

# Maryland

# Annual Big Game Report

## 2024–2025



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# White-tailed Deer & Sika Deer

## Introduction

Maryland deer hunters harvested 84,201 deer during the 2024–2025 season (Table 1, Figure 1). The statewide harvest included 32,148 antlered and 47,271 antlerless white-tailed deer; and 2,143 antlered and 2,639 antlerless sika deer. The combined species antlerless harvest consisted of 44,104 does or antlerless bucks and 5,806 button bucks (Table 2, Figure 2). The overall harvest was 16% higher than the 2023–2024 total of 72,642 deer.

The harvest in deer management Region A increased 12%, from 9,169 deer last year to 10,275 this year. Hunters in the western counties reported 5,836 antlered and 4,439 antlerless deer. Deer hunters in Region B harvested 73,926 deer, up 16% from 63,473 deer harvested last year. A total of 28,455 antlered and 45,471 antlerless deer were reported in this region.

Frederick County had the highest reported harvest with 6,869 deer reported. Dorchester 6,074 and Carroll 5,988 counties had the second and third highest reported harvest, respectively. Garrett and Baltimore rounded out the top five with 5,613 and 5,239, respectively.

Hunters harvested 9,459 deer on Sundays (Table 3). Sunday deer hunting opportunities are available in 20 of Maryland's 23 counties. Opportunities vary by county and are only permitted during certain weeks of the deer hunting season (Table 4).

## Archery Season Summary

Each year, archery season in Maryland opens the Friday after Labor Day (September 6 in 2024–2025) and closes on January 31 (unless January 31 is a Sunday and is closed to hunting on Sunday). Resident and non-resident hunters purchased approximately 51,658 and 12,183 archery stamps, respectively, in 2024–2025. The average Maryland hunter who hunts deer with a vertical bow each year (approximately 18,000 hunters) normally does so for about 8–10 days each season; and 23% of these hunters take at least one deer each year with their bow. Approximately 20,000 hunters currently hunt deer with a crossbow in Maryland. The average crossbow hunter hunts with a crossbow for 8–10 days each year and 30–40% are successful in taking at least one deer per year with the weapon.

In 2024–2025:

- The reported archery harvest (vertical and crossbow) increased 16% from 24,789 deer in 2023–2024 to 28,895 in 2024–2025 (Table 1, Figure 3).
- There were 14,024 antlered deer (49% of the total archery harvest) and 14,871 antlerless deer harvested with crossbows and vertical bows.
- The antlered archery harvest increased 13% and the antlerless harvest (13,432 does or antlerless bucks and 1,439 button bucks) increased 20% from the previous year.
- Archery hunters took 2,648 deer (1,408 antlered, 1,240 antlerless) on Sundays open to archery hunting (Table 3).
- Archery hunters took 34% of all deer harvested in Maryland, the same percentage as the last three seasons. (Figure 3).
- 86% of the archery harvest was on private lands.
- Crossbow hunters took 8,815 antlered and 8,722 antlerless deer during the archery season (Table 5).
- The crossbow harvest (17,537 deer) represented 60% of the total archery season harvest in 2024–2025, slightly higher than the 59% in 2023–2024 (Figure 4).
- Approximately 11,875 different hunters harvested deer with a crossbow during archery season (compared to 10,438 in 2023–2024).
- Archery hunters harvested 65 deer during the Primitive Deer Hunt Days, February 1, 3–4 (Table 11).

*Table 1*  
*Maryland Reported Antlered and Antlerless Harvest for*  
*Archery, Firearm, and Muzzleloader Hunting Seasons*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Archery			Firearm			Muzzleloader			Total		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>	528	389	917	1015	757	1,772	325	398	723	1,868	1,544	3,412
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	518	588	1106	273	543	816	107	240	347	898	1,371	2,269
<b>Baltimore</b>	1294	1463	2757	587	1152	1,739	228	515	743	2,109	3,130	5,239
<b>Calvert</b>	372	390	762	210	512	722	76	160	236	658	1,062	1,720
<b>Caroline</b>												
<i>White-Tailed</i>	291	425	716	456	1454	1,910	131	383	514	878	2,262	3,140
<i>Sika</i>	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	2	4
<b>Carroll</b>	989	1069	2,058	1100	2035	3,135	279	516	795	2,368	3,620	5,988
<b>Cecil</b>	665	800	1,465	496	1142	1,638	164	318	482	1,325	2,260	3,585
<b>Charles</b>	648	663	1,311	523	953	1,476	185	396	581	1,356	2,012	3,368
<b>Dorchester</b>												
<i>White-Tailed</i>	170	211	381	370	830	1,200	97	237	334	637	1,278	1,915
<i>Sika</i>	554	703	1,257	727	1,095	1,822	559	521	1,080	1,840	2,319	4,159
<b>Frederick</b>	1099	1050	2,149	1483	2235	3,718	430	572	1,002	3,012	3,857	6,869
<b>Garrett</b>	994	576	1,570	1742	1291	3,033	502	508	1,010	3,238	2,375	5,613
<b>Harford</b>	731	890	1,621	475	1136	1,611	180	388	568	1,386	2,414	3,800
<b>Howard</b>	445	617	1,062	307	503	810	100	209	309	852	1,329	2,181
<b>Kent</b>	467	482	949	558	1404	1,962	195	398	593	1,220	2,284	3,504
<b>Montgomery</b>	701	871	1,572	505	907	1,412	173	307	480	1,379	2,085	3,464
<b>Prince George's</b>	388	427	815	258	409	667	109	215	324	755	1,051	1,806
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	485	546	1,031	568	1537	2,105	159	471	630	1,212	2,554	3,766
<b>Somerset</b>												
<i>White-Tailed</i>	242	251	493	401	898	1,299	87	224	311	730	1,373	2,103
<i>Sika</i>	8	6	14	12	5	17	6	0	6	26	11	37
<b>St. Mary's</b>	551	591	1,142	341	610	951	111	269	380	1,003	1,470	2,473
<b>Talbot</b>	275	328	603	366	968	1,334	104	261	365	745	1,557	2,302
<b>Washington</b>	911	846	1,757	1199	1287	2,486	367	456	823	2,477	2,589	5,066
<b>Wicomico</b>												
<i>White-Tailed</i>	314	340	654	498	1,128	1,626	133	364	497	945	1,832	2,777
<i>Sika</i>	65	80	145	86	101	187	71	46	117	222	227	449
<b>Worcester</b>												
<i>White-Tailed</i>	301	246	547	665	1,468	2,133	131	248	379	1,097	1,962	3,059
<i>Sika</i>	17	22	39	26	42	68	10	16	26	53	80	133
<b>Total</b>	14,024	14,871	28,895	15,248	26,402	41,650	5,019	8,637	13,656	34,291	49,910	84,201

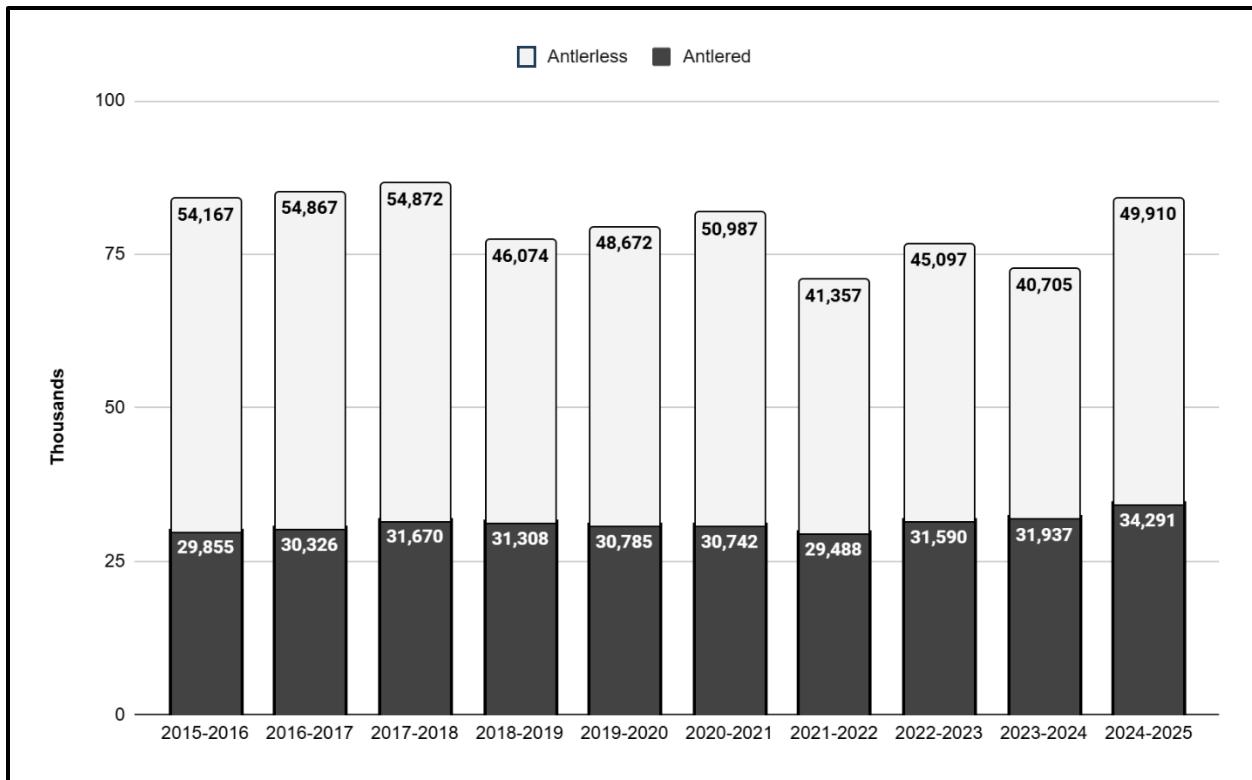


Figure 1  
Maryland Reported Antlered and Antlerless Deer Harvest,  
2015–2016 through 2024–2025.

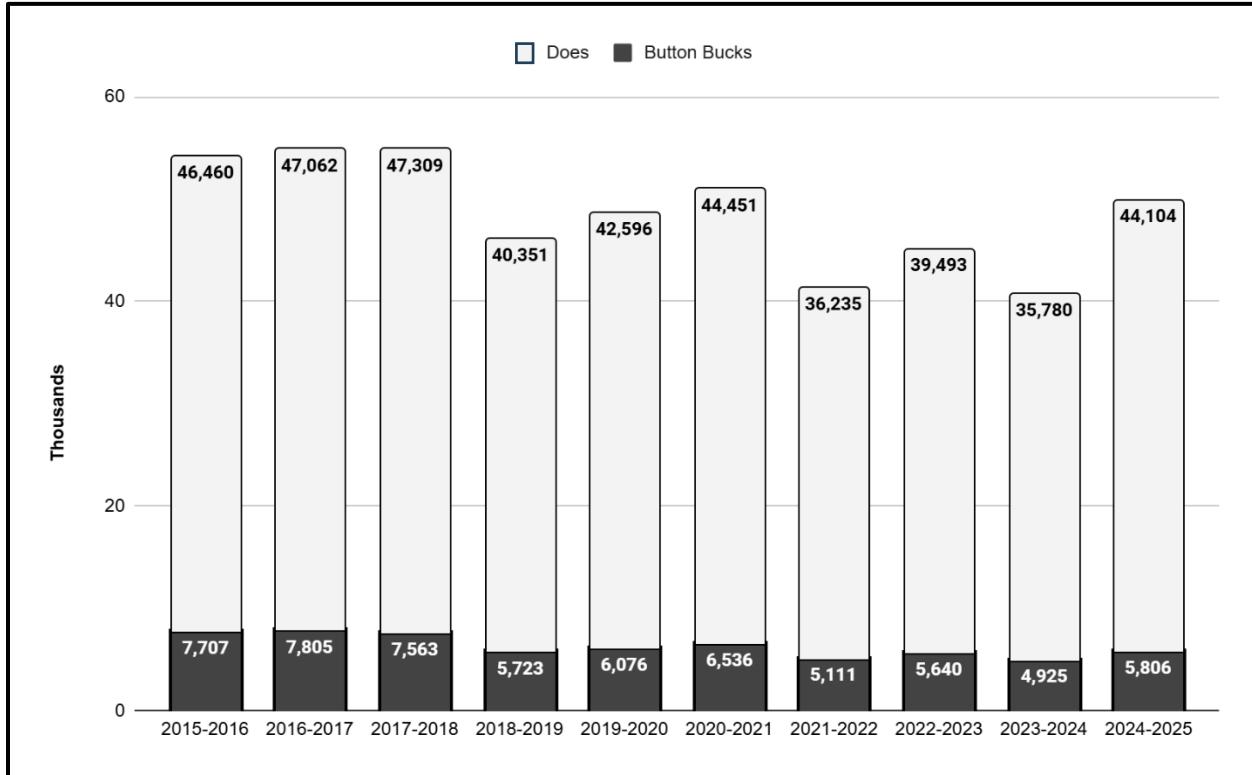


Figure 2  
Maryland Reported Button Buck and Doe Harvest,  
2015–2016 through 2024–2025

*Table 2*  
*Maryland Reported Button Buck Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Buttonbuck	Female or antlerless	Total	% Buttonbuck
<b>Allegany</b>	144	1,400	1,544	9.3
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	189	1,182	1,371	13.8
<b>Baltimore</b>	307	2,823	3,130	9.8
<b>Calvert</b>	122	940	1,062	11.5
<b>Caroline</b>				
<i>White-Tailed</i>	314	1,948	2,262	13.9
<i>Sika</i>	0	2	2	0
<b>Carroll</b>	437	3,183	3,620	12.1
<b>Cecil</b>	283	1,977	2,260	12.5
<b>Charles</b>	208	1,804	2,012	10.3
<b>Dorchester</b>				
<i>White-Tailed</i>	222	1,056	1,278	17.4
<i>Sika</i>	115	2,204	2,319	5
<b>Frederick</b>	375	3,482	3,857	9.7
<b>Garrett</b>	232	2,143	2,375	9.8
<b>Harford</b>	287	2,127	2,414	11.9
<b>Howard</b>	122	1,207	1,329	9.2
<b>Kent</b>	293	1,991	2,284	12.8
<b>Montgomery</b>	238	1,847	2,085	11.4
<b>Prince George's</b>	117	934	1,051	11.1
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	317	2,237	2,554	12.4
<b>Somerset</b>				
<i>White-Tailed</i>	154	1,219	1,373	11.2
<i>Sika</i>	2	9	11	18.2
<b>St. Mary's</b>	211	1,259	1,470	14.4
<b>Talbot</b>	316	1,241	1,557	20.3
<b>Washington</b>	248	2,341	2,589	9.6
<b>Wicomico</b>				
<i>White-Tailed</i>	266	1,566	1,832	14.5
<i>Sika</i>	11	216	227	4.8
<b>Worcester</b>				
<i>White-Tailed</i>	260	1,702	1,962	13.3
<i>Sika</i>	16	64	80	20
<b>Total</b>	5,806	44,104	49,910	8.6

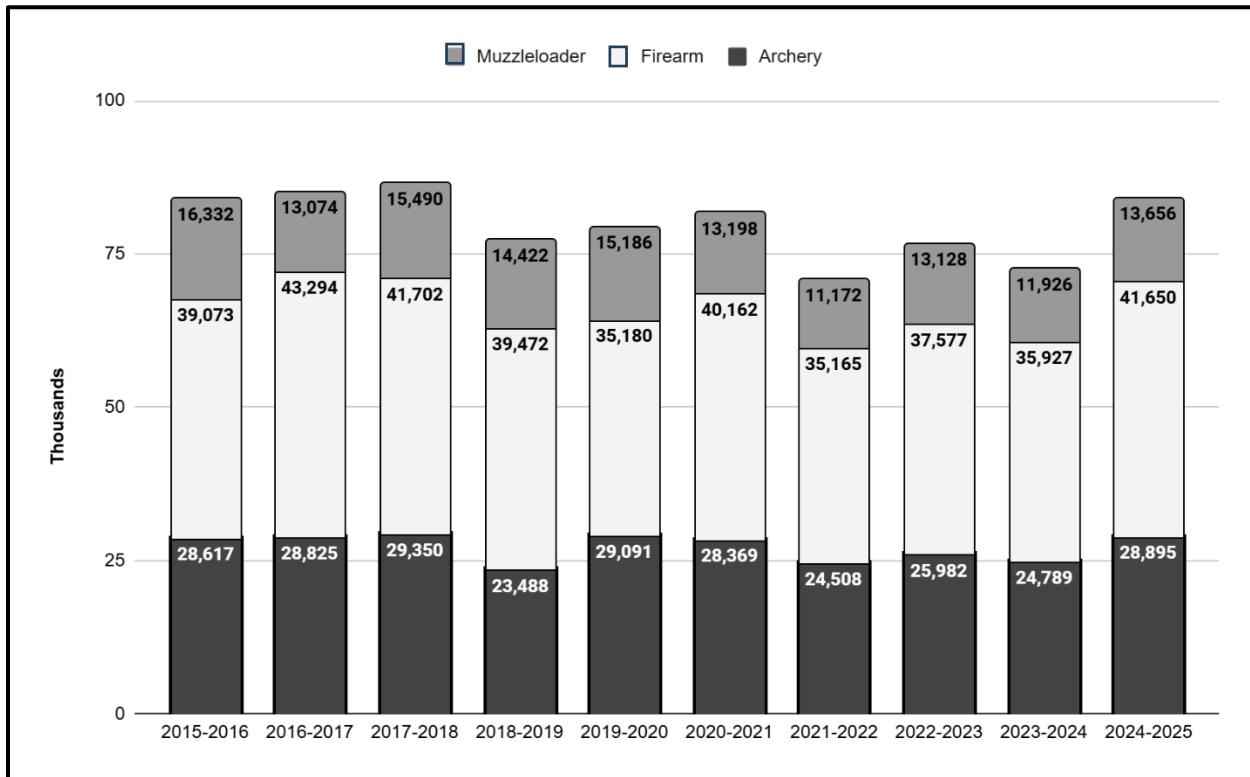


Figure 3  
Maryland Reported Deer Harvest for Archery, Firearms,  
and Muzzleloader Seasons, 2015–2016 through 2024–2025

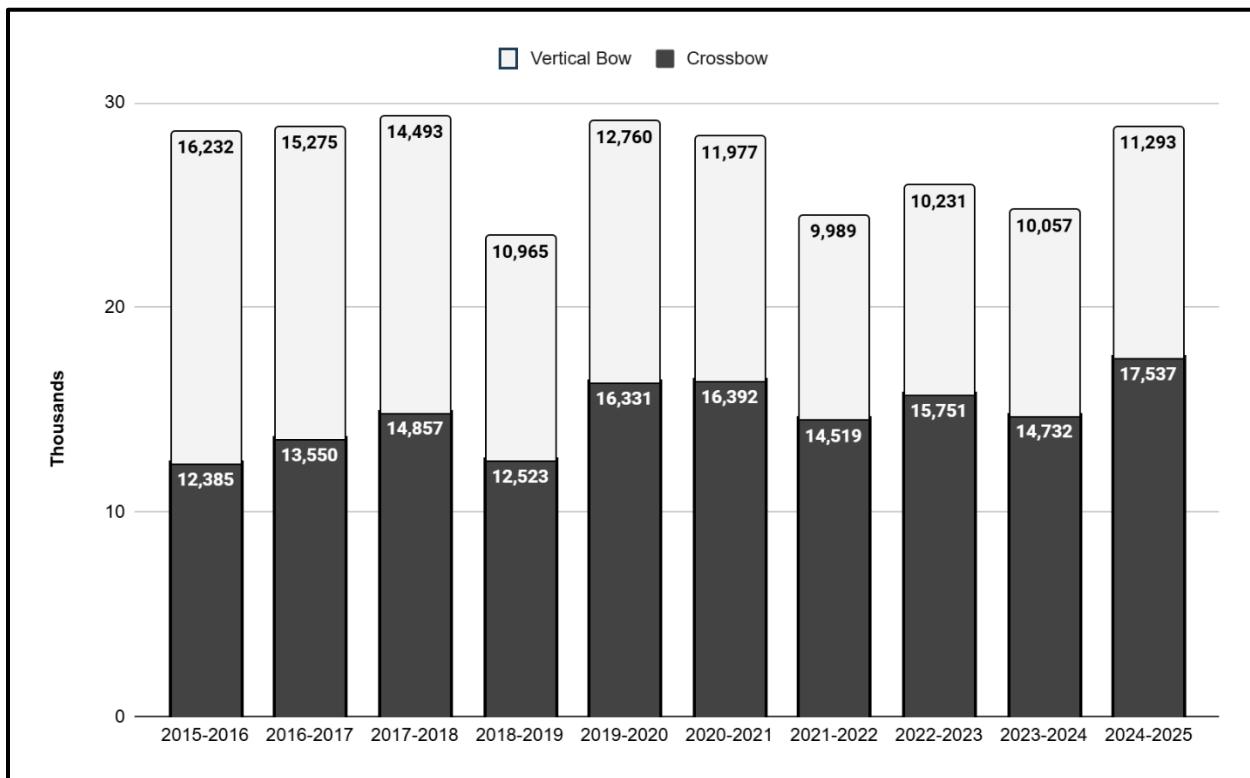


Figure 4  
Maryland Reporter Crossbow and Vertical Bow Deer Harvest during  
Designated Archery Season, 2015–2016 through 2024–25

## Firearm Season Summary

The statewide firearm season begins the Saturday after Thanksgiving and runs for the following two weeks. In Region B, hunters have an additional two or three days of firearm hunting in early January depending on whether Sunday hunting is allowed in the county where they are hunting. Deer taken during managed hunts outside the normal deer seasons are also counted as firearm kills. Approximately 45,000 – 55,000 hunters hunt deer with a firearm each year in Maryland. The average firearm hunter spends 5–6 days each year pursuing deer and approximately 35–45% of firearm hunters bag at least one deer each year.

In 2024–2025:

- The statewide firearm harvest increased 16%, from 35,927 deer in 2023–2024 to 41,650 deer (Table 1, Figure 3).
- The firearm harvest included 15,248 antlered deer (36% of the total firearm harvest) and 26,402 antlerless deer.
- The antlered harvest increased by 2%, and the antlerless harvest (22, 967 does or antlerless bucks and 3,437 button bucks) increased 25% from 2023–2024.
- The majority (7%) of the firearm harvest occurred during the two-week season that began the Saturday after Thanksgiving (Table 6).
- Firearm hunters took 49% of all deer harvested in Maryland for the third consecutive season. (Figure 3).
- The majority (89%) of the firearm harvest was taken on private property.
- Firearm hunters bagged 5,612 deer (1,966 antlered and 3,646 antlerless) on the Sundays open during the two-week and January firearm seasons; and junior deer hunters harvested 872 deer (570 antlered and 302 antlerless) on the Junior Deer Hunt Sunday (Table 3).
- Junior deer hunters bagged a total of 2,493 deer (1,674 antlered and 819 antlerless) during the Junior Deer Hunt weekend; 12% more than the 2,226 deer taken in 2023–2024. (Table 7).
- Hunters reported 7,048 deer (79% antlerless) for the three-day January firearm season (Table 8).

**Sunday deer hunting opportunities are available on private lands and designated public hunting lands. The public lands, shooting hours, and dates vary from county to county. See Table 4 for more information.**

*Table 3*  
*Maryland Reported Sunday Hunting Deer Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–25*

County	Archery			Firearm			Junior Hunt			Muzzleloader			Grand Total
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	
<b>Allegany</b>	69	57	126	143	79	222	54	17	71	10	12	22	441
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	7	6	13	22	23	45	3	4	7	*	*	*	65
<b>Baltimore</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Calvert</b>	53	40	93	30	92	122	5	7	12	2	8	10	237
<b>Caroline</b>	33	49	82	54	229	283	16	18	34	1	12	13	412
<b>Carroll</b>	138	113	251	186	367	553	48	18	66	4	18	22	892
<b>Cecil</b>	106	119	225	89	193	282	22	10	32	5	15	20	559
<b>Charles</b>	83	63	146	51	155	206	11	5	16	4	14	18	386
<b>Dorchester</b>													
<i>White-Tailed</i>	23	26	49	57	142	199	16	6	22	7	6	13	283
<i>Sika</i>	38	54	92	79	139	218	7	9	16	12	17	29	355
<b>Frederick</b>	132	108	240	236	393	629	68	43	111	15	18	33	1,013
<b>Garrett</b>	136	75	211	219	129	348	105	31	136	10	15	25	720
<b>Harford</b>	59	49	108	68	202	270	8	8	16				394
<b>Howard</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Kent</b>	43	54	97	74	146	220	15	8	23	8	15	23	363
<b>Montgomery</b>	64	63	127	56	97	153	22	15	37	2	8	10	327
<b>Prince George's</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	63	47	110	85	280	365	13	15	28	5	10	15	518
<b>Somerset</b>													0
<i>White-Tailed</i>	44	27	71	47	144	191	19	20	39	1	7	8	309
<i>Sika</i>	1	0	1										1
<b>St. Mary's</b>	83	84	167	51	102	153	14	10	24	5	10	15	359
<b>Talbot</b>	31	31	62	47	115	162	12	4	16	2	11	13	253
<b>Washington</b>	111	119	230	169	187	356	57	17	74	10	14	24	684
<b>Wicomico</b>													0
<i>White-Tailed</i>	43	27	70	64	133	197	24	16	40	2	4	6	313
<i>Sika</i>	7	8	15	14	17	31	1	0	1	1	1	2	49
<b>Worcester</b>													
<i>White-Tailed</i>	41	21	62	125	280	405	30	21	51	3	3	6	524
<i>Sika</i>				0	2	2							2
<b>Total</b>	1,408	1,240	2,648	1,966	3,646	5,612	570	302	872	109	218	327	9,459

\*Sunday hunting was not open during this season in this county.

<sup>1</sup>See Table 4 for the Sundays that were open for deer hunting in each county in 2024–2025.

*Table 4*  
*Maryland Sunday Deer Hunting Dates, 2025–2026*

COUNTY	LANDS OPEN	ARCHERY SEASON										FIREARM SEASON						MUZZLELOADER SEASON							
		SEPT. 8	SEPT. 15	SEPT. 22	SEPT. 29	OCT. 6	OCT. 13	OCT. 20	OCT. 27	NOV. 3	NOV. 10	NOV. 17	NOV. 24	JAN. 5	JAN. 12	JAN. 19	JAN. 26	NOV. 17 (JR. HUNT)	DEC. 1	DEC. 8	JAN. 12	DEC. 22	DEC. 29		
ALLEGANY	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
ANNE ARUNDEL	Private Only																								
BALTIMORE	None																								
CALVERT	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>																
CAROLINE	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>																
CARROLL	Private Only																								
CECIL	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
CHARLES	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>																
DORCHESTER	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>																
FREDERICK	Private Only																								
GARRETT	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
HARFORD	Private Only																								
HOWARD	None																								
KENT	Private Only	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
MONTGOMERY	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>																		
PRINCE GEORGE'S	None																								
QUEEN ANNE'S	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>													
ST. MARY'S	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
SOMERSET	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>													
TALBOT	Private Only	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open <sup>2</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open <sup>2</sup>													
WASHINGTON REGION A	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</sup>	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
WASHINGTON REGION B	Private Only	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open	Open																	
WICOMICO	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</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>														
WORCESTER	Private & Designated Public <sup>1</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>														

1 – Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in **Allegany** (Billmeyer-Belle Grove WMA, Dan's Mountain WMA, Green Ridge SF, McCole FMA, Sidelings Hill WMA, Warrior Mountain WMA), **Cecil** (C&D Canal Lands, Earville WMA, Grove Farm WMA, Old Bohemia WMA), **Garrett** (Cunningham Swamp WMA, Garrett SF, Saint Ingiges SF), **St. Mary's** (Salem SF, Savage River SF), **Washington** (Indian Springs WMA, Prather's Neck WMA, Sidelings Hill WMA), **Wicomico** (Ellis Bay WMA, Chesapeake Forest Lands, Johnson WMA, Nanticoke WMA, Wetquon WMA), and **Worcester** (Chesapeake Forest Lands, E. A. Vaughn WMA, Hickory Pt. Wildlands, Isle of Wight WMA, Pocomoke SF, Pocomoke River WMA).

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

3 – Designated public lands open to Sunday hunting in **Somerset** County are those lands leased to hunt clubs for the purpose of hunting.

## **Muzzleloader Season Summary**

The 2024–2025 statewide antlered muzzleloader season included three days in October (October 17–19) and two weeks beginning in mid-December (December 21–January 4). Region A antlerless muzzleloader season also included the same three days in October (October 17–19) as well as eight days in late December and early January (December 28–January 4). Region B antlerless muzzleloader began with nine days in October (October 17–19; 21–26) in addition to two weeks in December and early January (December 21–January 4) to provide for additional deer population management through antlerless deer harvest. The October muzzleloader season is set annually to begin the first Thursday after the 15th of the month.

Resident and non-resident hunters purchased approximately 45,064 and 8,718 muzzleloader stamps, respectively, in 2024–2025. The stamps are required to hunt deer during the muzzleloader season. It is estimated that 20,000–30,000 hunters hunt during this season. Those that pursue deer with a muzzleloader do so for 1–3 days for each of the early and late seasons. Approximately 20–25% of muzzleloader hunters are successful in harvesting at least one deer in any given year.

In 2024–2025:

- The muzzleloader harvest totaled 13,656 deer compared to 11,926 deer in 2023–2024, a 15% increase (Table 1, Figure 3).
- There were 5,019 antlered deer and 8,637 antlerless deer harvested with muzzleloaders. Antlerless deer represented 63% of the total muzzleloader harvest.
- The antlered harvest increased 7% and the antlerless harvest (7,705 does or antlerless bucks and 930 button bucks) increased 19% from the previous year.
- Muzzleloader hunters took 16% of all deer harvested in Maryland, the same as last season (Figure 3).
- The October muzzleloader harvest was 8,149 deer (3,442 antlered and 4,707 antlerless); a 29% increase from the previous year's harvest of 6,314 deer (Table 9).
- The December muzzleloader harvest totaled 5,255 deer (1,543 antlered and 3,712 antlerless); a slight 0.43% decrease from the previous year's harvest of 5,278 deer (Table 10).
- The October muzzleloader season accounted for 60% of the total muzzleloader harvest for the year.
- Muzzleloader hunters took 87% of their total harvest on private lands.
- Muzzleloader hunters harvested 252 deer with primitive flintlock or percussion sidelock muzzleloaders during the Primitive Hunt Days, February 1, 3–4 (Table 11)

## **Public Property Deer Management**

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides assistance to local governments, communities, and publicly owned properties that choose to address deer management issues. Public entities that desire to conduct hunts outside of the regional deer hunting season framework may do so with prior approval from DNR. Managed hunts are used to help control deer populations under special conditions on properties where stricter control of hunters is required. This allows each facility to manage deer hunting to complement their mission. Military bases, airports, and agricultural research facilities, as well as state, county, and municipal parks, have developed deer hunting programs in conjunction with DNR.

To improve opportunities for the public to qualify for managed hunts, DNR cooperates with organizations and shooting ranges that offer a shooter qualification program. This program provides public access to shooting ranges where hunters can become certified in the standards required to apply for managed hunts held across the state. When they have successfully passed the program, they receive a statewide shooter qualification card. Appendix II provides a summary of the total deer taken on Maryland public lands during the 2024–2025 hunting seasons. Some of these public lands are part of the managed hunting programs described here.

*Table 5*  
*Maryland Reported Crossbow Deer Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Archery Season			Muzzleloader/Firearm Seasons			Grand Total
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	
<b>Allegany</b>	394	281	675	12	13	25	700
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	347	345	692	40	67	107	799
<b>Baltimore</b>	765	802	1,567	80	147	227	1,794
<b>Calvert</b>	255	248	503	18	35	53	556
<b>Caroline</b>							
<i>White-Tailed</i>	172	244	416	7	21	28	444
<i>Sika</i>	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
<b>Carroll</b>	553	544	1,097	30	61	91	1,188
<b>Cecil</b>	410	471	881	33	73	106	987
<b>Charles</b>	420	390	810	24	61	85	895
<b>Dorchester</b>							
<i>White-Tailed</i>	114	136	250	4	11	15	265
<i>Sika</i>	354	432	786	22	32	54	840
<b>Frederick</b>	685	563	1,248	24	53	77	1,325
<b>Garrett</b>	700	373	1,073	15	15	30	1,103
<b>Harford</b>	436	502	938	45	76	121	1,059
<b>Howard</b>	274	375	649	31	72	103	752
<b>Kent</b>	268	240	508	7	25	32	540
<b>Montgomery</b>	405	509	914	56	94	150	1,064
<b>Prince George's</b>	226	274	500	20	29	49	549
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	289	306	595	10	27	37	632
<b>Somerset</b>							
<i>White-Tailed</i>	151	157	308	3	16	19	327
<i>Sika</i>	1	1	2	1	2	3	5
<b>St. Mary's</b>	389	384	773	24	42	66	839
<b>Talbot</b>	183	215	398	6	24	30	428
<b>Washington</b>	607	526	1,133	25	39	64	1,197
<b>Wicomico</b>							
<i>White-Tailed</i>	215	210	425	6	24	30	455
<i>Sika</i>	35	38	73	4	1	5	78
<b>Worcester</b>							
<i>White-Tailed</i>	156	140	296	7	16	23	319
<i>Sika</i>	11	15	26	0	2	2	28
<b>Grand Total</b>	8,815	8,722	17,537	554	1,079	1,633	19,170

*Table 6*  
*Maryland Reported 2-Week*  
*Firearm Season Deer Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>	869	713	1,582
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	181	308	489
<b>Baltimore</b>	465	849	1,314
<b>Calvert</b>	157	377	534
<b>Caroline</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	349	1,101	1,450
<i>Sika</i>	1	0	1
<b>Carroll</b>	856	1,496	2,352
<b>Cecil</b>	362	837	1,199
<b>Charles</b>	404	660	1,064
<b>Dorchester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	280	625	905
<i>Sika</i>	466	497	963
<b>Frederick</b>	1,106	1,573	2,679
<b>Garrett</b>	1,452	1,222	2,674
<b>Harford</b>	353	798	1,151
<b>Howard</b>	222	328	550
<b>Kent</b>	422	1,009	1,431
<b>Montgomery</b>	367	470	837
<b>Prince George's</b>	207	302	509
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	447	1,138	1,585
<b>Somerset</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	304	667	971
<i>Sika</i>	9	4	13
<b>St. Mary's</b>	248	479	727
<b>Talbot</b>	300	820	1,120
<b>Washington</b>	967	982	1,949
<b>Wicomico</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	372	801	1,173
<i>Sika</i>	65	66	131
<b>Worcester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	506	1,057	1,563
<i>Sika</i>	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,737</b>	<b>19,182</b>	<b>30,919</b>

*Table 7*  
*Maryland Reported*  
*Junior Deer Hunt Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>	146	44	190
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	9	13	22
<b>Baltimore1</b>	43	13	56
<b>Calvert</b>	12	14	26
<b>Caroline</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	51	56	107
<i>Sika</i>			
<b>Carroll</b>	129	56	185
<b>Cecil</b>	51	29	80
<b>Charles</b>	46	30	76
<b>Dorchester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	33	18	51
<i>Sika</i>	19	26	45
<b>Frederick</b>	198	94	292
<b>Garrett</b>	290	69	359
<b>Harford</b>	23	20	43
<b>Howard</b>	13	8	21
<b>Kent</b>	49	29	78
<b>Montgomery</b>	55	31	86
<b>Prince George's</b>	9	8	17
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	49	34	83
<b>Somerset</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	49	47	96
<i>Sika</i>	1	0	1
<b>St. Mary's</b>	47	24	71
<b>Talbot</b>	25	15	40
<b>Washington</b>	165	47	212
<b>Wicomico</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	73	39	112
<i>Sika</i>	2	4	6
<b>Worcester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	87	51	138
<i>Sika</i>	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,674</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>2,493</b>

<sup>1</sup> Saturday only.

*Table 8*  
*Maryland Reported 3-Day*  
*January Firearm Season Deer Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>			
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	20	81	101
<b>Baltimore</b>	69	259	328
<b>Calvert</b>	41	121	162
<b>Caroline</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	56	297	353
<i>Sika</i>			
<b>Carroll</b>	115	483	598
<b>Cecil</b>	83	276	359
<b>Charles</b>	70	251	321
<b>Dorchester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	52	168	220
<i>Sika</i>	117	346	463
<b>Frederick</b>	179	568	747
<b>Garrett</b>			
<b>Harford</b>	70	282	352
<b>Howard</b>	37	114	151
<b>Kent</b>	64	344	408
<b>Montgomery</b>	56	160	216
<b>Prince George's</b>	38	95	133
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	72	365	437
<b>Somerset</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	48	184	232
<i>Sika</i>	2	1	3
<b>St. Mary's</b>	41	103	144
<b>Talbot</b>	41	133	174
<b>Washington</b>	67	258	325
<b>Wicomico</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	53	288	341
<i>Sika</i>	19	31	50
<b>Worcester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	69	356	425
<i>Sika</i>	1	4	5
<b>Total</b>	1,480	5,568	7,048

*Table 9*  
*Maryland Reported*  
*Early Muzzleloader Season Deer Harvest*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>	242	198	440
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	53	124	177
<b>Baltimore</b>	130	231	361
<b>Calvert</b>	42	88	130
<b>Caroline</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	89	216	305
<i>Sika</i>	0	0	0
<b>Carroll</b>	188	298	486
<b>Cecil</b>	106	166	272
<b>Charles</b>	91	202	293
<b>Dorchester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	67	164	231
<i>Sika</i>	433	295	728
<b>Frederick</b>	285	301	586
<b>Garrett</b>	390	258	648
<b>Harford</b>	118	187	305
<b>Howard</b>	50	120	170
<b>Kent</b>	132	202	334
<b>Montgomery</b>	108	142	250
<b>Prince George's</b>	59	117	176
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	112	292	404
<b>Somerset</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	66	142	208
<i>Sika</i>	5	0	5
<b>St. Mary's</b>	74	167	241
<b>Talbot</b>	81	148	229
<b>Washington</b>	261	206	467
<b>Wicomico</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	97	238	335
<i>Sika</i>	60	28	88
<b>Worcester</b>			
<i>White-Tailed</i>	94	162	256
<i>Sika</i>	9	15	24
<b>Total</b>	3,442	4,707	8,149

*Table 10*

*Maryland Reported Late  
Muzzleloader Season Deer Harvest  
by County, 2024–2025*

County	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>	82	173	255
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	53	109	162
<b>Baltimore</b>	96	272	368
<b>Calvert</b>	34	70	104
<b>Caroline</b>			
<b>White-Tailed</b>	42	165	207
<b>Sika</b>	0	1	1
<b>Carroll</b>	89	207	296
<b>Cecil</b>	56	147	203
<b>Charles</b>	91	189	280
<b>Dorchester</b>			
<b>White-Tailed</b>	30	66	96
<b>Sika</b>	118	188	306
<b>Frederick</b>	145	263	408
<b>Garrett</b>	112	222	334
<b>Harford</b>	59	193	252
<b>Howard</b>	50	86	136
<b>Kent</b>	58	189	247
<b>Montgomery</b>	65	160	225
<b>Prince George's</b>	50	96	146
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	45	165	210
<b>Somerset</b>			
<b>White-Tailed</b>	21	81	102
<b>Sika</b>	1	0	1
<b>St. Mary's</b>	35	102	137
<b>Talbot</b>	22	108	130
<b>Washington</b>	104	233	337
<b>Wicomico</b>			
<b>White-Tailed</b>	36	124	160
<b>Sika</b>	11	17	28
<b>Worcester</b>			
<b>White-Tailed</b>	37	85	122
<b>Sika</b>	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	1,543	3,712	5,255

*Table 11*

*Maryland Reported Primitive Deer Hunt Days  
Harvest by County, 2024–2025*

County	Archery			Muzzleloader			Total		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
<b>Allegany</b>	0	1	1	1	27	28	1	28	29
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	1	4	5	1	7	8	2	11	13
<b>Baltimore</b>	1	3	4	2	12	14	3	15	18
<b>Calvert</b>	1	2	3	0	2	2	1	4	5
<b>Caroline</b>	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	5	5
<b>Carroll</b>	0	3	3	2	11	13	2	14	16
<b>Cecil</b>	0	2	2	2	5	7	2	7	9
<b>Charles</b>	1	1	2	3	5	8	4	6	10
<b>Dorchester</b>									
<b>White-Tailed</b>	0	5	5	0	7	7	0	12	12
<b>Sika</b>	1	5	6	8	38	46	9	43	52
<b>Frederick</b>	0	1	1	0	8	8	0	9	9
<b>Garrett</b>	0	3	3	0	28	28	0	31	31
<b>Harford</b>	0	4	4	3	8	11	3	12	15
<b>Howard</b>	0	1	1	0	3	3	0	4	4
<b>Kent</b>	0	2	2	5	7	12	5	9	14
<b>Montgomery</b>	0	1	1	0	5	5	0	6	6
<b>Prince George's</b>	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	4	4
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	2	1	3	2	14	16	4	15	19
<b>Somerset</b>	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
<b>St. Mary's</b>	0	1	1	2	0	2	2	1	3
<b>Talbot</b>	0	3	3	1	5	6	1	8	9
<b>Washington</b>	1	1	2	2	17	19	3	18	21
<b>Wicomico</b>									
<b>White-Tailed</b>	1	4	5	0	2	2	1	6	7
<b>Sika</b>	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2
<b>Worcester</b>	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	10	55	65	34	218	252	44	273	317

## **Suburban Deer Management**

Deer management in suburban areas ranks as one of the most difficult challenges facing wildlife agencies throughout the country. DNR is charged with managing deer across the state's varied landscape for a diverse public that has different opinions on how deer should be managed. This includes the large urban/suburban corridor in the midsection of the state.

As development continues in Maryland, the conversion of forested and agricultural lands into housing developments can actually improve habitat conditions for deer. Developed areas provide more than adequate food resources and they often offer refuge from hunting. As a result, deer numbers can increase rapidly in these areas. High deer numbers lead to a greater number of negative interactions with suburban residents, decreasing the residents' tolerance of deer and increasing the demand on the department to somehow regulate the population.

Safety concerns and social considerations in urban areas often prevent the use of common lethal deer population control measures (i.e., hunting). Non-lethal control measures, such as fencing and repellants, can help reduce deer problems, but they do not eliminate them.

Increasing deer-vehicle collisions, damage to ornamental plants and gardens, and damage to natural habitats are some of the problems that persist when the deer population is not directly managed and reduced. Oftentimes, when public tolerance levels have been surpassed, lethal control methods are considered as a last resort. At this point, DNR provides its professional opinion as to what, if any, lethal method (i.e., managed hunt, professional sharpshooting, etc.) is feasible for a particular scenario. Often, a combination of non-lethal and lethal techniques is recommended to help resolve the problem. DNR will continue to evaluate any new deer management techniques as they are created and promote effective methods that help reduce deer-human conflicts.

## **Non-Hunting Mortality**

Factors that cause mortality in deer other than hunting include disease, fawn predation (from bears, coyotes, bobcats, fishers, feral dogs, etc.), collisions with vehicles, harvest using Deer Management Permits, and harvest via sharpshooting.

To monitor deer mortality due to deer-vehicle collisions, DNR primarily uses data provided by State Farm Insurance Company. State Farm estimates total animal-vehicle collisions based on its share of the insurance business for each state and the number of accidents reported by their clients. In 2023–2024, they projected there were between 30,000–40,000 (31,047) deer-vehicle collisions in Maryland annually.

Negative impacts to farmland are also of concern when deer populations are not managed or reduced. Farmers and landowners can obtain a Deer Management Permit from DNR when deer are causing damage to commercial crops. Deer Management Permits allow farmers to harvest antlerless deer on their property outside of the regular state hunting seasons and bag limits. In 2024, 11,501 deer were taken with Deer Management Permits compared to 9,867 deer in 2023 (Table 12). Significantly higher planting costs continue to cause farmers to control deer more intensely than they have in the past. While regulated hunting remains the most effective way to control deer statewide, Deer Management Permits are a valuable tool for farmers to protect their livelihood.

In areas where lethal control of deer via regulated hunting is not feasible due to urbanization or security issues (i.e., military bases), public and private landowners may obtain a Deer Cooperator Permit. Sharpshooting deer via a Deer Cooperator Permit is a viable, lethal alternative for controlling deer numbers. A limited number of farmers also use the permit at night in particularly problematic areas to reduce deer damage to their crops. Permittees must pass written and shooting exams in order to obtain the permit and must submit an Operational Plan for approval. The majority of these permits are limited to the months of February and March. During 2024, 1,433 deer were harvested under authority of these permits in Maryland. County and/or federal officials, as well as a few private groups, remove the majority of deer taken with this method.

Over the past decade, there has been increased concern about predation on deer in the United States. These concerns often are focused on coyotes, and particularly in the southeastern part of the country. In Maryland, these concerns are more pronounced in the western counties, where bears and coyotes are more abundant. Currently, reproductive data that the Deer Project collects does not indicate coyotes or bears are having a significant impact on the deer population in Maryland. In some counties, fawn recruitment, based on the annual hunter harvest, has declined to relatively low numbers during some years, but the deer population remains stable. While the deer population is significantly lower than it was 20 years ago, the decline can be largely attributed to the relatively high percentage of antlerless deer taken during the hunting season.

While there is no doubt that coyotes and bears are preying on fawns, Maryland's long-term deer data, along with research and experience from nearby states, indicate that their effect is minimal. The vast majority of white-tailed deer give birth to fawns within a two- to four-week period in May and June, which overwhelms predators like coyotes and bears. During that time, there are far more fawns on the ground than can be consumed by predators, thus ensuring that an adequate number will survive to reproduce in coming years. The Deer Project will continue to monitor fawn recruitment rates, as well as coyote and bear populations, in Maryland, and will develop alternative management strategies as the need arises.

### **Deer Population**

Maryland's white-tailed deer population prior to the 2024–2025 hunting season was estimated at 263,644 deer, approximately 16% higher than the previous 5-year average of 225,916 deer. Trends in deer abundance are commonly monitored using harvest estimates and the age structure of the deer herd. These methods work well in areas where hunters have access to most of the land but are much less reliable for urban/suburban deer populations where hunting occurs sporadically.

Liberal antlerless regulations have slowed or halted deer population growth in many areas outside the Washington D.C. to Baltimore suburban corridor. In some rural counties, the deer population has declined. The Department of Natural Resources is currently investigating additional ways to control deer in the suburban corridor where hunting is limited by a lack of access to land.

*Table 12*  
*Maryland Reported Crop Damage Mortality*  
*by County, 2024–2025*

County	No. Permits Issued	No. Shooters Authorized	No. Successful Shooters	No. Deer Authorized to Harvest	Whitetail Males Harvested	Whitetail Females Harvested	Sika Males Harvested	Sika Females Harvested	Total Harvested	Tags Utilized (%)
<b>Allegany</b>	54	263	82	494	32	224			256	52
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	32	216	26	980	21	96			117	12
<b>Baltimore</b>	89	1,186	109	1,655	37	468			505	31
<b>Calvert</b>	23	129	27	690	18	76			94	14
<b>Caroline</b>	41	235	62	715	23	258			281	39
<b>Carroll</b>	207	1,398	266	4,860	130	926			1,056	22
<b>Cecil</b>	38	369	59	768	42	198			240	31
<b>Charles</b>	50	284	65	1,730	33	259			292	17
<b>Dorchester</b>	82	667	158	2,120	28	504	16	405	953	45
<b>Frederick</b>	157	950	216	3,285	90	779			869	26
<b>Garrett</b>	471	2,764	642	5,025	172	1,917			2,089	42
<b>Harford</b>	54	802	74	1,029	18	234			252	24
<b>Howard</b>	49	382	90	1,155	27	333			360	31
<b>Kent</b>	43	295	100	785	47	397			444	57
<b>Montgomery</b>	51	477	86	1,320	33	350			383	29
<b>Prince George's</b>	28	190	51	940	7	213			220	23
<b>Queen Anne's</b>	46	336	96	860	25	395			420	49
<b>Somerset</b>	41	355	50	823	22	179			201	24
<b>St. Mary's</b>	63	443	66	1,955	29	237			266	14
<b>Talbot</b>	60	394	112	1,110	76	398			474	43
<b>Washington</b>	127	674	156	2,045	60	625			685	33
<b>Wicomico</b>	78	511	114	1,384	47	373	43	463	33	
<b>Worcester</b>	83	631	131	1,778	52	529			581	33
<b>Statewide</b>	1,967	13,951	2,781	37,506	1,069	9,968	16	448	11,501	31

### Chronic Wasting Disease

In 2024–2025, the DNR sampled 1,312 deer for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and detected 62 deer carrying the disease. Sixty-one of the positives were from within the existing CWD Management Area, while one was outside (found in Howard County). In response, the Chronic Wasting Disease Management Area has been expanded to include all of Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery and Washington counties.

Maryland first detected CWD in November 2010 in Green Ridge State Forest near an area where chronic wasting disease is present in West Virginia. To date, the DNR has detected the disease in 285 deer out of more than 15,706 tested.

CWD is a disease of the brain and nervous system that causes death in cervids (members of the deer family). The disease is classified as a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy and attacks the brain of cervids, producing small lesions that eventually result in death. CWD was historically a western U.S. disease, but since 2001 it has been detected in numerous states east of the Mississippi River, including the mid-Atlantic states of Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. To date, 36 states and four Canadian provinces in North America have documented CWD in their deer, elk, or moose populations (free-ranging, captive, or both). The disease has also been detected in Finland (free-ranging moose), Norway (free-ranging reindeer), South Korea (captive elk from Canada), and Sweden (free-ranging moose).

Concerns over CWD should not stop hunters from enjoying the hunting season or any venison they may acquire. CWD has not been shown to be transmissible to humans. However, it is recommended that hunters field-dressing or butchering deer take the same precautions as they might to protect against other pathogens or diseases. Additional information on the proper handling of harvested deer and chronic wasting disease management can be found in Appendix I.

DNR continues to cooperate with various research institutions concerning CWD. Currently, staff are participating in a multistate effort coordinated by Cornell University to identify the most effective surveillance strategies for the disease.

### **Deer Research and Data Use**

In 2024–2025 department staff and volunteers examined 4,636 deer at butcher shops across the state during the muzzleloader and firearm seasons. At the butcher shops, sex and age of the deer were determined and antler measurements were recorded for bucks. Deer were also checked for evidence of illness or disease. The yearly sample of harvested deer provides valuable information that is used to estimate deer population numbers and to detect any changes in the deer herd reproductive potential. It is also used to monitor the overall health of deer and the effects of changes to seasons and bag limits made to better manage deer populations.

Staff and volunteers determine the age of each deer by the wear and replacement of its teeth. As young deer get older, their milk teeth are replaced with permanent teeth. As adult deer age, their permanent teeth begin to wear down. This wear enables biologists to reliably categorize deer as fawns (less than one year old), yearlings (approximately 1.5 years old) or adults (two years and older). The proportions of deer in each age class and their gender are then used in reconstruction models to develop and follow trends in the state's deer population.

The antler beam circumference measurements of yearling bucks that are brought to butcher shops are used as indicators of the reproductive potential and health of the deer herd. Yearling males in good habitat with moderate deer numbers will have larger antler beam diameters than those in higher populations or poorer habitat. Abundant food and modest competition translate into more energy available for antler growth. This is most evident in the yearling age class. Trends in these measurements can indicate deer herd overpopulation and habitat degradation.

Overall, Maryland's long-term data for these indicators show healthy, productive deer populations across the state. The percentage of yearling bucks in the harvest remains very healthy and has shown a positive declining trend in recent years. However, the average number of antler points and the average antler beam diameter for yearling bucks have also been declining. This data will continue to be monitored closely in the coming years, but the declining trend may be an artifact of the sampling that now occurs at butcher shops.

Deer examined at the butcher shops are also examined for evidence of hemorrhagic disease (HD), a viral disease spread by biting midges. HD, or "blue-tongue," commonly appears in late summer and early fall. Deer that have survived hemorrhagic disease and are harvested will exhibit hooves with sloughing or peeling tissue. These deer are still suitable for human consumption. Hemorrhagic disease occurs yearly in Maryland, although it varies in intensity. The results of this annual statewide examination are reported to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study in Athens, Georgia as part of a nationwide survey. This study is one of the oldest and most complete nationwide wildlife disease investigations in the country.

Significant HD outbreaks typically occur every three to five years and may affect 10–20%, or more, of a local deer population. There was a moderate outbreak in Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties in 2024–2025. The Department of Natural Resources will continue to monitor for HD in the coming years.

### **Archery Hunter Survey**

The annual [Archery Hunter Survey](#) was continued for 2023–2024 and 2024–2025. However, survey data is currently being analyzed and was not ready for this report.

The Archery Hunter Survey provides observational data about furbearers, deer and other wildlife. Archery hunters record the number of animals observed during each hunt, number of hours they hunt, county of hunt and other specific details about each hunt. If you are an archery hunter and would like to participate, contact Josh Tabora at 240-609-5100 or by email at [Josh.Tabora@maryland.gov](mailto:Josh.Tabora@maryland.gov) Forms are also available on the DNR website, at [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt\\_trap/bhsurvey.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/bhsurvey.aspx).

### **Regulatory and Legislative Changes for the Coming 2025–2026 Season**

DNR has a new and improved online licensing system called MD Outdoors. It is located at [mdoutdoors.maryland.gov](https://mdoutdoors.maryland.gov). A mobile app version is also available through your device's app store by searching "MD Outdoors mobile app". Your existing DNRid will remain active in the new system. You can use MD Outdoors to purchase licenses and stamps, check in deer and turkeys, print harvest report cards and field tags, and access many of the features available across all DNR units.

New for the 2025–2026 season, hunters who wound a deer may now legally kill the deer after legal hunting hours as part of the recovery within established hunting regulations. (See page 16 of the [Hunting Guide](#) for more details.)



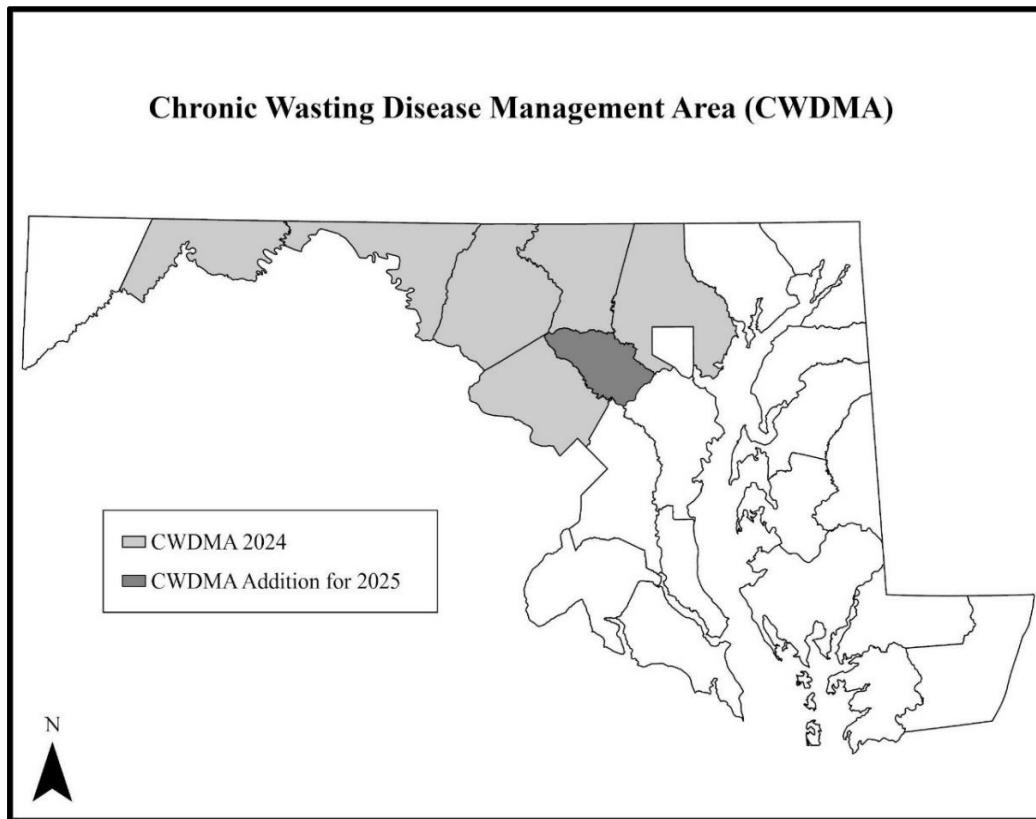
## Appendix I

The following common-sense precautionary measures are recommended for the safe handling, field-dressing and home processing of venison:

- Avoid shooting or handling a deer that appears sick.
- Wear latex or rubber gloves when field-dressing or butchering deer.
- Remove all internal organs.
- Remove the meat from the bones and spinal column if home processing a deer.
- Do not use household knives or utensils when field-dressing or home processing a deer.
- Avoid cutting through bones or the spinal column (backbone).
- Never eat a deer's brain, eyeballs, spinal cord, spleen or lymph nodes.
- If you saw off antlers or through a bone, or if you sever the spinal column with a knife, be sure to disinfect these tools prior to using them for the butchering or removal of meat.
- Remove all fat, membranes and connective tissue from the meat. Note that normal field-dressing and trimming of fat from meat will remove lymph nodes.
- Always wash hands and instruments thoroughly after dressing and processing game meat.
- Use a 50/50 solution of household chlorine bleach and water to disinfect tools and work surfaces. Wipe down counters and let them dry; soak knives for one hour.

### **Chronic Wasting Disease Management**

Due to the detection of chronic wasting disease in several counties in Maryland, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has implemented several measures that are intended to prevent the unintentional spread of chronic wasting disease to other locations in Maryland or to other states. The changes outlined below apply only to the Chronic Wasting Disease Management Area (CWDMA), which is currently defined as all of Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery and Washington counties.



Whole deer carcasses or deer parts cannot be transported out of the Chronic Wasting Disease Management Area unless they are transported to an approved processor or taxidermist ([https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt\\_trap/CWD\\_in\\_Maryland.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/CWD_in_Maryland.aspx)), apart from the following exceptions:

- Meat with no part of the spinal column, backbone, or head attached,
- Hind quarters and front shoulders with no spinal column or backbone attached, (hunters MUST have checked in their deer and obtained a confirmation number to transport a quartered deer)
- Cleaned hide with no head attached,
- Skull plate cleaned of all meat and brain tissue,
- Antlers with no meat or soft tissue attached,
- Finished taxidermy mounts or tanned hides,
- Whole deer carcasses or parts being transported directly to the meat processors or taxidermists listed below, or to the landfill located within Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, or Washington counties.

Please check the Maryland Department of Natural Resources website, at [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt\\_trap/CWD\\_in\\_Maryland.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/CWD_in_Maryland.aspx) , for updates on chronic wasting disease surveillance and management. Hunter assistance and cooperation is essential to the department's efforts to monitor and manage chronic wasting disease.

### **Carcass Importation Ban**

The primary objective in the management of CWD is to prevent or slow its spread into new areas. One possible mode of disease transmission is by the movement and disposal of infected carcasses. To minimize the risk for disease spread, Maryland, along with many other states, has adopted regulations that prohibit the importation of whole carcasses and certain carcass parts of deer, moose and elk harvested from states that have CWD.

A person may bring only the following parts of a dead deer, elk, or moose into Maryland from another state or province's designated CWD containment, surveillance, or management area, unless the final destination of the carcass is within the Maryland Chronic Wasting Disease Management Area or with a chronic wasting disease-approved Maryland processor or taxidermist:

- Meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached.
- Hindquarters and front shoulders with no spinal column or backbone attached.
- Cleaned hide with no head attached.
- Skull plate cleaned of all meat and brain tissue.
- Antlers with no meat or soft tissue attached.
- Upper canine teeth, also known as buglers, whistlers or ivories.
- Finished taxidermy mount or tanned hides.

Importation of whole deer, elk, moose or carcasses of other members of the deer family, *Cervidae*, is prohibited from CWD positive areas identified within the United States and Canadian provinces. The latest information on CWD positive areas in the United States and Canada. can be found on the [USGS website](https://www.usgs.gov).

Any person who imports or possesses a cervid carcass or part of a cervid that was tested for chronic wasting disease in another state or province and is notified that the cervid tested positive, must report the test results to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources within 24 hours of receiving such notification by telephone at 301-334-4255 or by email to: [jonathank.trudeau@maryland.gov](mailto:jonathank.trudeau@maryland.gov).

If you hunt deer, elk, moose or other cervids in other states and/or provinces, particularly those in which CWD has been detected, check with the respective fish and wildlife agencies regarding special regulations or specific advice for hunters. Also check with your home state fish and wildlife agency to ensure that animals lawfully killed elsewhere may be imported and possessed in your state. Additional information can be found at the CWD Alliance website [www.cwd-info.org](http://www.cwd-info.org)

### **Taking Deer Carcasses out of Maryland**

Because Maryland is considered a CWD positive state, deer hunters must follow carcass importation regulations in other states when they transport a deer carcass out of Maryland (see [www.cwd-info.org](http://www.cwd-info.org)). The surrounding states of Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia each have specific regulations as to whether they will allow whole deer carcasses or only parts of carcasses to enter from Maryland. Likewise, the regulations for each of these states vary as to whether they apply to deer from anywhere in Maryland, or just to deer taken within the CWDMA. Hunters are strongly encouraged to check state regulations before transporting deer carcasses. Travelers may pass through Maryland with cervid carcasses, provided that no parts are disposed of or remain in the state.

**Appendix II**  
**Statewide Reported Antlered and Antlerless Deer Harvest**  
**by Public Hunting Area and County, 2024–2025**

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Allegany		
Billmeyer WMA	10	8
Dan's Mountain WMA	88	60
Green Ridge SF	236	258
McCoole Fishery Management Area	1	0
Rocky Gap SP	8	12
Sideling Hill WMA	4	1
Warrior Mountain WMA	51	59
Anne Arundel		
Crownsville CWMA	2	3
Davidsonville Receiver Station	7	6
Fort Meade	34	50
Holly Beach Farm NRMA	6	7
Patapsco Valley SP	2	3
Sandy Point SP	5	6
Severn Run NEA	2	3
Smithsonian	19	48
Baltimore		
Gunpowder Falls SP	63	77
Gwynnbrook WMA	3	6
Liberty Watershed	20	33
Loch Raven Watershed	82	109
North Point SP	5	5
Patapsco Valley SP	23	31
Prettyboy Watershed	105	157
Soldiers Delight NEA	17	51
Calvert		
Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm CWMA	0	3
Calvert Cliffs SP	4	7
Hall Creek NRMA	2	3
Huntingtown Area	13	30
Parkers Creek WMA	11	26
Caroline		
Chesapeake Forest Lands	9	20
Idylwild WMA	30	95
Tuckahoe SP	8	22

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Carroll		
Avondale WMA	6	11
Farver CWMA	1	1
Hahn CWMA	3	1
Hanover Watershed	13	11
Liberty Watershed	61	133
Maring CWMA	7	3
Morgan Run NEA	21	40
Patapsco Valley SP	22	35
Sawmill-Speigel CWMA	15	29
Woodbrook CWMA	13	18
Cecil		
Bohemia River NRMA	3	2
C and D Canal Lands	15	17
Earleville WMA	12	8
Elk Neck SF	21	31
Elk Neck SP	18	46
Fair Hill NRMA	35	109
Grove Farm WMA	16	23
Old Bohemia WMA	9	14
Charles		
Blossom Point Field Test Facility	3	13
Cedar Point WMA	16	30
Cedarville SF	3	9
Chapel Point SP	13	19
Chapman SP (Mt. Aventine)	1	12
Chicamuxen WMA	4	4
Doncaster SF or Tayloes Neck	4	5
Indian Creek NRMA	9	13
Indian Head Naval Ordinance Area	7	38
Myrtle Grove WMA	26	59
Nanjemoy Creek WMA	1	0
Nanjemoy WMA	6	9
Popes Creek WMA	2	12
Riverside WMA	7	2

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Dorchester		
Blackwater NWR		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	15	29
<i>Sika</i>	313	468
Chesapeake Forest Lands		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	44	102
<i>Sika</i>	74	81
Fishing Bay WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	4	11
<i>Sika</i>	78	109
LeCompte WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	1	4
<i>Sika</i>	7	13
Linkwood WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	3	13
<i>Sika</i>	6	0
Taylor's Island WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	0	0
<i>Sika</i>	11	23
Frederick		
Cunningham Falls SP, Thurmont Watershed	42	32
Emmitsburg Watershed	5	14
Frederick City Watershed	59	76
Heaters Island WMA	5	6
Monocacy NRMA	32	45
South Mountain SP	17	32
Urbana Fishery Management Area	4	1

**Appendix II – continued –**  
**Statewide Reported Antlered and Antlerless Deer Harvest**  
**by Public Hunting Area and County, 2024–2025**

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Garrett		
4H Center	5	6
Cunningham Swamp WMA	9	5
Deep Creek Lake SP	14	11
Frostburg Watershed	11	14
Garrett SF	130	99
Mount Nebo WMA	35	32
Potomac SF	57	37
Sang Run SP	6	6
Savage River SF	314	262
Wolf Den Run SP	9	12
Youghiogheny NEA	4	3
Youghiogheny Reservoir	4	1
Harford		
Aberdeen Proving Ground	82	110
Gunpowder Falls SP	10	9
Rocks SP	6	17
Stoney Demonstration Forest	4	7
Susquehanna SP	9	23
Howard		
Hugg-Thomas WMA	13	22
Patapsco Valley SP	25	51
Patuxent River SP	78	109
Triadelphia/Rocky Gorge (WSSC)	19	24
Kent		
Cypress Branch State Park	2	0
Eastern Neck NWR	24	26
Millington WMA	40	72
Sassafras NRMA	29	36
Montgomery		
Cherrington CWMA	10	22
Islands of the Potomac	10	12
Mckee-Beshers WMA	24	41
Patuxent River SP	48	91
Seneca Creek SP	67	65
Seneca Schaeffer Farm Tract	24	33
Strider WMA	8	6
Triadelphia/Rocky Gorge (WSSC)	6	4

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Prince George's		
Aquasco Farms CWMA	13	54
Belt Woods NEA	9	10
Beltsville	56	40
Billingsley Tract (Patuxent River Park)	2	7
Brandywine Receiver Station	6	19
Cheltenham WMA	2	1
Marlboro Natural Area CWMA	5	10
Merkle NRMA	7	32
Milltown Landing NRMA	1	8
Nottingham NRMA	2	7
Patuxent WRC (Central Tract)	8	9
Queen Anne Bridge Rd. CWMA	4	2
Rosaryville SP	7	14
Spice Creek (Patuxent River) NRMA	1	6
Queen Anne's		
Browns Branch WMA	11	12
Tuckahoe SP	8	19
Wye Island NRMA	47	65
St. Mary's		
Elms' CWMA	1	3
Greenwell SP	1	12
Historic St. Mary's City CWMA	3	7
Myrtle Point CWMA	1	1
Newtowne Neck SP	6	9
Patuxent Naval Air Station	23	12
Point Lookout SP (Jacobs Property)	4	4
Saint Clements State Park	0	2
St. Inigoes SF	2	6
St. Mary's River SP or Salem Tract	12	32

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Somerset		
Cedar Island WMA	1	0
Chesapeake Forest Lands		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	66	104
<i>Sika</i>	2	1
Deal Island WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	4	20
<i>Sika</i>	4	1
Fairmount WMA		
<i>White-Tailed Deer</i>	3	2
<i>Sika</i>	1	0
Maryland Marine Properties WMA	1	1
Pocomoke Sound WMA	2	3
South Marsh Island WMA		
<i>Sika</i>	1	0
Wellington WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	7	8
<i>Sika</i>	0	1
Talbot		
Seth CFL	6	4
Washington		
Fort Frederick SP	1	3
Greenbrier SP	15	36
Indian Springs WMA	67	56
Maryland Correctional Training Center	8	21
Prather's Neck WMA	5	5
Sideling Hill WMA	12	10
South Mountain SP	50	52
Woodmont NRMA	14	14

**Appendix II – continued –**  
**Statewide Reported Antlered and Antlerless Deer Harvest**  
**by Public Hunting Area and County, 2024–2025**

County/Public Land	Antlered	Antlerless
Wicomico		
Blackwater NWR		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	0	8
<i>Sika</i>	3	2
Chesapeake Forest Lands		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	86	155
<i>Sika</i>	15	16
Ellis Bay WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	4	9
<i>Sika</i>	7	12
Johnson WMA	3	2
Nanticoke WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	4	33
<i>Sika</i>	18	27
Wetipquin WMA		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	2	8
<i>Sika</i>	1	0
Wicomico Demo Forest CFL		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	10	12
<i>Sika</i>	2	0
Worcester		
Assateague NS		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	6	4
<i>Sika</i>	45	67
Assateague SP		
<i>Sika</i>	3	8
Chesapeake Forest Lands		
White-Tailed Deer	51	84
<i>Sika</i>	1	2
E.A. Vaughn WMA	13	35
Hickory Point		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	4	3
<i>Sika</i>	0	1
Isle of Wight WMA	0	1
Pocomoke River WMA	7	9
Pocomoke SF		
<i>White-Tailed</i>	51	74
<i>Sika</i>	0	1

CFL- Chesapeake Forest Land

CWMA- Cooperative Wildlife Management Area

FMA- Fishery Management Area

MNCPPC- Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

NEA- Natural Environment Area

NRMA- Natural Resources Management Area

NS- National Seashore

NWR- National Wildlife Refuge

SF- State Forest

SP- State Park

WMA- Wildlife Management Area

WRC- Wildlife Research Center

WSSC- Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

# Wild Turkey

## Introduction

Wild turkeys are an important game bird in Maryland, providing recreation and enjoyment for many hunters, wildlife enthusiasts and citizens. Although turkey populations were dangerously low less than a century ago, conservation efforts have brought the species back from the brink of extinction. Maryland DNR uses a variety of survey and hunting data to monitor wild turkeys in the state to ensure that the population remains healthy.

Following a period of stabilization in the 2000s, the statewide wild turkey population has increased and now numbers over 40,000. Much of the increase can be attributed to growth of the central and southern region's turkey populations. In many suburban counties that previously contained low densities of turkeys, data suggest that numbers have grown significantly. Populations in the western and eastern regions are generally stable but vary based on habitat quality and trends in reproduction. On average, reproductive success in the summer of 2024 was moderate throughout the state.

Approximately 10,000 hunters annually pursue turkeys in the spring, fall or winter hunting seasons in Maryland. In the 2025 spring season, hunters reported harvesting 4,851 turkeys, a slight decline from the previous two seasons but still well-above average. The 2024 fall turkey harvest of 104 was higher than the prior year but a long-term decline in fall season hunter participation is still evident. A total of 42 turkeys were reported harvested during the three-day statewide winter turkey season.

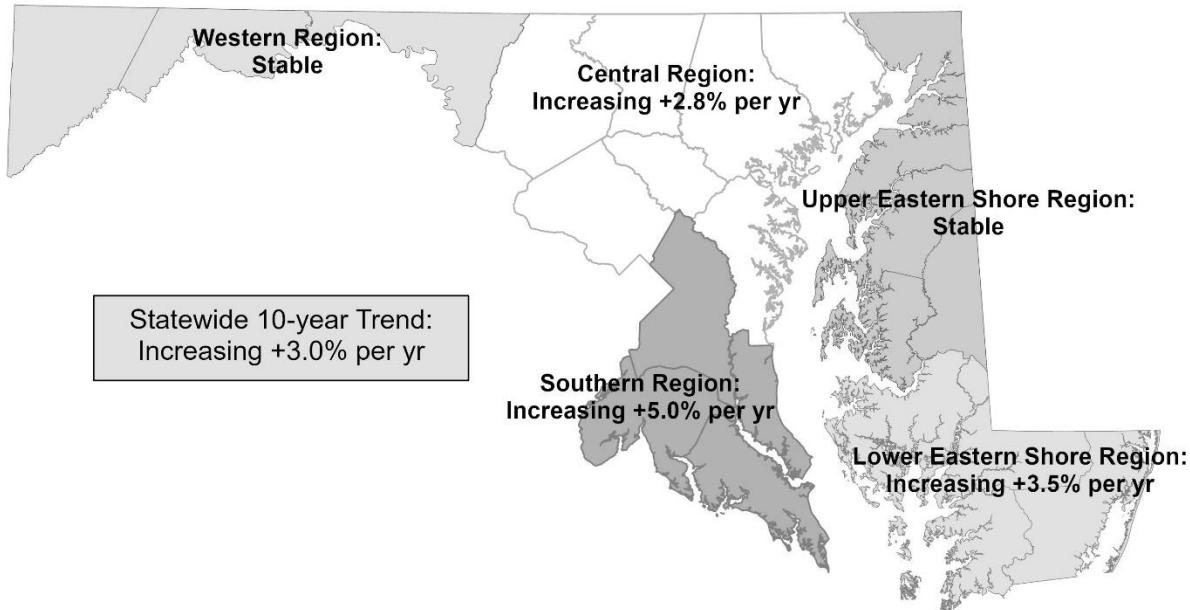
More detailed information about wild turkey populations, hunting statistics and surveys can be found in the following report.

## Population Status

Maryland's estimated wild turkey population has increased in some regions and remained stable in other regions over the past 10 years (Figure 1). The rapid population growth seen in the last few decades has slowed but modest increases of 2–5% per year have occurred in the southern, central and lower eastern shore regions. Populations in the upper eastern shore and western regions have remained stable. Density indices (2023–25 average spring turkey kill per forested mi<sup>2</sup>) are categorized as high in 16 counties (>1 kill/mi<sup>2</sup>), moderate in six counties (0.5–1.0 kill/mi<sup>2</sup>), and low in only one county (<0.5 kill/mi<sup>2</sup>, Table 1, Figure 2). The highest densities of turkeys are still found in the western mountains, the eastern region and portions of the southern region, but numbers continue to increase in the central region's more developed corridor.

The summer wild turkey observation survey estimated moderate reproductive success in summer of 2024 with a statewide index of 2.6 pouls observed per hen (Figure 3). Regionally, the index was above 2 pouls per hen in all regions, which can be considered a general threshold where production should be adequate to replace annual adult turkey losses. The highest reproductive success was noted in the Western, Southern, and Lower Eastern Shore regions, while the Central and Upper Eastern Shore Regions saw somewhat lower production. A detailed summary of the summer survey can be found here: [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/wt\\_observe\\_survey.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/wt_observe_survey.pdf).

## Maryland Estimated 10-year Wild Turkey Population Trends by Region Based on Spring Turkey Harvest, 2016-2025



*Figure 1*  
*Maryland Wild Turkey 10-year Population Trends*  
*Based on Spring Turkey Harvest, 2016–2025*

### Spring Season

Maryland hunters harvested a total of 4,851 wild turkeys during the 2025 spring regular and junior turkey seasons (Table 1, Figure 4). The harvest was slightly lower than the 2024 season total of 4,959 but remained well above the 10-year average of 4,350. Favorable weather during the season and abundant turkey populations in many areas likely benefitted hunters. Recent DNR surveys have documented average to above-average reproductive success in three of the last four summers, contributing to stable or growing turkey populations in much of the state.

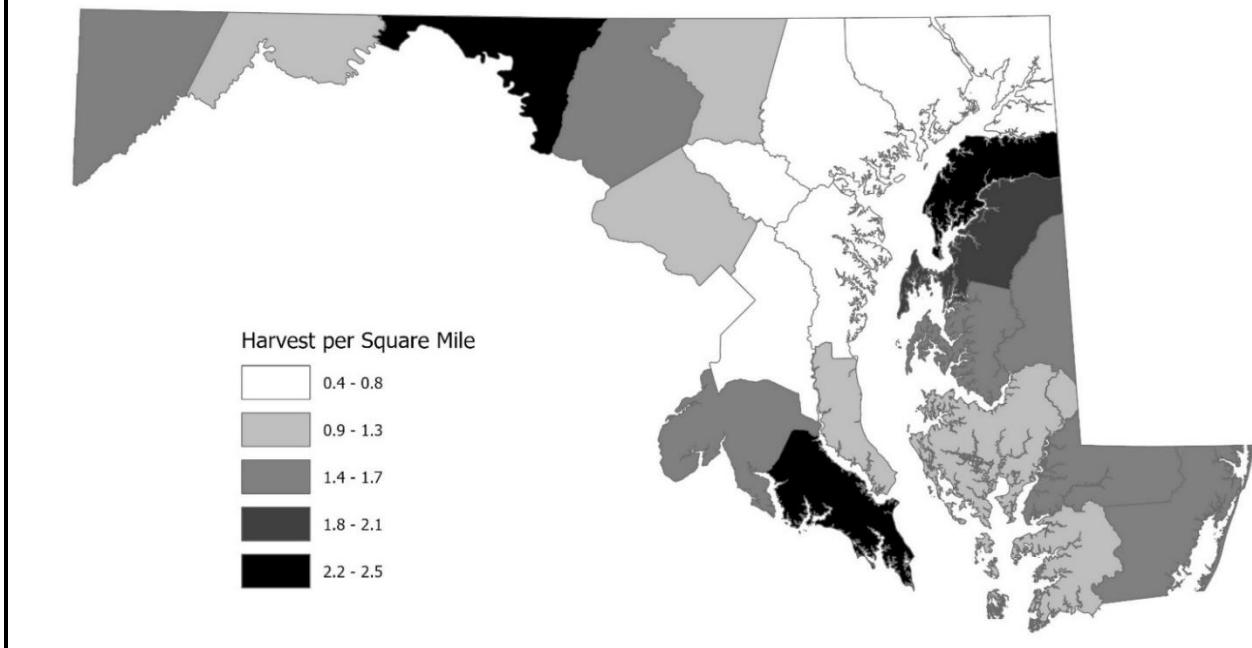
Youth hunters harvested 338 turkeys, comprising 7% of the total harvest, on the weekend prior to the regular season. As in the past, a large proportion of gobblers (43%) were taken during the first week of the regular season. Adult gobblers comprised 81% of the total harvest (Figure 5).

Garrett County reported the highest harvest with 506 turkeys, followed by Charles County (445) and Washington County (406). Four counties set new harvest records: Cecil, St. Mary's, Talbot, and Wicomico. A total of 16% of the harvest was reported from public hunting lands.

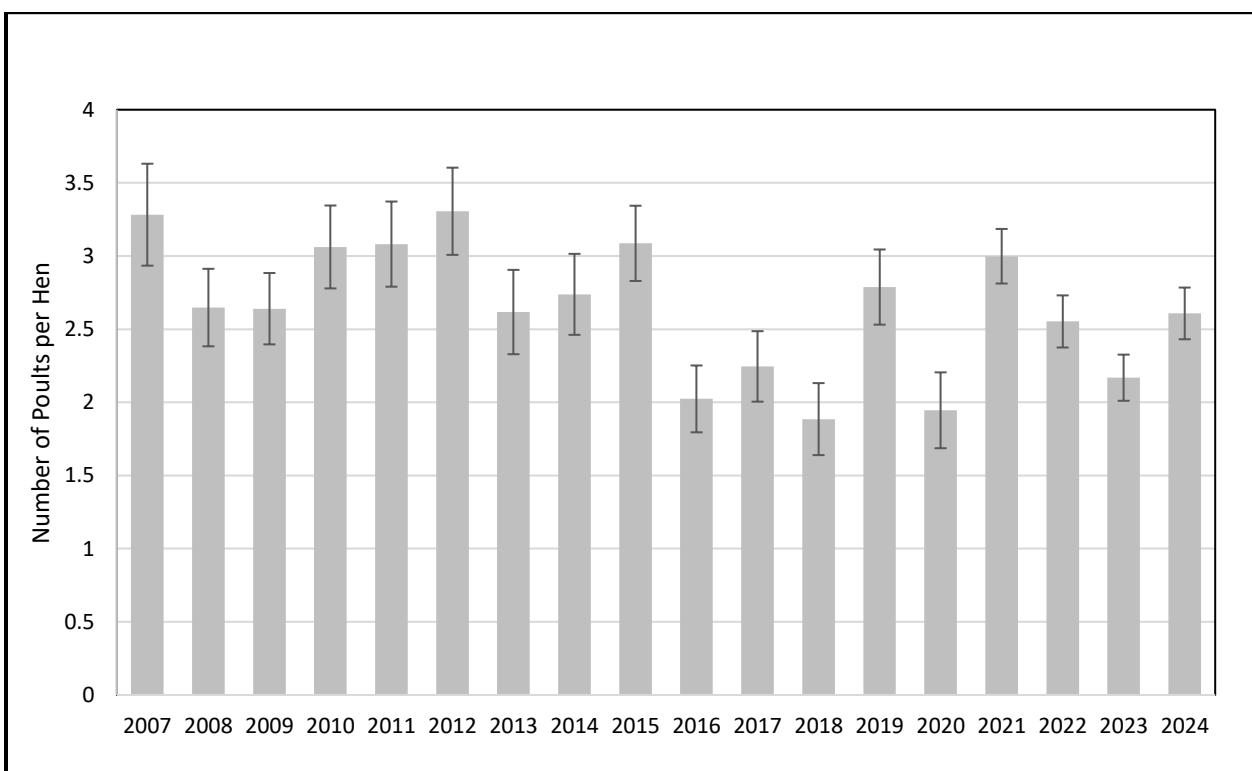
*Table I*  
*Maryland Reported Spring Gobbler Season Harvest, 2019–2025*

County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change 2024–2025	10-year Average	Average kill/ sq. mi. 23–25
Allegany	278	286	266	282	483	345	314	-9.0	305	1.22
Anne Arundel	74	81	64	85	136	106	118	11.3	82	0.73
Baltimore	56	65	53	82	101	89	71	-20.2	68	0.42
Calvert	68	82	58	72	99	107	101	-5.6	80	0.95
Caroline	152	180	149	168	174	151	162	7.3	159	1.69
Carroll	73	93	104	94	132	125	118	-5.6	102	1.19
Cecil	89	94	80	67	95	86	112	30.2	85	0.76
Charles	348	369	353	334	445	472	445	-5.7	369	1.68
Dorchester	221	211	197	170	180	211	226	7.1	221	1.16
Frederick	304	348	281	343	391	322	281	-12.7	321	1.47
Garrett	429	387	374	436	579	546	506	-7.3	449	1.27
Harford	124	88	104	91	128	105	98	-6.7	108	0.75
Howard	33	34	35	51	61	40	43	7.5	39	0.65
Kent	166	206	151	160	184	130	184	41.5	170	2.31
Montgomery	135	162	154	164	206	150	121	-19.3	147	1.13
Prince George's	105	109	99	115	164	135	129	-4.4	111	0.77
Queen Anne's	145	144	120	144	170	191	186	-2.6	157	1.84
Somerset	129	171	180	176	199	202	175	-13.4	169	1.02
St. Mary's	188	226	187	204	253	226	282	24.8	215	2.35
Talbot	87	95	80	84	96	95	119	25.3	92	1.64
Washington	414	439	345	400	515	445	406	-8.8	420	2.54
Wicomico	155	193	181	193	215	238	254	6.7	195	1.64
Worcester	229	240	295	293	350	442	400	-9.5	288	1.64
<b>State</b>	<b>4002</b>	<b>4303</b>	<b>3910</b>	<b>4208</b>	<b>5356</b>	<b>4959</b>	<b>4851</b>	<b>-2.2</b>	<b>4350</b>	<b>1.31</b>

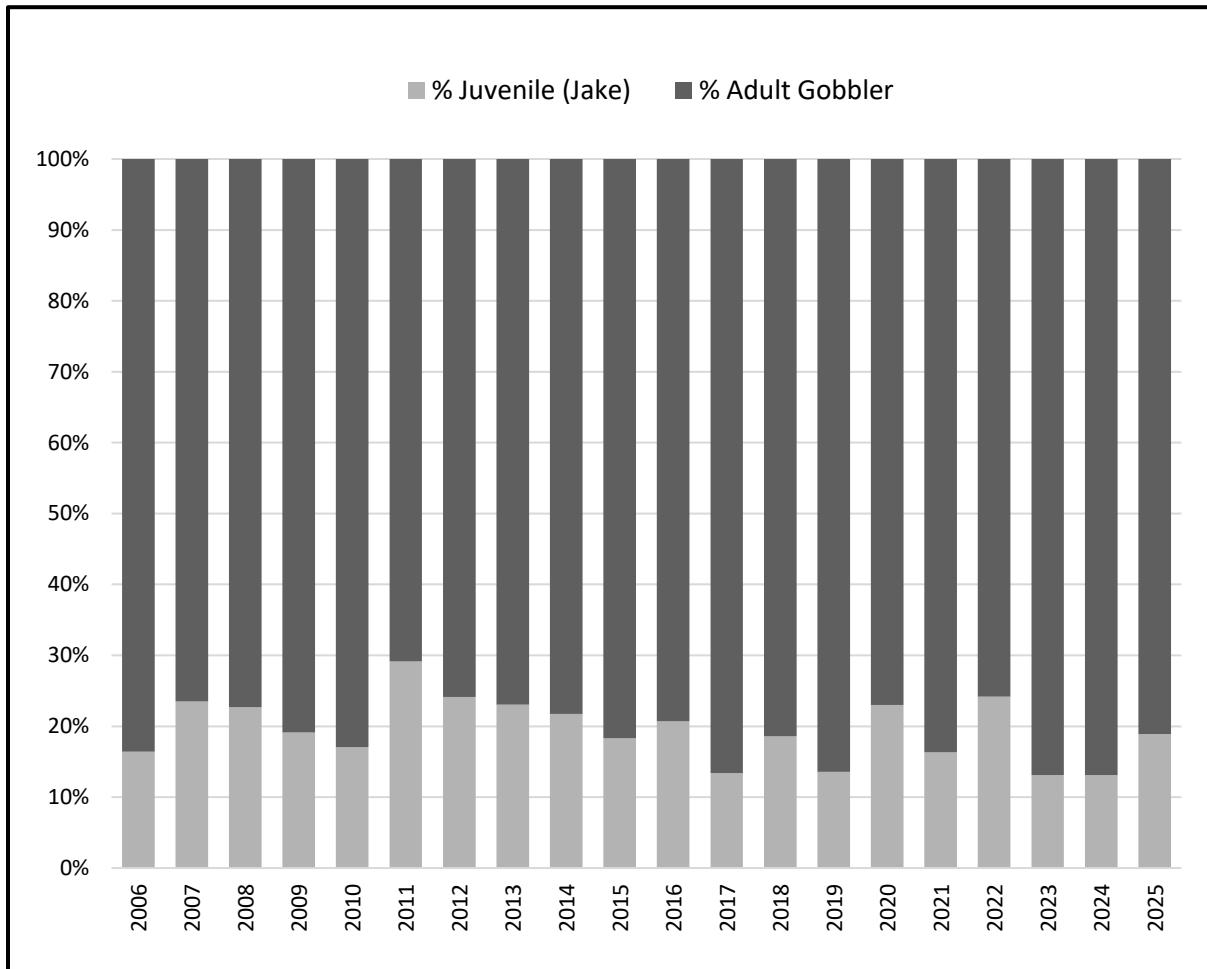
## Average Spring Turkey Harvest per Square Mile of Forest, 2023-25



*Figure 2*  
*Maryland Wild Turkey Density Indices Based on Average Spring Turkey Harvest per Square Mile of Forest, 2023–2025*



*Figure 3*  
*Average Number of Poult per Adult Hen Observed by Participants in Summer Wild Turkey Observation Survey, 2007–2024. Error Bars Represent a 95% Confidence Interval*



*Figure 4*  
*Percentage of Juvenile and Adult Gobblers Reported  
Harvested in Spring Turkey Seasons, 2006–2025*

## Fall Season

Turkey hunters reported taking 104 wild turkeys during the 9-day 2024 fall season. The harvest was higher than the 2023 fall season harvest of 75 and the 10-year average (Table 2, Figure 4). The fall season is limited to the three westernmost counties in Maryland. Adult males comprised 34% of the harvest while adult females were estimated to account for 25%. The proportion of juveniles in the harvest was 41%.

*Table 2  
Maryland Reported Fall Turkey Season Harvest, 2018–2024*

County	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	% Change 2023–2024	10-year average
Allegany	31	22	36	33	38	18	29	61.1	30
Garrett	50	53	32	30	34	40	57	42.5	45
Washington	16	16	16	18	27	17	18	5.9	22
Total	97	91	84	81	99	75	104	38.7	97

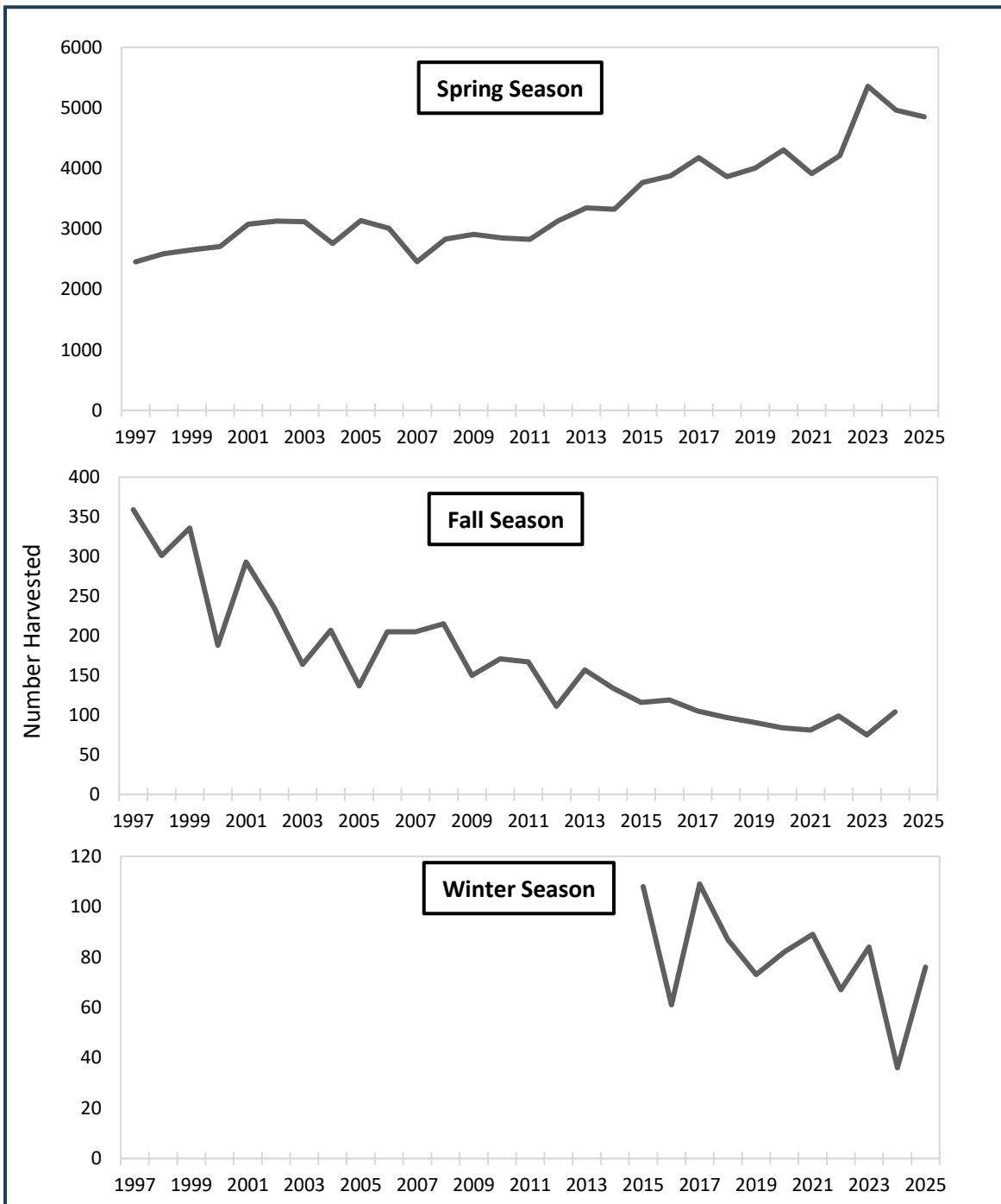
## Winter Season

Hunters reported taking 42 wild turkeys during the 2025 winter turkey season that was open January 23–25 statewide (Table 3, Figure 4). The harvest was slightly above the 2024 total but remained below average. Adult males comprised 38% of the harvest with the remainder females and juveniles. The winter turkey season was established in 2015 to provide hunters additional turkey hunting opportunities while minimizing conflicts with other hunting seasons.



*Table 3*  
*Maryland Reported Winter Wild Turkey Season Harvest, 2018–2024*

County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average
Allegany	4	2	4	4	10	2	2	5
Anne Arundel	2	2	0	4	7	2	1	2
Baltimore	1	1	3	7	3	1	1	3
Calvert	1	2	0	0	3	0	4	2
Caroline	1	5	4	5	1	2	4	4
Carroll	2	5	1	3	5	0	1	2
Cecil	3	3	4	2	1	0	0	2
Charles	3	1	8	0	7	3	3	4
Dorchester	6	3	6	1	3	1	3	6
Frederick	7	3	12	3	9	2	2	5
Garrett	7	9	7	4	4	4	4	6
Harford	1	0	5	3	3	0	0	2
Howard	1	1	0	4	0	1	1	1
Kent	3	6	2	0	0	0	0	2
Montgomery	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2
Prince George's	2	5	7	1	0	0	0	2
Queen Anne's	6	4	3	1	1	2	3	4
Somerset	4	6	3	4	3	1	1	3
St. Mary's	6	13	6	9	6	4	2	7
Talbot	0	4	3	0	0	1	0	1
Washington	7	3	5	3	7	1	3	6
Wicomico	3	1	3	4	3	1	5	3
Worcester	2	2	0	3	6	6	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>76</b>



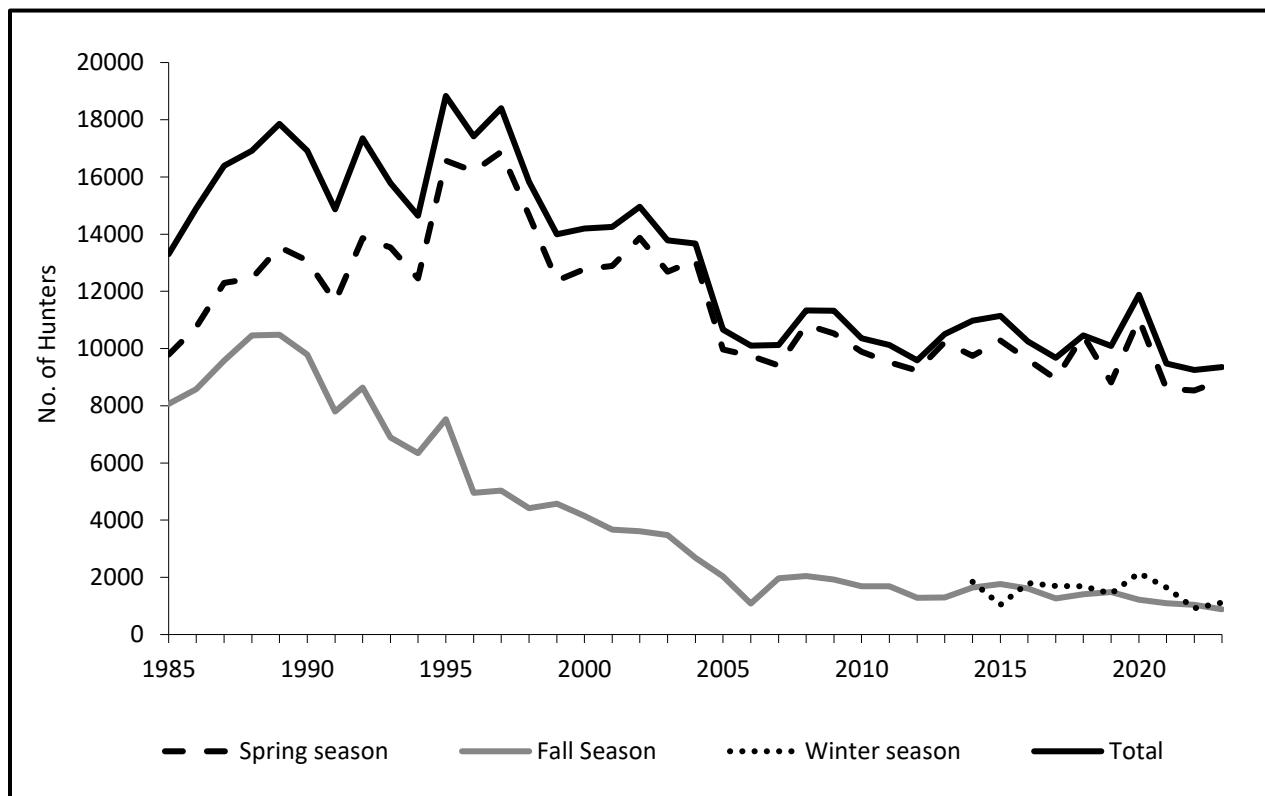
*Figure 5*  
*Reported Maryland Wild Turkey Harvest in Spring,  
 Fall and Winter Seasons, 1997–2025*

## Hunter Participation

The annual hunter mail survey estimates that the total number of Maryland turkey hunters peaked in the mid-1990s but has remained generally stable over the last 15 years at about 10,000 (Figure 6). Most turkey hunters (over 90%) participate in the spring season. In 2023, an estimated 9,000 spring turkey hunters hunted 52,000 days. About 30% of spring hunters are typically successful in taking at least one turkey. Participation in fall turkey hunting has declined by over 80%, with only about 1,000 hunters remaining. Success rate in the fall season is typically about 10%. An estimated 1,100 hunters pursued turkeys during the winter season statewide.

## Wild Turkey Research

Beginning in winter 2023, MD DNR began a 3-year research project in collaboration with various university, state and federal agencies, and non-profit partners in the Mid-Atlantic region. Objectives include assessing the impact of weather, predators, habitat and disease on turkey survival and reproduction. Gobblers are leg-banded to estimate harvest rates as well. During the first 2 years, 531 turkeys were captured. A total of 146 hens were radio-tagged, and 254 gobblers were leg-banded. Preliminary data indicate hen survival and nesting success was low during 2023 but improved significantly in 2024. Predation was the primary cause of both adult hen and nest losses. Harvest rates for males were 28–35% for adult gobblers and 13–17% for juvenile gobblers. A progress report with preliminary results can be found at [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/MD-wild-turkey-research-project-update\\_9\\_24.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/MD-wild-turkey-research-project-update_9_24.pdf). Data will be collected through 2025 with additional analyses and a final report expected to be completed in 2026.



*Figure 6*  
*Number of Maryland Wild Turkey Hunters, 1975–76 to 2023–24.*  
*Data From Annual Hunter Mail Survey*

# Black Bears

## Introduction

Maryland bear hunters harvested 125 bears during the 2024–2025 6-day season (Figure 1), a 21% increase from the 103 harvested during the 2023–2024 season. Hunters harvested 80 bears in Garrett County, 24 bears in Allegany County, 11 bears in Washington County, and 10 bears in Frederick County.

In 2024–25:

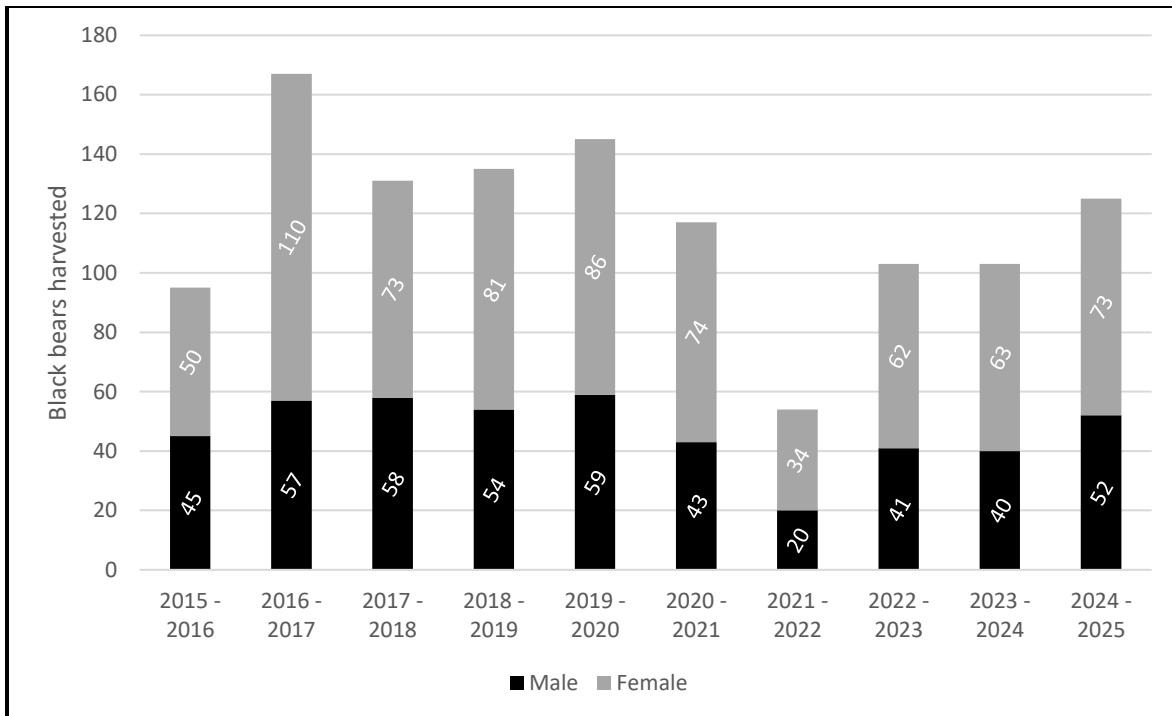
- The harvest was comprised of 52 male bears and 73 female bears.
- The heaviest bear taken was a male in Frederick County weighing 650 pounds.
- Male bears had a mean estimated live weight of 203 pounds and female bears had a mean estimated live weight of 146 pounds.
- The vast majority of the harvest (112 bears) were taken with rifles, 7 with muzzleloaders, 3 with shotguns, and 3 with archery equipment.
- Thirty-seven of the bears were harvested on public land and the other 88 were harvested on private land.

## Black Bear Management

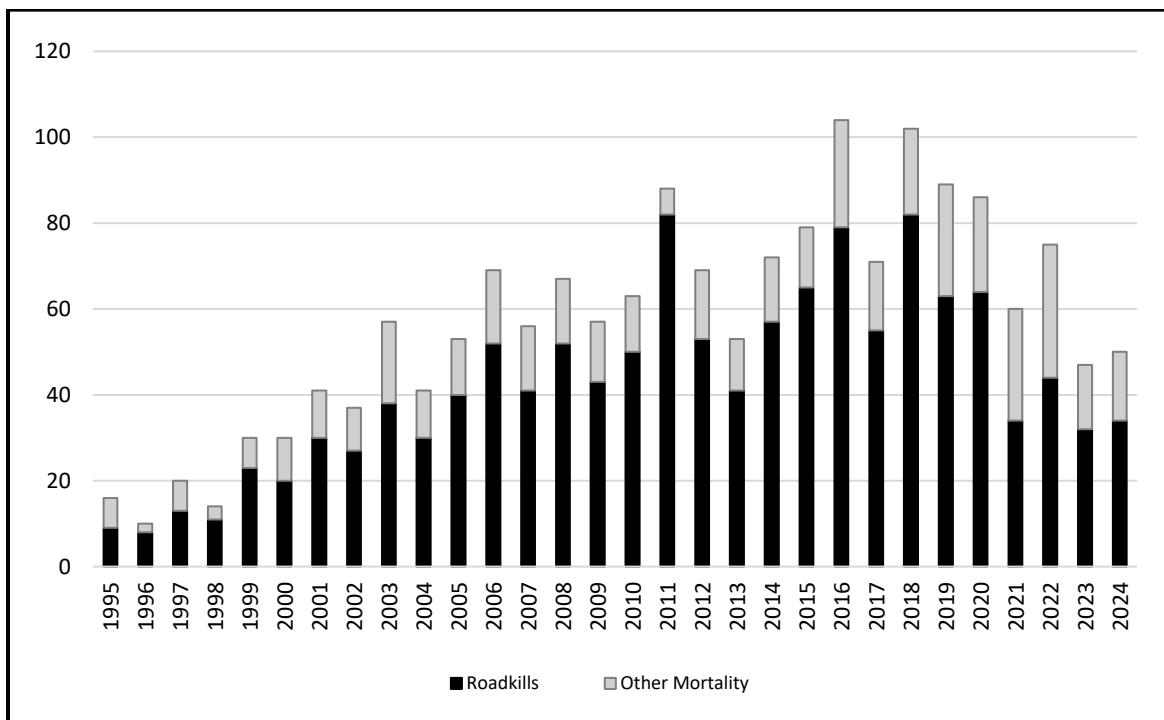
Black bears are predominantly located in Maryland's four western counties (Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington). However, the population continues to expand, and bear sightings east of the occupied range are not uncommon. While most of these reported sightings are young bears that are dispersing, there have been several reports of sows with cubs outside of the western counties. As the bear population expands and occupies additional counties, the department will adjust management practices accordingly.

The DNR Bear Project manages black bears using a mix of lethal and non-lethal techniques under guidance of a bear management plan. Along with the annual bear hunt in the four western counties, the department conducts extensive public outreach about living with black bears and uses non-lethal aversion techniques for problematic bears whenever possible. Agricultural damage permits are also available for farmers experiencing crop damage from bears. These permits allow farmers suffering bear damage to lethally remove one bear from the affected property annually.

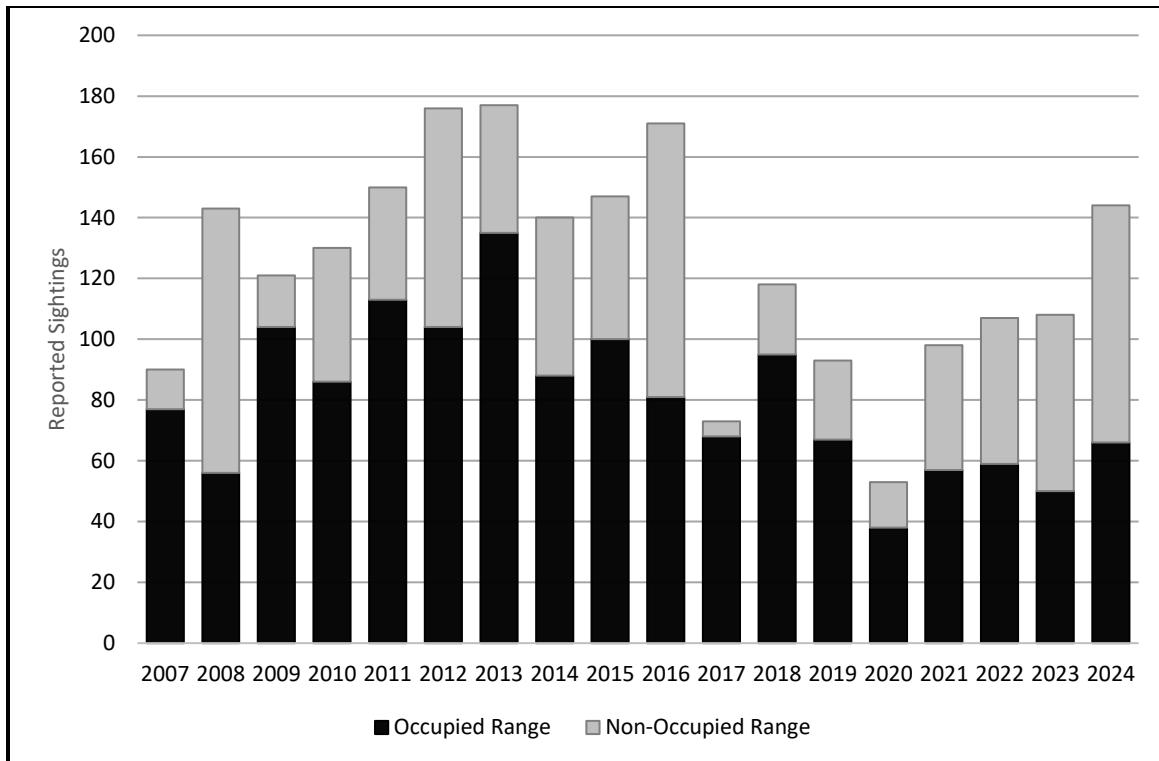
The Bear Project uses multiple methods to monitor Maryland's bear population status. The population has been periodically directly estimated using DNA mark-recapture techniques. The Department also uses several indices to monitor population trends, including the number of bears killed annually on Maryland roadways and by other non-hunting causes (Figure 2) and sightings reported to the Department (Figure 3). These indices suggest Maryland's bear population remains healthy and is expanding eastward.



*Figure 1*  
*Reported Male and Female Black Bear Harvest,*  
*2015–2016 through 2024–2025*



*Figure 2*  
*Reported Roadkill and Other Non-hunting*  
*Black Bear Mortalities in Maryland, 1995–2024*



*Figure 3*  
*Statewide (Excludes Garrett County) Black Bear Sightings*  
*Within and Outside of the Occupied Black Bear Range*  
*(Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties) From 2007–2024*

