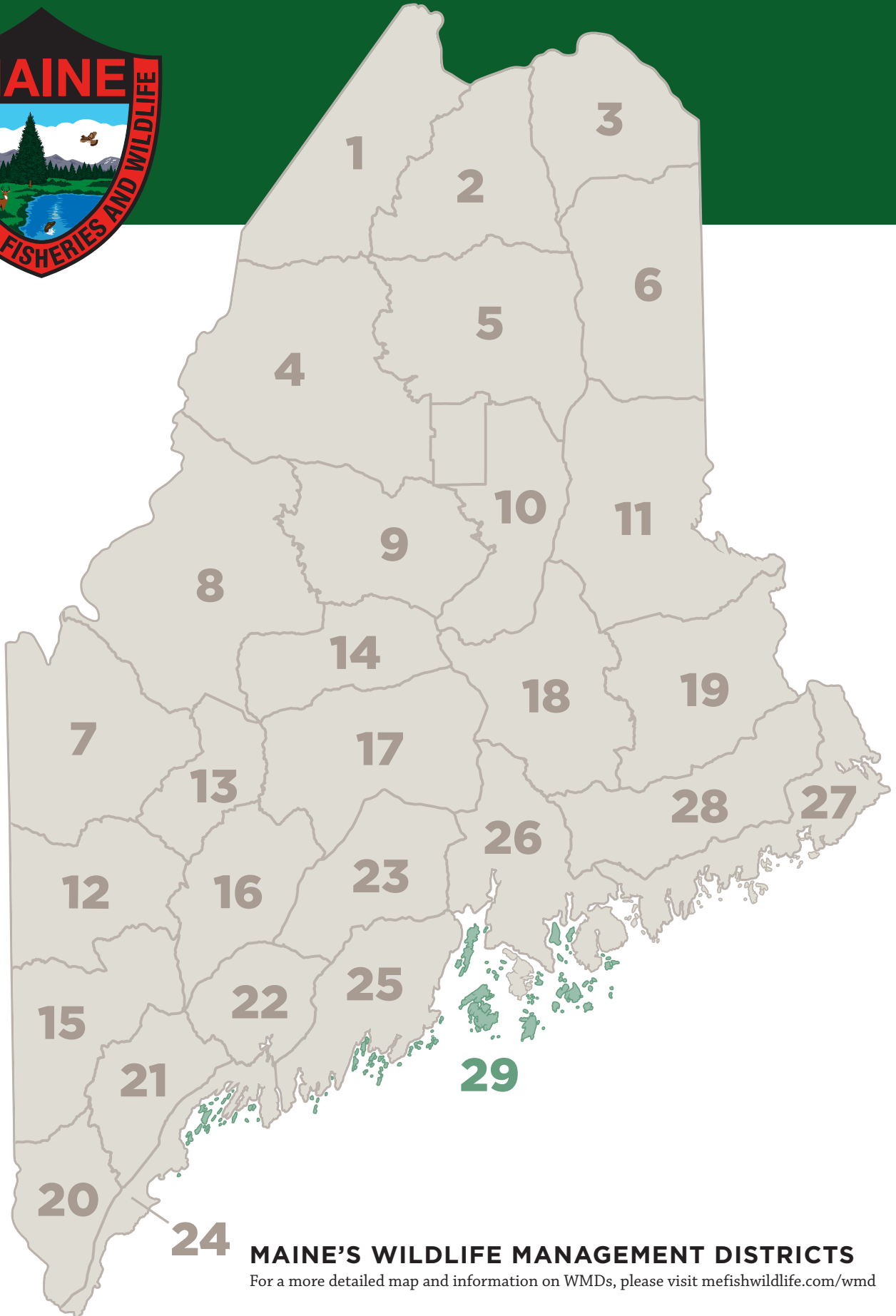


S U M M A R Y O F

# MAINE HUNTING LAWS



2025-2026



## MAINE'S WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

For a more detailed map and information on WMDs, please visit [mefishwildlife.com/wmd](http://mefishwildlife.com/wmd)

# SUMMARY OF HUNTING LAWS

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### DIGITAL VERSION AVAILABLE

Download a PDF copy  
of this book at  
[mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws](http://mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws)  
to easily reference from your  
computer or mobile device.



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# LAWS OF THE MAINE OUTDOORS

Being a responsible user of the Maine outdoors means staying informed of, and complying with, the current laws and rules.

This book, published by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW), is designed to help you quickly find and understand the hunting laws and rules that apply to you. We've also included handy tools to help you stay in compliance, like charts of legal hunting hours already adjusted for sunrise and sunset. Law summaries are available online at [mefishwildlife.com/laws](http://mefishwildlife.com/laws), in print, and through the Department's mobile app, ME Outdoors.

## No Cell Coverage in the Woods? No problem.

Just go to [mefishwildlife.com/laws](http://mefishwildlife.com/laws) and browse by activity. Before you head into the woods, follow these instructions to save an offline law book or quick-reference guide to your mobile device.



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- Go to [mefishwildlife.com/laws](http://mefishwildlife.com/laws) to save a copy and/or print just the pages you need.
- Don't have home access to a computer or the Internet?
1. Consider asking a friend or family member to help.
  2. Visit your local library.



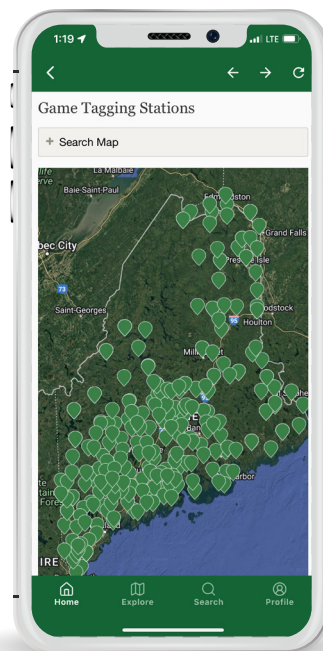
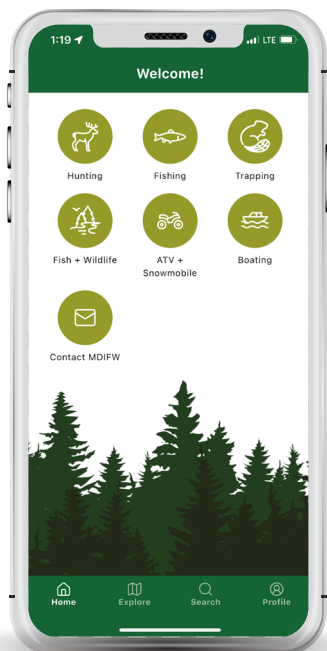
## Get ready for your next Maine adventure with the ME Outdoors mobile app

From purchasing licenses and permits for yourself and others to discovering new places to hunt, fish, trap, and explore, our app makes navigating Maine's woods and waters easier than ever.

### ME Outdoors Mobile App Features

- ✓ Purchase and store licenses, permits, and recreational vehicle registrations for yourself and others—right on your phone.
- ✓ Find places (Wildlife Management Areas) near you to hunt, fish, trap, wildlife watch, and explore.
- ✓ Access detailed maps showing fish stocking locations, water access sites, wildlife management areas, game registration stations, wildlife management districts, expanded archery areas, and more.
- ✓ Stay informed with quick access to Maine's outdoor laws.
- ✓ Enjoy offline capabilities for use even when you're out of service range.
- ✓ And much more!

Available on the Apple App Store and Google Play. Download today by searching "ME Outdoors" in your app store.



# 2025-26 MAINE HUNTING SEASONS

## 2025-26 MAINE HUNTING SEASONS

DEER	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION
Expanded Archery	Designated areas only	September 6, 2025	December 13, 2025	<b>Only 1 antlered deer may be harvested annually</b> <b>Exceptions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For 2025, in WMDs 21-25 and 29 during the firearms and muzzleloader seasons, or statewide during the regular archery and youth hunt seasons, hunters may harvest one deer, either antlered or antlerless, under the authority of their big game hunting license. This deer counts as the hunter's one deer for the year. If a hunter wants to take additional deer, an antlerless deer permit is required.</li> <li>Additional deer may be harvested by hunters possessing antlerless deer permit(s) or during the expanded archery season with appropriate permits.</li> </ul>
Regular Archery	All	October 4, 2025	October 31, 2025	
Youth Deer Hunt	All	October 24, 2025	October 25, 2025	
Maine Resident Only Day*	All	November 1, 2025		
Firearms Season	All	November 3, 2025	November 29, 2025	
Muzzleloader Statewide	All	December 1, 2025	December 6, 2025	
Muzzleloader	12, 13, 15-18, 20-26, 29	December 8, 2025	December 13, 2025	

BEAR	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION
Youth Bear Hunting Day	All	August 23, 2025		<b>2 Bears Per Year</b> 1 by hunting, 1 by trapping
General Hunting Season	All	August 25, 2025	November 29, 2025	
Hunting with Bait <i>Bait can be placed July 26, 2025</i>	All	August 25, 2025	September 20, 2025	
Bear Trapping	All	September 1, 2025	October 31, 2025	
Hunting with Dogs <i>Bear dog training season is July 1 - August 21, 2025</i>	All	September 8, 2025	October 31, 2025	

MOOSE** BY PERMIT ONLY	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION
Antlerless-Only	4A (Adaptive Unit Hunt)	October 20, 2025	October 25, 2025	<b>1 Moose Per Year</b> A person may only harvest one moose per year, regardless of how many permits they may be listed on.  In order to harvest a moose a person must be either the permittee or sub-permittee.
		October 27, 2025	November 1, 2025	
		November 3, 2025	November 8, 2025	
Bull-Only	1- 6, 10, 11, 18, 19, 27, 28	September 22, 2025	September 27, 2025	
Bull-Only	1-15, 17-19, 27, 28	October 13, 2025	October 18, 2025	
Antlerless-Only	1-6, 8	October 27, 2025	November 1, 2025	

Permit application period: April - May of each year.

\*A non-resident who owns 25 or more acres of land in Maine and leaves land open to hunting, holds a valid hunting license, and is not otherwise prohibited by law, may hunt deer on the Resident only day, anywhere in the state. A verification form must be completed and can be located on our website.

FALL WILD TURKEY <i>Archery equipment or shotgun</i>	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	SEASONAL BAG & POSSESSION	
General Hunting Season	15-17, 20-25	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	5 Wild Turkeys*	No more than two wild turkeys (either-sex, any age) may be harvested per permit holder per day, but cannot exceed the WMD bag limit.
	26	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	3 Wild Turkeys*	
	28	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	2 Wild Turkeys*	
	3, 6-8, 10-14, 18, 19, 27 & 29	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	1 Wild Turkey*	
	1, 2, 4, 5, 9	Closed to taking of Wild Turkeys			

Youth Fall Wild Turkey Day September 13, 2025

\*May harvest up to 5 turkeys for the fall season, but an individual WMD bag limit cannot be exceeded. The order in which they are harvested from a WMD does not matter.

SPRING WILD TURKEY <i>Archery equipment or shotgun</i>	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	SEASONAL BAG & POSSESSION	
All Hunters	7 and 9-29	May 4, 2026	June 6, 2026	2 bearded Wild Turkeys**	
	1-6 and 8	May 4, 2026	June 6, 2026	1 bearded Wild Turkey**	
Youth Spring Wild Turkey Day		May 2, 2026		May harvest up to 2 bearded Wild Turkeys from WMDs that have a 2 bird limit.	

\*\*May harvest up to 2 turkeys for the spring season, but an individual WMD bag limit cannot be exceeded. The order in which they are harvested from a WMD does not matter.

UPLAND AND MIGRATORY BIRDS	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION
Ruffed Grouse & Bobwhite Quail	All	September 27, 2025	December 31, 2025	4	8
Pheasant	All	September 27, 2025	December 31, 2025	2	4
Woodcock	All	September 27, 2025	November 18, 2025	3	9
Common Snipe	All	September 1, 2025	January 2, 2026	8	24
Ducks, Geese, Sea Ducks (Scoter, Eider, Long-Tailed Duck)		See pg. 36			
Sora & Virginia Rails (and Gallinules)	All	September 1, 2025	November 20, 2025	25	25
Crows	1-6	August 1, 2025 February 2, 2026	September 20, 2025 April 15, 2026	No daily bag or possession limit	
	7-29	August 1, 2025 January 17, 2026	September 20, 2025 March 31, 2026		

OTHER SPECIES	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION
Gray Squirrel	All	September 27, 2025	January 31, 2026	4	8
Gray Squirrel (Falconry)	All	September 27, 2025	February 28, 2026	4	8
Snowshoe Hare	All	September 27, 2025	March 31, 2026	4	8
	Season on Island of Vinalhaven	September 27, 2025	February 28, 2026		
Bobcat	All	December 1, 2025	February 21, 2026	No Limit	
Fox	All	October 20, 2025	February 28, 2026	No Limit	
Raccoon	All	October 1, 2025	December 31, 2025	No Limit	
Skunk, Opossum	All	October 20, 2025	December 31, 2025	No Limit	
Coyote	All	During daylight hunting hours No Closed Season for Hunting		No Limit	
		Night hunting December 16, 2025 - August 31, 2026			
Woodchuck, Porcupine, Red Squirrel	All	No Closed Season		No Limit	
Spruce Grouse, Lynx, Cottontail Rabbit		No Open Season for Hunting			

**Note:** Except for migratory game birds, there is no hunting season on any species of bird or animal which is not listed above. All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.

# LICENSING INFORMATION

*Read on to learn how Maine law defines the major hunting license types, what they allow, and how to obtain one.*

## WHO NEEDS A LICENSE?

In general, anyone who hunts wild birds or animals in Maine needs a hunting license. The type of license you need depends upon your age, resident status, and other factors, and there are some exceptions. See the charts on pages 8 and 9 for all available hunting licenses and fees.

In addition to a license, most hunting activities also require a permit. See individual species' pages for details.

**Junior and Adult Hunters:** Hunters under age 16 must possess a junior license, and those 16 and up need an adult license.

**Note:** a junior license holder who turns 16 may hunt with that junior license for the remainder of the calendar year.

### Exception for Assisting in a Hunt:

A person may assist in a hunt without a license or permit for that activity, as long as they do not carry hunting equipment (means to kill) or drive deer.

**Exception:** See dog training and hunting permit requirement on page 13.

**Landowner Privilege:** Maine resident landowners and their immediate family members may hunt without a license using firearms, archery or muzzleloader on land they own and reside upon, provided the land exceeds 10 or more contiguous acres in size. The landowner privilege is not available to hunters with revoked or suspended licenses, and does not apply to moose hunting, for which a license is still required. See page 23 for information about landowner privilege for turkey hunting.

## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

To obtain a hunting license in Maine, you generally need to show that you have either (1) held that license in a prior year, or (2) have taken a hunter safety course. License-specific requirements and exceptions follow. Lost your hunter safety card or certificate? Call 207-287-5220 for a replacement card or to find your hunter safety certification number (applies to hunter, archery hunter, and trapping).

**Firearms Licenses:** When applying for an adult firearms hunting license in Maine, you must show proof of residency, and that you have either possessed an adult license to hunt with firearms in any year beginning with 1976, or successfully completed an approved hunter safety course in any U.S. state, province or country. Convicted felons cannot purchase or possess a firearms hunting license in Maine unless they have been issued a permit to carry a firearm.

**Archery Licenses:** An archery license allows a person to hunt with a bow and arrow or crossbow. To obtain an adult archery hunting license, you must show proof of having held an adult license to hunt with bow and arrow in any year after 1979, successful completion of an archery education course, or evidence of previously holding a crossbow permit in Maine prior to 2024. See page 16 for more details.

### Exceptions to Safety Course Requirement:

**Native American Exception:** Native Americans are exempt from the safety course requirement for archery and trapping.

**Military Exception:** An active-duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces who is permanently stationed outside of the U.S. and home on leave is exempt from firearms and archery safety course requirements if they can show proof at time of license application that their home state of record is Maine.

## HOW ARE LICENSES OBTAINED?

**From MDIFW:** Residents and non-residents may obtain hunting licenses from the MDIFW office in Augusta, either in person, online at [mainefishwildlife.com](http://mainefishwildlife.com), or (for non-residents) by mail.

**From Agents:** Licenses can also be purchased from agents throughout the state (sporting good stores, many convenience stores, town clerks, and turnpike service centers). Agents who process applications online for moose and antlerless deer permits may charge a fee of \$2.00.

**Note:** Not all town clerks issue non-resident licenses.

A person buying a trapping license for the first time must purchase it from the MDIFW office in Augusta (in person, by email at [ifw.licensing@maine.gov](mailto:ifw.licensing@maine.gov), or by mail). As of 2021, trapping license renewals including bear permits can be purchased online. Visit [mefishwildlife.com](http://mefishwildlife.com) or call (207) 287-8000 for more information.

It is unlawful to obtain a license or permit through misstatement or misrepresentation, or to possess a license or permit that has been altered or tampered with in any way.

### Guide Required for Big Game Hunters from New Brunswick or Quebec:

Any resident of New Brunswick or Quebec who is not a U.S. Citizen and who wishes to hunt bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey in Maine must be accompanied by a Maine Guide unless they can provide documentation to MDIFW that they own or lease land in Maine, are current on property taxes for that land and keep that land open to hunting. That person's family member including a parent, spouse, daughter or son or a grandchild who is less than 18 years of age also qualifies.

## RESIDENCY DEFINITIONS

**Resident** means a citizen of the United States or a person who is not a citizen of the United States who has been domiciled in the State for one year who:

- if registered to vote, is registered in this State;
- if licensed to drive a motor vehicle, has made application for or possesses a motor vehicle operator's license issued by the State;
- has registered in Maine any motor vehicles they own that are located within the state; and
- is in compliance with the state income tax laws.

A person who is a full-time student at a college or university in the State and has satisfied the requirements above is rebuttably presumed to be a resident in the State during that period.

**Nonresident** means a person who does not fall within the definition of a resident.



## SPECIAL LICENSES

### Special Privilege Licenses

#### Military Currently Stationed in Maine:

Anyone serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and permanently stationed at a military base in Maine (including spouse and dependent children if they permanently reside with that person) may purchase a resident license to hunt, trap, or fish after showing proof of residency.

#### Maine Resident Military Currently Stationed Outside of Maine:

Residents who are on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and permanently stationed outside of Maine may purchase either a hunting, fishing, trapping, or combination hunting and fishing license for the Maine Resident Serviceman combination price upon verification that Maine is their home of record. Their spouse and any dependent children residing with them are also entitled to discounted rates. See page 8.

**Exchange Students:** Any citizen of a foreign nation under age 21 who is living with a family in Maine for a cultural or educational exchange program may purchase a resident license to hunt or fish.

#### Nonresident College Student license:

Allows an applicant between the ages of 18 and 23, inclusive, to obtain a license at the Maine Resident cost. The applicant must be a full-time student, and have completed at least one semester prior to applying for the license. To obtain the license they need to apply through Augusta MDIFW. The student will need to fill out the application, provide us with a current college ID card and last semester's transcripts.

### Complimentary Licenses

**Disabled Veterans:** Maine resident and non-resident veterans (if reciprocal privileges exist in their home state) who have been honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces or the National Guard and have a service-connected disability

## OUTDOOR SAFETY COURSES

Maine law requires all firearms, archery, or trapping license applicants to complete an outdoor safety course, unless they have previously held an adult license. Crossbow safety is now included in the archery course. See pg 16 for more details. For bear trapping education course requirements, please see page 28.

Firearms and archery hunter safety and bear trapping education courses are available in three formats; online, homestudy, or traditional. Homestudy includes the completion of the hunter education workbook, or online course, followed by a skills and exam day. An in-person skills and exam session is required for students ages 10-15 who take

firearms and archery safety courses online.

The in-person classes are sponsored by school districts, sports clubs, civic groups, and others, and are taught statewide by volunteer instructors certified by MDIFW. Pre-registration is typically required.

To begin taking a course online or to register for an in-person course, visit [mefishwildlife.com/safetycourses](http://mefishwildlife.com/safetycourses). For information on becoming a volunteer instructor, contact your local Regional Safety Coordinator or the Recreational Safety Division Office.

**Recreational Safety Division**  
(207) 287-5220

of 50% or more will be issued, upon application, a complimentary license that entitles the holder to all privileges they are qualified to receive including hunting, trapping, archery, and fishing. The license also includes the following permits: bear hunt, bear trap, muzzleloader, migratory waterfowl, pheasant, spring and fall turkey, coyote night hunt, one expanded archery antlerless and one either-sex. Veterans must still apply for antlerless deer and moose permits each year. These licenses may only be obtained from MDIFW's main office in Augusta.

**Native Americans:** The commissioner shall issue a complimentary lifetime hunting, archery, trapping and fishing license, including permits and other permissions needed to hunt, trap and fish, to a person, who is an enrolled member of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, or the Aroostook Band of Mi'kmaq, if the person presents certification from the respective reservation governor or the Aroostook Mi'kmaq Council stating that they are an enrolled member of that federally recognized nation, band or tribe.

### Other Licenses

Available at the Augusta Office only. For detailed information on the following licenses, contact MDIFW at (207) 287-5232.

- **Hide Dealers License:** See prohibition regarding selling of wild animals section on page 11.
- **Seasonal Hide Dealers License:** Required for any place of business that butchers wild animals and commercially sells or barbers the heads or untanned hides of deer or moose that they have butchered.
- **Taxidermist License:** Allows a place of business to lawfully possess fish or wildlife for the sole purpose of preparing and mounting them and to also buy, sell or barter raw, untanned hides or heads of wild animals. This includes skull and bone mounts, commonly referred to as European mounts, reptile and amphibians, and freeze-dried mounts.
- **Guides License:** Required for anyone who receives any form of remuneration for their services in accompanying or assisting others while hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, snowmobiling, ATVing, or camping at a primitive camping area.

## APPRENTICE HUNTER LICENSE

An apprentice hunter license is available to a resident or non-resident 16 years or older who has never held a valid adult hunting license. A person may not obtain an apprentice hunter license more than five times. A person holding this license may not hunt other than in the presence of an apprentice supervisor at least 18 years of age who has held a valid hunting license for the prior three consecutive years. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the holder of an apprentice hunter license follows safe hunting protocol as well as all hunting laws.

### 2025-26 APPRENTICE HUNTER LICENSE AND PERMIT FEES

APPRENTICE LICENSE	FEE
Apprentice Resident Hunting (includes bear and turkey permits)	\$26.00
Apprentice Resident Archery	\$26.00
Apprentice Non-resident Hunting (includes bear & turkey permits)	\$115.00
Apprentice Non-resident Small Game (includes turkey permit)	\$75.00
Apprentice Non-resident Archery	\$75.00

*Fees listed do not include agent fee.*



## 8 LICENSING INFORMATION

### 2025-26 LICENSE AND PERMIT FEES

LICENSE	FEE
MAINE RESIDENTS	Big Game* Hunting (16 and older)
	\$26.00
	Junior Hunting (0 to 15 years old)
	\$8.00
	Small Game* Hunting (16 and older)
	\$15.00
	Combination Hunting & Fishing (16 and older)
	\$43.00 (\$48, effective Dec 1 2025)
	Combination Fishing & Archery (16 and older)
	\$43.00 (\$48, effective Dec 1 2025)
	Serviceman (resident) Combination Hunting & Fishing
	\$3.00
NON- RESIDENTS	Serviceman (dependent) Combination Hunting & Fishing
	\$20.00
	Serviceman (dependent) Hunting
	\$10.00
	Disabled War Veteran (resident)
	FREE
	Archery Hunting (16 and older)
	\$26.00
	Apprentice Hunter License (16 and older)
	See info on page 7
	Super Pack
	\$207.00 (\$ 212, effective Dec 1 2025)
PERMIT AND OTHER FEES	Nonresident Big Game Hunting (16 and older)
	\$115.00
	Combination Hunting & Fishing (16 and older)
	\$150.00 (\$169 effective Dec 1 2025)
	Small Game* Hunting (16 and older)
	\$75.00
	3-Day Small Game* Hunting (valid for 3 consecutive days)
	\$50.00
	Junior Hunting (0 to 15 years)
	\$35.00
	Archery Hunting (16 and older)
	\$75.00
PERMIT AND OTHER FEES	6-Day Archery Hunting (16 and older)
	\$26.00
	Apprentice Hunter License (16 and older)
	See info on page 7
	Bear Permits
	See page 26 & 28
	Coyote Night Hunting Permit
	\$4.00
	Antlerless Deer Permit
	\$12.00
	Deer, Moose, and Bear Registration
	\$5.00
PERMIT AND OTHER FEES	Dog Training and Hunting Permit
	\$12.00
	Duplicate License
	\$2.00
	Expanded Archery Permits
	Antlerless Deer
	\$12.00
	(See page 20)
	Either-Sex
	\$32.00
	Falconry Permit
	\$26.00
PERMIT AND OTHER FEES	Moose Permit
	See page 22
	Muzzleloader Permit
	Maine Resident
	(16 and older)**
	\$13.00
	Non-resident
	\$69.00
	Pheasant Permit (Cumberland and York Counties)
	\$27.00
	State Migratory Waterfowl Permit (16 and older)***
	\$7.50
PERMIT AND OTHER FEES	Outdoor Partners Program
	\$15.00
	Taxidermist, Hide Dealer, and Guide Licenses
	See info on page 7
	Wild Turkey Permit
	\$20.00

Fees listed do not include the agent fee. The commissioner may revoke all licenses and permits issued to any person who fails to pay the fees due and may recover fees associated with insufficient funds.

\*Big game license permits hunting of all legal species, including deer, bear, moose, raccoon, bobcat (additional permits apply for certain species and seasons).

Small game license permits hunting of all legal species except deer, bear, moose, raccoon, and bobcat (additional permits apply for certain species and seasons).

\*\*A resident and non-resident, under 16 years of age may hunt with a muzzleloader if that person holds a valid junior hunting license and is not required to have a muzzleloader permit.

\*\*\*In addition to the State Migratory Waterfowl Permit, a Federal Migratory Waterfowl Permit is required.

## LIFETIME LICENSE FEES

RESIDENTS	FISHING	HUNTING	ARCHERY	TRAPPING	COMBINATION OF ANY TWO*	COMBINATION OF ANY THREE*
5 years & under	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$250	\$400
6-15 years of age	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$500	\$800
65 years of age	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$80	\$110
66 years of age	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$64	\$94
67 years of age	\$30	\$30	\$30	\$30	\$48	\$78
68 years of age	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$32	\$52
69 years of age	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$16	\$26
70 and older	\$8.00— Covers all authorities that you are qualified to receive, see below.					
NON RESIDENTS	FISHING	HUNTING	ARCHERY	TRAPPING	COMBINATION OF ANY TWO*	COMBINATION OF ANY THREE*
5 years & under	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$750	\$1,200
6-15 years of age	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$900	\$1,500	\$2,400

\*Hunting, fishing, archery

These fees are subject to change. Please check with the Department for current fees.

## MAINE LIFETIME LICENSE

### A Maine Tradition and a Gift that Lasts a Lifetime

A lifetime license, purchased for yourself or as a gift, allows the bearer to fish, trap, and/or hunt for their lifetime, regardless of where they live in the future. Revenues generated by these licenses are deposited in a special trust fund that provides long-term financial support for Maine's fish and wildlife.

Lifetime license holders (not complimentary) are required to purchase any additional hunting/fishing permits between the ages of 16 and 69.

### Maine Resident Applicants 70+ Years of Age

For a one-time fee of \$8.00, a senior lifetime license entitles the holder to all privileges they are qualified to receive including hunting, trapping, archery, and fishing. The license also includes the following permits: bear hunt, bear trap, muzzleloader, migratory waterfowl (state permit), pheasant, spring and fall turkey, coyote night hunt, one expanded archery

antlerless and one expanded archery either-sex. Hunters 70 and over do not need to obtain a physical permit, but can tag those species with their lifetime license and must still apply for antlerless deer and moose permits each year. A lifetime license holder must still annually purchase a federal migratory waterfowl permit and the salt water registry must be completed on the DMR website in any year they want to participate in the migratory hunting or saltwater fishing.

**Note:** If you purchased a senior lifetime license before age 70, you do NOT have to pay the \$8.00 fee, and the permits listed in the previous paragraph are included with your lifetime license anytime during the calendar year you turn 70 years of age.

A lifetime license holder who turns 16 years of age is able to hunt with their lifetime license just as an adult big game license holder would, upon showing proof of having completed the required safety course. Contact MDIFW to upgrade to an adult license, and obtain all necessary permits. See page 18 for more information on Junior Hunters. ■

## SUPER PACK LICENSE

This license, available to Maine residents only, permits an eligible person to hunt and fish for all legal game and fish species, subject to all of the laws governing fishing, hunting, and archery. The super pack license includes muzzleloader, migratory waterfowl, pheasant, spring/fall turkey, bear hunting, coyote night hunt, one either-sex expanded archery permit, and three expanded archery antlerless permits. The license includes a dog training and hunting permit which must be obtained through the MDIFW Augusta office via phone, email, mail, or in-person. It also includes one free chance in the moose lottery and entry into a special category in the antlerless deer permit lottery. Person must meet all respective safety course requirements to hunt with individual methods (i.e. firearms, archery, etc.).

## LICENSE & PERMIT REVOCATION INFORMATION

The MDIFW Commissioner may, at their discretion, revoke the hunting privileges of anyone convicted of a hunting violation, or any violation of fish and wildlife laws. This is in addition to any penalties imposed by a court of law. Some violations result in a mandatory revocation (summarized below):

### Minimum Mandatory Ten Year Revocation of Hunting Licenses

If a person is convicted of Assault While Hunting [17A MRSA §208(A)] and the offense occurred in the context of hunting activity, and if, through failure of the hunter to make proper target identification, the offense resulted in the injury or death of another person.

### Minimum Mandatory Five Year Revocation of Hunting Licenses

- Shooting a domestic animal while hunting.
- Conviction of a violation of 17A MRSA while on a hunting or fishing trip or in the pursuit of wild animals, birds or fish and when the wounding or killing of a human being has occurred.
- Conviction of night hunting with night vision equipment or thermal imaging equipment.

### Minimum Mandatory Three Year Revocation of ALL MDIFW Licenses

- Disturbing traps.
- Conviction of any of the violations listed within 12 MRSA § 10902-6 while having a firearm with a noise suppressor device.

### Minimum Mandatory Two Year Revocation of ALL MDIFW Licenses

- Burglary or criminal trespass of a building located within any unorganized township.
- Theft of any equipment used for hunting, fishing and trapping.
- Theft of any animal which has been obtained by hunting or trapping and which was in the possession or control of the person who hunted or trapped the animal.

## DISTURBING TRAPS

It is unlawful to take or disturb any trap or wild animal caught in a trap without permission from the owner of the trap. An individual convicted of disturbing a trap, will lose any license in effect, and be ineligible to purchase any license issued by the Department for 3 years.

## KEEP YOUR LICENSE WITH YOU

You are required to keep an **electronic and/or paper copy** of your hunting license and any necessary permits with you while hunting or transporting wild birds and wild animals and, if requested to do so, must present it for inspection to any warden, law enforcement officer, MDIFW employee, guide or landowner upon whose land you are hunting.

### Minimum Mandatory Two Year Revocation of Hunting Licenses

- Second offense of placing or hunting over bait for deer.
- A second violation of civil trespass with a hunting dog.

### Hunting Offenses with a Minimum One Year License Revocation

- Illegally hunting and/or possessing deer, bear, or moose during closed season.
- Night hunting.
- Discharging a firearm or archery equipment within 100 yards of a building or residential dwelling without permission of the owner, or in the owner's absence, an adult occupant who dwells in that location.
- Illegally buying and/or selling deer, bear, moose or wild turkeys.
- Illegally hunting/possessing wild turkeys including using illegal hunting methods.
- Hunting deer, bear, moose, or wild turkey after having killed one and/or exceeding the bag limit.
- First offense of placing or hunting over bait for deer.
- Destroying or tearing down a property posting sign.
- Hunting over another person's bear bait without written permission from that person.
- Hunting under the influence of liquor or drugs.
- Hunting while license is revoked.
- Civil trespass with a hunting dog.
- Coyote night hunting without a permit.
- Coyote night hunting outside December 16<sup>th</sup>-August 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Littering on WMAs

In addition to penalties provided by Maine's littering laws, a person convicted of littering on a state owned wildlife management area or sanctuary as defined in Title 12 shall surrender their hunting and/or fishing licenses for a period of up to one year.

## Interstate Violations/Suspensions

Maine is a participating member of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, an agreement that recognizes suspension of hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses across member states. This means that illegal activities in one state can affect a person's hunting, fishing, or trapping privileges in all participating states as well. If a person plans to hunt, fish, or trap in another state, and they have a license suspension in Maine, it is their responsibility to contact the other state to see if they can legally hunt, fish, or trap in that state. Similarly, if someone is suspended or revoked in another state and plans to hunt in Maine, it is their responsibility to contact the Maine Warden Service to ensure their privilege to hunt in Maine is not revoked.

### Suspension or Revocation of or Refusal to Issue a License or Permit

Any conviction, adjudication, deferred disposition pursuant to Title 17-A, section 1902, subsection 1 or written filing agreement with the State for a violation of MDIFW Title 12 Part 13 laws is grounds for suspension of any license or permit issued under this Part. Except when provided by law, the commissioner shall determine the suspension period.

### Refusal to Issue License or Permit

If a person is convicted, is adjudicated, enters into a deferred disposition pursuant to Title 17-A, section 1902, subsection 1 or enters into a written filing agreement with the State in violation of MDIFW Title 12 Part 13 laws and is not the holder of a valid license or permit issued under this Part, the commissioner may refuse to issue a related license or permit to that person for up to 5 years following the date of conviction or adjudication, except when the killing or wounding of a human being has occurred, in which case the commissioner may refuse to issue the license or permit for a period of not less than 5 years.

### Failure to Pay Fine or Reinstatement Fee

If a license, permit or registration is suspended pursuant to this section or Title 14, section 3142, the suspension remains in effect until the person pays the fine and the reinstatement fee.



# GENERAL HUNTING LAWS

*To hunt means to pursue, catch, take, kill or harvest wild birds and wild animals (wild by nature, whether or not bred or reared in captivity), including any physical part of that species of mammal or bird.*

**Unlawful Conduct:** The hunting, possession, transporting of any species of wild animal or wild bird, or parts thereof, for which an open hunting season is not specifically provided, and except as provided in the fish and wildlife laws, is unlawful. It is also unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any wild bird except the English or European house sparrow, the European starling and the rock pigeon (a.k.a. rock dove).

## PROHIBITION REGARDING SELLING OF WILD ANIMALS

**Wild Birds:** A person may not sell or possess for sale a wild bird, except for the plumage of lawfully harvested wild birds, and only if that sale does not violate regulations of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

**Wild Turkey:** A person who has lawfully killed and registered a wild turkey may sell the plumage, wing bones, beard, and lower legs of that animal.

**Finished Wildlife Products:** A person may buy, sell, offer for sale, barter or trade legally obtained finished wildlife products, excluding federally protected wild animals and birds.

**Bear, Deer, or Moose:** A person may not buy, sell, offer for sale, or barter a bear, deer, or moose. See exceptions below for bear, deer, or moose parts.

A person may, without a hide dealer's license, buy, sell, offer for sale, barter, or trade naturally shed deer or moose antlers.

A person who has lawfully killed and registered a deer, bear or moose may, without a hide dealer's license, sell:

- The head, hide, antlers\* and feet of that deer.
- The head, hide, antlers\*, feet and bones of that moose.
- The head, hide, teeth, gallbladder,\* fat not attached to the meat, and claws (not attached to the paws) of that bear.

\*Raw antlers, bear fat (not attached to the meat), and bear gallbladders may only be sold (including for money, barter, or trade) to a licensed hide dealer, and they must be tagged or accompanied with documentation containing the name and address of the person who legally killed the animal. Raw antlers and bear gallbladders may be gifted from a person who has lawfully killed and registered the animal and subsequently used for personal use (with appropriate documentation of the person who killed the animal); the recipient of the gifted parts must have a hide dealer's license in order to offer for sale, trade, or barter, and the sale must be to another licensed hide dealer.

**You Need a Hide Dealer's License To:** Commercially buy, sell, barter, or trade any raw, untanned animal hides (including fur-bearing animals) or parts of wild animals or birds not prohibited above.

Any parts bought or sold may not be attached to wild animal or wild bird parts that are prohibited from being sold.

Contact MDIFW if you are interested in becoming a Hide Dealer or you are looking for a list of dealers in the state at (207) 287-8000.

## POSSESSION OF GIFT BEAR, DEER, MOOSE, OR WILD TURKEY

A person may not accept as a gift any part of a bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey unless that animal, or part thereof, is plainly labeled with the name and address of the person who registered it and the year it was registered.

## NIGHT HUNTING

Except as otherwise provided, wild birds and wild animals may not be hunted from ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise the following day.

**Exceptions:** migratory game bird (see page 40), raccoon and coyote (see page 24).

## PLACEMENT OF BAIT

As used in this section, "bait" means an animal, plant, or part thereof used to attract wild animals for the purpose of hunting.

### Species-specific Baiting Laws:

- Baiting or feeding of deer is prohibited from June 1-December 15. See page 21 for more information.
- Baiting and feeding moose and turkey is prohibited from September 1 to December 15.

- Baiting and feeding turkey is prohibited during the spring wild turkey season.
- Further restrictions apply to bear baiting, see page 26.

### A Person Placing Bait for Hunting Purposes Must:

- Obtain oral or written permission from the landowner or landowner's agent.
- Plainly label the bait with a 2-inch by 4-inch tag containing the name and address of the baiter.
- Clean up the bait site immediately upon landowner request; or if not requested, within 20 days of the last day the site is hunted.

### A Person May NOT:

- Hunt over another person's bait site without the baiter's permission.
- Place any medicinal, poisonous, or stupefying substance to entice any animal.

## SUNDAY HUNTING IS ILLEGAL IN MAINE

### TARGET IDENTIFICATION WHILE HUNTING

#### (Summary of 12 MRSA §11222)

A hunter may not shoot at a target without at that point in time being certain that the target is the wild animal or wild bird sought.

A reasonable and prudent hunter:

- Risks losing legitimate prey so as not to risk destruction of human life.
- Neither disregards, nor fails to be aware of, the risk of causing the death of another human being as a consequence of misidentification.
- Never bases identification upon sound alone, or even upon sound combined with what appears to be an appendage of the wild animal or wild bird sought.
- Bases identification upon an essentially unobstructed view of the potential target's head and torso.
- Recognizes that sound and sight target-determining factors are affected by a number of other considerations including, but not limited to, the distance to the target, surrounding or intervening terrain and cover, lighting and weather conditions, the hunter's hearing, eyesight, and experience level, and other people nearby.



## MINIMUM SHOOTING DISTANCES

### **Discharge of Firearm Near Dwelling or Building:**

It is unlawful to discharge any firearm or muzzleloader, or cause a projectile to pass as a result of that discharge, within 100 yards (300 feet) of a building without permission from the owner or, in the owner's absence, an adult occupant who dwells in that building. This provision also applies to state-owned boat launches that are posted accordingly. See page 29 for distance requirements when hunting on Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL).

### **Discharge of Archery Equipment Near Dwelling or Building:**

It is unlawful to discharge an arrow or a bolt from archery equipment when on land of another person and within 100 yards of a building on that land without permission of the owner (or in the owner's absence, permission from an adult occupant) of that building or cause an arrow or a bolt from archery equipment to pass across the land of another person and within 100 yards of a building on that land without the permission of the owner (or in the owner's absence, permission from an adult occupant) of that building.

### **Definitions, as Used in This Section:**

Building means any residential, commercial, retail, educational, religious or farm structure that is designed to be occupied by people or domesticated animals or is being used to shelter machines or harvested crops. "Projectile" means a bullet, pellet, shot, shell, ball, arrow, bolt or other object propelled or launched from a firearm or archery equipment.

**Hunting Under the Influence:** It is unlawful to hunt while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs.

### **Possession of Hunting Equipment on Sunday:**

Possession of hunting equipment in the fields and forests or on the waters or ice of this state on Sunday is prima facie evidence of a violation of Sunday hunting law, unless the equipment is securely wrapped in a complete cover, fastened in a case, or carried in at least two separate pieces in such a way that it cannot be fired without the pieces being joined together (for the purpose of this paragraph, a firearm clip, magazine, or cylinder is not considered a "piece").

Archery equipment must be kept in a case or cover if broadheads or field points are kept attached to the arrows or bolts.

**Exceptions:** A person may possess hunting equipment on Sunday for legitimate activities such as target practice, sighting in

rifles, etc., or for persons carrying handguns as prescribed by Title 25 subsection 2001-A.

**Airborne Hunting:** A person on the ground or airborne may not use aircraft (including drones & remote-controlled aircraft) to aid or assist in hunting deer, bear, or moose.

### **Shooting from a Motor Vehicle or Motorboat or Possessing a Loaded Firearm or Archery Equipment in or on a Motor Vehicle:**

It is unlawful to shoot while in or on a motor vehicle, motorboat, snowmobile or ATV or have a loaded firearm or archery equipment while in or on a motor vehicle, trailer, or other type of vehicle being hauled by a motor vehicle except as specifically allowed.

#### **Exemptions**

- A holder of a valid Maine concealed weapon permit may carry a loaded pistol or revolver in a motor vehicle as prescribed by Title 25 subsection 2001A.
- Persons who are at least 21 years of age, or are at least 18 years of age and a member or honorably discharged veteran of the armed forces or National Guard, may carry a loaded pistol or revolver in or on a motor vehicle if they are not otherwise prohibited from carrying a firearm. Upon contact with a law enforcement officer, a person carrying a concealed handgun without a permit must notify the officer immediately.
- Paraplegics and leg amputees may shoot from a motor vehicle that is not in motion.
- Migratory waterfowl may be hunted from a motorboat in accordance with federal regulation.
- While hunting, a person who is not in or on a vehicle may rest a loaded firearm or archery equipment that is under the person's control on the vehicle to shoot only when the vehicle is not in motion and the engine of the vehicle is not running.
- A person may shoot from a motorboat if that boat is not being propelled by the motor and forward momentum of the boat has stopped. However, the wanton waste law allows you to shoot crippled waterfowl from a motorboat under power on coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams lying seaward of the first upstream bridge.
- A person who is hunting and is on but not within an enclosed area or passenger compartment of an ATV or snowmobile may shoot a firearm or archery equipment or rest a loaded firearm or archery equipment that is under the person's control on the ATV or snowmobile to shoot only when the vehicle is not in motion and the engine is off.

- While target shooting, not hunting, a person who is on but not within an enclosed area or passenger compartment of a vehicle may shoot a firearm or archery equipment or rest a loaded firearm or archery equipment that is under their control on the vehicle to shoot only when the vehicle isn't in motion and the engine is off.

**Note:** A loaded magazine may be carried in a motor vehicle, but it must not be inserted in, or attached to a firearm; a crossbow may be carried as long it is not cocked and armed; a muzzleloader is considered to be loaded only if charged with powder, projectile and a primed ignition device or mechanism.

### **Shooting From or Over a Public Paved Way:**

A person may not shoot or discharge any firearm or archery equipment at any wild animal or bird from any public paved way (any road treated with bituminous or concrete material), from within 10 feet of the edge of its pavement, or from the right-of-way of any controlled access highway.

**Shooting of Domestic Animals:** It is unlawful for any person, while hunting to negligently, carelessly, or willfully shoot and wound or kill any domestic animal or bird.

**Firearms on School Property:** Possession of a firearm on public school property or discharging one within 500 feet of school property, except as used in supervised educational programs or by law enforcement officials, is illegal.

### **Harassment of Lawful Hunter or Trapper:**

It is unlawful for any person to willfully interfere with the lawful hunting or trapping of any wild animal or wild bird, including the willful disturbance of wild animals or wild birds with intent to interfere with their lawful taking.

**Disposal of Remains:** A person may not dispose of a carcass, waste parts or remains of a wild animal, except as a result of normal field dressing of a lawfully harvested wild animal or the lawful use of waste parts or remains of a wild animal as bait.

The Department recommends the disposal of any entrails by deep burial. Disposal of dead animals or animal parts is illegal in dumps and landfills. A person may not dispose of the parts not presented for registration where they are visible to a person traveling on a public or private way.



## HUNTING WITH DOGS AND DOG TRAINING

### *Hunting Bear, Bobcat, Coyote, Raccoon, and Fox with Dogs*

Anyone 16 years of age or older who is using a dog to hunt for bear, coyote, fox, bobcat, or raccoon; or train for bear, fox, and raccoon must possess a Dog Training and Hunting permit.

**Exception:** A person who is training or hunting with a dog under the supervision of and in the presence of a registered Maine hunting guide who has a valid Dog Training and Hunting Permit is exempt from possessing the permit.

Any dog engaged in the above activities must have a functioning tracking collar which allows the handler to track the dog's location at all times such as a GPS or VHF tracking device. The dog must also have a collar that legibly provides the name, telephone number, and address of the dog's owner.

### *A person is in violation of civil trespass with a hunting dog if:*

- They turn a hunting dog loose onto posted property;
- They turn a hunting dog loose onto property where the landowner has communicated to the dog handler that they do not want hunting dogs on their property; or
- A hunting dog enters property upon which a hunting dog has been previously found and a law enforcement officer has warned any handler of the hunting dog (within the past 365 days) that hunting dogs are not permitted on the property.

A person or persons may not use more than six dogs at any one time to hunt bear, bobcat, coyote, raccoon, and fox.

A person may not use a dog to hunt during the period from ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise, except for raccoon (see raccoon hunting page 24).

For more information on hunting bears with dogs, see page 27.

A person with a suspended or revoked hunting license may not train dogs.

### *Dog Training Season*

- From July 1 through the following March 31, including Sundays, dogs may be trained on fox, gray and red squirrels, snowshoe hare, and raccoons. During such training, it is unlawful to use or possess a firearm, other than a pistol or a shotgun loaded with blank ammunition, except during the applicable open hunting seasons on these species.
- Dogs may be used to hunt snowshoe hares during the firearm season on deer.
- Sporting dogs may be trained on wild birds (not including wild turkey) at any time. The commissioner may authorize with a permit the use of firearms during such training to shoot and kill wild birds propagated or legally acquired by the permittee and possessed in accordance with the laws pertaining to breeders', licenses.
- Residents may train up to six dogs on bear during the bear dog training season, see bear hunting page for dates. Exceptions; in portions of Washington and Hancock counties that are situated south of Route 9, landowner permission is required to train dogs on land used for wild blueberry production. Nonresidents, including nonresident Maine Guides, are not eligible to train dogs on bear in Maine.
- A person must possess a valid hunting license to engage in all dog training activities, except Sunday or when training on pen-raised birds.

ities, except Sunday or when training on pen-raised birds.

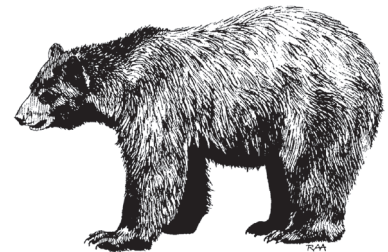
- Propagation permits for domesticated fowl are no longer required to possess or use them for dog training purposes.

### *Leashed Dog Tracking License*

A license is available which allows the tracking of wounded deer, moose, and bear with dogs. The fee for this license is \$81 for 3 years and is in addition to a one-time application fee of \$25. A person who holds a valid license may charge a fee for dog tracking services without having to hold a guide's license, as long as that is the only service provided. Find the application form at [mefishwildlife.com/forms](http://mefishwildlife.com/forms).

## NOTICE TO DOG OWNERS

It is unlawful to allow any dog to run at large at any time, except when used for hunting. "AT LARGE" means off the premises of the owner and not under the control of any person by means of personal presence or attention. It is unlawful to allow any dog to chase, wound, or kill a deer or moose at any time or any other wild animal in closed season.



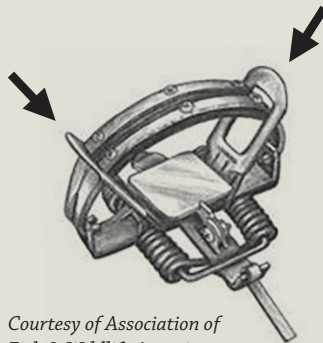
## RELEASING DOGS FROM TRAPS

A dog's reaction to being caught in a foothold trap can vary from being calm to frightened, but upon being released, they do not normally sustain injury. Foothold traps are designed to hold an animal by the foot. The most common type of foothold trap used in Maine is shown here. If your dog gets caught in one of them, follow these steps:

**Stay Calm and Get Help:** If available, get a second person to assist you.

**Protect Yourself:** Some dogs may attempt to bite, especially as the trap is removed from their foot. Protect

yourself by securing the dog's muzzle using a jacket or vest, or by placing a barrier between you and the dog.



*Courtesy of Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies*

**Open the Trap:** If possible, pull the trap chain tight from the anchor point and put the trap flat on the ground. To open the trap, push down using your hands or feet on the levers located at either end of the jaws (see arrows in the diagram). This will release tension on the jaws and allow you to remove the dog's foot.

### **Respect the Trapper, and Obey the**

**Law:** It is unlawful to take or destroy a trap without permission from the owner.

**Prevent Future Incidents:** Trappers commonly use lures and urine to attract furbearers such as foxes and coyotes. You can train your dog to avoid trap locations by utilizing these scents in mock trap sets.

## TAGGING, TRANSPORTATION & REGISTRATION

### TAGGING REQUIREMENTS

Prior to presenting a bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey for registration, a person may not possess or leave that animal in the field or forest unless they have securely attached a plainly visible tag to the animal with their name, address, and license number on the tag. For information on tagging a bobcat, see page 24.

**Transporting Harvested Animals:** A person may not transport a harvested wild animal or bird that they do not lawfully possess, nor may they present for registration, or allow to be registered in their name, any bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey that they did not lawfully kill. Prior to registration, any harvested bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey in transit must be open to view, meaning that the animal is not concealed and can be readily observed in whole or in part from outside of the vehicle or trailer transporting it. Once an animal or bird has been registered, it may be transported by another person.

**Registration Requirements:** A person who kills a bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey must:

1. Remain with the animal until it is registered, (with some exceptions – see Time Limits for Registering section).
2. Present the animal for registration in that person's name at the first open registration station for that animal on their route. Wild turkey may be self-registered online and a copy of the registration seal number must be kept.
3. Leave the registration seal attached until the animal is processed and packaged for consumption.
4. Pay a fee of \$5.00 to register a bear, deer or moose (of which \$2 is retained by the agent and \$2 of the deer registration is dedicated to a fund that can be used for deer habitat enhancement and to assist landowners with deer conflicts) or \$2.00 to register a wild turkey, all of which is retained by the agent. There is no fee to self-register a turkey online.

### TIME LIMITS FOR REGISTERING

A person may not keep an unregistered bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey for more than 18 hours after the animal was

harvested. This does not apply to an animal that is kept in an official registration station for the animal or at the office of a game warden. A person may exceed the 18-hour limit under special circumstances, but that person must still notify a game warden within 18 hours.

A person on a hunting trip in an unorganized township and staying at a temporary place of lodging may keep an unregistered harvested animal at the temporary place of lodging for no more than 7 days or until that person leaves the woods, whichever comes first.

A person may not possess a bear, deer, moose, or wild turkey that has not been legally registered, except as otherwise provided in the statutes regarding nuisance animals or animals causing damage. Bobcats killed by hunting must be tagged by a MDIFW employee within 10 calendar days of the time they were harvested, and the hunter must submit a labeled tooth and the tissue at the time of registration. All fox taken by hunting must be tagged within 10 calendar days after the fox hunting season closes. See page 24.

### CONDITION OF ANIMAL PRESENTED FOR REGISTRATION

Prior to registration, bear, deer, and moose may be dismembered for ease of transportation, all edible meat, the head and evidence of sex must be presented for registration (for deer and moose the head can be the evidence of sex). The viscera, hide, lower legs and rib cage, including the ribs, spine and pelvis, are not required to be presented for registration but must be disposed of where they are not visible to a person traveling on a public or private way.

Wild turkey must be presented for registration in its entirety, including evidence of sex except that the viscera may be removed.

**Bear:** Hunters and trappers are required to remove a premolar tooth from the bear they harvest and provide the tooth when they register their bear (instructions available at registration and online). Hunters will be notified of the age of the bear they harvested on the Bear Hunting page of the MDIFW website prior to the start of the next bear hunting season (late August).

**Collared or Tagged Animals:** All radio transmitters must be submitted and all tagged or collared animals must be reported to MDIFW. Hunters can keep any leg bands or wing tags as long as they have reported them to MDIFW. ■

### REPORTING ACCIDENTS & AIDING VICTIMS

Any person who knows or has reason to believe that they have inflicted injury to another person by the use of a firearm or archery equipment is required to make themselves known to the victim and render such first aid and assistance as they are capable of under the circumstances. The incident must be reported by the quickest means, to a game warden or other law enforcement officer.

## CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES

### PFAS

Because of possible contamination with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), MDIFW, Maine Center for Disease Control (MECDC), and Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP) have issued consumption advisories for deer and turkey harvested in certain parts of the state. Learn more at [mefishwildlife.com/pfas](http://mefishwildlife.com/pfas).

### Heavy Metals

Because of possible contamination with the heavy metal cadmium, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) and Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (MECDC) recommend that the liver and kidneys of moose not be eaten, and deer liver consumption be limited to 0.8 pounds in one sitting and 1 to 1 1/3 pounds per week.

Because of possible contamination with mercury, MDIFW has issued a consumption advisory for waterfowl harvested in parts of the lower Penobscot River. Learn more at [mefishwildlife.com/advisory](http://mefishwildlife.com/advisory).

# LAWS PERTAINING TO HUNTING EQUIPMENT

## GENERAL LAWS

Wild animals and wild birds may be hunted only by the use of rifles, handguns, shotguns (not larger than 10-gauge), muzzle-loader, archery equipment, or falconry.

Deer and moose decoys are legal, as are laser sights (red dots or beam) for firearms, crossbows, and bows.

Electronic calling devices are legal except for migratory game birds.

### Illegal Devices:

- It is unlawful to hunt with the use of (or sell or offer for sale for the purpose of hunting) a set gun, or any medicinal, poisonous or stupefying substance (except rodenticide for orchard mouse control and gas cartridges for woodchuck control).
- Drawlocks and set bows are illegal unless otherwise permitted for disabled hunters.
- Crossbows cannot be used to hunt deer during the muzzleloader season.

**Exception:** Use of crossbows in expanded archery areas during the expanded archery season is permissible for any hunter who has an archery license and expanded archery permit(s).

**Illegal Use of Lights:** From September 1 to December 15, it is unlawful to use artificial lights from ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise to illuminate, jack, locate, attempt to locate or show up wild birds or animals, except raccoons, which may be hunted at night with flashlights during the open season (see General Hunting Provisions for details). An exception to this may be made for agents appointed by the commissioner to hunt coyotes at night during this period under policies established by MDIFW.

## MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES

Several Maine cities and towns have adopted local ordinances that restrict or prohibit the discharge of certain projectiles (e.g., arrows, bullets, bolts).

Prior to hunting near densely populated communities, hunters should check with local authorities regarding such ordinances. Towns may regulate the discharge of firearms as provided by Title 30-A; however, they cannot regulate or charge fees to hunt, fish or trap.

## FIREARMS LAWS

### It is Unlawful to Hunt with, or Possess for Hunting, any:

- Automatic firearm (a firearm that continues to fire as long as the trigger is held back).
- Auto-loading firearm (a firearm that reloads itself after each shot and requires a separate trigger pull for each shot) with a magazine capacity of more than 5 cartridges (plus 1 in the chamber for a total of 6), unless the magazine has been permanently altered to contain not more than 5 cartridges.

**Note:** This provision does not apply to .22 caliber rimfire or smaller caliber guns or auto-loading pistols with barrel lengths of less than 8 inches.

### 3-shell Max for Migratory Game Birds:

It is unlawful to hunt any migratory game bird with a shotgun capable of holding more than 3 shells unless the magazine has been cut off, altered, or plugged with a one-piece filler (incapable of removal without disassembling the gun), so as to reduce the capacity of the gun to not more than 3 shells in the magazine and chamber combined.

**Silencers:** While a person no longer needs a permit from Warden Service to hunt with a suppressor device, anyone who wishes to possess a firearm fitted or contrived with any device for deadening the sound of the explosion must still obtain the appropriate tax stamp from The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

**Bullet Types:** It is unlawful to hunt with cartridges that contain tracer bullets or explosive bullets.

### Cartridges:

- Firearms with .17 or .22 caliber rimfire cartridges may not be used for deer, moose, or bear hunting, except that .22 magnum can be used for deer hunting.
- Shotguns using shot loads cannot be used to hunt bear or moose.

**Archery Season Provisions:** No firearms of any kind may be carried while hunting-deer with archery equipment during the regular archery season on deer, except a person may carry a handgun in accordance with Title 25 section 2001-A; but it cannot be used to shoot a deer or dispatch a wounded deer.

### Loaded Firearms in Motor Vehicles:

It is unlawful to have a loaded firearm or

## HARASSMENT OF HUNTERS

It is illegal for any person to willfully interfere with the lawful hunting of any wild animal or wild bird, including the willful disturbance of wild animals or wild birds with intent to interfere with their lawful taking. **Note:** This law does not limit the ownership, use, access, or control of property rights otherwise provided by law.

archery equipment in or on a motor vehicle (including trailer, ATV, aircraft, snowmobile, or railway car), unless otherwise specified. See page 12 for more information.

A loaded magazine may be carried in a motor vehicle, but it must not be inserted in or attached to a firearm.

Firearms may be transported in a motor vehicle without a concealed firearms permit provided they are (1) unloaded and in plain view, or (2) are unloaded and placed in a remote secure area (such as a locked trunk) away from the control of the occupants of the motor vehicle.

For the purpose of this law, a muzzleloader is considered to be loaded only if charged with powder, a projectile, and a primed ignition device or mechanism. A crossbow is considered loaded if cocked and armed. Exceptions apply when carrying a concealed pistol or revolver.

**Carrying Concealed Firearms:** A person may carry a concealed handgun without a permit and may have that concealed, loaded pistol or revolver in, or on, a motor vehicle or trailer if:

- The person is 21 years of age or older and is not otherwise prohibited from possessing a firearm or;
- The person is 18 years of age or older and under 21 years of age and on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard or is an honorably discharged veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard and is not otherwise prohibited from carrying a firearm.

Upon contact with a law enforcement officer, a person carrying a concealed handgun without a permit is required to notify them immediately.



## ARCHERY INFORMATION

Changes to the bowhunting license and crossbow permit occurred in 2024. A bowhunting license is now an archery license. A crossbow permit is no longer required as hunting with a bow and arrow AND crossbow are included with an archery license.

Crossbow use is NO longer permissible during the muzzleloader season.

**Exceptions:** Use of crossbows in expanded archery areas during the expanded archery season is permissible for any hunter who has an archery license and expanded archery permit(s).

**Seasons:** The regular archery license allows archery equipment to be used to hunt all legal game throughout the year, except for deer during the muzzleloader season.

**Archery Equipment:** Refers to bow and arrow and crossbow.

**Licenses:** You must have an archery license to hunt with archery equipment.

- Junior hunters who hold a valid Junior Hunting License are allowed to hunt with archery equipment when accompanied by a junior hunter supervisor. See page 18.
- Laws that allow you to hunt without a license on your own land under certain conditions apply to archery hunting. See page 6.

**Permits:** In addition to an archery license, hunters participating in the expanded archery deer season (designated areas only) must also purchase permits. Multiple antlerless deer permits may be purchased for \$12 each, and an either-sex permit for the expanded archery deer season is \$32.

**Exceptions:** Complimentary archery license holders (Disabled Veterans, Native Americans) and junior hunting license holders may hunt with those licenses during the expanded archery deer season.

**Obtaining an Archery License:** Individuals applying for the archery hunting license must show proof of having successfully completed an approved archery hunter education course (which now includes crossbow safety) or of having held a Maine adult archery license in any year after 1979, or evidence of previously holding a crossbow permit in Maine prior to 2024. When proof or evidence cannot be provided, the applicant may substitute a signed affidavit. Native Americans are exempt from safety course requirements for archery and trapping.

## Archery Hunting Requirements:

- A hunter may carry a handgun while archery hunting, but it may NOT be used to dispatch deer. See page 15 for more information.
- Hunter orange clothing is NOT required when hunting with bow and arrow. See additional information related to hunter orange requirements below.
- All deer killed during the archery seasons must be inspected and registered at the first open deer registration station.
- It is legal to hunt until ½ hour after sunset during both archery deer seasons.

In addition, all other laws pertaining to deer hunting apply to archery hunting.

## Bow and Arrow Equipment Requirements:

### Required Features

- Only hand-held bow and arrow may be used.
- Draw weight must be at least 35 pounds (there is no max). For moose, a minimum draw weight of 45 pounds is required.
- For hunting deer, bear, and moose, arrowheads, including mechanical broadheads when open, must be at least ⅞ inch wide.

### Prohibited Features

- It is unlawful to use a set bow.
- Arrows with explosive or poisonous tips are prohibited.

## Crossbow Equipment Laws:

### Required Features

- Only crossbows with a shoulder-type stock may be used.
- Draw weight must be at least 100 pounds (there is no max).
- For hunting deer, bear and moose, arrowheads, including mechanical broadheads when open, must be at least ⅞ inch wide.
- Crossbows must be equipped with a mechanical trigger safety device in working condition.

### Prohibited Features

- Hand-held pistol-type crossbows are prohibited.
- Arrows with explosive or poisonous tips are prohibited.

### Optional, but Allowed Features

- Crossbows equipped with scopes or sights may be used.

## Native American License & Hunting:

Information see pages 6, 7 & 16. ■



## TRAIL/GAME CAMERAS LAW

People using trail and game cameras may not place a camera upon another person's private land without written permission. All cameras must be labeled with the owner's name and contact information.

## OBSERVATION STANDS

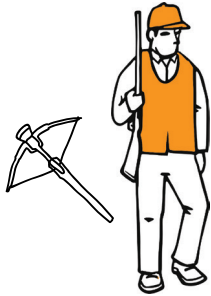
It is unlawful to insert any metallic or ceramic object into a tree on another person's land for the purpose of erecting a ladder or observation stand, unless you have permission from the landowner. You must obtain verbal or written permission of the landowner (or representative) to erect or use a portable or permanent ladder or observation stand, and the ladder or observation stand must be plainly labeled with a 2-inch by 4-inch tag with the names and addresses of everyone the landowner has authorized to use it.

**Exception:** Portable ladders or observation stands used on land within the jurisdiction of the Maine Land Use Planning Commission and attended by the person who owns the ladder or observation stand do not require landowner permission or labeling, but permanent ones do.

**Note:** For more information on private property use, see page 31. For more information on the use of observation stands on public lands, please see page 29. Observation stands do not include portable blinds utilized at ground level that remain in the hunter's physical possession and must not be left when not in use.

## HUNTER ORANGE CLOTHING REQUIREMENT

Hunter orange is defined as a daylight fluorescent orange color with a dominant wave length between 595 and 605 nanometers, excitation purity of at least 85% and luminance factor of at least 40%. A decal on an article of clothing that is otherwise solid hunter orange is permissible. Articles of hunter orange clothing must be in good and serviceable condition and visible from all sides.



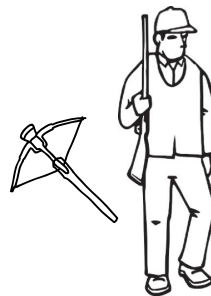
**CROSSBOW  
AND FIREARMS**

### TWO ARTICLES OF ORANGE REQUIRED

#### Firearms and Muzzleloader Seasons on Deer

When hunting any species with a firearm, muzzleloader, or crossbow during the firearms or muzzleloader season for deer, including deer hunting Youth Days. One article must be a solid-colored hunter orange hat; the other must cover a major portion of the torso, such as a jacket, vest, coat or poncho and must be a minimum of 50% hunter orange in color (camouflage orange patterns of at least 50% orange are legal).

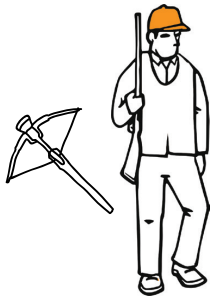
**Example:** When hunting ruffed grouse during the firearms season on deer, two articles of orange are required.



**CROSSBOW  
AND FIREARMS**

### NO ARTICLES OF ORANGE REQUIRED

- When hunting waterfowl as long as the hunter is hunting from a boat, blind, or in conjunction with waterfowl decoys.
- When hunting wild turkey, bear, small game, or furbearers with a firearm or crossbow – unless that WMD is open to moose hunting at that time or during a firearms or muzzleloader season for deer.



**CROSSBOW  
AND FIREARMS**

### ONE ARTICLE OF ORANGE REQUIRED

#### Moose Hunting Season

When hunting any species with a firearm, muzzleloader, or crossbow in a WMD open to moose hunting.

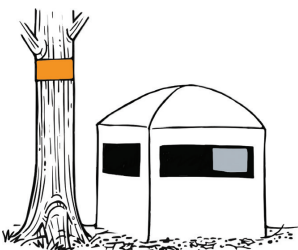
**Example:** When hunting ruffed grouse in a WMD open to moose hunting, one article of orange is required.



**VERTICAL  
BOW**

### BOW AND ARROW HUNTERS

When hunting with bow and arrow, hunter orange is not required. The Department recommends bow and arrow hunters wear at least one article of orange when navigating through the landscape.



### SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Although not required, the Department recommends always wearing at least one article of orange. Maine forests can be very thick, and orange helps alert other hunters, including those in your hunting party, to your location.
- Turkey hunters or those hunting from a blind should consider marking their location with hunter orange.



# Junior Hunters

## JUNIOR HUNTING LICENSES

All children that have not yet reached their 16th birthday must have a junior hunting license to hunt. There is no minimum age to purchase a junior hunting license.

After a junior hunter's 16th birthday, they may continue to hunt on their junior license for the remainder of the calendar year with or without taking the hunter safety course. If the junior hunter does take the hunter safety course, it must be appropriate for the method in which they intend to hunt with. He or she may then hunt without supervision and keep all the junior hunter permits but must carry their valid junior hunting license as well as their hunter safety card. The junior hunter is not required to upgrade to the adult license until the calendar year they turn 17 but they may upgrade to the adult license in their 16th year. Upgrading while they are 16 years of age will require them to purchase any necessary permits.

Junior license holders can hunt with a firearm or archery equipment. The license includes hunting permits for muzzleloader, spring and fall turkey, bear, coyote night hunt, pheasant, state migratory waterfowl, one expanded archery antlerless deer permit, and one expanded archery either-sex permit.

**Note:** Junior hunters do not need to obtain a physical permit for the permits listed

above as they are included in the license.

**Note:** A lifetime license purchased for a hunter under 16 years of age is considered a junior license until upgraded to an adult license which can be done by contacting MDIFW.

## SUPERVISION OF JUNIOR HUNTERS

- Hunters from 10–15 years of age must be in the presence of, and under the effective control of, a junior hunter supervisor.
- Hunters under the age of 10 must be in the presence of, and under the effective control of, a junior hunter supervisor who remains at all times within 20 feet of the hunter.

### A. A “Junior Hunter Supervisor” Means:

1. The parent or guardian of the junior hunter who holds or has held a valid Maine hunting license or successfully completed a hunter safety course.
2. A person 18 years of age or older who:
  - a. Is approved by the parent or guardian of the junior hunter; and
  - b. Holds or has held a valid Maine hunting license or successfully completed a hunter safety course.

### B. “In the Presence of” Means:

In visual and voice contact without the use of visual or audio enhancement devices, including but not limited to binoculars and citizen band radios.

## YOUTH HUNTING DAYS

Junior hunters who hold a valid junior hunting license (including a lifetime license) can participate in special youth hunting days for bear, deer, spring and fall wild turkey, and migratory waterfowl.

If a person is continuing to hunt on a junior hunting license and has turned 16, they may hunt on youth hunting days. If that 16-year-old who is hunting with a junior hunting license has completed their hunter safety course, they still must have adult supervision on the youth hunting days only.

On these days, all laws pertaining to hunting deer, bear, spring and fall wild turkey and waterfowl apply. The accompanying parent, guardian or qualified adult, shall not possess a firearm, bow and arrow or crossbow, except on youth waterfowl days\*. On youth deer, bear and spring and fall turkey days the parent, guardian or qualified adult may carry a handgun pursuant to Title 25 MRSA §§ 2001-A, but the handgun may not be used for the purpose of hunting.

16-year-olds still hunting on valid junior hunting licenses may hunt on youth hunt days without purchasing additional permits, except for migratory waterfowl youth hunt days, which require anyone 16 or older to obtain a valid Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp. ■

## YOUTH HUNTING

SPECIES	YOUTH HUNTING DAY(S)	REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO JUNIOR HUNTERS
Bear	August 23, 2025	A licensed junior hunter may hunt a bear with a firearm or archery equipment during the youth bear hunting day. Use of dogs is prohibited; hunting over bait or still hunting is permitted.
Deer	October 24, 2025 - October 25, 2025	Junior hunters may harvest one antlered deer statewide. Junior hunters may harvest antlerless deer without a permit (in 2025 all WMDs/Subunits allow the harvest of antlerless deer without an antlerless permit) during the Youth Deer Hunt. If a junior hunter harvests a deer during the Youth Deer Hunt, they are prohibited from taking additional deer unless they have antlerless deer permits, or participate in the expanded archery season (in designated areas only) with appropriate archery license and expanded archery permits.
Fall Wild Turkey	September 13, 2025	Junior Hunters may harvest up to two wild turkeys on this day, with a shotgun or archery equipment, but cannot exceed an individual WMD bag limit. If hunting in different WMDs, the order in which they are harvested does not matter.
Spring Wild Turkey	May 2, 2026	Junior Hunters may harvest up to two bearded wild turkeys with a shotgun or archery equipment, but cannot exceed an individual WMD bag limit. See wild turkey, pages 23-24.
Waterfowl	<b>North Zone:</b> September 20, 2025 & December 13, 2025 <b>South Zone:</b> September 20, 2025 & October 18, 2025 <b>Coastal Zone:</b> September 27, 2025 & October 18, 2025	ALL duck species except Harlequins, Barrow's Goldeneye, Moorhens and Gallinules, may be hunted on these days, including geese. For the September 27, October 18 and December 13 youth days, the goose limit is under the Regular Season daily bag limit. On youth waterfowl hunting days, scoters, eiders, and long-tailed ducks may be harvested as part of the 6 bird daily limit on regular ducks. Also on these dates, 2 Black Ducks may be harvested. Must follow regular season bag limits and exceptions.  <i>*The junior hunter supervisor may not carry a firearm, or archery equipment while accompanying a youth hunter on a youth hunt day except when it occurs during the early goose season the accompanying junior hunter supervisor may hunt for geese only.</i>

# Deer Hunting

**Hunting License Authority:** A big game hunting license (firearms or archery) provides a hunter the opportunity to harvest one antlered deer annually. Hunters with an archery license and an expanded archery permit may harvest an additional antlered deer in an expanded archery area.

*Antlerless deer may be harvested in the following situations:*

**Either-Sex Hunting:** For 2025, in WMDs 21-25 and 29 during the firearms and muzzleloader seasons, or statewide during the regular archery and youth hunt seasons, hunters may harvest one deer, either antlered or antlerless, under the authority of their big game hunting license. This deer counts as the hunter's one deer for the year.

**Hunting of Antlerless Deer:** Hunting of antlerless deer (a deer that has no antlers or has antlers less than 3 inches in length measured from the skull) is prohibited except by antlerless deer permit or in areas designated open to either-sex hunting under the authority of a big game hunting license (for 2025, WMDs 21-25 and 29 for firearms and muzzleloader season; statewide for regular archery and youth hunt seasons).

Additional antlerless deer may be taken in the following situations: with an antlerless deer permit(s) during youth hunt, regular archery, firearms, or muzzleloader seasons or with expanded archery antlerless deer permit(s) during the expanded archery season.

## DEER HUNTING PROHIBITIONS

Baiting deer by placing salt, grain, fruit, nuts or other foods or bait known to be attractive to deer, or hunting from an observation stand or blind overlooking such bait, is prohibited from June 1 to December 15. This does not apply to hunting from an observation stand or blind overlooking:

- Standing crops
- Foods that have been left as a result of a natural occurrence or normal agricultural operations
- Bear bait that has been placed at a bear hunting stand or blind in accordance with bear baiting laws

**Illegal Equipment:** Deer may not be hunted with the use of dogs, artificial lights, snares, traps, airbows, set guns or any firearm using .17 or .22 caliber rimfire

cartridges, except that .22 caliber rimfire magnum cartridges are permitted.

**Driving Deer:** A person may not participate in a hunt for deer during which an organized or planned effort is made to drive deer. Four or more persons working together to move deer constitutes such an effort.

**Gift deer:** Gift deer may be possessed if clearly labeled with the name and address of the person who registered the animal, and the year it was registered.

**Buying, Selling, and Bartering Deer:** see page 11.

## AREAS CLOSED TO DEER HUNTING

- Mt. Desert Island in Hancock County;
- Cross and Scotch Islands, located in Washington County;
- The town of Isle au Haut and islands within that town, located in Knox County; and
- Wildlife sanctuaries, with exceptions listed below.

## AREAS OPEN TO DEER HUNTING

*But with these Special Restrictions:*

- **Beauchamp Point Sanctuary** in Camden and Rockport, Knox County, is open to archery hunting for deer during any open hunting season that allows archery equipment to be used to hunt deer.
- **Cranberry Isles** in Hancock County is open to archery hunting for deer only during the archery and firearms seasons on deer and to shotgun hunting during the firearms season on deer.
- **The area within Drake's Island and Wells Sanctuaries, situated in the Town of Wells in the County of York:** shall be open to the hunting of antlerless deer with a hand-held bow and arrow (crossbows are not permitted), by permit only, during a specified period between November 1 and January 30; permits may be issued by the department to licensed archery hunters authorized by a landowner.
- **Islesboro**, Waldo County, is open to deer hunting with bow and arrow only during the archery, expanded archery, or firearms seasons on deer (crossbows are not permitted).
- **Marsh Island in Old Town**, Penobscot County, is open to deer hunting with hand-held bow and arrow only (crossbows are not permitted).
- **Prout's Neck**; Richmond's Island; Cape Elizabeth Sanctuary contains approximately 1,600 acres open to deer hunting,

## HUNTERS FOR THE HUNGRY

A gift of meat from your hunt can help reduce hunger in Maine. Hunters for the Hungry is a program for donating wild game meat to food kitchens, shelters, and charitable organizations statewide.

To find out how you can help call (207) 287-7513 or visit [www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/food-assistance/hunters-for-hungry.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/food-assistance/hunters-for-hungry.shtml)

## BIG BUCK CLUB

Maine has a club for deer hunters called "The Biggest Bucks in Maine Club," which is sponsored by The Maine Sportsman.

To qualify, the minimum dressed weight (without heart, lungs, and liver) must be 200 pounds. Learn more by calling the Maine Sportsman at (207) 622-4242 or visit [mainesportsman.com](http://mainesportsman.com).

with bow and arrow only (crossbows are not permitted), during the open special archery season and the firearms season on deer.

**Note:** Landowner permission required.

- **Southport:** In the town of Southport, Lincoln County, and on all islands within its confines, it is lawful to hunt deer with shotguns and archery equipment only during the firearms season.

Please refer to page 15 for information on municipal ordinances that may prohibit certain hunting methods.



## DEER PERMITS & LICENSES

### Muzzleloader Permit

- Muzzleloader means a firearm that is capable of being loaded only through the muzzle; is ignited by a matchlock, wheel lock, flintlock, or caplock, including an in-line caplock or shotgun or rifle primer mechanism; has a rifled or smooth-bored barrel capable of firing only a single charge; propels a ball, bullet, or charge of shot; and may have any type of sights, including scopes.
- New technology: There are new types of muzzleloaders on the market that allow for a pre-measured amount of factory loaded gun powder that is encapsulated and is not loaded through the muzzle as a traditional muzzleloader would require. The bullet is still loaded through the muzzle. This still meets the definition of a muzzleloader and is legal for hunting during the muzzleloader hunting season.
- A muzzleloader permit, in addition to a valid adult big game hunting license that allows the use of firearms, is required for hunters 16 years of age or older prior to hunting deer during the muzzleloader deer season. The muzzleloader permit is included in the junior hunting license and the senior (age 70+) lifetime license.
- Except as specified, all other laws relating to the taking of deer with firearms shall apply to the taking of deer with muzzleloaders.
- Only muzzleloaders that are .40 caliber or greater and capable of firing only a single charge are legal.

### Expanded Archery Permit

- Restricted to designated areas (contact MDIFW, or visit [mefishwildlife.com/expanded](http://mefishwildlife.com/expanded), for maps of areas).
- Hunting permitted with archery equipment only.

- Hunters who have a valid archery license can purchase multiple expanded archery antlerless deer permits and one expanded archery either-sex permit.
- Antlerless deer may be harvested by hunters during the expanded archery season (Sep-Dec) with expanded archery permits.
- Deer must be legally transported and registered as required for other deer seasons.
- All other archery deer hunting laws apply.
- Junior hunters may hunt during this season with their junior hunting license. The junior hunting license includes one expanded archery either-sex permit. If the hunter wants to harvest additional deer, unlimited expanded archery antlerless deer permits may be purchased.

### Antlerless Deer Permit

- Hunters with an antlerless deer permit(s) and a big game hunting license may harvest an antlerless deer in the designated WMD or subunit, in addition to a deer taken with their big game hunting license.
- For 2025, in WMDs 21-25 and 29 during the firearms and muzzleloader seasons, or statewide during the regular archery and youth hunt seasons, hunters may harvest one deer, either antlered or antlerless, under the authority of their big game hunting license. This deer counts as the hunter's one deer for the year. If a hunter harvests an antlerless deer without an antlerless deer permit, they are prohibited from taking additional deer unless they have an antlerless deer permit(s) or participate in the expanded archery season (designated areas only) with expanded archery permits.
- Junior hunters may harvest antlerless deer without a permit in designated

WMDs (in 2025 all WMDs/Subunits allow the harvest of antlerless deer without an antlerless permit) during the Youth Deer Hunt. If a junior hunter harvests a deer during the Youth Deer Hunt, they are prohibited from taking additional deer unless they have antlerless deer permits or participate in the expanded archery season (designated areas only) with appropriate expanded archery permits or have not yet used their hunting license to take a deer.

- Antlerless deer permits are acquired by lottery and any remaining permits are available for purchase on the MDIFW website. Hunters selected for antlerless deer permits in the antlerless deer permit lottery may claim and pay for their permits. Super pack license holders selected from the special super pack license holder category may claim their permits at no cost. If a super pack license holder is not selected from the special super pack license holder category, the hunter is eligible to receive an antlerless deer permit from the regular antlerless deer permit applicant category, and if selected may claim and pay for their permit.

### Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) Permits

DMAP permits must be used during the regular deer hunting seasons (excluding the expanded archery season), in accordance with all rules and statutes pertaining to the regular deer hunting season during which the permit is used, and used to harvest deer on the property for which they are issued. Each DMAP permit must be used to harvest one additional antlerless deer only. Learn more at [mefishwildlife.com/dmap](http://mefishwildlife.com/dmap). ■

## 2025 DEER SEASONS & BAG LIMITS

SEASON	DATES	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION LIMIT
Expanded Archery (limited area/permit required)	September 6, 2025 - December 13, 2025	<b>Only 1 antlered deer may be harvested annually</b> <b>Exceptions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For 2025, in WMDs 21-25 and 29 during the firearms and muzzleloader seasons, or statewide during the regular archery and youth hunt seasons, hunters may harvest one deer, either antlered or antlerless, under the authority of their big game hunting license. This deer counts as the hunter's one deer for the year. If a hunter wants to take additional deer, an antlerless deer permit is required.</li> <li>• Additional deer may be harvested by hunters possessing antlerless deer permit(s) or during the expanded archery season with appropriate permits.</li> </ul>
Regular Archery	October 4, 2025 - October 31, 2025	
Youth Deer Hunt	October 24, 2025 - October 25, 2025	
Firearms (allows use of archery equipment, firearms, or muzzleloaders)	<b>Maine Residents Only:</b> November 1, 2025 <b>All Hunters:</b> November 3, 2025 - November 29, 2025	
Muzzleloader	<b>Week 1:</b> All Wildlife Management Districts (WMDs) December 1, 2025 - December 6, 2025 <b>Week 2:</b> WMDs 12, 13, 15-18, 20-26, 29 December 8, 2025 - December 13, 2025	

All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.



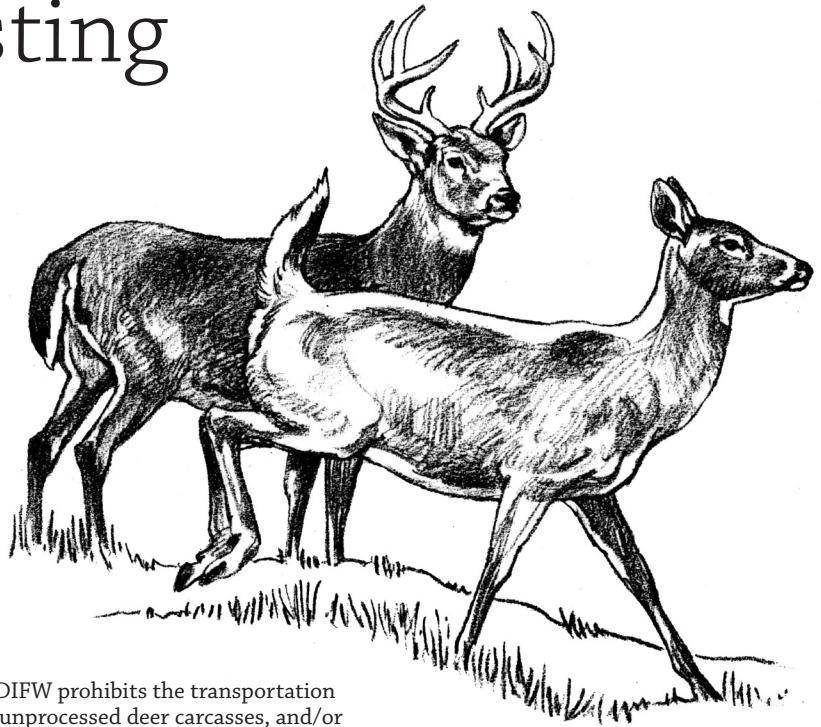
# Chronic Wasting Disease

## WHAT IS CWD?

- CWD is a fatal brain disease of white-tailed deer, mule deer, caribou, moose, and elk. It is similar to mad cow disease which occurs in cattle.
- CWD has been found in free-ranging deer populations in 36 U.S. states and 5 Canadian provinces, including states as close as Pennsylvania and New York.
- CWD has not yet been recorded as being transmissible to people. However, a similar disease does exist in humans.
- CWD can persist in the environment outside of a host for many years.
- CWD has a 100% mortality rate in deer.

## CWD Monitoring and Prevention in Maine

- Maine has actively monitored for CWD each year since 1999, and since that time screened approximately 14,300 wild deer. Thus far, Maine proudly remains CWD free.
- It is illegal for individuals to bring into Maine cervid carcasses or parts, except that the following carcass parts may be imported and possessed: boned-out meat, hardened antlers, skull caps that have been cleaned free of brain and other tissues, capes and hides with no skull attached, teeth, and finished taxidermy mounts.



- MDIFW prohibits the transportation of unprocessed deer carcasses, and/or parts, into Maine from states that are not directly adjacent to our state. This includes carcasses that are being transported through Maine.

**Note:** Cervid carcasses or parts from New Hampshire are exempt from the transportation exemption.

- MDIFW will not transplant deer from other states into Maine.

## MDIFW Recommends that Individuals:

- Contact their regional wildlife biologist or warden if a deer shows poor body condition in addition to signs of disease such as loss of fear of humans, excessive drooling or urination, drooping head, or other neurological problems.

- Take precautionary steps such as using latex gloves while processing a harvested deer, and sterilizing their equipment following processing by soaking in a 50/50 solution of water and bleach. These steps will help to reduce potential transmission of the disease to humans. Again, thus far CWD has not been identified in a person.

- Avoid consumption of the brain and spinal tissues.
- Use synthetic deer lures instead of urine-based lures, as CWD is spread via bodily fluids. Some companies are beginning to label products as tested or certified CWD free, but it is unclear what industry controls are in place to ensure these labels are warranted. If you choose to utilize a urine-based lure, place it in a location where deer will not be able to directly contact it. ■

## REGULATIONS ON FEEDING DEER

Feeding deer is prohibited from June 1 to December 15. The Commissioner can stop anyone from feeding deer at any time if there is a public safety hazard or if it is harmful to the deer population. The Commissioner may prohibit or limit the feeding of deer, bear, moose and wild turkey if there is documented evidence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in the State or within 50 miles of the border of the State or if there is a reason to believe that the type or location of feed may create a public safety hazard or may have a detrimental effect on deer, bear, moose and wild turkey.

## MDIFW CHECK STATIONS

Our wildlife biologists annually collect information that allows MDIFW to assess the condition and productivity of Maine's deer population. Much of the information we collect comes from hunter-harvested deer. As such, the information you provide us with is used directly for deer management purposes, in Maine. A summary of the information we collect from you can be found within our most recent Research and Management Reports at [mefishwildlife.com/wildlifereport](http://mefishwildlife.com/wildlifereport).

## WASTE OF GAME

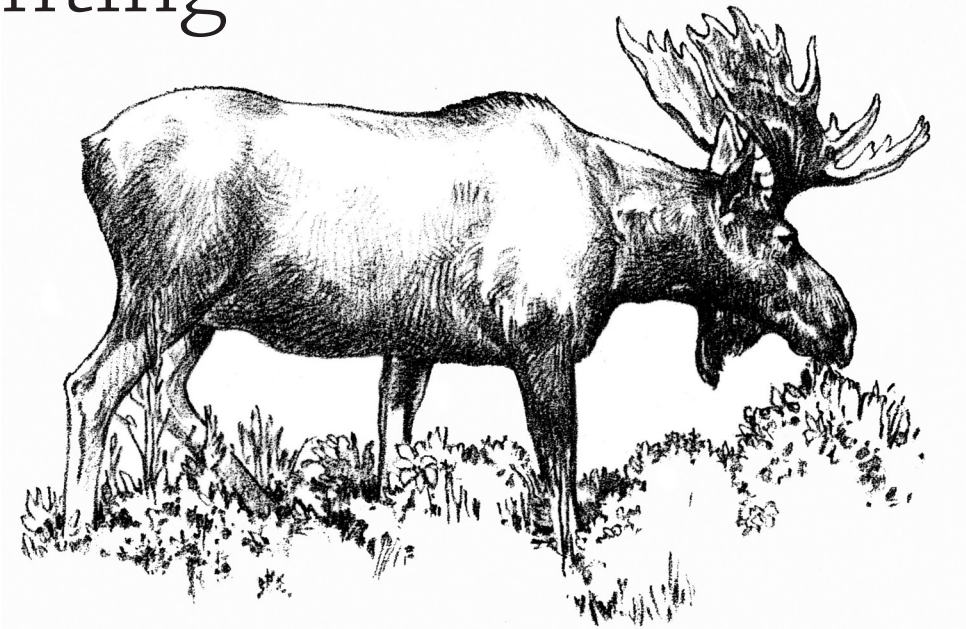
A person may not waste a wild bird or wild animal that has been wounded or killed while hunting. For purposes of this section "waste" means to intentionally leave a wounded or killed animal in the field or forest without making a reasonable effort to retrieve and render it for consumption or use. This law does not apply to coyotes.

# Moose Hunting

## MOOSE HUNTING PERMIT

Maine's moose hunt is a "permit only" hunt issued by season for bull moose, antlerless moose, or WMD 4A antlerless moose. A bull moose permit allows the permittee to harvest a male moose with hardened antlers. An antlerless moose permit allows the permittee to harvest a female moose without antlers or a male calf moose without antlers. Permittees with a 4A Adaptive Unit permit may hunt an antlerless moose in zone 4A and have special requirements. A total of 4,105 moose hunting permits were issued through the 2025 lottery. Each permittee may select a subpermittee to hunt with them. A person may not hunt moose with an apprentice hunter license. The bag limit is one moose per year, by either permittee or subpermittee. A person 10 years of age or older on the opening day of the moose hunt is eligible to apply for a moose hunting permit in that calendar year. A person under the age of 10 on the opening day of the moose hunting season may apply to earn a point in the lottery system, but cannot receive a permit.

**Permit Donation to Veterans:** A person who receives a moose permit may transfer that permit to a disabled veteran or may return the permit to MDIFW so the permit can be transferred to a disabled veteran through the Department of Veteran's Affairs. The disabled veteran must meet eligibility and permit requirements. A



transferor and a transferee of the permit are subject to the elimination of any accumulated points and the 3-year ineligibility period to reapply for a moose permit.

**Permits for 65 Years Old and Older:** A resident 65 years of age or older with 30 points or more in the moose lottery system who applies for a moose permit is guaranteed a permit.

**Permits for Hunting Lodges:** The Commissioner may allocate up to 2% of the moose hunting permits for a special chance lottery that is separate from the regular moose permit lottery, to hunting outfitters

who meet the specific requirements defined in the law. If a qualified applicant is drawn in the lottery, the cost to purchase the permit is \$1,500.

**Adaptive Unit Moose Hunt:** All adaptive unit antlerless hunters will be required to watch a one-hour pre-hunt training video. A selected hunter who fails to view the required training session and complete the assessment will forfeit their permit. Hunters are required to stop, register moose, and provide biological data at designated field check stations within the adaptive hunt area at key entry/egress points. ■

2025 MOOSE PERMIT HUNT SEASONS & BAG LIMITS		
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT	DATES	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION LIMIT
4A (Adaptive Unit Hunt)	October 20, 2025 - October 25, 2025	1 Moose Per Year A person may only harvest one moose per year, regardless of how many permits they may be listed on.  In order to harvest a moose a person must be either the permittee or sub-permittee.
	October 27, 2025 - November 1, 2025	
	November 3, 2025 - November 8, 2025	
1-6, 10, 11, 18, 19, 27, 28	September 22, 2025 - September 27, 2025	
1-15, 17-19, 27, 28	October 13, 2025 - October 18, 2025	
1-6, 8	October 27, 2025 - November 1, 2025	

All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.



# Wild Turkey Hunting

## WILD TURKEY HUNTING PERMIT

To hunt wild turkey in the spring or fall seasons a valid hunting license and a spring/fall wild turkey permit is required. Valid hunting licenses include a small or big game firearms license or an archery license.

## LANDOWNER PRIVILEGES

The following laws and regulations are specific to spring and fall wild turkey hunting seasons. Hunters must also comply with all other applicable fish and wildlife laws.

Any private landowner is eligible to hunt wild turkeys on their own land without a turkey hunting permit if:

1. That person legally possesses a particular piece of land that is 25 or more contiguous acres in size and is located within the turkey hunting zone designated for the season that they wish to hunt;
2. That person is permanently domiciled on that land;
3. The land is managed for the raising and selling of dairy cattle, dairy products, or beef cattle; and
4. The land is open to hunting including hunting by permission only.

Any family member permanently domiciled on that land is also eligible to hunt wild turkeys on that land without a permit. (Family member means any family member, including spouse, grandchildren, etc.

who resides on the property). A landowner must provide proof of eligibility if requested by an agent of the commissioner.

All other standard reporting and tagging procedures are required. Turkey may be harvested during any open week of the season. Landowners are allowed a bag limit of up to 2 bearded wild turkeys in the spring season and up to 5 wild turkeys of either-sex in the fall season. Please check the WMD in which you are hunting as some are closed, and others have bag limits varying anywhere from 1, up to 5 turkeys.

## TURKEY REGISTRATION

Wild turkeys can either be registered in-person at a registration station or self-registered online at [mefishwildlife.com/tagaturkey](http://mefishwildlife.com/tagaturkey).

## LEGAL HUNTING EQUIPMENT

- **Shotgun:** A person can use shotgun-gauges 10 through 20, using shot sizes 4 through 6 or mixed loads that include shot sizes 4 through 7. In addition, shotgun gauges 10 through 28, including .410, may be used with shot sizes 7 through 9 in Tungsten Super Shot (TSS).
- **Archery Equipment:** A person must possess a valid archery license and a turkey permit.
- **Electronic Calling Devices:** The use of electronic calling devices is legal.

## WILD TURKEY HUNTING PROHIBITIONS

### No Person May:

1. Employ the use of a dog or dogs in any manner while hunting turkey except during the fall season;
2. Engage in an organized drive of any manner;
3. Use bait;
4. Use a trap or other device intended or designed to capture or ensnare wild turkeys;
5. Shoot a turkey while it is in a tree;
6. Hunt wild turkeys within a WMD that is closed to hunting wild turkeys.
7. Possess any part or parts of a wild turkey unless each part is plainly labeled with the name and address of the person who registered the turkey, and the year it was registered;
8. Buy, sell, offer for sale or barter, or aid someone in buying, selling, or offering for sale or barter, any wild turkey (except the plumage of legally harvested turkeys).
9. Hunt or register a wild turkey during the spring season after having killed or registered two turkeys.
10. Hunt or register a wild turkey during the fall season after having killed five turkeys.

## WILD TURKEY LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

Legal hunting time is from ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. ■

## 2025-26 WILD TURKEY SEASONS & BAG LIMITS

FALL WILD TURKEY <i>Archery equipment or shotgun</i>	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	SEASONAL BAG & POSSESSION	
General Hunting Season	15-17, 20-25	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	5 Wild Turkeys*	No more than two wild turkeys (either-sex, any age) may be harvested per permit holder per day, but cannot exceed the WMD bag limit.
	26	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	3 Wild Turkeys*	
	28	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	2 Wild Turkeys*	
	3, 6-8, 10-14, 18, 19, 27 & 29	September 15, 2025	November 7, 2025	1 Wild Turkey*	
	1, 2, 4, 5, 9	Closed to taking of Wild Turkeys			
Youth Fall Wild Turkey Day		September 13, 2025			
<i>*May harvest up to 5 turkeys for the fall season, but an individual WMD bag limit cannot be exceeded. The order in which they are harvested from a WMD does not matter.</i>					
SPRING WILD TURKEY <i>Archery equipment or shotgun</i>	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	SEASONAL BAG & POSSESSION	
All Hunters	7 and 9-29	May 4, 2026	June 6, 2026	2 bearded Wild Turkeys**	
	1-6 and 8	May 4, 2026	June 6, 2026	1 bearded Wild Turkey**	
Youth Spring Wild Turkey Day		May 2, 2026		May harvest up to 2 bearded Wild Turkeys from WMDs that have a 2 bird limit.	
<i>**May harvest up to 2 turkeys for the spring season, but an individual WMD bag limit cannot be exceeded. The order in which they are harvested from a WMD does not matter.</i>					

All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.

# Furbearers & Other Species Hunting

## FURBEARERS PERMITS & LICENSES



### Bobcat Hunting

Hunters must tag bobcat within 10 days of when the animal was harvested. Bobcat can only be tagged by MDIFW staff. If a skin or animal will be frozen at the time of tagging, skin out and insert a stick the thickness of your pinky from the mouth hole through one of the eye holes before freezing. A lower lateral incisor, lower canine tooth, or lower jaw (preferred) and tissue sample (small piece of tongue) must be submitted when the bobcat is tagged. Hunters are responsible for labeling bobcat samples with species, sex, and seal number. Please include your name with the sample in case there are any questions and email or phone number if you would like the age results. If a hunter has any questions or issues submitting their samples, please contact Shevenell Webb, Furbearer Biologist at (207) 287-8776.



Bobcat lateral incisors are very small and easy to extract when animal is fresh by running a knife down each side of the tooth. Replacement teeth or age results can be requested by including name and contact information with your sample.

### Coyote Hunting

Coyote hunting is permitted year-round during daylight hunting hours. Coyotes taken by hunting must be tagged and registered prior to being bought, sold, traded, or transported out of state. However, unregistered coyotes can be gifted (see below).

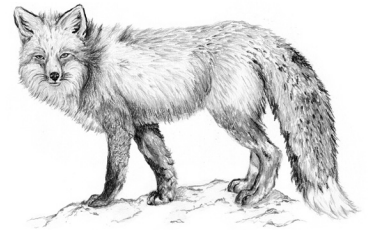
A Coyote Night Hunting Permit is available for \$4 plus agent fee, and allows a person to hunt coyote at night from December 16 - August 31. "At night" means a ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise.

To hunt coyotes at night, hunters must be in possession of a predator calling device (electronic, hand-held, or mouth-operated).

The use of artificial lights to hunt coyote at night is permitted. The use of dogs to hunt coyote at night is prohibited.

## GIFTING COYOTES

The Department allows the gifting of unregistered coyotes. A tag must be attached to each gifted coyote with the name and hunting or trapping license number of the person who harvested the coyote, the harvest method (hunt or trap), harvest date, and harvest town. Contact the Furbearer Biologist at (207) 287-8776 if you want to know who may be interested in gifted coyotes.



### Fox Hunting

All red fox and gray fox taken by hunting must be tagged within 10 days after the fox hunting season closes.

### Raccoon Hunting

Raccoons may be hunted at night during the open season only when the hunter:

- Is accompanied by a dog.
- Uses a rifle or handgun of no greater power than one which uses .22 caliber long rifle ammunition.
- Loads the rifle or handgun only when dispatching a raccoon that is treed or held at bay by a dog or dogs and has been identified by flashlight.

## FURBEARER TAGGING LOCATIONS

Bobcat and river otter must be tagged by Department staff. Other furs may be tagged at a fur tagging station (see trapping laws). Furs may also be tagged at any of the Department offices (see page 41), but please call ahead to ensure someone will be there.

## OTHER SPECIES PERMITS & LICENSES

### Crows

Crows are neither migratory waterfowl nor migratory game birds. The use of lead shot and shotguns capable of holding more than three shells is permitted. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required.

### Falconry License

A falconry license, in addition to a regular hunting license, is required of persons who engage in falconry. Copies of the regulations pertaining to this type of hunting are available upon request. To obtain a falconry license, contact MDIFW.

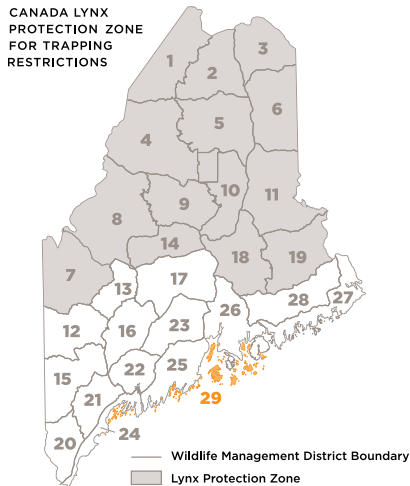
### Pheasant Permit

A Pheasant Permit is required for hunters 16 years of age or older hunting on an adult license, in order to hunt or possess pheasant in Cumberland and York counties (permit is not required to hunt or possess pheasant throughout the remainder of the State). Revenue derived from this permit is dedicated to the acquisition of pheasants which are raised and released by private fish and game clubs in partnership with MDIFW. ■

# Identifying Rare Mammals

## CANADA LYNX

Canada lynx are a federally listed Threatened Species and protected statewide but are typically found in northern and western Maine (shaded in gray in the map). Although there is no open trapping or hunting season of lynx in Maine, a lynx may be accidentally caught in a trap. Not only is it illegal to shoot an animal in someone's trap, but it is also a violation of state & federal law to shoot a lynx. **If you observe a lynx in a trap, please report it as soon as possible by calling the Lynx Hotline at 207-592-4734.**



## LYNX VS. BOBCAT: KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Bobcats are similar in appearance to Canada lynx and are a legal furbearer in Maine that can be harvested during the open trapping and hunting season for bobcats. Although bobcats and lynx have some similarities, there are some distinguishing characteristics to help you identify your target.



### Canada Lynx

- Longer ear tufts (1" or longer)
- Longer facial ruff
- Shorter and completely black-tipped tail
- Large and well-furred feet (>3" track)
- Uniform coat color



### Bobcat

- Shorter ear tufts (absent to 1")
- Shorter facial ruff – more round face
- Tail black-tipped on top and white underneath
- Smaller feet (2" track)
- Less-uniform coat (white underbelly, spotted)

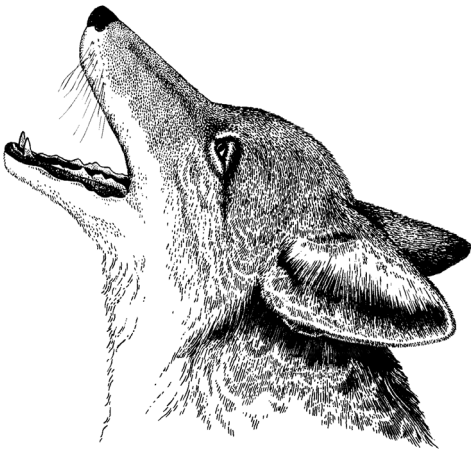
**TO REPORT A LYNX SIGHTING, PLEASE CONTACT THE FURBEARER BIOLOGIST AT (207) 287-8776.**

## LARGE COYOTES

Although relatively uncommon in Maine, the Department occasionally receives reports of large coyotes (50+ pounds). If you encounter a coyote that is over five feet in total length (tip of the nose to the tip of the tail) and/or weighs over 50 pounds, please contact the Department at (207) 287-5229.

## LARGE EXTIRPATED MAMMALS

Each year, the Department receives and investigates reports of possible wolf and cougar (mountain lion) sightings. Although wolves were extirpated in Maine by the late 1800s and the last cougar in Maine was killed in 1938, occasionally wolves have been observed near Maine and a cougar was struck and killed by a car in Connecticut in 2011. If you believe you have seen one of these rare mammals, take photos and contact the Department at (207) 287-5229.



## NEW ENGLAND COTTONTAIL RABBITS

If you are trapping in southern Maine, MDIFW would like to know if you accidentally trap or see New England cottontail rabbits. Cottontail rabbits are smaller than snowshoe hare, have hind feet less than 4 inches in length, and do not turn white in the winter. Their coat remains brown all year round. Please let us know about any rabbits you see. This is Maine's only native rabbit and MDIFW is actively trying to restore its population. Identifying new areas where the rabbit occurs could greatly benefit restoration efforts. Please let us know about any rabbits you see by contacting MDIFW Small Mammal Biologist Cory Stearns at (207) 592-1782. Sightings should be reported online at [mefishwildlife.com/rabbits](http://mefishwildlife.com/rabbits). ■



# Bear Hunting

## BEAR HUNTING PERMIT

To hunt bear a valid hunting license and a bear permit is required.

**Exception:** Resident hunters do not need a bear permit to hunt bear during the firearms season for deer.

### The fee for this permit is:

- Residents \$10.00\*
- Non-Residents \$74.00\* (this permit covers the entire bear hunting season)
- Non-Resident Late Season Permit \$40\* (If a non-resident wishes to hunt bear during the regular firearms season on deer only, a late-season bear hunting permit and a valid hunting license is required.)

*\*Plus agent fee.*

In addition to a valid hunting license and bear hunting permit, to train or hunt bear with the use of a dog, a dog training and hunting permit is required, see page 13 for more information.

To trap for a bear, a bear trapping permit and a big game hunting license or a bear trapping permit and trapping license is required. See Maine Trapping Laws and page 28 of this book for more information.

See page 14 for information on required removal of a bear tooth after harvest.

## LANDOWNER PRIVILEGES

Qualified landowners may hunt bears on their own land without a big game license, but are required to have a valid bear hunting permit. See page 6 for special landowner privileges.

## BAIT

Bait may be placed up to 30 days prior to opening day of the bear bait hunting season and no later than October 31. Bait areas must be cleaned up by November 10. Bait can be used to assist dog hunters and trappers, but it is illegal to shoot a bear over bait after the close of the bait season.

Hunting with the use of bait is defined as hunting from an observation stand, blind, or other location that overlooks any bait or food, except standing crops and foods that have been left as a result of normal agricultural operations or natural occurrence.

Bear bait means any animal, plant, or derivative thereof, used to attract bear. This does not include packaging or container materials that fall within the definition of litter under Title 17, §2263.



A person may not place any medicinal, poisonous, or stupefying substance to entice any animal, including bears. It is unlawful to disturb or interfere with a bait site using chemicals or any other method.

Bait may not be placed to entice, hunt or trap a black bear unless:

- The bait is placed at least 50 yards from any travel way that is accessible by a conventional 2-wheel or 4-wheel drive vehicle.
- The observation stand, blind, or bait area is plainly labeled with a 2 inch by 4 inch tag with the name and address of the baiter.
- The bait is placed more than 500 yards from any solid waste disposal site or campground.
- The bait is placed more than 500 yards from an occupied dwelling, unless written permission is granted by the owner or tenant.
- The person hunting from another person's stand or blind has the owner's permission.
- The person placing bait on another person's land has the landowner's permission (oral or in writing).

- If placing bait on a wildlife management area, you need to secure a permit from MDIFW. To apply for a bear baiting permit, contact the wildlife biologist in your administrative region (see p. 41).
- If placing bait on Public Reserved Land, you need to secure a permit from the Bureau of Parks and Lands (for info, call 207-287-3821).

Baiting of animals is prohibited in State Parks and Historic Sites.

## LEGAL HUNTING EQUIPMENT

Bears may be harvested by use of rifle, handguns, muzzleloader, shotguns (with slugs only and not larger than 10 gauge), bow and arrow (with a minimum draw weight of 35 lbs.) or crossbow (with a minimum draw weight of 100 lbs.). The use of a firearms with .17 or .22 caliber rimfire cartridges, or a shotgun with shotloads to hunt bear is prohibited.

## BEAR HUNTING PROHIBITIONS

A person cannot, within 50 yards of a bait site and without written permission from the person who maintains the bait site:

- hunt, trap, molest, or harass bears;
- release a dog or dogs to hunt bears;
- and train dogs on bears

It is unlawful to hunt bears, or release dogs to hunt bears, within 500 yards of a solid waste disposal site.

A person may not hunt a bear after having killed one by hunting and may not trap a bear after having killed one by trapping, during the open season of that calendar year. A person can kill and register two bears, one by hunting and one by trapping.

## BEAR HUNTING WITH A MAINE GUIDE

Non-residents must employ, and hunt in the presence of, a resident Maine guide in order to hunt bears with dogs. If the nonresident is a licensed Maine guide, they may hunt bears with dogs themselves, and may guide residents, but cannot guide non-residents.

For more info on buying, selling or bartering animals, see pages 11 & 12. For info on tracking a wounded bear, deer or moose with a Leashed Dog Tracking License, see page 13.



## HUNTING WITH DOGS

It is unlawful to:

- Use dogs to hunt bears during the open firearm season on deer.
- Use more than 6 dogs at any one time to hunt bears.
- Kill or wound a bear that is treed or held at bay by another person's dog or dogs unless you have permission from the person conducting the hunt.

**View Dog Training and Hunting permit requirements on page 13.**

The total number of nonresident clients hunting bears with dogs with a licensed resident Maine guide may not exceed five. ■

## FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION PROGRAM

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, commonly known as the Pittman-Robertson (PR) Act, established a "User Pay/User Benefit" philosophy for funding state wildlife resource restoration and conservation efforts. These funds have played a vital role in the Maine's wildlife management capabilities since they were first used in 1939.

Revenues collected from excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, pistols, revolvers, and bows and arrows are deposited in the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Fund, and used to support wildlife population assessments, long-range species management planning, development of management recommendations, implementation of management programs, acquisition and management of wildlife habitat, and hunter education.

## 2025 BEAR SEASONS & BAG LIMITS

SEASON	DATES	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION LIMIT
<b>Youth Bear Hunting Day</b>	August 23, 2025	2 may be harvested annually—1 by hunting, 1 by trapping
<b>General Hunting</b>	August 25, 2025 - November 29, 2025	
<b>Hunting with Bait</b> <i>Bait can be placed July 26, 2025</i>	August 25, 2025 - September 20, 2025	
<b>Trapping</b>	September 1, 2025 - October 31, 2025	
<b>Hunting with Dogs</b> <i>Bear dog training season is July 1 - August 21, 2025</i>	September 8, 2025 - October 31, 2025	

*All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.  
For information on bear trapping, see page 28.*



# Bear Trapping

## BEAR TRAPPING PERMIT AND BAG LIMITS

A bear trapping permit and a big game hunting license or a bear trapping permit and trapping license are required to set a trap for a bear during the bear trapping season (September 1 - October 31). You are allowed to harvest one bear by trapping and one bear by hunting annually. See page 27. The fee for a bear trapping permit is \$10 for residents and \$67 for nonresidents.

**To purchase a bear trapping permit you have three options:**

**Option 1:** Must have completed a Maine Trapping Education course (includes all furbearers and bear) dated after 1978 OR Previously held a Maine Bear Trapping permit prior to 2023.

**Option 2:** Must have completed the Maine Black Bear Trapping Education course (online or in-person).

**Option 3:** A person may trap a bear under the supervision of and in the presence of a licensed hunting guide who has successfully completed the Maine Black Bear Trapping Education course.

First time trapping licenses holders (including first time bear trapping permit holders) and bear trapping permit holders who are trapping under the direct supervision of a guide who has taken the bear trapping education course must be purchased through the MDIFW office in Augusta (in person or by emailing [ifw.licensing@maine.gov](mailto:ifw.licensing@maine.gov) or mailing a Trapping License Application to the MDIFW Augusta office). Trapping license renewals, including bear trapping renewal permits, may be purchased online at [mefishwildlife.com](http://mefishwildlife.com).

## BEAR TRAPPING LAWS

If you trap for black bear, you are required to follow the same general trapping rules regarding the labeling of traps, the tending of traps, and the need to obtain landowner permission.

If you trap a bear, you are required to follow the same transportation and registration rules as those for bear harvested by hunting. See page 14 for more information.

You are also required to follow other rules specific to bear trapping, as follows:

- Bear may be trapped only with the use of

cable traps (foothold cable restraint) or cage-type live traps.

- Whenever a cage-type live trap is used to trap a bear, the trap must be enclosed and must be heavily constructed to prevent damage from bears, and also must have adequate openings for ventilation and cooling inside when the door is closed. Traps must also be constructed with no sharp intrusions to injure bears, and be large enough for bears to turn around inside the closed trap.
- You are not allowed to have more than one trap set for a bear at any time.
- All bear traps must be tended at least once a day. Electronic trap notification devices cannot be used in lieu of physical checks.
- You are not allowed to catch a bear in a trap and allow another person to kill or register the bear.
- You cannot continue to trap for a bear after you have already killed or registered one in a trap.
- Bears caught in traps must be killed or released at the catch site. A bear caught in a trap may not be used in conjunction with a hunt or to train a dog for bear hunting.
- The same rules apply for the use of bait whether hunting or trapping for bears. See section below for more information on using bait when trapping a black bear.
- You may not trap within 500 yards of a solid waste disposal site. These areas can be identified by a visible line of demarcation.

**Exception:** the agent of the commissioner is exempt from the above restrictions when live trapping a nuisance bear.

## DESIGN & DEPLOYMENT STANDARDS

### Design Standards for ALL Cable Traps Used to Capture Black Bears

Whenever a cable trap is used to trap for bear:

- The cable must have a minimum closing diameter of not less than 2½ inches.
- The cable must be at least ⅝ inches in diameter.
- The cable must include at least one swivel, which is typically located between the foot loop and the anchor point.

### Deployment Standards for ALL Cable Traps Used to Capture Black Bears

- The cable must be set at or below ground level in such a manner as to catch the animal only by the foot or leg.
- Drags are prohibited.
- The cable must be securely attached to a fixed anchor point.
- If a tree is used as an anchor, it must be at least 6 inches in diameter at 4.5 feet above ground level and must be free of

limbs for at least 7 feet above the ground.

- The catch circle, which is the distance from the anchor to the end of the closed cable loop, must be no greater than 8 feet.
- The area within the catch circle must be clear of woody vegetation, debris and man-made material that could cause entanglement of a trapped bear. This restriction does not include a tree used as an anchor. Sticks and rocks, and rotten/decaying woody material may be used for stepping guides, blocking, and backing for trap sets, if they are not rooted to the ground.

### Design Standards for Bucket, Tube or Pipe-style Traps Used to Capture Black Bears

Whenever a cable trap is used in conjunction with a device that is designed to capture a bear when it reaches into the device to obtain bait (e.g. bucket, tube, or pipe-style traps):

- The trigger must be recessed at least 12 inches below the opening of the device.
- The opening and inside diameter of the device must be no more than 6 inches.
- A bucket or other similar device can be used if it is modified to have an opening and inside diameter no greater than 6 inches.

### Deployment Standards for Bucket, Tube or Pipe-style Traps Used to Capture Black Bears

- Animal-based bait and/or lure cannot be placed within the bucket, tube or pipe. Animal-based bait is defined as animal matter including meat, skin, bones, feathers, hair or any other solid substance that used to be part of an animal. This includes live or dead fish.
- Only non-animal based bait and/or lure can be placed within the device and it must be placed below the trigger.
- The opening to the device must be covered by a weight of at least 30 pounds when set, placed, and tended to prevent access by non-target species. ■

## COMMERCIALLY AVAILABLE CABLE TRAPS

A list of commercially available legal cable traps (when set according to the parameters described), is available on our website at [mefishwildlife.com/beartrap](http://mefishwildlife.com/beartrap).

### Examples of Commercially Available **ILLEGAL** Cable Traps

- Belisle
- Unmodified M-15

# Hunting Areas

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

All MDIFW-owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), except Steve Powell WMA (Swan Island) and portions of Steep Falls and Killick Pond WMA, are open for general-law hunting and trapping. Information on WMAs, including maps can be found at [mefishwildlife.com/wma](http://mefishwildlife.com/wma). Removable stands or blinds, such as ladder, hang on, pop-up blinds etc. when placed for more than one day require a permit to hunt on MDIFW-owned WMAs and must be plainly labeled with a 2-inch by 4-inch tag that include the names and addresses of everyone the Department has authorized to use. Permanent structures are prohibited. Permission is not needed if blinds and stands are removed daily. All trapping, including bear trapping and the placing or hunting over bait for any species is authorized by permit only, unless landowner permission is expressly not required by law or rule, see Trapping Law Book for more information. A person may utilize game cameras on WMAs without Department permission. To obtain a permit, contact a Regional Wildlife Biologist at the appropriate Regional MDIFW office. Find a WMA near you at [mefishwildlife.com/wma](http://mefishwildlife.com/wma).

## BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS (BPL)

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands manages 700,000 acres of land (not including easements and leases) in Maine for a mix of activities, including hunting and trapping. The safety of all visitors is the Bureau's primary concern, so certain heavily developed and high-use areas are closed to hunting for all or part of the year. In other areas, the Bureau provides as many hunting and trapping opportunities as are reasonable and consistent with its mandates and with visitor safety.

Hunters and trappers are asked to exercise due caution and care for the safety and enjoyment of other visitors when using Bureau lands by obeying posted information and the rules listed below.

### State Parks and Historic Sites

General hunting, except where specifically prohibited, is allowed from the day after Labor Day to May 31. Hunting and trapping must conform with State of Maine laws, MDIFW rules, and local ordinances. Trapping on state park or historic site

land in organized townships requires the written permission of the Bureau. There is no hunting allowed in the restricted zone of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway between May 1 and September 30.

- Hunting is not allowed in any Memorial or Historic Site.
- Hunting is not allowed at Andrews Beach; that portion of Bradbury Mountain State Park west of State Route 9; Cobscook Bay; Crescent Beach and Kettle Cove; Damariscotta Lake; Ferry Beach; Holbrook Island Sanctuary; Mackworth Island; Nickerson Lake; Owls Head Light; that portion of Quoddy Head within 1,000 feet of the lighthouse, or at Reid, Sebago Lake, Shackford Head, Two Lights, and Wolfe's Neck Woods State Parks.
- Work areas and areas with significant public use may be posted and closed to hunting from time to time in the interest of public safety.
- The discharge of any firearm, archery equipment, or weapon is prohibited from or within 300 feet of any picnic area, camping area, campsite, parking area, building, shelter, boat launch site, posted trail or other developed area.
- Loaded weapons are not allowed on the treadway of any trail posted "Closed to hunting".
- The baiting of any animal for the purpose of hunting is not allowed.
- Written permission from the regional manager is required to erect attended or unattended portable tree stands or ladders. Unattended tree stands or ladders will be permitted for a period determined by the Bureau.

### Public Lands

**Firearms:** Loaded firearms are not permitted in campsites, on marked hiking trails, at boat launching sites, or at picnic sites, and shall not be discharged within 300 feet of such areas.

**Bear Hunting:** A permit is required from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands to place bait on Public Reserved Land for the purpose of hunting bear.

**BPL Tree Stand Policy:** Portable tree stands and hunting platforms or ladders that are not permanently attached to a tree are allowed on lands managed by the Bureau, in accordance with state law and Bureau rules.

In organized towns, oral permission from the Bureau is required for portable tree stands or ladders when used on a daily basis; written permission from the Bureau is required to place unattended tree stands or ladders, for a period determined by the Bureau.

In unorganized towns, permission from the

Bureau is not required for portable tree stands or ladders when used on a daily basis; written permission from the Bureau is required to place unattended tree stands or ladders, for a period determined by the Bureau.

Any ladder or observation stand for which the Bureau has given permission must be plainly labeled with a 2-inch by 4-inch tag with the names and addresses of everyone authorized to use it. This requirement applies to State Parks and Public Lands managed by Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Portable tree stands or ladders used in conjunction with a valid bear-bait site permit are allowed to remain in place on Public Reserved and Nonreserved Lands during the baiting season on bear but must be removed from the tree at the end of the bear baiting season.

### For More Information

Please call (207) 287-3821, TTY (207) 287-2213 or write to: Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands  
22 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0022

## NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES (NWR)

**Note:** On National Wildlife Refuges that permit hunting of upland game, persons hunting upland species other than deer and turkey with a shotgun shall possess and use only nontoxic shot while in the field.

More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting and a refuge hunting permit may be required. For more info on federal refuge regulations, contact:

- **Rachel Carson NWR**  
321 Port Road, Wells, ME 04090  
(207) 646-9226
- **Maine Coastal Islands NWR**  
PO Box 279, Milbridge, ME 04658  
(207) 594-0600
- **Sunkhaze Meadows NWR**  
103 Headquarters Rd, Baring, ME 04694  
(207) 454-7161
- **Moosehorn NWR and Aroostook NWR**  
(Baring and Edmunds Units)  
103 Headquarters Rd  
Baring, ME 04694  
(207) 454-7161
- **Lake Umbagog NWR**  
PO Box 240  
Errol, NH 03579  
(603) 482-3415





## WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

### Oxford County, Maine

The public land within National Forests is open to hunting. Portable observation stands that do not damage live trees may be used. Please contact the Androscoggin Ranger District for more information on bear baiting on National Forest lands at (603) 466-2713.

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

- Acadia National Park & the Appalachian National Scenic Trail — hunting, trapping, and/or possessing a weapon is prohibited on land administered by the National Park Service. For further information on these lands contact:
- **Acadia National Park**  
PO Box 177, Bar Harbor, ME 04609  
(207) 288-3338
- **Appalachian Trail Park Office**  
Harpers Ferry Center  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
(304) 535-6270
- **Appalachian Trail Conference**  
New England Regional Office  
PO Box 264, South Egremont, MA 01258  
(413) 528-8002

Mount Desert Island (MDI) is located within the geographic boundary of WMD 26.

## BAXTER STATE PARK

Hunting and trapping are prohibited within the Park. Use or possession of any firearm, bow and arrow, sling shot, crossbow, air rifle or pistol is prohibited. Firearms may be transported through the Park if kept in a car trunk, enclosed in a case, or otherwise inaccessible to use. Bows may be transported through the Park if unstrung or enclosed in a case. This rule does not apply north of Trout Brook and Wadleigh Brook in T6 R9; in T6 R10; or in T2 R9 and in T2 R10 north of the West Branch of the Penobscot River, east to the thread of Abol Stream and west to the thread of the West Branch of the Penobscot River. Hunting with dogs is

prohibited. In the areas within the Park where hunting and trapping are permitted, the general laws of the State pertaining to hunting and trapping apply, except that moose hunting and baiting any animals for hunting purposes are prohibited. For more information, visit [baxterstatepark.org](http://baxterstatepark.org)

## CLOSED AND SPECIAL REGULATION AREAS

**Unity Utilities District:** It is unlawful to hunt on the Unity Utilities District Property located on Route #139 and Prairie Road in Unity, Waldo County.

**Gray Squirrels:** It is unlawful to hunt gray squirrels on any land which is dedicated as a public or private park or on any land located within the limits of the compact or built-up portion of any city or town.

**Haley Pond:** It is unlawful to hunt waterfowl on Haley Pond in the town of Rangeley and Dallas Plantation, Franklin County.

**Wildlife Sanctuaries and Certain Wildlife Management Areas:** Unless otherwise specifically provided, it is unlawful to hunt or trap any wild animal or wild bird within the limits of any wildlife sanctuary, any area properly posted by the State of Maine, or within the following described territories:

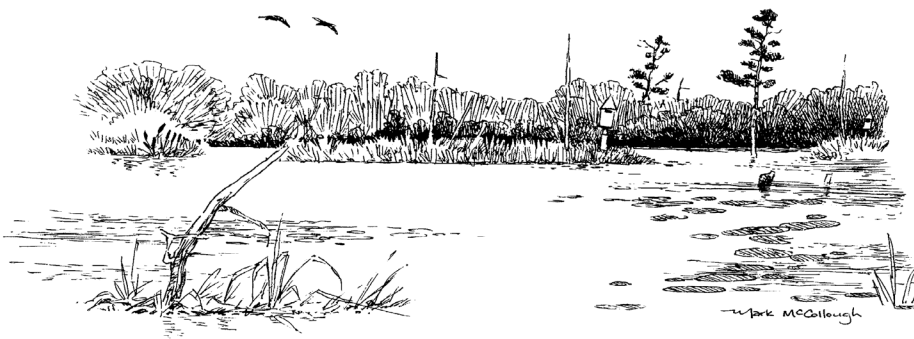
- Back Bay Sanctuary, Portland
- Beauchamp Sanctuary: Open to the taking of deer with archery equipment during any open season that allow hunting of deer, including expanded archery.
- Cape Elizabeth Sanctuary\*\*\*
- Carver's Pond Waterfowl Sanctuary
- Drake's Island Game Sanctuary
- Dry Pond Sanctuary (Crystal Lake)
- Fairfield Sanctuary\*
- Glencove Sanctuary
- Gray Game Sanctuary

- Hog Island Game Sanctuary
- Jefferson & Whitefield Sanctuary
- Kineo Point Sanctuary
- Limington, Hollis, Waterboro Sanctuary
- Lowell E. Barnes Area, Oxford County
- Marsh Island Area,\* Old Town: Open to the taking of deer with bow and arrow during any open season that allow hunting of deer, including expanded archery.
- Megunticook Lake and Vicinity Sanctuary\*\*
- Merrymeeting Bay Game Sanctuary. See page 38 for additional information.
- Monroe Island Game Sanctuary
- Moosehead Lake Game Sanctuary
- Moosehorn Game Sanctuary
- Narragansett Game Sanctuary\*
- Oak Grove Area, Vassalboro
- Ocean Park Game & Bird Sanctuary
- Orrington Game Sanctuary
- Pittston Farm Sanctuary
- Prout's Neck, Richmond's Island\*
- Rangeley Game Sanctuary
- Rangeley Lake Sanctuary
- Readfield and Winthrop Sanctuary
- Salmon Pond Sanctuary
- Sebago Lake Basin Area, Standish, Windham
- Somerset Game Sanctuary
- Standish Sanctuary
- Stanwood Wildlife Sanctuary, Ellsworth
- Steve Powell WMA (Swan Island), Richmond
- Thorncrag-Stanton Bird Sanctuary
- Tomhegan Game Sanctuary
- Wells Sanctuary
- Wells & York Game Sanctuary
- Willow Water Game Sanctuary
- Woodbury Sanctuary, Litchfield, Monmouth
- York Game Sanctuary, Franklin County

\*Trapping allowed in accordance with the general laws of the State.

\*\*From October 1 until March 31 of each year, hunting wild animals and wild birds is permitted.

\*\*\* Hunting with bow and arrow only during firearms season and any season that allows archery.



## RAILROAD TRACKS

### Stay off the Tracks.

#### A person may not, without right:

- Enter or drive upon a railroad track with a team or a vehicle, however propelled.
- Stand or walk on a railroad track or railroad bridge, or pass over a railroad bridge, except by railroad conveyance.



## MAINE INDIAN TERRITORY

As a result of the Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Acts of 1980, land taken into trust by the United States on behalf of the Penobscot Nation and the Passamaquoddy Tribe within certain designated areas of the State is classified as Indian Territory. Subject to 30 MRS § 6207(6), the Penobscot Nation and the Passamaquoddy Tribe have exclusive authority to regulate hunting and trapping within their respective Indian Territories (which also include their respective Reservations).

At the time of this publication, the following lands were included within Indian Territory:

### *Penobscot Nation*

**Franklin County:** Alder Stream Twp.

**Penobscot County:** T2R9 NWP (western portion), T3R9 NWP (eastern portion), T6R8 WELS (western portion), Argyle

Township (northern portion), T3R1 NBPP (northeastern portion), and Penobscot Indian Reservation.

**Piscataquis County:** T6R8 NWP.

### *Passamaquoddy Tribe*

**Franklin County:** Lowelltown, T1R8 WBKP.

**Hancock County:** T3&4ND.

**Penobscot County:** T3R9 NWP, T5R1 NBPP, TAR7 WELS.

**Somerset County:** Holeb T6R1 NBKP, Prentiss, T4R4 NBKP, Hammond Township, T3R4 NBKP, Alder Brook Township, T3R3 NBKP, Pittston Academy Grant, T2R4 NBKP Soldiertown Township, T2R3 NBKP.

**Washington County:** T5ND, BPP; T19 MD, Indian Township, and Pleasant Point, Perry.

These areas should be conspicuously posted as Indian Territory. Anyone wishing to hunt or trap within either Tribe's Indian Territory should contact the appropriate tribal agency for further information.

### *Penobscot Nation*

Department of Natural Resources  
12 Wabanaki Way  
Indian Island, ME 04468  
(207) 817-7349

### *Passamaquoddy Tribe*

Ranger Department  
Box 301, Princeton, ME 04668  
(207) 796-2301

### **For more Tribal Information:** *Maine Tribal-State Commission*

13 Commissary Point Rd  
Trescott, ME 04652  
(207) 271-7762 ■

## HUNTING/TRAPPING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

# Hunting & Trapping on Private Property



*The MDIFW  
Landowner Relations  
Program is actively  
working to enhance  
relationships between land owners  
and land users.*

With approximately 94% of the land in Maine privately owned, everyone **MUST** respect landowners and their rights. Landowner wishes have to be followed by all outdoor recreation participants to help ensure access and use of private property in the years to come.

### **7 Ways to Be a Good Land User**

- **Always Ask Permission:** Always get permission, even if the land isn't posted. Look up landowner information through the town office or online. Permission is not indefinite — check in each year.
- **Respect Landowner Preferences:** Follow all landowner requests about parking, activities, and access. Their comfort should come first.
- **Communicate Clearly:** Offer your name, contact information, and a description of your vehicle. Courtesy cards can help make a good impression.
- **Give Back:** Show appreciation by offering to help with property projects or purchasing an antlerless deer permit for them.

- **Know Your Boundaries:** Stay within property lines. Trespassing can result in fines or loss of licenses.
- **Leave No Trace:** Pack out all trash and pick up litter. Treat the land better than your own.
- **Follow the Rules and Say Thank You:** Obey all laws and report violations. Always thank landowners for their generosity.  
**Learn more at [mefishwildlife.com/outdoorpartners](http://mefishwildlife.com/outdoorpartners).**

Summarized below are several laws enacted by the Maine Legislature addressing landowners' concerns. For more details, consult the Maine Revised Statutes cited in parenthesis.

### **Landowner Liability (14 MRSA §159-A) Limited Duty**

An owner, lessee, manager, holder of an easement or occupant of premises shall owe no duty of care to keep the premises safe for entry or use by others for recreational or harvesting activities or to give warning of any hazardous condition, use, structure or activity on these premises to persons entering for those purposes. This subsection applies regardless of whether permission has been given to pursue recreational or harvesting activities on the premises.

### **Exceptions to Limited Duty**

1. For a willful or malicious failure to guard or warn against a dangerous condition,

- use, structure, or activity; and
2. When financial consideration is paid for the exclusive right to make use of the property for recreational activities.

### **Costs and Fees**

The court shall award any direct legal costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, to an owner, lessee, manager, holder of an easement or occupant who is found not to be liable for injury to a person or property pursuant to this section.

### **Posting of Land and Criminal Trespass (17-A MRSA, §402)**

Property is posted if it is marked with signs or paint in one of the following ways and in a manner that is reasonably likely to come to the attention of an intruder:

1. Signs must indicate that access is prohibited, that access is prohibited without permission of the landowner or landowner's agent, or that access for a particular activity is prohibited.
2. One vertical "OSHA Safety Purple" stripe at least one inch in width and at least 8 inches in length means "Access by Permission Only" when it is placed on trees, posts or stones between three and five feet off the ground. These signs or paint stripes must mark the property at distances no more than 100 feet apart at locations that are readily visible to any person approaching the property, and at all vehicular access entries from a public road.

In addition, landowners may also, either verbally or in writing, personally communicate to others that access is prohibited. Remember, it is unlawful to remove, mutilate, deface or destroy a sign or paint mark that is placed in order to prohibit or restrict access; and it is unlawful to post the land of another without permission of the landowner.

#### **Other Provisions of Posting**

1. Signs or paint markings must be at all vehicular access entrances from a public way.
2. It is unlawful to post the land of another or to remove, destroy, mutilate or deface any signs or paint marks.

#### **Trespass by Motor Vehicle (17 MRSA, §§3853-C)**

A person may not park a motor vehicle or allow a motor vehicle under that person's control to remain parked:

1. In a private drive or private way in a manner that blocks or interferes with the free passage of other vehicles without the permission of the owner of that private drive or way; or
2. On a public highway in a manner that blocks the entrance to a private drive, gate or barway.

#### **Trespass Damages (14 MRSA, §7551-B)**

Any person who enters another person's land without permission and causes damage to that person's property is liable to the owner in a civil action. Violations of this law will have the following results:

1. If the damage is intentional, the person doing the damage is liable to the owner for two times the actual damage, plus additional costs including attorneys' fees.
2. If the damage is unintentional, the person doing the damage is liable to the owner for the amount of the actual damage including attorneys' fees.
3. A person doing damage to property of another may also be charged criminally for causing the damage.

#### **Unlawful Cutting of Trees (14 MRSA, §7552, and 17 MRSA, §2510)**

It is unlawful for any person to intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or negligently cut down or fell any tree without the consent of the owner of the property on which the tree stands.

#### **Abuse of Another Person's Property While Hunting (12 MRSA §10652)**

It is unlawful to tear down a fence or wall, trample or destroy any crop, leave open any bars or gates, destroy, tear down, deface or otherwise damage a property posting sign, or insert objects into trees on another person's land without permission or erect

or use a portable or permanent ladder or observation stand without first labeling the stand and having landowner permission.

If the landowner or the landowner's representative finds an abandoned ladder or observation stand or an abandoned camera or electronic surveillance equipment (trail/game camera), and the owner of that abandoned equipment is unknown, the landowner or the landowner's representative may take ownership of the abandoned ladder or observation stand or the abandoned camera or electronic surveillance equipment. The landowner or the landowner's representative may remove, destroy, sell or possess the abandoned ladder or observation stand, or the abandoned camera or electronic surveillance equipment. For the purposes of this subparagraph, "abandoned ladder or observation stand" means a ladder or observation stand left on property not owned by the person who owns the ladder or observation stand without permission of the landowner or the landowner's representative. For purposes of this section, "abandoned camera or electronic surveillance equipment" means a camera or electronic surveillance equipment left on property not owned by the person who owns the camera or electronic surveillance equipment without permission of the landowner or the landowner's representative (33 MRSA §2001).

See page 16 for observation stand and trail/game camera information.

#### **Disposal of Offal; Littering (12 MRSA §11221)**

It is unlawful to dispose of litter anywhere in this state except in areas or receptacles designed for that purpose. As litter relates to the proper disposal of legally harvested game, a person may not drop, deposit, discard, dump or otherwise dispose of a carcass, waste parts or remains of a wild animal, except waste parts or remains resulting from the normal field dressing of lawfully harvested wild game or the lawful use of waste parts or remains of wild game as bait.

#### **Civil Trespass (12 MRSA, §10657) Prohibition**

While engaging in any activity regulated by MDIFW, a person, knowing that they are not licensed or privileged to do so, may not:

1. Enter, or cause a projectile to enter, any place from which that person may lawfully be excluded and that is posted in accordance with Title 17-A, section



402, subsection 4, in a manner reasonably likely to come to the attention of intruders, or that is fenced or otherwise enclosed in a manner designed to exclude intruders; or

2. Enter, remain in, or cause a projectile to enter or remain in any place in defiance of a lawful order not to enter or an order to vacate that was personally communicated to that person by the owner of the place or another authorized person.

**Definition of projectile:** For the purposes of this section, "projectile" means a bullet, pellet, shot, shell, ball, arrow, bolt or other object propelled or launched from a firearm or a bow, crossbow or similar tensile device.

### **COMMERCIAL SHOOTING AREAS**

A person may not charge any fee for access to land if the fee is contingent upon the taking of game on that land or directly related to the taking of game on the land, unless the land is an authorized commercial shooting area whose owner has been licensed by the commissioner to charge others for the opportunity to hunt mallard ducks, pheasants, quail, Chukar partridge, and Hungarian partridge (12 MRSA § 12101).

The operator of a commercial shooting area may authorize a person to hunt other wild birds or wild animals in a commercial shooting area during the regular open season on those species, in accordance with the provisions of 12 MRSA Part 13, as long as the person possesses a valid State of Maine hunting license that allows the hunting of those wild birds and animals.

The operator of the commercial shooting area shall provide to each person taking birds in that area a receipted invoice or bill of sale for possession and transportation of those birds.

#### **Enforcement**

Enforcement of the trespass laws of a commercial shooting area is the responsibility of the owner and may not in any manner be considered an MDIFW obligation.

#### **Commercial Shooting Areas**

For a complete copy of the law governing commercial shooting areas, and to obtain a list of commercial shooting areas, call MDIFW at (207) 287-8000. ■

*This time chart is NOT the sunrise and sunset time table and has already been adjusted to display the actual legal hunting hours.  
Note: This table is not to be used for migratory birds, see page 40. Blank spaces indicate Sundays when hunting is not legal.*

2025-26 LEGAL HUNTING HOURS												
DAY	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
01	5:28 - 7:41	6:03 - 6:45	6:44 - 5:53	6:23 - 4:26	6:43 - 4:35			5:46 - 7:33	4:55 - 8:10	4:22 - 8:44	4:23 - 8:55	4:51 - 8:31
02	5:29 - 7:40	6:05 - 6:43		6:24 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:36	6:23 - 5:15	5:41 - 5:54	5:44 - 7:34	4:53 - 8:12	4:22 - 8:45	4:24 - 8:55	
03	5:30 - 7:38	6:06 - 6:41	5:46 - 4:50	6:25 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:37	6:22 - 5:16	5:39 - 5:56	5:42 - 7:35		4:21 - 8:46	4:24 - 8:54	4:53 - 8:29
04	5:31 - 7:36	6:07 - 6:40	5:48 - 4:49	6:26 - 4:25		6:21 - 5:18	5:37 - 5:57	5:40 - 7:37	4:50 - 8:14	4:21 - 8:47	4:25 - 8:54	4:54 - 8:27
05	5:32 - 7:34		5:49 - 4:48	6:27 - 4:24	6:43 - 4:39	6:20 - 5:19	5:36 - 5:58		4:49 - 8:15	4:20 - 8:47		4:56 - 8:26
06	5:34 - 7:32	6:10 - 6:36	5:50 - 4:46	6:28 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:40	6:18 - 5:21	5:34 - 5:59	5:37 - 7:39	4:48 - 8:17	4:20 - 8:48	4:26 - 8:53	4:57 - 8:24
07		6:11 - 6:34	5:52 - 4:45		6:42 - 4:41	6:17 - 5:22	5:32 - 6:01	5:35 - 7:40	4:46 - 8:18		4:27 - 8:53	4:58 - 8:23
08	5:36 - 7:29	6:12 - 6:32	5:53 - 4:44	6:30 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:42			5:33 - 7:42	4:45 - 8:19	4:19 - 8:49	4:28 - 8:52	4:59 - 8:22
09	5:37 - 7:27	6:13 - 6:30		6:31 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:43	6:14 - 5:25	6:28 - 7:03	5:31 - 7:43	4:44 - 8:20	4:19 - 8:50	4:28 - 8:52	
10	5:38 - 7:25	6:15 - 6:29	5:56 - 4:42	6:32 - 4:24	6:41 - 4:44	6:13 - 5:26	6:27 - 7:05	5:29 - 7:44		4:19 - 8:51	4:29 - 8:51	5:01 - 8:19
11	5:40 - 7:23	6:16 - 6:27	5:57 - 4:41	6:33 - 4:24		6:11 - 5:28	6:25 - 7:06	5:28 - 7:45	4:41 - 8:22	4:19 - 8:51	4:30 - 8:51	5:03 - 8:17
12	5:41 - 7:21		5:59 - 4:39	6:34 - 4:24	6:41 - 4:47	6:10 - 5:29	6:23 - 7:07		4:40 - 8:24	4:19 - 8:52		5:04 - 8:16
13	5:42 - 7:19	6:18 - 6:23	6:00 - 4:38	6:35 - 4:24	6:40 - 4:48	6:09 - 5:31	6:21 - 7:09	5:24 - 7:48	4:39 - 8:25	4:19 - 8:52	4:32 - 8:50	5:05 - 8:14
14		6:20 - 6:22	6:01 - 4:37		6:40 - 4:49	6:07 - 5:32	6:19 - 7:10	5:22 - 7:49	4:38 - 8:26		4:33 - 8:49	5:06 - 8:13
15	5:44 - 7:15	6:21 - 6:20	6:03 - 4:36	6:36 - 4:25	6:39 - 4:50			5:21 - 7:50	4:37 - 8:27	4:18 - 8:53	4:33 - 8:48	5:07 - 8:11
16	5:45 - 7:13	6:22 - 6:18		6:37 - 4:25	6:39 - 4:52	6:04 - 5:35	6:16 - 7:13	5:19 - 7:52	4:35 - 8:28	4:19 - 8:53	4:34 - 8:48	
17	5:47 - 7:12	6:24 - 6:16	6:05 - 4:34	6:37 - 4:25	6:38 - 4:53	6:02 - 5:36	6:14 - 7:14	5:17 - 7:53		4:19 - 8:54	4:35 - 8:47	5:10 - 8:08
18	5:48 - 7:10	6:25 - 6:15	6:07 - 4:34	6:38 - 4:26		6:01 - 5:38	6:12 - 7:15	5:15 - 7:54	4:33 - 8:30	4:19 - 8:54	4:36 - 8:46	5:11 - 8:06
19	5:49 - 7:08		6:08 - 4:33	6:39 - 4:26	6:37 - 4:56	5:59 - 5:39	6:10 - 7:16		4:32 - 8:32	4:19 - 8:54		5:12 - 8:05
20	5:50 - 7:06	6:27 - 6:11	6:09 - 4:32	6:39 - 4:27	6:36 - 4:57	5:58 - 5:41	6:08 - 7:18	5:12 - 7:57	4:31 - 8:33	4:19 - 8:55	4:38 - 8:44	5:13 - 8:03
21		6:29 - 6:10	6:11 - 4:31		6:35 - 4:58	5:56 - 5:42	6:06 - 7:19	5:10 - 7:58	4:30 - 8:34		4:39 - 8:43	5:14 - 8:01
22	5:53 - 7:02	6:30 - 6:08	6:12 - 4:30	6:40 - 4:28	6:34 - 5:00			5:09 - 7:59	4:30 - 8:35	4:19 - 8:55	4:40 - 8:42	5:16 - 8:00
23	5:54 - 7:00	6:31 - 6:07		6:41 - 4:28	6:33 - 5:01	5:53 - 5:45	6:03 - 7:21	5:07 - 8:00	4:29 - 8:36	4:20 - 8:55	4:41 - 8:41	
24	5:55 - 6:58	6:33 - 6:05	6:14 - 4:29	6:41 - 4:29	6:33 - 5:02	5:51 - 5:46	6:01 - 7:23	5:06 - 8:02		4:20 - 8:55	4:42 - 8:40	5:18 - 7:56
25	5:56 - 6:56	6:34 - 6:03	6:16 - 4:28	6:41 - 4:29		5:50 - 5:47	5:59 - 7:24	5:04 - 8:03	4:27 - 8:38	4:20 - 8:55	4:43 - 8:39	5:19 - 7:54
26	5:57 - 6:54		6:17 - 4:28	6:42 - 4:30	6:31 - 5:05	5:48 - 5:49	5:57 - 7:25		4:26 - 8:39	4:21 - 8:55		5:20 - 7:53
27	5:59 - 6:53	6:37 - 6:00	6:18 - 4:27	6:42 - 4:31	6:30 - 5:07	5:46 - 5:50	5:55 - 7:27	5:01 - 8:05	4:25 - 8:40	4:21 - 8:55	4:46 - 8:37	5:22 - 7:51
28		6:38 - 5:59	6:19 - 4:27		6:29 - 5:08	5:44 - 5:51	5:53 - 7:28	4:59 - 8:07	4:25 - 8:41		4:47 - 8:36	5:23 - 7:49
29	6:01 - 6:49	6:40 - 5:57	6:21 - 4:26	6:42 - 4:32	6:28 - 5:09			4:58 - 8:08	4:24 - 8:42	4:22 - 8:55	4:48 - 8:35	5:24 - 7:47
30	6:02 - 6:47	6:41 - 5:56		6:43 - 4:33	6:27 - 5:11		5:49 - 7:30	4:56 - 8:09	4:23 - 8:42	4:23 - 8:55	4:49 - 8:34	
31		6:42 - 5:55		6:43 - 4:34	6:26 - 5:12		5:48 - 7:32				4:50 - 8:32	5:26 - 7:44

*\*Legal hunting hours are based on sunrise/sunset in Bangor, Maine (Eastern Standard Time) and are to be used statewide.  
Exceptions: Raccoon, Coyote, and Migratory Bird hunting (see separate legal hunting hours for these species).*



# Migratory Game Birds

For the purpose of this section, migratory game birds include and are limited to species in the following families: 1. Anatidae (wild ducks, geese, and brant); 2. Rallidae (rails, coots, moorhens and gallinules); and 3. Scolopacidae (woodcock and snipe). Except as expressly provided in the regulations, it is unlawful to hunt, capture, kill, harvest, possess, transport, buy or sell any migratory game bird or part thereof.

## 1. Hunting Methods

**Aids and Equipment:** It is lawful to hunt migratory game birds with dogs, artificial decoys, manually or mouth-operated bird calls (electronic calling devices are illegal), hand-held bow and arrow, crossbow, the practice of falconry, or with a shotgun not larger than No.10 gauge and incapable of holding more than three shells, fired from the shoulder. Every other method is unlawful.

**Watercraft:** It is lawful to hunt migratory game birds from floating craft (except a sinkbox), including those capable of being propelled by motor, sail and wind, or both, only when (1) the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sails furled, as the case may be, and (2) the progress or motion of the craft in the water has ceased and the craft is drifting, beached, moored, resting at anchor, or is being propelled solely by paddle, oars, or pole. It is lawful to use a motor or sail on a craft as a means of retrieving or picking up dead or injured birds.

The shooting of crippled waterfowl from a motorboat under power is permitted on those coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams lying seaward from the first upstream bridge.

## 2. Transportation

Any person, without a permit, may transport lawfully killed and possessed migratory game birds into, within, or out of any State, or export such birds to a foreign country during and after the open seasons in the State where harvested, subject to the following conditions and restrictions:

**Identifiable Condition:** If such birds are dressed, one fully-feathered wing must remain attached to each bird so as to permit species identification while being transported between the place where harvested and the personal abode of the possessor or a commercial preservation facility.

**Properly Marked Package:** The package or container in which such birds are transported shall have the name and address of

both the shipper and the consignee and an accurate statement of the numbers and kinds of birds contained therein clearly and conspicuously marked on the outside thereof.

## 3. Possession for the Purpose of Processing, Transportation, or Storage

**Tagging Requirement:** A hunter who legally harvests and possesses migratory game birds and wishes to place or leave any such birds in the custody of any other person for picking, cleaning, processing, shipping, transportation, or storage (including temporary storage) must sign and attach a tag to the birds stating the hunter's address, the total number and kinds of birds, and the date such birds were killed. No person may receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are tagged as provided above.

**Untagged Birds:** If birds are not tagged as provided above, the only legal place of storage is the personal abode of the hunter who legally took and possesses the birds.

**Vehicles:** Legally possessed migratory game birds being transported in any vehicle as the personal baggage of the possessor are not deemed to be in storage or temporary storage.

**Record Keeping:** Any commercial picking establishment or cold-storage or locker plant receiving, possessing, or having in custody any migratory game birds must maintain accurate records showing the numbers and kinds of such birds, the dates received and disposed of, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom such birds were received and to whom they were delivered. These records shall be retained for a period of 1 year from the close of the open season on migratory game birds in the state where the picking establishment or cold-storage or locker plant is located.

## 4. Termination of Possession

For the purposes of this part, the possession of birds legally harvested and properly tagged by any hunter shall be deemed to have ceased when such birds have been delivered by the hunter to a person other than the hunter:

1. as a gift
2. to a post office
3. to a common carrier
4. to a commercial cold-storage or locker plant for subsequent transportation by the postal service or a common carrier to

someone other than the hunter

## 5. Wounded Live Migratory Game Birds

Every migratory game bird wounded by hunting and reduced to possession by the hunter shall be immediately killed and become a part of the daily bag limit.

## 6. Possession of Plumage

Any person, without a permit, may possess and transport for his own use the plumage and skins of lawfully harvested migratory game birds.

## 7. Wanton Waste of Migratory Game Birds

No person shall kill or cripple any migratory game bird pursuant to this regulation without any visible means to retrieve and without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird and include it in their daily bag limit.

The shooting of crippled waterfowl from a motorboat under power is permitted on those coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams lying seaward from the first upstream bridge.

Additionally, Maine state law states that a person may not waste a wild bird that has been wounded or killed by that person while hunting, or intentionally leave any wounded or killed animal in the field or forest without making a reasonable effort to retrieve and render it for consumption or use.

## 8. Open Seasons, Limits, and Other Provisions

Migratory game birds may be harvested only in accordance with open seasons, legal shooting hours, and daily bag and possession limits.

**Bag Limit:** No person may harvest in any one day more than the daily bag limit or aggregate daily bag limit, whichever applies.

**Possession Limit:** No person may possess more birds lawfully harvested than the possession limit or the aggregate possession limit, whichever applies.

**Opening Day:** On the opening day of the season, no person shall possess any freshly killed migratory game birds in excess of the daily bag limit, or aggregate daily bag limit, whichever applies.

**Closed Season:** No person may possess any freshly killed migratory game birds during the closed season.



## SUMMARY OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

**NOTICE:** The material below is only a summary of Federal rules. Each hunter should also consult the actual Federal regulations, which may be found in Title 50, code of Federal Regulations, Part 20.

**RESTRICTIONS.** No person shall harvest migratory game birds:

- A. While possessing shot (either in shot shells or as loose shot for muzzleloading) other than steel shot or such shot approved as nontoxic while taking Anatidae (ducks, geese, and brant), coots and any species that make up aggregate bag limits during concurrent seasons.
- B. With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance.
- C. With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler that cannot be removed without disassembling the gun.
- D. From a sink box (a low floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water).
- E. From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord.
- F. By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- G. Using records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls.
- H. By means or aid of any motor driven land, water, or air conveyance, or any sailboat used for the purpose of or resulting in the concentrating, driving, rallying, or stirring up of any migratory bird.
- I. By the aid of baiting or on or over any baited area, where a person knows or reasonably should know that the area is or has been baited. However, nothing in this paragraph prohibits the taking of migratory game birds on or over the following lands or areas that are not otherwise baited areas: a) standing crops or flooded standing crops; standing, flooded, or manipulated natural vegetation; flooded harvested croplands; or lands or areas where seeds or grains have been scattered solely as a result of a normal agricultural planting, harvesting, post-harvest manipulation or normal

soil stabilization practice; b) from a blind or other place of concealment camouflaged with natural vegetation; c) from a blind or other place of concealment camouflaged with vegetation from agricultural crops, as long as such camouflaging does not result in the exposing, depositing, distributing or scattering of grain or other feed.

- J. A person must also retain the bird in their actual custody, at the place where harvested or between that place and either (a) their automobile or principle means of land transportation; or (b) their personal abode or temporary or transient place of lodging.

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

USFWS: (207) 352-2068

## Aquatic Invasive Species

HELP US KEEP IT MAINE: PROTECT OUR WATERS FROM AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

### 1 CLEAN

- Clean off plants, animals, and mud from gear and equipment including decoys, waders, footwear, boat, paddles, ropes, anchors, and field gear before leaving water access.
- Scrub off any visible material on footwear with a stiff brush.
- Dispose of debris in a trash reciprocal or a responsible location away from the water.

### 2 DRAIN

- Drain water from watercraft, motor, bilge, bladder tanks, and live well away from the water before leaving water access.

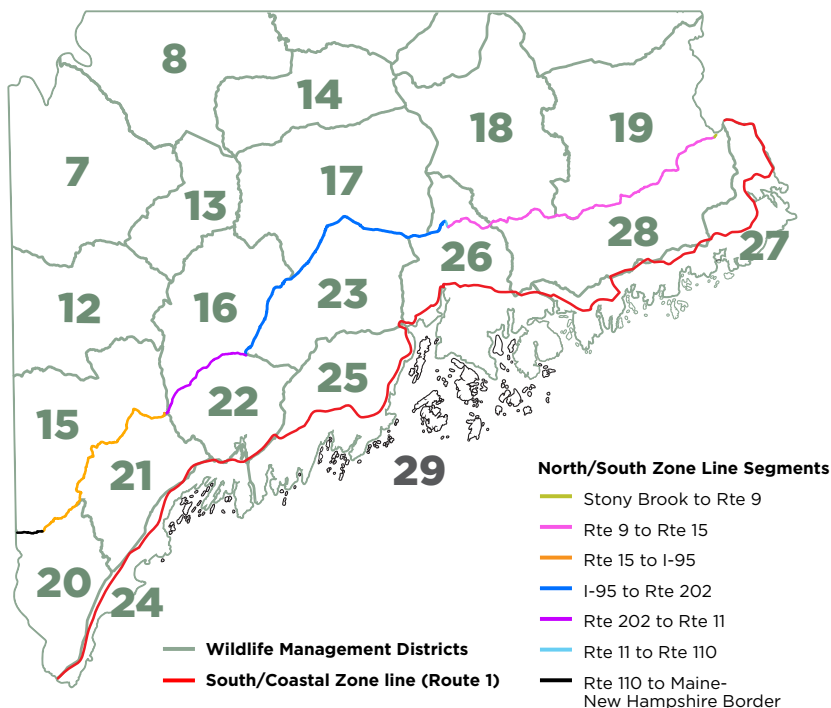
### 3 DRY

- Dry completely before reuse.



Learn more at  
[mefishwildlife.com/cdd](http://mefishwildlife.com/cdd)

## Maine Migratory Hunting Zones Map



## 2025-26 MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS SEASONS &amp; BAG LIMITS

SPECIES		SEASON		LIMITS		
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION	
Crows*	Wildlife Management Districts 1 - 6	August 1, 2025	September 20, 2025	No Limit		
		February 2, 2026	April 15, 2026			
	Wildlife Management Districts 7 - 29	August 1, 2025	September 20, 2025			
		January 17, 2026	March 31, 2026			
Common Snipe**		September 1, 2025	January 2, 2026	8	24	
Woodcock**		September 27, 2025	November 18, 2025	3	9	
Rails (Sora And Virginia)***		September 1, 2025	November 20, 2025	25 <i>Single or in aggregate</i> 25		
Canada Goose (Early)	North Zone	September 1, 2025	September 25, 2025	8	24	
	South Zone	September 1, 2025	September 25, 2025	10	30	
	Coastal Zone	September 1, 2025	September 25, 2025	10	30	
Canada Goose <i>Regular, White-Fronted Geese</i>	North Zone	October 1, 2025	December 9, 2025	2	6	
	South Zone	October 1, 2025	October 11, 2025			
		October 29, 2025	December 25, 2025			
	Coastal Zone	October 4, 2025	October 11, 2025	3	9	
		October 25, 2025	January 6, 2026			
Snow Geese <i>Including Blue Geese</i>		October 1, 2025	January 30, 2026	25		
Ducks <i>Including all duck species unless listed in exceptions on page 37, Mergansers, and American Coots</i>	North Zone	September 29, 2025	December 6, 2025	6	18	
	South Zone	October 1, 2025	October 11, 2025			
		October 29, 2025	December 25, 2025	<i>Species-specific bag limits may be found on page 37. All duck species not listed under exceptions on page 37 have a daily bag limit of 4 and possession limit of 12.</i>		
	Coastal Zone	October 4, 2025	October 11, 2025			
		November 6, 2025	January 6, 2026			
Brant	North Zone	September 29, 2025	November 1, 2025	1	3	
	South Zone	October 1, 2025	October 11, 2025			
		October 29, 2025	November 20, 2025			
	Coastal Zone	October 4, 2025	October 11, 2025			
		December 11, 2025	January 6, 2026			

All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.

\*Crows are neither migratory waterfowl or migratory game birds. The use of lead shot and the use of a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells is permitted. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required. Use of electronic calls is permitted.

\*\*Woodcock & Snipe are considered migratory game birds, not migratory waterfowl. The use of lead shot is permitted.

The use of a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells is prohibited. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required.

\*\*\*Rails are considered migratory game birds not migratory waterfowl. The use of lead shot and a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells is prohibited. A migratory waterfowl stamp is not required.

## 2025-26 MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS SEASONS &amp; BAG LIMITS

SPECIES AND AREA		SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION
<b>Special Falconry Season</b> <i>In addition to the regular migratory bird season (for the take of Ducks, Mergansers and American Coots)</i>	North Zone	December 15, 2025	February 4, 2026	3	9
	South Zone	January 7, 2026	February 27, 2026	<i>Respectively, singly or in aggregate Species Restrictions Apply</i>	
	Coastal Zone	January 7, 2026	February 27, 2026		
<b>Special Youth Waterfowl Hunts</b> <i>All duck species except Harlequins, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Moorhens and Gallinules – may be hunted on these days, including geese. For the September 27, October 18, and December 13 youth days, the goose limit is under the Regular Season daily bag limit.</i>	North Zone	September 20, 2025 & December 13, 2025		<i>Special regulations apply to youth and accompanying adult. Please see Junior Hunters section.</i>	
	South Zone	September 20, 2025 & October 18, 2025			
	Coastal Zone	September 27, 2025 & October 18, 2025			

## DAILY BAG LIMIT EXCEPTIONS CONTINUED FROM PG. 36

Harlequin Ducks, Barrow's Goldeneye, Moorhens and Gallinules	Closed Season
American Coots	In addition to the 6 duck daily bag limit, hunters may harvest 5 coots. It is unlawful to possess more than 15 coots at any time.
Mottled Ducks, Fulvous Whistling Ducks, Scaup and Hen Eider	The daily limit on these species is 1 bird; possession limit is 3.
Black Duck, Redhead, Hen Mallards, Canvasback and Eider	The daily limit on these species is 2 birds; possession limit is 6.
Mallards	The daily limit is 4 (2 hen mallards); possession limit is 12 (6 hen mallards).
Mergansers (Common, Red-breasted and Hooded)	In addition to the 6 duck daily bag limit, hunters may harvest 5 mergansers in the aggregate, with a species specific limit of 5. It is unlawful to possess more than 15 mergansers at any time.
Sea Ducks (Scoter, Eider, and Long-Tailed Duck)	The daily limit is 3 by species (4 total sea ducks), possession limit is 9 by species (12 total seas ducks). Except that the daily bag limit for eiders is 2, not to exceed 1 hen eider; and possession limit for hen eiders is 3, with the total possession limit for all eiders being 9.
Northern Pintails and Wood Ducks	The daily limit is 3 birds, possession limit is 9.



**Hunting Hours:** Hunting hours on migratory game birds are from ½ hour before sunrise to sunset (see chart on page 40).

**Pursuit of Crippled Waterfowl Under Power:** The shooting of crippled waterfowl from a motorboat under power is permitted on those coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams lying seaward from the first upstream bridge.

#### Definition of North and South Zone

**Line:** Maine-New Brunswick border in Baileyville, Maine west along Stony Brook to Route 9 in Baileyville. West along Route 9 to Route 15 in Bangor. West along Route 15 to I-95 in Bangor. Southwest along I-95 to Route 202 (Exit 109A) in Augusta. Southwest along Route 202 to Route 11 in Auburn. Southwest along Route 11 to Route 110 in Newfield. West along Route 110 to Maine-New Hampshire border.

**Definition of Coastal Zone Line:** Includes areas south of a line beginning at the Maine-New Brunswick border in Calais at the Route 1 bridge, South along Route 1 to the Maine-New Hampshire border in Kittery.

**Nontoxic Shot - Statewide:** The use or possession of ammunition loaded with other than nontoxic shot while hunting wild ducks, geese, brant, rails, or coots is prohibited. Nontoxic shot means any shot type that does not cause sickness and death when ingested by these birds and is approved for use by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director. Steel, bismuth-tin, iron-tungsten, iron-tungsten-nickel, copper-clad-iron, corrosion-inhibited copper, tungsten-bronze, tungsten-iron-copper-nickel, tungsten-matrix, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-tin-iron, tungsten-tin-bismuth, tungsten-tin-iron-nickel, and tungsten-iron-polymer shot have been approved nontoxic by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. See the USFWS website on nontoxic shot for more detail: [fws.gov](http://fws.gov).

On National Wildlife Refuges that permit hunting of upland game, persons hunting upland species other than deer and turkey with a shotgun shall possess and use only nontoxic shot while in the field.

**Haley Pond - Closed to Hunting:** It is unlawful to hunt waterfowl on Haley Pond in the Town of Rangeley and Dallas Plt. in Franklin County.

**Wildfowl Decoys:** It is unlawful to shoot, or shoot at, or near, any wildfowl decoy of another person, with a firearm, bow and arrow, or crossbow. "Near" means the area encompassed by the set of decoys and

including the area 50 yards away from the outer perimeter of the set of decoys.

#### LAWS SPECIFIC TO MERRYMEETING BAY

Laws outlined below apply to the waters of the Kennebec River, known as Merry-meeting Bay, bounded as follows: From the high tension wires at Chop's Point to the first dam on the Androscoggin River, to the first road bridge on the Muddy, Cathance, Abbagadasset, and Eastern rivers and the Richmond-Dresden bridge on the Kennebec River, being in the counties of Cumberland, Sagadahoc, and Lincoln.

- No artificial cover which is termed stationary blind, or parts thereof, used for hunting purposes shall be left or allowed to remain in the waters of Merry-meeting Bay between one hour after legal shooting time and one hour before legal shooting time.
- No duck decoys shall be allowed to remain in the waters of Merry-meeting Bay at any time during the period from one hour after legal shooting time until one hour before legal shooting time.
- No power boat may be operated in Merry-meeting Bay at a speed in excess of 10 miles per hour except within the confines of the buoyed channels.

#### LAWS SPECIFIC TO MERRYMEETING BAY GAME SANCTUARY

Hunting is not allowed within this sanctuary. The corners of the sanctuary are marked by orange buoys. A map of the sanctuary can be found at [mefishwildlife.com](http://mefishwildlife.com) or by calling MDIFW at 287-8000.

Merry-meeting Bay sanctuary is an area easterly of the confluence of the Abagadasset River and Merry-meeting Bay, south of Browns point (formerly Kelley's point) in Bowdoinham and the high tension powerlines crossing the Kennebec River, and west of the shoreline of Chopps point in Woolwich. Waypoints for the sanctuary are as follows (Datum WGS84):

<b>NW Corner:</b>	<b>SE Corner:</b>
44° 00.148'	43° 59.531'
69° 50.645'	69° 49.533'
<b>NE Corner:</b>	<b>SW Corner:</b>
43° 00.035'	43° 59.894'
69° 49.169'	69° 50.752'

- Using motorboat within Merry-meeting Bay Game Sanctuary: A person may not use a motorboat within Merry-meeting Bay Game Sanctuary, except that motorboats may be used between the Woolwich shore on the east and a line on the west designated by a series of orange markers adjacent to the edge of the grassy marsh area from Kelly's Point to the southern boundary of the Merry-meeting Bay Game Sanctuary.

#### STAMP REQUIREMENTS

The State Migratory Waterfowl Permit is required of anyone 16 years of age or older if they are hunting on an adult license, but is not required if continuing to hunt on a junior license for the remainder of the calendar year. Anyone who turns 16, whether hunting on an adult license or a junior license, must purchase a Federal Stamp and validate it with the holder's signature written across the face of the stamp in ink.

The state permit may be purchased for \$7.50 from local license agents, online at [mefishwildlife.com](http://mefishwildlife.com), or from the MDIFW office in Augusta. The Federal stamp can be purchased by visiting your local post office or USPS.com. A federal EStamp can be purchased online through participating state websites found here [www.fws.gov/service/buy-duck-stamp-or-e-stamp](http://www.fws.gov/service/buy-duck-stamp-or-e-stamp).

The Migratory Waterfowl Stamp is not required to hunt woodcock, snipe, rails or crows.

**Note:** All revenue from the sale of state waterfowl permits used exclusively for acquisition of waterfowl habitat and waterfowl management activities.

#### FIELD POSSESSION LIMIT

No person shall possess more than one daily bag limit while in the field or while returning from the field to one's car, hunting camp, home, etc.

#### IMPORTATION

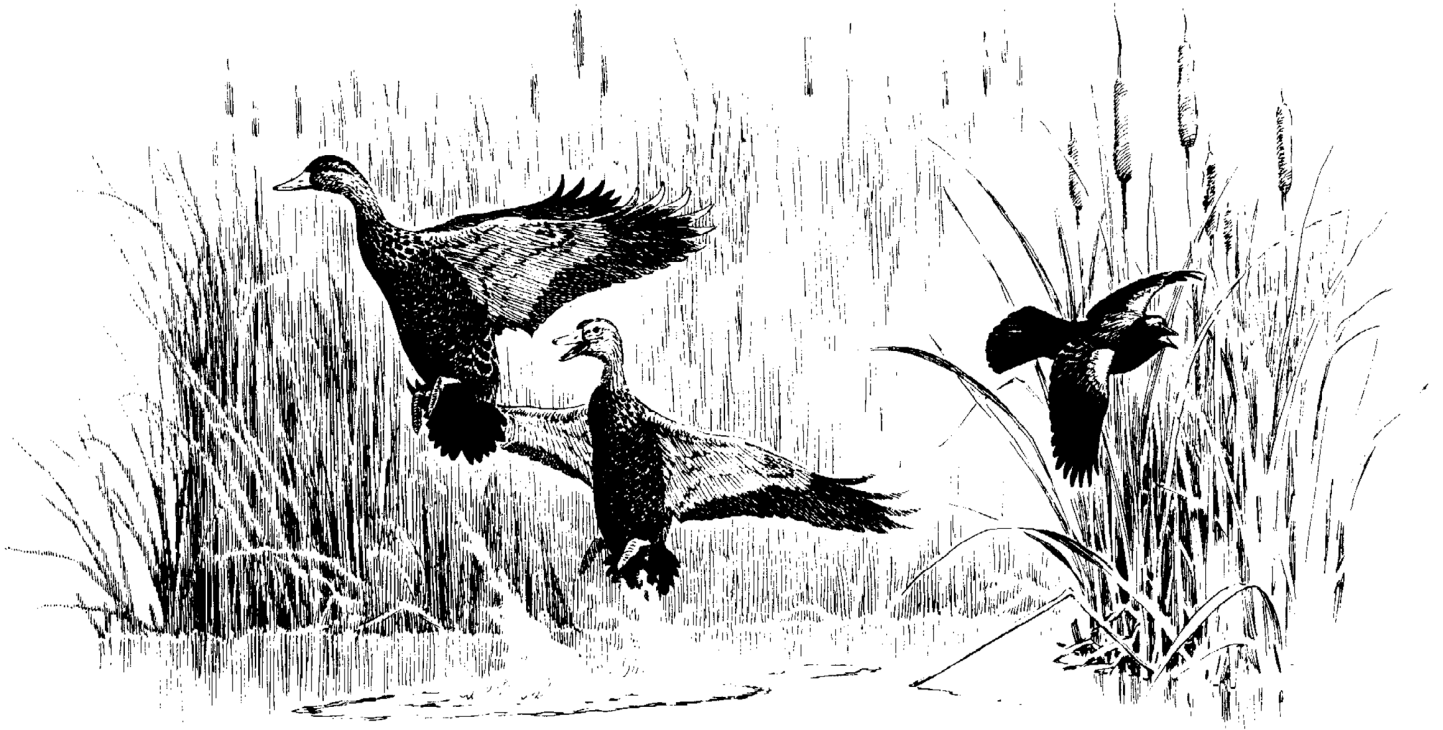
For information regarding the importation of migratory birds killed in another country, hunters should consult 50 CFR 20.61 through 20.66. One fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all migratory game birds being transported between the port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation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

#### Dual Violation

A violation of State migratory bird regulations is also a violation of Federal regulations.

#### Caution

More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting. For additional information on Federal refuge regulations, see contact information on page 29. ■



## HELP STOP WILDLIFE VIOLATIONS

Dial Operation Game Thief  
1-800-ALERT US (253-7887)

## BAND RECOVERY REPORTS

Anyone finding a band or recovering one while hunting should log onto:  
[reportband.gov](http://reportband.gov)

Results will provide better estimates of survival and harvest rates and will reduce high costs associated with banding studies.

## HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM

If you plan to hunt woodcock, ducks, geese, snipe, rails, or coots, you are required to indicate on your license your intention of doing so at the time you purchase your license. The information will be used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (H.I.P.).

## BARROW'S GOLDENEYE

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife wishes to continue the lawful hunting of Common Goldeneyes while ensuring adequate protection of the Barrow's Goldeneye, a Threatened Species under the Maine Endangered Species Act.

Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes look very similar. Our goal is to reduce the unintentional harvest of Barrow's in Maine by improving duck hunters' abilities to distinguish them from Common Goldeneyes.

Barrow's are known to congregate in certain areas.

Despite our efforts, we suspect that a few Barrow's Goldeneyes may be unintentionally shot. In these cases, hunters are required to report to your local game warden, and surrender to MDIFW, any that are harvested during legal waterfowl hunting activities. **There is no penalty for reporting this.**

# SUNDAY HUNTING IS ILLEGAL IN MAINE



## 40 MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS

Please see legal hunting time table for all other species on page 33.

### 2025-26 MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTER'S LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS			LEGAL HUNTING HOURS		
DATE	OPEN	CLOSE	DATE	OPEN	CLOSE
9/1/25	5:28	7:11	11/17/25	6:05	4:04
9/2/25	5:29	7:10	11/18/25	6:07	4:04
9/3/25	5:30	7:08	11/19/25	6:08	4:03
9/4/25	5:31	7:06	11/20/25	6:09	4:02
9/5/25	5:32	7:04	11/21/25	6:11	4:01
9/6/25	5:34	7:02	11/22/25	6:12	4:00
9/8/25	5:36	6:59	11/24/25	6:14	3:59
9/9/25	5:37	6:57	11/25/25	6:16	3:58
9/10/25	5:38	6:55	11/26/25	6:17	3:58
9/11/25	5:40	6:53	11/27/25	6:18	3:57
9/12/25	5:41	6:51	11/28/25	6:19	3:57
9/13/25	5:42	6:49	11/29/25	6:21	3:56
9/15/25	5:44	6:45	12/1/25	6:23	3:56
9/16/25	5:45	6:43	12/2/25	6:24	3:55
9/17/25	5:47	6:42	12/3/25	6:25	3:55
9/18/25	5:48	6:40	12/4/25	6:26	3:55
9/19/25	5:49	6:38	12/5/25	6:27	3:54
9/20/25	5:50	6:36	12/6/25	6:28	3:54
9/22/25	5:53	6:32	12/8/25	6:30	3:54
9/23/25	5:54	6:30	12/9/25	6:31	3:54
9/24/25	5:55	6:28	12/10/25	6:32	3:54
9/25/25	5:56	6:26	12/11/25	6:33	3:54
9/26/25	5:57	6:24	12/12/25	6:34	3:54
9/27/25	5:59	6:23	12/13/25	6:35	3:54
9/29/25	6:01	6:19	12/15/25	6:36	3:55
9/30/25	6:02	6:17	12/16/25	6:37	3:55
10/1/25	6:03	6:15	12/17/25	6:37	3:55
10/2/25	6:05	6:13	12/18/25	6:38	3:56
10/3/25	6:06	6:11	12/19/25	6:39	3:56
10/4/25	6:07	6:10	12/20/25	6:39	3:57
10/6/25	6:10	6:06	12/22/25	6:40	3:58
10/7/25	6:11	6:04	12/23/25	6:41	3:58
10/8/25	6:12	6:02	12/24/25	6:41	3:59
10/9/25	6:13	6:00	12/25/25	6:41	3:59
10/10/25	6:15	5:59	12/26/25	6:42	4:00
10/11/25	6:16	5:57	12/27/25	6:42	4:01
10/13/25	6:18	5:53	12/29/25	6:42	4:02
10/14/25	6:20	5:52	12/30/25	6:43	4:03
10/15/25	6:21	5:50	12/31/25	6:43	4:04
10/16/25	6:22	5:48	1/1/26	6:43	4:05
10/17/25	6:24	5:46	1/2/26	6:43	4:06
10/18/25	6:25	5:45	1/3/26	6:43	4:07
10/20/25	6:27	5:41	1/5/26	6:43	4:09
10/21/25	6:29	5:40	1/6/26	6:42	4:10
10/22/25	6:30	5:38	1/7/26	6:42	4:11
10/23/25	6:31	5:37	1/8/26	6:42	4:12
10/24/25	6:33	5:35	1/9/26	6:42	4:13
10/25/25	6:34	5:33	1/10/26	6:41	4:14
10/27/25	6:37	5:30	1/12/26	6:41	4:17
10/28/25	6:38	5:29	1/13/26	6:40	4:18
10/29/25	6:40	5:27	1/14/26	6:40	4:19
10/30/25	6:41	5:26	1/15/26	6:39	4:20
10/31/25	6:42	5:25	1/16/26	6:39	4:22
11/1/25	6:44	5:23	1/17/26	6:38	4:23
11/3/25	5:46	4:20	1/19/26	6:37	4:26
11/4/25	5:48	4:19	1/20/26	6:36	4:27
11/5/25	5:49	4:18	1/21/26	6:35	4:28
11/6/25	5:50	4:16	1/22/26	6:34	4:30
11/7/25	5:52	4:15	1/23/26	6:33	4:31
11/8/25	5:53	4:14	1/24/26	6:33	4:32
11/10/25	5:56	4:12	1/26/26	6:31	4:35
11/11/25	5:57	4:11	1/27/26	6:30	4:37
11/12/25	5:59	4:09	1/28/26	6:29	4:38
11/13/25	6:00	4:08	1/29/26	6:28	4:39
11/14/25	6:01	4:07	1/30/26	6:27	4:41
11/15/25	6:03	4:06	1/31/26	6:26	4:42

All times listed through October 31 are Eastern Daylight Time; after that date, they are Eastern Standard Time (for Bangor).





# SUMMARY OF HUNTING LAWS

## All In for the Maine Outdoors

### MAIN OFFICE

353 Water Street, 41 SHS  
Augusta, ME 04333-0041  
(207) 287-8000

### WEBSITE

mefishwildlife.com

### OPERATION GAME THIEF

1-800-ALERT US (253-7887)  
maineogt.org

### REGIONAL COMMUNICATION CENTERS

If you are in need of the services of a game warden or need to report a wildfire or request a campfire permit from Forestry call the Department of Public Safety Dispatch at the following toll-free numbers:

Augusta.....1-800-452-4664  
Houlton.....1-800-924-2261  
Bangor.....1-800-432-7381

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### COMMISSIONER

**Judith A. Camuso**

### DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

**Timothy E. Peabody**

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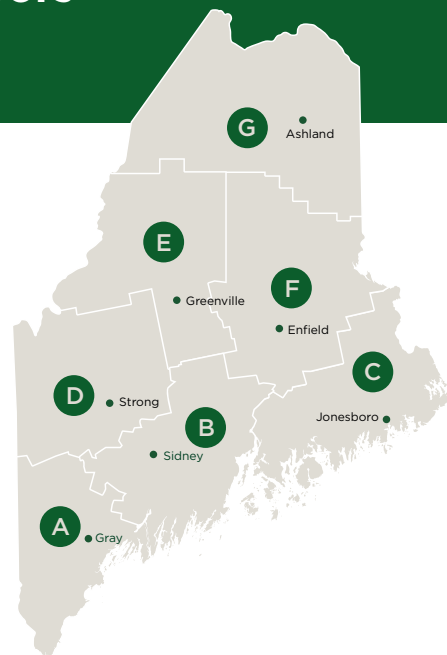
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### ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS

Region A – Gray ..... (207) 287-2345  
Region B – Sidney ..... (207) 287-5300  
Region C – Jonesboro ..... (207) 255-2080  
Region D – Strong ..... (207) 778-3322  
Region E – Greenville ..... (207) 695-3756  
Region F – Enfield ..... (207) 794-1003  
Region G – Ashland ..... (207) 435-3231  
Bangor Research Office ..... (207) 941-4440

### COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Written comments should be mailed to:

### Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

353 Water Street  
41 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0041

