

# **HUNTING AND TRAPPING REGULATION PROPOSALS**

**For 2026-2027 and 2027-2028**

(All dates inclusive.)

**Wildlife and Heritage Service  
Tawes State Office Building  
E-1  
580 Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401**

**See below for the goals and background of proposed changes and the proposed season dates and bag limits for all resident game species.**

## Upland Game

**No proposed regulatory changes for upland game except for the updated season dates proposed below.**

### Proposed Upland Game Season Dates and Bag Limits 2026-2027 and 2027-2028

Species	Open Season	Location	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 7 – Feb 28  <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 6 – Feb 29	All counties	4 per day	8
Crow	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Aug 15 – Mar 15  Wed – Sat Only	All counties	No Limit	No Limit
Pheasant	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 7 – Feb 28  <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 6 – Feb 29	All counties	2 per day, either sex	4
Quail	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 7 – Jan 15  <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 6 – Jan 15	Private lands east of the Susquehanna River; All lands west of Susquehanna River, excluding Garrett and Allegany counties	6 per day	12
Quail	CLOSED SEASON	Lands owned or managed by DNR east of the Susquehanna River		
Quail	CLOSED SEASON	Garrett and Allegany counties		

**Proposed Falconry Upland Game Season Dates and Bag Limits  
2026-2027 and 2027-2028**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Daily Bag Limit</b>	<b>Possession Limit</b>
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit (falconry)	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Mar 31	All counties	4 per day	8
Quail (falconry)	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Mar 31	All counties	4 per day	8
Pheasant (falconry)	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Mar 31	All counties	2 per day, either sex	4

**Proposed Falconry Forest Game Season Dates & Bag Limits  
2026-2027 and 2027-2028**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Open Season</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Daily Bag Limit</b>	<b>Possession Limit</b>
Ruffed grouse (falconry)	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Oct 1 – Mar 31	All counties	2 per day	4
Squirrel – Gray, Eastern Fox, Red or Piney (falconry)	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Sep 1 – Mar 31	All counties	6 per day	12

# Migratory Game Birds

## Note

Seasons, bag limits and possession limits for migratory game birds must conform to regulations and season frameworks adopted by the Secretary of the Interior. Proposed migratory bird hunting seasons are available in a separate link.

## Forest Game and Deer

### Black Bear

Note: This is a policy change, but public comment is requested.

#### **Regulation Proposal: Adopt an infinite grace period for black bear lottery preference points.**

Rationale/Goal: This is a common request from hunters. Currently, if a hunter misses a single year, they lose all of their preference points. This has caused frustration amongst resident and non-resident hunters. Implementing a grace period will improve hunter retention, hunter relations, and reduce confusion surrounding the lottery process.

Comments: It is a somewhat common occurrence for hunters to forget to purchase a preference point or lottery application because the lottery takes place before any hunting season comes in and hunters aren't thinking about buying a license yet. Many western states with a lottery system provide a grace period for this reason and hunters typically express discontent that Maryland DNR does not do the same.

### Black Bear and Deer

**Regulation Proposal: Modify the current energy requirements for rifles allowed for hunting deer and black bear. Any centerfire or rimfire rifle .30 caliber (7.62mm) or larger will be legal for hunting these species with no minimum muzzle energy requirement. Rifles smaller than .30 caliber (7.62mm) used for black bear and deer will still be required to generate 1,200 foot pounds of muzzle energy.**

Rationale/Goal: The current regulation excludes many popular pistol rounds used in rifles that are capable of ethically harvesting big game. This change would legalize and expand the use of popular modern hunting rifles that are commonly used in other states that do not currently meet the muzzle energy requirement. Additionally, this change increases the rifle options for youth, senior, and disabled hunters who may be restricted due to recoil.

Comments: Adding .30 caliber as a minimum caliber as an alternative to 1,200 foot pounds of energy permits the use of popular and effective firearms that otherwise cannot meet the muzzle energy requirements.

## Sika and White-tailed Deer

**Regulation Proposal:** Allow the use of straight-walled cartridge rifles during the muzzleloader seasons for those hunters with a Universal Disability Pass that are hunting from a vehicle.

Rationale/Goal: Improve safety and hunting opportunities for disabled hunters.

Comments: Loading a muzzleloader can be difficult and dangerous in a vehicle. Allowing straight-walled cartridge rifles is safer and may attract more disabled hunters to participate in the season.

## Sika Deer

**Regulation Proposal:** Institute an antler point restriction (APR) for sika deer requiring stags to have at least two points on one antler to be legal for harvest. Hunters would be allowed to harvest one antlered sika deer within the yearly bag limit that does not meet that requirement. Stags could be taken in any order.

Rationale/Goal: Further align sika management with the same quality deer management principles used to manage white-tailed deer. The APR would promote the harvest of mature sika deer, improving the age structure of the population. Additionally, an APR would promote an increased antlerless harvest, improving overall herd management.

Comments: Annually, approximately 24% of the antlered sika harvest is spikes (yearlings).

### **Proposed Forest Game Season Dates & Bag Limits 2026-2027 and 2027-2028**

Species	Open Season	Location	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
Black Bear	<b>2026</b> Oct 26 – Oct 31  <b>2027</b> Oct 25 – Oct 30  <b>Permit Required</b>	Allegany, Garrett, Frederick, and Washington counties	1 per day with no more than 1 per permitted bear hunting team	1 per season with no more than 1 per permitted bear hunting team
Wild Turkey, fall season	<b>2026</b> Oct 31 – Nov 8  <b>2027</b> Oct 30 – Nov 7	Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties	1 either sex	1 either sex per fall/winter season combined
Wild Turkey, winter season	<b>2027</b> Jan 21 – Jan 23  <b>2028</b> Jan 20 – Jan 22	All counties	1 either sex	

Wild Turkey, spring season, Junior Hunt  (Hunters age 16 or younger only)	<b>2027</b> Apr 17 – 18  <b>2028</b> Apr 15 – 16	All counties	1 bearded turkey	2 bearded turkeys per season
Wild Turkey, Spring season	<b>2027</b> Apr 19 – May 24  <b>2028</b> Apr 18 – May 23	All counties	1 bearded turkey	
Squirrel - Gray, Red (Piney) & Eastern Fox	<b>2026-2027</b> Sep 5 – Feb 28  <b>2027-2028</b> Sep 4 – Feb 29	All counties	6 per day	12
Delmarva Fox Squirrel	CLOSED SEASON	All counties		
Ruffed grouse	<b>2026</b> Oct 3 – Dec 31  <b>2027</b> Oct 2 – Dec 31	All counties	2 per day	4

## Proposed 2026-2027 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlered Deer – Statewide

**Definition:** An antlered white-tailed deer is a deer with two or more points to one antler, or a deer with at least one antler three or more inches long, measuring from the top of the skull as the deer is in life.

**Antler Point Restriction:** Deer hunters may harvest one antlered deer during a license year within the established statewide bag limit (including bonus antlered deer) that does not meet the requirement of having at least three points on one antler. Any remaining antlered deer taken within the established bag limit must have at least three points on one antler. Antlered deer can be taken in any order. Junior hunters (16 years old or younger) and apprentice license holders are exempt from the three antler point requirement.

Season	Dates	Weapon Bag Limit	Total Combined Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Sep 11 – Oct 21  Sunday, Oct 25 – Nov 27 (Sunday, see Notes)  Dec 14 – Dec 18  Sunday, Jan 3 – Jan 7 (Sunday, see Notes)  Jan 8 – Sunday, Jan 10 (Region A only, see Notes)  Jan 11 – Sunday, Jan 31 (Sunday, see Notes)	1 Antlered <sup>1</sup>	2 Antlered <sup>1</sup>	<p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting. Archery hunters in Allegany, Garrett, Frederick, and Washington counties are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Black Bear Season is open.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
	Muzzleloader			
Firearm	Nov 28 – Dec 12  Jan 8 – Jan 9 (Region B only, see Notes)  Jan 10 (Sunday, see Notes)	1 Antlered <sup>1</sup>		<p><b>Deer Firearm Season is open during the January 2027 dates in Region B only.</b> Deer Archery Season is open these dates in Region A only. Deer hunters may use archery equipment on these days in Region B but any deer harvested must count towards the Deer Firearm Season bag limit.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>

Primitive Hunt Days (See Notes)	Feb 1 – 3	See Notes	<p><b>Primitive Hunt Days:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. Antlered deer taken with long bows and recurve bows will count towards the regular archery bag limit. Antlered deer taken with flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders will count towards the regular muzzleloader bag limit.</p> <p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Days hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.</p>
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<sup>1</sup>The statewide antlered white-tailed deer regular bag limit is two deer total, no more than one in any weapon season; however, one additional antlered white-tailed deer may be taken with the use of a bonus antlered stamp with some restrictions. The bonus stamp may be used in one of the following ways:

1. In Region B: For a hunter to take a second antlered white-tailed deer during the same weapon season;
2. In Region B: For a hunter to take a third antlered white-tailed deer in the remaining weapon season that they have not harvested an antlered white-tailed deer;
3. In Region A: For a hunter to take one antlered white-tailed deer during the same weapon season in which they have already taken an antlered white-tailed deer in Region B; or
4. In Region A: For a hunter to take a third antlered white-tailed deer during the remaining weapon season, as long as the hunter's two previously harvested antlered white-tailed deer were **not** both taken in Region A.

Hunters may not take more than two antlered white-tailed deer total per year from Region A, or more than one antlered white-tailed deer in any weapon season while hunting in Region A.

### **Proposed 2026-2027 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlerless Deer – Region A** Allegany, Garrett & Washington (Zone 2) counties

**Definition:** An antlerless white-tailed deer is a female deer or male deer with no antlers or spike antlers less than three inches in length, measuring from the top of the skull as the deer is in life.

Season	Dates	Weapon Bag Limit	Total Combined Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Sep 11 – Oct 21  Sunday, Oct 25 – Nov 27 (Sunday, see Notes)	2 Antlerless <sup>1</sup>	2 Antlerless <sup>1</sup>	<b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting. Archery hunters in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Black Bear Season is open.
	Dec 14 – Dec 18  Sunday, Jan 3 – Sunday, Jan 31 (Sunday, see Notes)			<b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
Muzzleloader	Oct 22 – Oct 24  Dec 26 – Jan 2	2 Antlerless <sup>1</sup> (See Notes)		<b>Region A muzzleloader bag limit:</b> Only 1 deer total (antlered or antlerless) may be taken in Region A during the October 22 – 24, 2026 muzzleloader season.

Firearm	Dec 5 – Dec 12	2 Antlerless <sup>1</sup>		<b>Sunday Deer Hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
Primitive Hunt Days (See Notes)	Feb 1 – 3	1 Antlerless	1 Antlerless <sup>1</sup>	<b>Primitive Hunt Days:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. An antlerless deer taken during these days does not count against the hunter’s regular Region A antlerless bag limit.  <b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Days hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.

<sup>1</sup> Up to two antlerless deer may be harvested during a weapon season but no more than two total for the combined season. Only one antlerless deer per day may be harvested in Region A. A third antlerless deer may be harvested during the designated Primitive Hunt Days.

### Proposed 2026-2027 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlerless Deer – Region B

Anne Arundel<sup>2</sup>, Baltimore<sup>1</sup>, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard<sup>1</sup>, Kent, Montgomery<sup>1</sup>, Prince George’s<sup>1</sup>, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s, Somerset, Talbot, Washington (Zone 1), Wicomico & Worcester counties

**Definition:** An antlerless white-tailed deer is a female deer or male deer with no antlers or spike antlers less than three inches in length, measuring from the top of the skull as the deer is in life.

Season	Dates	Total Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Sep 11 – Oct 21	15 Antlerless  (Unlimited antlerless in the Suburban Deer Management Zone, see Notes)	<b>Suburban Deer Management Zone:</b> During the designated Archery season, hunters in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties may use vertical bows or crossbows to take an unlimited number of antlerless deer.  <b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting. Archery hunters in Frederick and Washington counties are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Black Bear Season is open.  <b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
	Sunday, Oct 25 – Nov 27 (Sunday, see Notes)		
	Dec 14 – Dec 18		
	Sunday, Jan 3 – Jan 7 (Sunday, see Notes)		
	Jan 11 – Sunday, Jan 31 (Sunday, see Notes)		
Muzzleloader	Oct 22 – Oct 24 Oct 26 – Oct 31 Dec 19 – Jan 2	10 Antlerless	<b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Muzzleloader season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.

Firearm	Nov 28 – Dec 12 Jan 8 – Sunday, Jan 10 (Sunday, see Notes)	10 Antlerless	<b>Sunday Deer Hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
Primitive Season (See Notes)	Feb 1 – 3	See notes	<b>Primitive Season:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. Antlerless deer taken with long bows and recurve bows will count towards the Region B archery bag limit. Antlerless deer taken with flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders will count towards the Region B muzzleloader bag limit.  <b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Season hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.

<sup>1</sup> Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties comprise the Suburban Deer Management Zone. This zone has an unlimited bag limit for antlerless deer harvested during the designated archery season.

### Proposed 2026-2027 Junior Deer Hunt Antlered & Antlerless Deer

The Junior Deer Hunt is for hunters age 16 or younger only. Junior hunters must be accompanied by a licensed (or exempt from license requirement) unarmed adult age 21 or older. Junior hunters are not required to comply with the antler point restrictions.

Region	Description	Total Bag Limit	Dates	Notes
Region A	White-tailed Deer, Antlered or Antlerless	1 deer	Nov 14  Nov 15 (Sunday, see Notes)	<b>Separate Bag Limit:</b> Deer taken by Junior hunters during the Junior Deer Hunt do not count towards the regular archery, muzzleloader, or firearm season bag limits.  <b>Sunday Deer Hunting:</b> The Junior Deer Hunt is open on Sunday November 15, 2026 in all counties except Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George’s. See chart.
Region B	White-tailed Deer, Antlered or Antlerless	3 deer, no more than 1 may be antlered		
Where present	Sika Deer, Antlered or Antlerless	1 deer		

## Proposed 2026-2027 Sika Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlered & Antlerless Deer

**Definition:** An antlered sika deer is a deer with at least one antler visible above the hairline.

Season	Description	Dates	Total Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Antlered or Antlerless	Sep 11 – Oct 21	3 deer, no more than 1 antlered	<p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
		Sunday, Oct 25 – Nov 27 (Sunday, see Notes)		
		Dec 14 – Dec 18		
		Sunday, Jan 3 – Jan 7 (Sunday, see Notes)		
		Jan 11 – Sunday, Jan 31 (Sunday, see Notes)		
Muzzleloader	Antlered or Antlerless	Oct 22 – Oct 24	3 deer, no more than 1 antlered	<p><b>October 26 – 31:</b> Deer muzzleloader season is open during these dates in Region B only.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Muzzleloader season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
	Antlerless Only	Oct 26 – 31 (Region B only)		
	Antlered or Antlerless	Dec 19 – Jan 2		
Firearm	Antlered or Antlerless	Nov 28 – Dec 12	3 deer, no more than 1 antlered	<p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
		Jan 8 – Sunday, Jan 10		
Primitive Season (See Notes)	Antlered or Antlerless	Feb 1 – 3	See Notes	<p><b>Primitive Season:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. Sika deer taken with long bows and recurve bows will count towards the sika deer archery bag limit. Sika deer taken with flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders will count towards the sika deer muzzleloader bag limit.</p> <p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Season hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.</p>

### Tentative 2026-2027 Sunday Deer Hunting Dates

COUNTY	ARCHERY SEASON															LANDS OPEN	
	Sept. 13	Sept. 20	Sept. 27	Oct. 4	Oct. 11	Oct. 18	Oct. 25	Nov. 1	Nov. 8	Nov. 15	Nov. 22	Jan. 3	Jan. 10	Jan. 17	Jan. 24		Jan. 31
Allegany	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>						
Anne Arundel								Open									Private Only
Baltimore																	None
Calvert	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Caroline	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Carroll				Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open					Private Only
Cecil	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>						
Charles	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Dorchester	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Frederick				Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open					Private Only
Garrett	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>						
Harford					Open	Open	Open	Open	Open								Private Only
Howard																	None
Kent	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private Only						
Montgomery	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only						
Prince George's																	None

**Tentative 2026-2027 Sunday Deer Hunting Dates (continued)**

COUNTY	ARCHERY SEASON															LANDS OPEN	
	Sept. 13	Sept. 20	Sept. 27	Oct. 4	Oct. 11	Oct. 18	Oct. 25	Nov. 1	Nov. 8	Nov. 15	Nov. 22	Jan. 3	Jan. 10	Jan. 17	Jan. 24		Jan. 31
Queen Anne's	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
St. Mary's	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public
Somerset	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private & Designated Public <sup>3</sup>
Talbot	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Washington Region A	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Washington Region B	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Wicomico	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Worcester	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Allegany (Billmeyer-Belle Grove WMA, Dan's Mountain WMA, Green Ridge SF, McCoole FMA, Sideling Hill WMA, Warrior Mountain WMA), Cecil (Earlville WMA, C&D Canal Lands, Grove Farm WMA, Old Bohemia WMA), Garrett (Cunningham Swamp WMA, Garrett SF, Mt. Nebo WMA, Potomac SF, Savage River SF), St. Mary's (Salem SF, Saint Inigoes SF), Washington (Indian Springs WMA, Prather's Neck WMA, Sideling Hill WMA), Wicomico (Ellis Bay WMA, Chesapeake Forest Lands, Johnson WMA, Nanticoke WMA, Wetipquin WMA), and Worcester (Chesapeake Forest Lands, E. A. Vaughn WMA, Hickory Pt. Wildlands, Isle of Wight WMA, Pocomoke SF, Pocomoke River WMA).

<sup>2</sup>Legal shooting hours for deer are one half hour before sunrise to 10:30 am on this Sunday (applies only where footnoted).

<sup>3</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Somerset County are those lands leased to hunt clubs for the purpose of hunting.

**Tentative 2026-2027 Sunday Deer Hunting Dates (continued)**

COUNTY	FIREARM SEASON				MUZZLELOADER SEASON		LANDS OPEN
	Nov. 15 (Jr Hunt)	Nov. 29	Dec. 6	Jan. 10	Dec. 20	Dec. 27	
Allegany	Open	Open	Open	No Season	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Anne Arundel	Open	Open					Private Only
Baltimore							None
Calvert	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Caroline	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Carroll	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Cecil	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Charles	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Dorchester	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Frederick	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Garrett	Open	Open	Open	No Season	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Harford	Open	Open	Open	Open			Private Only
Howard							None
Kent	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Private Only
Montgomery	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Prince George's							None
Queen Anne's	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
St. Mary's	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Somerset	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private & Designated Public <sup>3</sup>
Talbot	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Washington Region A	Open	Open	Open	No Season	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Washington Region B	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Wicomico	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Worcester	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Allegany (Billmeyer-Belle Grove WMA, Dan's Mountain WMA, Green Ridge SF, McCoole FMA, Sideling Hill WMA, Warrior Mountain WMA), Cecil (Earlville WMA, C&D Canal Lands, Grove Farm WMA, Old Bohemia WMA), Garrett (Cunningham Swamp WMA, Garrett SF, Mt. Nebo WMA, Potomac SF, Savage River SF), St. Mary's (Salem SF, Saint Inigoes SF), Washington (Indian Springs WMA, Prather's Neck WMA, Sideling Hill WMA), Wicomico (Ellis Bay WMA, Chesapeake Forest Lands, Johnson WMA, Nanticoke WMA, Wetipquin WMA), and Worcester (Chesapeake Forest Lands, E. A. Vaughn WMA, Hickory Pt. Wildlands, Isle of Wight WMA, Pocomoke SF, Pocomoke River WMA).

<sup>2</sup>Legal shooting hours for deer are one half hour before sunrise to 10:30 am on this Sunday (applies only where footnoted).

<sup>3</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Somerset County are those lands leased to hunt clubs for the purpose of hunting.

## Proposed 2027-2028 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlered Deer – Statewide

**Definition:** An antlered white-tailed deer is a deer with two or more points to one antler, or a deer with at least one antler three or more inches long, measuring from the top of the skull as the deer is in life.

**Antler Point Restriction:** Deer hunters may harvest one antlered deer during a license year within the established statewide bag limit (including bonus antlered deer) that does not meet the requirement of having at least three points on one antler. Any remaining antlered deer taken within the established bag limit must have at least three points on one antler. Antlered deer can be taken in any order. Junior hunters (16 years old or younger) and apprentice license holders are exempt from the three antler point requirement.

Season	Dates	Weapon Bag Limit	Total Combined Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Sep 10 – Oct 20  Sunday, Oct 24 – Nov 26 (Sunday, see Notes)	1 Antlered <sup>1</sup>	2 Antlered <sup>1</sup>	<p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting. Archery hunters in Allegany, Garrett, Frederick, and Washington counties are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Black Bear Season is open.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
	Dec 13 – Dec 17  Sunday, Jan 2 – Jan 6 (Sunday, see Notes)  Jan 7 – Sunday, Jan 9 (Region A only, See Notes)  Jan 10 – Jan 31			
Muzzleloader	Oct 21 – Oct 23  Dec 18 – Jan 1	1 Antlered <sup>1</sup>		<p>The <b>Bonus Antlered Deer Stamp</b> may not be used during the October 21 – 23, 2027 muzzleloader season.</p> <p><b>Region A muzzleloader bag limit:</b> Only 1 deer total (antlered or antlerless) may be taken in Region A during the October 21 – 23, 2027 muzzleloader season.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Muzzleloader season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
Firearm	Nov 27 – Dec 11  Jan 7 – Jan 8 (Region B only, see Notes)  Jan 9 (Sunday, see Notes)	1 Antlered <sup>1</sup>		<p><b>Deer Firearm Season is open during the January 2028 dates in Region B only.</b> Deer Archery Season is open these dates in Region A only. Deer hunters may use archery equipment on these days in Region B but any deer harvested must count towards the Deer Firearm Season bag limit.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>

Primitive Season  (See Notes)	Feb 1 – 3	See Notes	<p><b>Primitive Season:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. Antlered deer taken with long bows and recurve bows will count towards the regular archery bag limit. Antlered deer taken with flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders will count towards the regular muzzleloader bag limit.</p> <p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Season hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.</p>
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<sup>1</sup>The statewide antlered white-tailed deer regular bag limit is two deer total, no more than one in any weapon season; however, one additional antlered white-tailed deer may be taken with the use of a bonus antlered stamp with some restrictions. The bonus stamp may be used in one of the following ways:

1. In Region B: For a hunter to take a second antlered white-tailed deer during the same weapon season;
2. In Region B: For a hunter to take a third antlered white-tailed deer in the remaining weapon season that they have not harvested an antlered white-tailed deer;
3. In Region A: For a hunter to take one antlered white-tailed deer during the same weapon season in which they have already taken an antlered white-tailed deer in Region B; or
4. In Region A: For a hunter to take a third antlered white-tailed deer during the remaining weapon season, as long as the hunter's two previously harvested antlered white-tailed deer were **not** both taken in Region A.

Hunters may not take more than two antlered white-tailed deer total per year from Region A, or more than one antlered white-tailed deer in any weapon season while hunting in Region A.

### **Proposed 2027-2028 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlerless Deer – Region A** Allegany, Garrett & Washington (Zone 2) counties

**Definition:** An antlerless white-tailed deer is a female deer or male deer with no antlers or spike antlers less than three inches in length, measuring from the top of the skull as the deer is in life.

Season	Dates	Weapon Bag Limit	Total Combined Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Sep 10 – Oct 20  Sunday, Oct 24 – Nov 26 (Sunday, see Notes)	2 Antlerless <sup>3</sup>	2 Antlerless <sup>3</sup>	<p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting. Archery hunters in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Black Bear Season is open.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
	Dec 13 – Dec 17  Sunday, Jan 2 – Jan 31 (Sunday, see Notes)			
Muzzleloader	Oct 21 – Oct 23  Dec 25 – Jan 1	2 Antlerless <sup>3</sup>		<p><b>Region A muzzleloader bag limit:</b> Only 1 deer total (antlered or antlerless) may be taken in Region A during the October 21 – 23, 2027 muzzleloader season.</p>

Firearm	Dec 4 – Dec 11	2 Antlerless <sup>3</sup>		<b>Sunday Deer Hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
Primitive Season (See Notes)	Feb 1 – 3	1 Antlerless	1 Antlerless <sup>1</sup>	<b>Primitive Season:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. An antlerless deer taken during these days does not count against the hunter’s regular Region A antlerless bag limit.  <b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Season hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.

<sup>1</sup>Up to two antlerless deer may be harvested during a weapon season but no more than two total for the combined season. Only one antlerless deer per day may be harvested in Region A. A third antlerless deer may be harvested during the designated Primitive Season.

### Proposed 2027-2028 White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlerless Deer – Region B

Anne Arundel<sup>4</sup>, Baltimore<sup>1</sup>, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard<sup>1</sup>, Kent, Montgomery<sup>1</sup>, Prince George’s<sup>1</sup>, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s, Somerset, Talbot, Washington (Zone 1), Wicomico & Worcester counties

**Definition:** An antlerless white-tailed deer is a female deer or male deer with no antlers or spike antlers less than three inches in length, measuring from the top of the skull as the deer is in life.

Season	Dates	Total Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Sep 10 – Oct 20 Sunday, Oct 24 – Nov 26 (Sunday, see Notes) Dec 13 – Dec 17 Sunday, Jan 2 – Jan 6 (Sunday, see Notes) Jan 10 – Jan 31	15 Antlerless  (Unlimited antlerless in the Suburban Deer Management Zone, see Notes)	<b>Suburban Deer Management Zone:</b> During the designated Archery season, hunters in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties may use vertical bows or crossbows to take an unlimited number of antlerless deer.  <b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting. Archery hunters in Frederick and Washington counties are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Black Bear Season is open.  <b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
Muzzleloader	Oct 21 – Oct 23 Oct 25 – Oct 30 Dec 18 – Jan 1	10 Antlerless	<b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Muzzleloader season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.

Firearm	Nov 27 – Dec 11 Jan 7 – Sunday, Jan 9 (Sunday, see Notes)	10 Antlerless	<b>Sunday Deer Hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.
Primitive Season (See Notes)	Feb 1 – 3	See notes	<b>Primitive Season:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. Antlerless deer taken with long bows and recurve bows will count towards the Region B archery bag limit. Antlerless deer taken with flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders will count towards the Region B muzzleloader bag limit.  <b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Season hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.

<sup>1</sup>Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties comprise the Suburban Deer Management Zone. This zone has an unlimited bag limit for antlerless deer harvested during the designated archery season.

### Proposed 2027-2028 Junior Deer Hunt Antlered & Antlerless Deer

The Junior Deer Hunt is for hunters age 16 or younger only. Junior hunters must be accompanied by a licensed (or exempt from license requirement) unarmed adult age 21 or older. Junior hunters are not required to comply with the antler point restrictions.

Region	Description	Total Bag Limit	Dates	Notes
Region A	White-tailed Deer, Antlered or Antlerless	1 deer	Nov 13 Nov 14 (Sunday, see Notes)	<b>Separate Bag Limit:</b> Deer taken by Junior hunters during the Junior Deer Hunt do not count towards the regular archery, muzzleloader, or firearm season bag limits.  <b>Sunday Deer Hunting:</b> The Junior Deer Hunt is open on Sunday November 14, 2027 in all counties except Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George’s. See chart.
Region B	White-tailed Deer, Antlered or Antlerless	3 deer, no more than 1 may be antlered		
Where present	Sika Deer, Antlered or Antlerless	1 deer		

## Proposed 2027-2028 Sika Deer Seasons and Bag Limits Antlered & Antlerless Deer

**Definition:** An antlered sika deer is a deer with at least one antler visible above the hairline.

Season	Description	Dates	Total Bag Limit	Notes
Archery	Antlered or Antlerless	Sep 10 – Oct 20	3 deer, no more than 1 antlered	<p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> Archery hunters are required to wear fluorescent orange or pink when the Deer Muzzleloader Season, Deer Firearm Season or Junior Deer Hunt is open in the deer management region where they are hunting.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Archery season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
		Sunday, Oct 24 – Nov 26 (Sunday, see Notes)		
		Dec 13 – Dec 17		
		Sunday, Jan 2 – Jan 6 (Sunday, see Notes)		
		Jan 10 – Jan 31		
Muzzleloader	Antlered or Antlerless	Oct 21 – Oct 23	3 deer, no more than 1 antlered	<p><b>October 25 – 30:</b> Deer muzzleloader season is open during these dates in Region B only.</p> <p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Muzzleloader season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
	Antlerless Only	Oct 25 – 30 (Region B only)		
	Antlered or Antlerless	Dec 18 – Jan 1		
Firearm	Antlered or Antlerless	Nov 27 – Dec 11  Jan 7 – Sunday, Jan 9 (Sunday, see Notes)	3 deer, no more than 1 antlered	<p><b>Sunday deer hunting:</b> Firearm season dates include certain Sundays in select counties. See chart.</p>
Primitive Season  (See Notes)	Antlered or Antlerless	Feb 1 – 3	See Notes	<p><b>Primitive Season:</b> Hunters may use long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders during these days. The use of telescopic or modern optics is prohibited. Sika deer taken with long bows and recurve bows will count towards the sika deer archery bag limit. Sika deer taken with flintlock or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders will count towards the sika deer muzzleloader bag limit.</p> <p><b>Fluorescent orange or pink requirement:</b> All Primitive Season hunters must wear fluorescent orange or pink.</p>

### Tentative 2027-2028 Sunday Deer Hunting Dates

COUNTY	ARCHERY SEASON															LANDS OPEN	
	Sept. 12	Sept. 19	Sept. 26	Oct. 3	Oct. 10	Oct. 17	Oct. 24	Oct. 31	Nov. 7	Nov. 14	Nov. 21	Jan. 2	Jan. 9	Jan. 16	Jan. 23		Jan. 30
Allegany	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>							
Anne Arundel									Open								Private Only
Baltimore																	None
Calvert	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only				
Caroline	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only				
Carroll				Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open					Private Only
Cecil	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>							
Charles	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only				
Dorchester	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Frederick				Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open					Private Only
Garrett	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>							
Harford						Open	Open	Open	Open	Open							Private Only
Howard																	None
Kent	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private Only							
Montgomery	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only							
Prince George's																	None

**Tentative 2027-2028 Sunday Deer Hunting Dates (continued)**

COUNTY	ARCHERY SEASON (continued)															LANDS OPEN	
	Sept. 12	Sept. 19	Sept. 26	Oct. 3	Oct. 10	Oct. 17	Oct. 24	Oct. 31	Nov. 7	Nov. 14	Nov. 21	Jan. 2	Jan. 9	Jan. 16	Jan. 23		Jan. 30
Queen Anne's	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
St. Mary's	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public
Somerset	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Talbot	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Washington Region A	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Washington Region B	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open		Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Wicomico	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Worcester	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>		Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only

<sup>1</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Allegany (Billmeyer-Belle Grove WMA, Dan's Mountain WMA, Green Ridge SF, McCoolle FMA, Sideling Hill WMA, Warrior Mountain WMA), Cecil (Earlville WMA, C&D Canal Lands, Grove Farm WMA, Old Bohemia WMA), Garrett (Cunningham Swamp WMA, Garrett SF, Mt. Nebo WMA, Potomac SF, Savage River SF), St. Mary's (Salem SF, Saint Inigoes SF), Washington (Indian Springs WMA, Prather's Neck WMA, Sideling Hill WMA), Wicomico (Ellis Bay WMA, Chesapeake Forest Lands, Johnson WMA, Nanticoke WMA, Wetipquin WMA), and Worcester (Chesapeake Forest Lands, E. A. Vaughn WMA, Hickory Pt. Wildlands, Isle of Wight WMA, Pocomoke SF, Pocomoke River WMA).

<sup>2</sup>Legal shooting hours for deer are one half hour before sunrise to 10:30 am on this Sunday (applies only where footnoted).

<sup>3</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Somerset County are those lands leased to hunt clubs for the purpose of hunting.

## Tentative 2027-2028 Sunday Deer Hunting Dates (continued)

COUNTY	FIREARM SEASON				MUZZLELOADER SEASON		LANDS OPEN
	Nov. 14 (Jr Hunt)	Nov. 28	Dec. 5	Jan. 9	Dec. 19	Dec 26	
Allegany	Open	Open	Open	No Season	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Anne Arundel	Open	Open					Private Only
Baltimore							None
Calvert	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Caroline	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Carroll	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Cecil	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Charles	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Dorchester	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Frederick	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Garrett	Open	Open	Open	No Season	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Harford	Open	Open	Open	Open			Private Only
Howard							None
Kent	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Private Only
Montgomery	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Prince George's							None
Queen Anne's	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
St. Mary's	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Somerset	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Talbot	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Washington Region A	Open	Open	Open	No Season	Open	Open	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>
Washington Region B	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Private Only
Wicomico	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only
Worcester	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Private Only

<sup>1</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Allegany (Billmeyer-Belle Grove WMA, Dan's Mountain WMA, Green Ridge SF, McCoolle FMA, Sideling Hill WMA, Warrior Mountain WMA), Cecil (Earlville WMA, C&D Canal Lands, Grove Farm WMA, Old Bohemia WMA), Garrett (Cunningham Swamp WMA, Garrett SF, Mt. Nebo WMA, Potomac SF, Savage River SF), St. Mary's (Salem SF, Saint Inigoes SF), Washington (Indian Springs WMA, Prather's Neck WMA, Sideling Hill WMA), Wicomico (Ellis Bay WMA, Chesapeake Forest Lands, Johnson WMA, Nanticoke WMA, Wetipquin WMA), and Worcester (Chesapeake Forest Lands, E. A. Vaughn WMA, Hickory Pt. Wildlands, Isle of Wight WMA, Pocomoke SF, Pocomoke River WMA).

<sup>2</sup>Legal shooting hours for deer are one half hour before sunrise to 10:30 am on this Sunday (applies only where footnoted).

<sup>3</sup>Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in Somerset County are those lands leased to hunt clubs for the purpose of hunting.

# Proposed Changes For Furbearers

## River Otter

**Regulation Proposal: Align the otter bag limit in both non-coastal zones. The bag limit would be two otters per day (total of two per season) for Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington counties combined.**

Rationale/Goal: Aligning the bag limits in the non-coastal zones would simplify bag limit restrictions for trappers and only increase the daily and season bag limit in Allegany and Garrett counties by one. Current trapping participation levels make population harm a non-concern.

Comments: Otter populations are robust and can support additional harvest.

## Fisher and Long-tailed Weasel

**Regulation Proposal: Align the fisher and long-tailed weasel bag limits and season dates. The bag limit would increase from two fishers to four fishers per season and the season would run from November 1st - February 1st. The long-tailed weasel season and bag limit would mirror fisher.**

Rationale/Goal: Long-tailed weasel trapping season currently mirrors that of coyote, a species they share little in common with. Long-tailed weasel are more similar to fisher and trapping methods for the two species are more similar. Additionally, there is currently no bag limit on long-tailed weasel, despite regional concern for the species. Establishing a bag limit ensures the protection of the species.

Research has shown that the fisher population in western Maryland is robust enough to sustain additional harvest. Current fisher trapping participation is relatively low. Increased bag limits may increase participation.

Comments: Biologists are somewhat concerned about possible declines in long-tailed weasel population numbers. This would be the first step towards a better understanding of how the species is faring in Maryland.

Research from a 2020 study in western Maryland showed the fisher population is more robust than previously believed. With the few trappers that focus on fisher, an increase in overall harvest is predicted to be minimal.

## Gray Fox

**Regulation Proposal: Create an electronic check-in process for gray fox similar to current requirements for deer and turkeys. All trappers and hunters who harvest a gray fox between November 1st and February 28th would be required to check in their harvest electronically using the MD Outdoors system. This regulation would have a 5-year sunset provision.**

Rationale/Goal: Gray fox are suspected to be in decline across their range. Electronic check-in of harvested animals would help to supplement current harvest monitoring techniques. Other states have implemented an electronic check-in process for gray fox for similar reasons.

Comments: This regulation change will assist the department with updating current county location records for gray fox. Currently, it is assumed gray fox inhabit all areas of the state, but records are sparse for parts of the eastern shore.

**Proposed Furbearer Season Dates & Bag Limits 2026-2027 and 2027-2028**

Species	Open Season	Location	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
Beaver Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Dec 15 – Mar 15	All counties <i>except</i> Garrett and Allegany counties	No Limit	No Limit
Beaver Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Dec 1 – Mar 15	Garrett and Allegany counties	No Limit	No Limit
Bobcat	CLOSED SEASON	All counties		
Coyote Firearms, Archery, & Airgun Hunting	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Aug 1 – Jul 31	Coyotes may be hunted in all counties year-round during both daylight & nighttime hours	No Limit	No Limit
Coyote Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Feb 15	In that portion of the State WEST of the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River	No Limit	No Limit
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Feb 15			
Coyote Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 14 – Feb 28	In that portion of the State EAST of the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River	No Limit	No Limit
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 15 – Feb 28			
Long-Tailed Weasel Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Feb 1	All counties	4	4
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Feb 1			

Fox (Red and Gray) Trapping, Firearms, Archery, & Airgun Hunting	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Feb 15	Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Washington counties	No Limit	No Limit
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Feb 15			
	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 14 – Feb 28	Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties	No Limit	No Limit
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 15 – Feb 28			
	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Aug 1 – Jul 31	Charles and Dorchester counties	No Limit	No Limit
Fisher Trapping, Firearm, Archery, & Airgun Hunting	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Feb 1	All Counties	4	4
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Feb 1			
Muskrat and Mink Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 14 – Feb 15	Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard and Washington counties	No Limit	No Limit
	<b>2027-2028</b> Nov 15 – Feb 15			
		<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Dec 15 – Mar 15	Baltimore, Cecil, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset and Worcester counties	No Limit
	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Jan 1 – Mar 15	Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Charles, Dorchester, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, Talbot and Wicomico counties	No Limit	No Limit
Otter Trapping Only	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Dec 1 – March 15	Allegany and Garrett counties	2 per day	2 per season
		Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington counties		
		<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Dec 15 – March 15	In all other counties	10 per day

Raccoon and Opossum Chasing - No Kill	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> August 1 – Oct 14 Mar 16 – Jul 31	All counties		
Raccoon and Opossum Firearms, Archery, Airgun & Dog Hunting	<b>2026-2027 and 2027-2028</b> Oct 15 – Mar 15	Raccoons may be hunted in all counties day and night	No Limit	No Limit
Raccoon and Opossum Trapping	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Mar 15 <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Mar 15	In that portion of the State WEST of the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River	No Limit	No Limit
	<b>2026-2027</b> Nov 14 – Mar 15 <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 15 – Mar 15	In that portion of the State EAST of the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River	No Limit	No Limit
Skunk Trapping	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Mar 15 <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Mar 15	All counties	No Limit	No Limit
Skunk Firearms, Archery, & Airgun Hunting	<b>2026-2027</b> Oct 31 – Mar 15 <b>2027-2028</b> Nov 1 – Mar 15	All counties	No Limit	No Limit
*On lands owned or controlled by DNR in Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties only leaseholders or their appointees can hunt or trap furbearers and nutria between Nov 15 and Mar 15.				

## All Game Species

**Regulation Proposal: Establish regulations for the approved use of small unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) while hunting. Regulations would prohibit the use of a drone to locate, drive, or herd wildlife for the purpose of hunting, trapping, or killing EXCEPT to aid in the recovery of a wounded or expired animal. Drone operators would be required to notify Natural Resources Police before and after using a drone to search for a wounded or expired animal.**

**Rationale/Goal:** Currently, there are no restrictions for drone use while hunting. This regulation would promote fair chase hunting and align more closely with other states.

Comments: Based on anecdotal reports from hunters, outfitters, and the general public, it is known that drones are being used to locate wildlife for potential harvest. This is of concern due to the impacts it may have on game species. The use of drones calls into question fair chase. Locating roosting turkeys, deer in cover, or waterfowl on resting grounds are among the major concerns. It is recognized that the use of thermal imaging drones can greatly assist with locating wounded or expired game that has left the sight of the hunter. Many states, including Virginia and West Virginia, have regulations in place prohibiting the use of drones while hunting. This would align our regulations with those of neighboring states. Exceptions would be built in for research and management purposes not meeting the definition of hunting.