that was difficult for hunters to move through and wasn't a favorable habitat to many wildlife species. Focus now is on creation of native grasslands with a mix of both warm season grasses and forbes to still provide excellent cover for stocking pheasants while creating habitat for grassland nesting birds, pollinator species, as well as game species such as turkey and American woodcock. With the current seed mix, and semi annual mowing, the fields will be able to provide a more favorable habitat type and in future, the Division will be employing prescribed fire as an additional management tool.

This will further help favor native warm season grasses, encourage plant species diversity and discourage invasive plant species.

Directly adjacent these grasslands is the Durfee Hill Impoundment. This was originally installed in 1965 then replaced with a more modern structure in 2006. Its purpose is to create waterfowl habitat for nesting and migration, as well as waterfowl hunting opportunities. Biologists monitor water levels throughout the year, and use the water control structure on the southeast side of the impoundment to manipulate them depending on the season. In early spring, water levels within the impoundment are allowed to drop, exposing mudflats that had been flooded. Wetland vegetation now exposed to the sun is allowed to emerge and grow throughout the summer, creating nesting habitat for waterfowl. In fall, the impoundment is flooded again. The additional water area provides a more attractive resting spot for migrating waterfowl, and the vegetation that had grown through the summer is covered by a few inches of water making it accessible as a food source to dabbling ducks.

Durfee Hill Management Area is so much more than just these two habitat types, and they only cover a fraction of its total acreage. Much of Durfee is forested with mature secondary hardwood forests, pine forests, and shrubland. Deer hunting within this management area is very popular, and if the line of trucks at the check station each year is any indication, success rates are high.

## See Something, Say Something

By Scott Buchanan, Herpetologist, RI DEM

One of the great joys of spending time outdoors is an unexpected close encounter with wildlife. Whether a young fawn with spots still visible, or an ambling box turtle, crossing paths with any one of the many thousands of species that occur in Rhode Island can create a memory that lasts a lifetime. This emotional response can be so powerful that the temptation to collect the animal arises, whether to possess as a pet, or because of the perception that the animal may be in danger because it is alone. But it is important for all Rhode Islanders to remember that our native wildlife belongs in the wild.

Rhode Island has strict laws that govern the possession and take of native species. While many species can be fished, hunted, trapped, or harvested under certain conditions and times of year, these laws protect all native species from undue collection. As per Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife Regulations (250-RICR-40-05-3), all native wildlife are expressly prohibited from importation and ownership without a state-issued permit.

While it may disappoint some to learn that wildlife laws restrict most collection, there are ways that you can ensure your encounter with wildlife has lasting meaning. The illegal collection of wildlife is a problem in Rhode Island, and because wildlife are a shared resource among all members of the public, it should be viewed as a shared responsibility to report violations. If you encounter someone actively collecting or in possession of native wildlife, it should be reported to RIDEM Law Enforcement by calling (401)-222-3070. And finally, you can report wildlife observations to the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife (<https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/wildlife-hunting/report-wildlife-observations>) using one of six taxa-specific apps. These reports by community scientists can have great significance by helping to identify a new population of threatened or endangered wildlife, or to identify a road mortality hotspot.

The conservation of wildlife in Rhode Island is a big task that requires the help of the public. Please remember that you can play a big part — if you see something, say something!

### DON'T TAKE ME HOME!



Possession or removal from the wild of any native reptile or amphibian is **illegal**\* (RIDEM Regulations 250-RICR-60-00-9)

Rhode Island's amphibians and reptiles face pressure from many threats. For many species, even the loss of a *single adult individual* can lead to local extinction.

**HELP PROTECT WILDLIFE BY KEEPING IT WILD!**

\*Hunting/fishing permits are offered, with restrictions, for snapping turtles, green frogs, and bullfrogs. Scientific Collectors permits are also available for valid research purposes. No native amphibian or reptile can be kept as a pet under any circumstances.



Report violations to the RIDEM Environmental Police by calling 401-222-3070 (24 hr. hotline)



# Migratory Bird HUNTING

## Waterfowl Seasons and Bag Limits

Season	Dates	Daily Bag Limit	Restrictions
<b>Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days*</b>	October 28 - 29	Same as regular season, listed below	Open to youth hunters age 12-15 accompanied by a licensed adult 21 years of age or older; may take ducks, sea ducks, geese, gallinules, and brant.
<b>Canada Goose Early Season</b>	September 1 - 30	15	Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset for September season only.
<b>Canada Goose Regular Season</b>	November 18 - 26 and December 2 - January 21, 2024	2	Special permits are required for the South Shore Management Area and may be obtained through the online licensing system or the DFW. Field reservations are required. See page 26 for more information.
<b>Canada Goose Late Season</b>	January 27 - February 10, 2024	5	Limited to Providence, Bristol and Kent counties and portions of Washington County as described in RIHR §9.11(B)(3)(d). A map depicting the area open to hunting is found on page 16 and 17 and also available on the Department of Environmental Management's website.
<b>Snow Goose (Including Blue Goose)</b>	October 7 - January 21, 2024	25	No possession limit
<b>Brant</b>	December 23 - January 21, 2024	1	-
<b>Ducks</b>	October 13 - 16, November 22 - 26, December 2 - January 21, 2024	6	The daily bag limit shall contain no more than: Mallard ..... 4 (2 hens) Black Duck ..... 2 Canvasback ..... 2 Pintail ..... 1 Redhead ..... 2 Wood Duck ..... 3 Scaup ..... see below Sea Ducks ..... see below Other Duck Species ..... 6
<b>Scaup</b>	October 13 - 16, November 22 - 26, December 2 - January 1, 2024	1	The daily bag limit of scaup is part of the duck daily bag limit of 6.
	January 2 - 21, 2024	2	
<b>Sea Ducks</b>	Same as ducks	4	The daily bag limit is 4, in aggregate, but not to exceed 3 Scoter, 3 Eider ( <b>1 hen</b> ), or 3 Long-tailed Ducks. The daily bag limit of sea ducks (4) is part of the duck daily bag limit of 6.
<b>Mergansers</b>	Same As Ducks	5	-
<b>Coots</b>	Same As Ducks	15	-
<b>Swans</b>	No Season	-	-
<b>Harlequin Duck</b>	Closed	<b>Caution:</b> Harlequin ducks are found in sea duck hunting areas along rocky coastal shores, specifically in the vicinity of Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge, Middletown and Beavertail Pt., Jamestown. The female Harlequin duck is similar in appearance to female bufflehead, goldeneye, or scoter, and can be mistaken for these species.	

The possession limit shall contain no more than three (3) times the daily bag limit listed above.

\* See page 8 for more information on Youth and Disabled Hunter Opportunities.

## Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits

Season	Dates	Bag Limits
<b>Crow</b>	August 11 - October 1 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only) October 21 - December 11 (inclusive) December 15 - March 30, 2024 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only)	Unlimited
<b>King/Clapper Rail</b>	September 1 - November 9	1
<b>Sora/Virginia Rail</b>	September 1 - November 9	3
<b>Snipe</b>	September 1 - November 9	5
<b>Mourning Dove</b>	September 9 - October 8 October 21 - December 3 December 9 - 24	15
<b>Woodcock</b>	October 21 - December 4	3

The possession limit shall contain no more than three (3) times the daily bag limit listed above.

## 2023-24 Waterfowl Highlights:

1. Mallard bag limit has been increased to four (4) of which two (2) may be hen mallards.
2. The brant season has been reduced to 30 days seen on page 22. The bag limit for brant is one (1).
3. Sea Duck changes:
  - a. There is no longer a special sea duck season. The sea duck season is now the same as the duck season.
  - b. Sea duck daily bag limit is now 4. Species restrictions include no more than 3 scoters, 3 eider (1 hen), and 3 long-tailed ducks.
  - c. Sea ducks are now part of the daily duck bag of 6.
4. There is no longer a special restriction on hooded mergansers.
5. Pintail daily bag limit remains one (1) bird per day.
6. Permit and reservations are required to hunt geese at the South Shore Management Area during the regular season. Permits will be issued online and at the DFW Great Swamp Field office (see page 26 for details).
7. Goose and other waterfowl harvest reporting is no longer required for South Shore Management Area.
8. All migratory bird hunters must possess a Rhode Island Harvest Information Program (HIP) Permit, available through the online licensing system.
9. All waterfowl hunters sixteen (16) years of age and older must possess a RI State Waterfowl Stamp and Federal Duck Stamp.
10. Discharge of a firearm within five hundred (500) feet of an occupied dwelling is prohibited.
11. Cripples may be pursued, shot and retrieved from a boat under power in tidal waters seaward of the first upstream bridge; crippled birds must be immediately killed.
12. All regulations pertaining to migratory bird hunting also pertain to falconry hunting

(special permit required, contact the DFW for more details).

13. Non-toxic shot is required per Federal regulation for all dove, duck and goose hunting in Field 1 at South Shore Management Area.

## Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp

The law requires that each waterfowl hunter sixteen (16) years of age and over must carry on his or her person a valid Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp ("Federal Duck Stamp") signed in ink across the face. Waterfowl hunters must also possess a RI State Waterfowl Stamp, signed in ink across the face, or a State Waterfowl Stamp Certification obtained through the web-based online licensing system [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov). Those wishing to obtain a RI waterfowl stamp (\$8.00) in person may do so at the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Great Swamp Field Headquarters: 277 Great Neck Rd, West Kingston, RI 02892, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A limited number of "hunter" edition stamps will be printed and available for purchase.

## Harvest Information Permit - HIP

All migratory bird hunters are required by Federal Law to obtain a RI Harvest Information Program (HIP) Permit, obtainable through the online licensing system at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov), and at hunting license vendors, DEM headquarters in Providence, and participating town clerks statewide.

For more information, call 401-789-0281 or email [dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov](mailto:dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov). A HIP certification must be included on your license document to hunt migratory birds.

## RI Duck Stamp: About The Artist

Summer Blair created "Flying Long-Tailed Duck" which showcases great artistic ability and local Rhode Island scenery. She has always loved art since she was little. Any chance she got, she would draw or create something, and now that has transformed into her fully dedicated passion. She took a full year of art in Junior High and now is on the art pathway at

her high school. Additionally, she is a member of the National Art Honors Society and it is her pride and joy. Art is a form of expression for her and always has been a great comfort in her life. She has participated in the Duck Stamp competition through her entire school career and has always put in the most effort to make beautiful art in awareness of preserving wildlife. She is truly honored to have her artwork as the face of this year's RI Duck Stamp!



## Non-Toxic Shot Requirements

No shot other than non-toxic may be used to hunt, pursue, or attempt to take waterfowl, rails, or snipe within the State of Rhode Island including any jurisdictional tidal water extending from mean high water out seaward to three miles. Non-toxic shot includes steel, bismuth-tin, tungsten-iron, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-matrix, and tungsten-nickel-iron-shot or any other shot as approved by United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Tin shot is prohibited. All shot larger than BB is prohibited; including duplex loads containing shot larger than BB.

## Hunting Restrictions

No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, crossbow, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fish-hook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance.
- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler that is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.

## Contribute to the RI Waterfowl Programs

You can contribute to the RI waterfowl programs by investing in a limited edition stamp set for your home or office. Order forms for collector and signed governor edition 2023-2024 Rhode Island Waterfowl Stamps may be obtained by contacting the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife at 277 Great Neck Rd., West Kingston, RI 02892, 401-789-0281. The RI Division of Fish and Wildlife thanks waterfowl stamp and print collectors for your past support in funding our Waterfowl and Wetland Conservation Programs, and hope you contribute by adding RI's 2023-2024 stamp to your collection

If you are concerned about the future of waterfowling, the best way to support adequate waterfowl populations is to:

- Purchase federal and RI waterfowl stamps
- Join and participate in private conservation organizations
- Educate and train youth hunters and introduce them to waterfowling
- Learn to identify ducks and proper shooting distances to eliminate skybusting (shooting too soon and preventing birds from decoying) and crippling losses.

# Migratory Bird HUNTING

- From a sink box (a low floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of water).
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance.
- From or by means of any motor boat or sail boat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress has ceased.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- Using records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls.
- By driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sail boat to put them in the range of hunters.
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt, or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on/over a baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation.
- Dual Violation: Violation of state migratory bird regulations is also a violation of Federal regulations.

## Closed Areas

**Providence, East Providence, Pawtucket** – That portion of the Seekonk River north of the

railroad bridge to a line across the Seekonk River running between the intersection of Gulf Road and River Drive (Providence side) to the southerly abutment of the railroad bridge at the outlet of Omega Pond (East Providence side), shall be closed to waterfowl hunting. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting on the Seekonk River is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Warwick** – Brush Neck Cove, so-called, in its entirety. Mill Cove, so-called, in its entirety, including the beachfront. Buttonwoods Cove, so-called, in its entirety.

**North Kingstown** – Mill Cove, Wickford, so called, in its entirety. Fishing Cove, Wickford, area west of a line to be determined bisecting Cornelius Island. All discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge in an easterly direction from the above line. The Division of Fish and Wildlife will establish the line of demarcation.

**Charlestown** – Watchaug Pond and Poquiant Brook, or hunting within 100 yards upland of the shore or bank of same.

**Tiverton** – That unnamed estuary in Tiverton, north of Seapowet Avenue and east of Jack's Island, bounded on the west, south, and east shore by the Audubon Society of RI's Emile Ruecker Wildlife Refuge, and as posted by Audubon Society of RI and Department of Environmental Management signs. The affected area includes the inlet of this estuary and marshland on the north side of this outlet.

**Middletown** – Sachuest Point (NWR) shoreline below mean high water to mean low water surrounding the National Wildlife Refuge property is closed to all hunting: No hunting along shoreline.

**Lincoln/Central Falls** – Pursuant to RIGL 11-47-49.1, discharge of a firearm within the Blackstone Valley Flood Plains or Marshes, also known as "Valley Marshes" is prohibited.

## Additional Restrictions

**Barrington** – The Barrington River between Central Bridge at Massasoit Avenue and Barrington Bridge #123 at County Road is closed to hunting, except for that section on the river east of Puritan Avenue (41.745873° N, -71.309876° W) and west of the point southwest of Seabrook Court (41.744189° N, -71.306622° W). Hunting shall be restricted to the water areas below the vegetation line. Discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Bristol** – Walker Island – discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open waters (seaward).

**East Providence** – Check local ordinances for restrictions. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Warwick** – Rock Island and its adjacent groin extending northward off Narragansett Parkway. The discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge toward open water (seaward).

**Cranston** – Washouset Point (Pawtuxet Cove) north to Fields Point, including Stillhouse Cove; the discharge of firearms while waterfowl hunting is restricted to discharge towards open water (seaward). No hunting from the shoreline or from a watercraft within five hundred (500) feet of occupied buildings (RIGL 20-13-7).

**Little Compton** – All waterfowl hunters must have the following to hunt the Simmons Mill Pond only in the Simmons Mill Management Area: (a) waterfowl decoys; (b) retrieving breed of hunting dog, and/or a boat without motor, or canoe without motor.

**North Kingstown** – Waterfowl hunting on Belleville Pond is restricted to the northwest segment of the large pond as designated by DEM signs. The discharge of firearms is restricted toward open waters. Waterfowl hunting is permitted after November 15 by town ordinance. Firearms must remain cased until individual reaches hunting area (blind or boat).

**Check local ordinances for shooting or hunting restrictions.**

## Wanton Waste

All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.

## Tagging

No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

1. The hunter's signature
2. The hunter's address
3. The total number of birds involved, by species
4. The dates such birds were killed



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No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another unless such birds are properly tagged.

### Possession of Live Birds

Wounded and recovered birds shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

### Dressing

No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird (except doves and band-tailed pigeons) and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one fully feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported from the field to one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility.

### Shipment

No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species contained in the package.

### Importation

For information regarding the importation of migratory birds killed in another country, hunters should consult 50 CFR 20.61 through 20.66. One fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all migratory birds being transported between the port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility. No person shall import migratory game birds killed in any foreign country, except Canada, unless such birds are dressed (except as required in 20.63), drawn, and head and feet are removed. No person shall import migratory game birds belonging to another person.

### Reference

Federal regulations related to migratory game birds are located in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.

### Hunting on National Wildlife Refuges

More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting. For additional information on Federal regulations, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agent, 401-364-9124.

"It is the policy of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to offer its services and accommodations to all orderly persons, and, as required, to all properly licensed persons, without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, or disability." If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, facility, or if you desire further information, please write to the Office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Washington, D.C. 20240.

## Proper Harvest Care

Most wild animals in Rhode Island are healthy. However, diseases and viruses can be present with any wildlife species as well as associated parasites (e.g., ticks). Some wildlife diseases can be transmitted to humans, pets, domestic and other wild animals. The DFW monitors for diseases in multiple species, such as Chronic Wasting Disease and Epizootic Hemorrhagic disease (EHD) in deer, Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease 2 (RHVD2) and Tularemia in rabbits, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in waterfowl and a variety of other diseases in game and non-game animals.

If you do harvest an animal that is or seems sick, contact DFW (401-789-0281 or dem.dfw@dem.ri.gov). The DFW strongly advises hunters to adhere to the following procedures when handling harvested game:

- Do not handle or butcher game animals that are obviously sick or are found dead.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning game.
- Wear rubber gloves or cover hands with plastic when cleaning game.
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds after handling game.
- Carry disinfecting wipes or an alcohol-based gel into the field with you for immediate use after handling game.
- Wash tools and working surfaces with soap and water, then disinfect with a 10% solution of chlorine bleach.
- Cook game meat thoroughly, reaching an internal temperature of 165° F.
- Clean birds in an area that poultry and pet birds cannot access. There should be a solid barrier between your game cleaning area and where birds are housed
- Keep a separate pair of shoes to be worn only in the game cleaning area. Clean and disinfect all footwear when coming in and out of the cleaning area.
- Use dedicated tools for cleaning game; do not mix tools that you use around domestic animals or pets.
- Double bag carcass parts, tying both bags shut.
- Place bags in a container that children, domestic animals, and wildlife cannot access.
- Tick-borne diseases pose a hazard to both hunters and their dogs. Use tick repellents and always conduct tick checks after returning from the field.

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# Goose HUNTING

## South Shore Management Area Goose Hunting Cooperative

### Permits

- Required for all goose hunters during the regular Canada goose season (November 18 - 26, and December 2 - January 21, 2024).
- Must be obtained from the online licensing system at [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov) or from the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Great Swamp Field Headquarters, 277 Great Neck Rd., West Kingston.
- License document with SSMA permit certification must be carried while goose hunting at the SSMA and must be shown to any DEM Environmental Police Officer or Division of Fish and Wildlife employee upon request.

### Field Reservations

- Required for Canada goose hunting during the regular goose season (November 18 - 26, and December 2 - January 21, 2024).

### Harvest Reporting

- Goose and other waterfowl harvest reporting is no longer required for South Shore Management Area.

### Additional SSMA Goose Hunting Regulations

- See information packet provided with the goose hunting permit or online (<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pdf/waterfowlab-ssma.pdf>) for additional rules and regulations for goose hunting in the SSMA.
- SSMA is CLOSED during the late goose season: January 27 - February 10, 2024.

### Additional Hunting Restrictions at SSMA

**Dove hunting** is allowed in fields 1, 3, 5 and 6 except during the regular goose season. Doves may be taken by permitted goose hunters while goose hunting when the field reservation system is in place during the open dove season. Possession of lead shot for taking doves while goose hunting is prohibited.

**Upland game hunting** is allowed only in fields 5 and 6 during the upland game season except during the regular Canada goose seasons. All upland game hunting is prohibited during regular goose season, including Youth Waterfowl Weekend.

**Deer hunting during the archery season** is allowed ONLY in the wooded portions of field 3, 5 and 6, including during the regular Canada goose season when the field reservation system is in place.

**Deer hunting during the muzzleloader season** is allowed ONLY in the wooded portions of field 5 and 6, EXCEPT during the regular Canada goose season.

**Turkey hunting** is allowed in the wooded portions of Fields 3, 5, and 6 during the spring and fall turkey seasons.

**Waterfowl hunting** is allowed outside of the regular Canada goose season but within legal waterfowl seasons and without special hunting permits, reservation, or decoy restrictions, once crops are harvested. The taking of ducks during legal duck seasons is permitted while goose hunting.

Non-toxic shot is required per Federal regulation for all dove, duck (including coot and merganser), and goose hunting in Field 1 at South Shore Management Area.

Violations of any SSMA regulations, state management area regulations, and/or any state or federal hunting laws will result in loss of hunting privileges on the SSMA for a period of one year, beginning from the date of the violation.

For additional information, see the RI Hunting Regulations or call the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (401) 789-0281.



## Attention Migratory Bird Hunters

**Reminder: Report ALL bird bands ONLINE!**

[www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov)

Since June 2017, band reports are no longer taken over the phone via the 1-800 number. Band reports may also be mailed to: USGS Bird Banding Lab  
12100 Beach Forest Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

### Make Hunting & Fishing Dreams Come True!

*Hunt of a Lifetime* is a nonprofit organization that grants hunting and fishing dreams to children, age 21 and under, who have been diagnosed with life threatening illnesses.



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**Your band reports are important for migratory bird conservation!**

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# Small Game HUNTING

## Small Game Hunting

Species	Dates	Daily Bag Limit
<b>Coyote – State Land</b>	September 15 - February 29, 2024 April 25 - May 19, 2024	unlimited
<b>Coyote – Private Land</b>	No closed season	unlimited
<b>Youth Pheasant*</b>	October 14 - 15	2
<b>Raccoon</b>	October 1 - February 29, 2024	unlimited
<b>Pheasant</b>	October 21 - February 29, 2024	2
<b>Cottontail Rabbit</b>		3
<b>Gray and Red Squirrel</b>		5, singly or in aggregate
<b>Bobwhite Quail</b>		3
<b>Red, Gray Fox</b>		unlimited
<b>Ruffed Grouse</b>	CLOSED	

\* See page 8 for more information on Youth Hunt Opportunities

### Pheasant and Quail Hunting

A Game Bird Permit is required to hunt ring-neck pheasant and bobwhite quail. The daily limit for pheasant is two (2) either sex birds and the daily bag limit for quail is three (3). No physical tag require. Pheasants are stocked prior to opening day, then twice weekly, at most locations, until December. Birds are stocked once per week in December based on weather and available stock. Pheasant stocking does not occur in January and February. Stocked management areas are: Arcadia, Black Hut, Big River, Buck Hill, Carolina, Durfee Hill, Eight Rod Farm, Great Swamp, Nicholas Farm, Sapowet Marsh, and Simmons Mill Pond. For up to date stocking information see the departments Pheasant page at <https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/wildlife-hunting/pheasant>.



Photo by Casey Z.

### Coyote Hunting

Coyotes/wild on state lands is from September 15 until the last day in February, and during the open spring turkey hunting season, April 25 - May 19, 2024. The hunting season for coyotes on Prudence Island on state land during archery deer season with a valid archery permit, during the small game season on private land, November 1 - 30 and on North Prudence during the small game season, January 1 - 31, 2024. There is no closed season for coyote hunting on private lands. During the spring turkey season, coyote hunters must possess a valid turkey hunting permit while hunting on state lands.

Coyote hunters on state lands must wear a minimum of 200 square inches of fluorescent orange during the small game hunting season. During the shotgun deer season, 500 square

### Block Island Pheasant Hunting

Pheasant hunting is open on Block Island, with written landowner permission, on November 15 and 22, December 6 and 10 and January 3, 2024. Only male pheasants (roosters) may be taken from Block Island with a daily bag limit of 2 per day.

### Additional Regulations

The small game hunting season remains OPEN during the December shotgun deer season. This allows small game hunting on state management areas during the shotgun deer season.

Muzzle-loading rifles, no greater than .40 caliber with round ball and patch, may be used for hunting small game mammals during established seasons.

Night hunting of raccoons with shot larger than No. 4 or rifles larger than .22 cal. rimfire long-rifle is prohibited.

Archery hunters with a valid deer archery hunting permit may take raccoon during legal deer hunting hours beginning on the first day of October and ending on the last day of January.

### Air Rifles

Air rifles are permitted to hunt the following small mammals: squirrels, woodchucks, and cottontail rabbits, provided that the air guns are a minimum of .177 caliber and not larger than .22; a minimum of 750 fps velocity with pellets 7.5 grains or larger.

### Reptiles & Amphibians

A current Rhode Island hunting, fishing, or trapping license is required to take green frogs, bullfrogs and snapping turtles. The possession, removal from the wild, or killing, for any purpose, of any other native reptile or amphibian (including their nests and eggs) is prohibited except by special permit (RIHR 9.15.B).

The snapping turtle season is closed May 15 - July 15. The season bag limit is six (6) turtles, and at any time shall be limited to turtles with a minimum carapace length of thirteen (13) inches. Take is allowed by turtle trap, hand, hand-held dip net, snagging, and bow and arrow. Traps must include a tag with name and address of trapper and be set in a manner that allows all turtles within access to the surface to breathe air (RIHR 9.15.C). Take for the purpose of sale or any other purpose other than personal consumption is prohibited.

The green frog and bullfrog season is closed June 1 - July 31. The daily bag limit is 20 frogs (both species combined). Take is allowed by hand, hand-held dip net, spearing, hook and line, and bow and arrow.

inches is required. The placement or use of carcasses or meat parts is allowed on private property for the purposes of hunting coyotes but is prohibited on state lands.

Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset. Legal methods of take for coyote hunting include shotgun (no lead shot larger than No. 2), bow and arrow and crossbow; however, on private lands from April 1 to September 30 (both dates inclusive), centerfire rifles not larger than .229 caliber may be used (RIGL 20-13-13) and by any means allowed during any concurrent hunting season. When coyote hunting during deer season, the hunter must be in possession of a valid deer permit.

The bag limit for coyote is unlimited and electronic calls may be used.

## Trapping

Species	Dates	Season Bag Limit	Pelt Tagging
<b>Mink, Muskrat, Skunk, Raccoon, Opossum, Weasel, Red Fox, Gray Fox, Rabbit</b>	November 1 - January 31, 2024	none	no
<b>Coyote – Private</b>	no closed season	none	no
<b>Coyote – State Land</b>	November 1 - January 31, 2024		
<b>Beaver – Private*</b>	November 1 - March 14, 2024	20	yes
<b>Beaver – State Land*</b>	December 1 - February 29, 2024		
<b>Fisher*</b>	December 1 - 24	2	yes

\* Special permit required in addition to RI trapping license, which may be obtained at Fish and Wildlife's Great Swamp Field Headquarters (401) 789-0281 or email DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov

### General Regulations

- No person shall set, maintain, or tend any trap without first obtaining a trapping license from the Department of Environmental Management. A resident of this state may set traps on property which they own and on which they are domiciled without obtaining a trapping license (RIGL 20-16-7). All season restrictions, bag limits, tagging requirements, and other trapping laws and regulations apply.
- Every holder of a trapping license shall make a report of the number and species of all furbearing animals taken by him or her on forms provided by the Department within thirty (30) days of the end of the trapping season and before the expiration of the holder's license. No renewal of a trapping license shall be granted unless the report has been made (RIGL 20-16-12).
- Traps may not be set, staked, or placed prior to sunrise on opening day.
- All traps must be labeled with the trapper's current RI trapping license number attached by a metal tag or embedded or cut into the trap (RIGL 20-16-7).
- Written landowner permission is required to trap on private land (RIGL 20-16-9).
- All traps must be checked at least once in every 24-hour period (RIGL 20-16-9).
- There is no open season on bobcat or river otter.

### Types of Traps Permitted

Furbearers for which there is an open season may be taken in: box (a.k.a. "cage") traps, body-grip (a.k.a. "conibear") traps, or species specific traps, with the following restrictions:

#### Body-grip Traps

**Private land:** Body-grip (a.k.a. smooth wire or "conibear") type traps up to six and one half (6.5) inch jaw spread (i.e. "110, 120, 160" or equivalent) are permitted on land or in water on private land. Body-grip type traps greater than six and one half (6.5) inch but not exceeding eight (8) inch jaw spread ("220") may only be set if completely submerged in water or set no less than six (6) feet above the surface of the ground. Body-grip traps greater than eight (8) inch but not exceeding ten (10) inch jaw spread ("330") may only be set completely submerged in water.

**State land:** Body-grip traps up to six and one half (6.5) inch jaw spread are only permitted in water sets (i.e. all or a portion of the trap in water)

or if placed six (6) feet above the ground. Body-grip traps with a jaw spread greater than six and one half (6.5) inches but not exceeding ten (10) inches ("220-330") may only be set if completely submerged in water.

#### Box Traps

The use of box traps is permitted on private and state lands.

#### Species Specific Traps

The use of species specific traps is permitted on private and state land. A species specific trap is characterized by all of the following: triggering and restraining mechanisms are enclosed within a housing; triggering and restraining mechanisms are only accessible through a single opening when set; access opening does not exceed 2 inches in diameter; triggering mechanism can only be activated by a pulling force; has a swivel mounted anchoring system.

#### Permit to Trap State Lands

All trappers harvesting furbearers from state management areas must first obtain a Permit to Trap State Lands (no fee), issued by the Division of Fish & Wildlife by calling 401-789-0281 or by emailing DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov, in addition to their current R.I. trapping license, obtained through the online licensing system: [rio.ri.gov](http://rio.ri.gov).

#### Prohibitions

- The use of poisons or snares (RIGL 20-16-6).
- The use of steel-jawed leghold traps (RIGL 20-16-8).
- No person shall disturb, tend, or possess a trap of another, or take an animal from the traps of another unless specifically authorized to do so (RIGL 20-16-11).
- The setting of traps within ten feet of a beaver lodge or bank den or within eight feet of a muskrat lodge unless authorized by special permit.
- The taking or possession of a road-killed furbearer (RIGL 20-16-1), unless with a current R.I. trapping license and during the open season for that species or as provided for under a current RI Scientific Collectors Permit (RIGL 20-1-18) or otherwise permitted by the Division.
- The relocation of beaver.
- The use of deadfalls, pitfalls, fish hooks, treble hooks, or other similarly sharpened instruments to catch, capture, or injure furbearers is prohibited.



# Photo SUBMISSIONS



# Hunting SEASONS SUMMARY

For further information regarding specific bag, possession, and season limits please visit the pages noted in the table below.

## Deer Hunting (see page 10 for bag/season limit information)

Season	Dates
Archery (includes Crossbow)	September 9 - 10 (Youth only, Zone 1) September 23 - 24 (Youth only, Zone 2) September 15 - January 31, 2024 (Zone 1) October 1 - January 31, 2024 (Zone 2)
Archery: Patience and Prudence Islands (Zone 3)	October 28 - 29 (Youth only) November 1 - January 31, 2024
Archery: Block Island (Zone 4)	October 12, 13, 16-20, 23-27, 30, 31
Muzzleloader	October 28 - 29 (Youth only Zones 1, 2) November 4 - 26 (Zones 1, 2) December 26 - January 2, 2024 (Zones 1, 2 Private land only, antlerless deer only)
Shotgun	December 2 - 17 (Zone 1) December 2 - 10 (Zone 2) December 26 - January 2, 2024 (Zones 1, 2 - Private land only, antlerless deer only)
Archery, Muzzleloader & Shotgun: Block Island (Zone 4)	November 1-3, 6-9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 27-30, December 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-15, 18, 19, 21, 22, January 2-5, 8-12, 16-19, 22-26, 29-31, 2024, February 1, 2, 5-9, 12-16, 2024
Special Season for Disabled Hunters: Patience and Prudence Islands (Zone 3)	October 24 - 27

## Migratory Game Bird Hunting\* (page 22 for bag/possession limit information)

Season	Dates
Crow	August 11 - October 1 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only), October 21 - December 11, December 15 - March 30, 2024 (Fri, Sat, Sun Only)
King/Clapper Rail and Sora/Virginia Rail	September 1 - November 9
Snipe	September 1 - November 9
Mourning Dove	September 9 - October 8, October 21 - December 3, December 9 - 24
Woodcock	October 21 - December 4
Canada Goose (Early Season)	September 1 - 30
Canada Goose (Regular Season)	November 18 - 26, December 2 - January 21, 2024
Canada Goose (Late Season)	January 27 - February 10, 2024
Snow Goose (including blue goose)	October 7 - January 21, 2024
Ducks, Sea Ducks, Mergansers and Coots**	October 13 - 16, November 22 - 26, December 2 - January 21, 2024
Brant	December 23 - January 21, 2024
Youth Waterfowl	October 28 - 29

## Wild Turkey Hunting (see page 14 for bag/season limit information)

Season	Dates
Fall Archery	October 1 - 31
Youth	April 15 - 21, 2024
Paraplegic	April 20 - 21, 2024
Spring	April 25 - May 19, 2024

## Small Game Hunting (see page 28 for bag/season limit information)

Season	Dates
Coyote – State Land	September 15 - February 29, 2024 April 25 - May 19, 2024
Coyote – Private Land	No Closed Season
Youth Pheasant	October 14 - 15
Raccoon	October 1 - February 29, 2024
Pheasant	October 21 - February 29, 2024
Raccoon	
Cottontail Rabbit	
Gray and Red Squirrel	
Bobwhite Quail	
Red, Gray Fox	
Ruffed Grouse	CLOSED

\*Season dates are subject to regulatory changes occurring at the time of printing. Please refer to the complete Hunting and Trapping Regulations for the 2023-2024 season.

\*\*See new scaup, sea duck and merganser regulations on page 22.

Tear here for an in the field handy season guide!

# Shooting Hours & SUNRISE/SUNSET

## Legal Shooting Hours

Season	Hours
<b>Small Game</b>	Sunrise until Sunset
<b>Deer Hunting</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset
<b>Coyote</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset
<b>Raccoon</b>	6:00 PM October 1 until 11:59 PM of the last day of February
<b>Waterfowl</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
<b>Canada Goose, September season only</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset
<b>Spring Turkey</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until 1:00PM
<b>Fall Turkey</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
<b>Dove</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
<b>Woodcock, Snipe &amp; Rails</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until Sunset
<b>Crow</b>	½ hour before Sunrise until ½ hour after Sunset

## Sunrise / Sunset Table at Providence, RI

Darker brown indicates Daylight Savings Time

Day	August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		April		May	
	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set
01	5:39	8:03	6:11	7:19	6:42	6:27	7:17	5:40	6:53	4:15	7:13	4:25	6:58	5:00	6:19	5:36	6:27	7:11	5:41	7:44
02	5:40	8:02	6:12	7:17	6:43	6:25	7:18	5:38	6:54	4:15	7:13	4:26	6:57	5:01	6:18	5:37	6:25	7:12	5:40	7:45
03	5:41	8:01	6:13	7:16	6:44	6:24	7:20	5:37	6:55	4:15	7:13	4:26	6:56	5:02	6:16	5:38	6:24	7:13	5:38	7:46
04	5:42	8:00	6:14	7:14	6:45	6:22	7:21	5:36	6:56	4:14	7:13	4:27	6:55	5:04	6:14	5:40	6:22	7:15	5:37	7:47
05	5:43	7:59	6:15	7:12	6:46	6:20	6:22	4:35	6:57	4:14	7:13	4:28	6:54	5:05	6:13	5:41	6:20	7:16	5:36	7:49
06	5:44	7:58	6:16	7:10	6:47	6:19	6:23	4:34	6:58	4:14	7:13	4:29	6:53	5:06	6:11	5:42	6:19	7:17	5:35	7:50
07	5:45	7:56	6:17	7:09	6:48	6:17	6:25	4:33	6:59	4:14	7:13	4:30	6:51	5:08	6:09	5:43	6:17	7:18	5:33	7:51
08	5:46	7:55	6:18	7:07	6:49	6:15	6:26	4:31	7:00	4:14	7:12	4:31	6:50	5:09	6:08	5:44	6:15	7:19	5:32	7:52
09	5:47	7:54	6:19	7:05	6:50	6:14	6:27	4:30	7:01	4:14	7:12	4:32	6:49	5:10	6:06	5:45	6:14	7:20	5:31	7:53
10	5:48	7:52	6:20	7:04	6:52	6:12	6:28	4:29	7:01	4:14	7:12	4:33	6:48	5:11	7:04	6:47	6:12	7:21	5:30	7:54
11	5:49	7:51	6:21	7:02	6:53	6:10	6:29	4:28	7:02	4:14	7:12	4:34	6:47	5:13	7:03	6:48	6:11	7:22	5:29	7:55
12	5:50	7:50	6:22	7:00	6:54	6:09	6:31	4:27	7:03	4:14	7:11	4:35	6:45	5:14	7:01	6:49	6:09	7:23	5:28	7:56
13	5:51	7:48	6:23	6:58	6:55	6:07	6:32	4:26	7:04	4:15	7:11	4:37	6:44	5:15	6:59	6:50	6:07	7:24	5:27	7:57
14	5:52	7:47	6:24	6:57	6:56	6:06	6:33	4:26	7:05	4:15	7:11	4:38	6:43	5:16	6:58	6:51	6:06	7:26	5:26	7:58
15	5:53	7:45	6:25	6:55	6:57	6:04	6:34	4:25	7:05	4:15	7:10	4:39	6:41	5:18	6:56	6:52	6:04	7:27	5:25	7:59
16	5:54	7:44	6:26	6:53	6:58	6:02	6:36	4:24	7:06	4:15	7:10	4:40	6:40	5:19	6:54	6:53	6:03	7:28	5:24	8:00
17	5:55	7:43	6:27	6:51	6:59	6:01	6:37	4:23	7:07	4:16	7:09	4:41	6:39	5:20	6:53	6:55	6:01	7:29	5:23	8:01
18	5:56	7:41	6:28	6:50	7:01	5:59	6:38	4:22	7:07	4:16	7:09	4:42	6:37	5:21	6:51	6:56	5:59	7:30	5:22	8:02
19	5:57	7:40	6:29	6:48	7:02	5:58	6:39	4:21	7:08	4:16	7:08	4:44	6:36	5:23	6:49	6:57	5:58	7:31	5:21	8:03
20	5:58	7:38	6:30	6:46	7:03	5:56	6:40	4:21	7:09	4:17	7:08	4:45	6:34	5:24	6:48	6:58	5:56	7:32	5:20	8:04
21	5:59	7:37	6:31	6:44	7:04	5:55	6:42	4:20	7:09	4:17	7:07	4:46	6:33	5:25	6:46	6:59	5:55	7:33	5:19	8:05
22	6:00	7:35	6:32	6:43	7:05	5:53	6:43	4:19	7:10	4:18	7:06	4:47	6:31	5:26	6:44	7:00	5:53	7:34	5:19	8:06
23	6:01	7:33	6:33	6:41	7:06	5:52	6:44	4:19	7:10	4:18	7:06	4:48	6:30	5:28	6:42	7:01	5:52	7:35	5:18	8:07
24	6:03	7:32	6:34	6:39	7:08	5:50	6:45	4:18	7:11	4:19	7:05	4:50	6:28	5:29	6:41	7:02	5:50	7:37	5:17	8:08
25	6:04	7:30	6:35	6:38	7:09	5:49	6:46	4:18	7:11	4:19	7:04	4:51	6:27	5:30	6:39	7:04	5:49	7:38	5:16	8:08
26	6:05	7:29	6:37	6:36	7:10	5:48	6:47	4:17	7:11	4:20	7:03	4:52	6:25	5:31	6:37	7:05	5:48	7:39	5:16	8:09
27	6:06	7:27	6:38	6:34	7:11	5:46	6:48	4:17	7:12	4:21	7:03	4:53	6:24	5:33	6:36	7:06	5:46	7:40	5:15	8:10
28	6:07	7:25	6:39	6:32	7:12	5:45	6:50	4:16	7:12	4:22	7:02	4:55	6:22	5:34	6:34	7:07	5:45	7:41	5:15	8:11
29	6:08	7:24	6:40	6:31	7:14	5:44	6:51	4:16	7:12	4:22	7:01	4:56	6:21	5:35	6:32	7:08	5:43	7:42	5:14	8:12
30	6:09	7:22	6:41	6:29	7:15	5:42	6:52	4:16	7:12	4:23	7:00	4:57			6:30	7:09	5:42	7:43	5:13	8:13
31	6:10	7:21			7:16	5:41			7:12	4:24	6:59	4:59			6:29	7:10			5:13	8:13

Tear here for an in the field handy season guide!

# SHOOTERS & HUNTERS: HELP PREVENT WILDFIRES.

**T**he target shooting and hunting community prides itself on being safe and responsible with firearms in all situations—from using them outdoors to storing them safely at home. Sometimes, however, unusual conditions such as extremely dry environments require an extra level of awareness and safety on the part of shooters.

Wildfires have many possible causes. The National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearms and ammunition industry, reminds all shooters that during dry and hot weather conditions their use of certain ammunition and targets could accidentally ignite a wildfire. NSSF reminds all target shooters and hunters, as well as other outdoor enthusiasts, to consider the potential consequences of their activities in fire-prone environments.

- **Make it a point to know the regulations and rules related to shooting in areas experiencing dry and hot conditions, whether on public or private land or at shooting ranges. Many national forests, for example, do not allow recreational shooting when fire restrictions are in effect.**
- **Consider the type of ammunition and targets you are using. Minimize the risk of fires by not using steel-jacketed ammunition, ammunition with steel-core components, tracer rounds or exploding targets in fire-prone areas.**
- **Remember that equipment, such as cars and ATVs, can have extremely hot exhaust systems that could ignite dry vegetation, so park only in designated areas.**
- **Extinguish and dispose of smoking materials safely.**
- **Follow guidelines to extinguish campfires.**
- **Warn others of potential dangers and behaviors for starting wildfires.**
- **Report any wildfire you see to authorities.**
- **Spread this message to other target shooters, hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.**



NSSF.ORG





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