



2016

WISCONSIN

DEER

HUNTING

FORECAST

STARTING NEW TRADITIONS



WHITE-TAILED

DEER

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With another mild winter and good reports from the public, expectations for a very good deer hunting season are running higher in 2016 than we have seen in recent years. Hunters are also settling into new rule changes that were implemented in recent years. As a result, we are hoping that hunters will feel more comfortable with the rules and can focus on the excitement of a great deer season.

[2016 Wisconsin Deer Hunting Regulations](#) available online or at any hunting license vendor or DNR Service Center.

For additional information, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "[deer](#)." There, you will find an abundance of helpful information including FAQs, maps, resources to help find a place to hunt and more.

GO WILD LICENSING SYSTEM

The DNR will introduce the new Go Wild licensing and registration system for deer hunters this year. Through Go Wild, hunters are now able to purchase their deer hunting licenses, select their antlerless tag(s) and print them all from the convenience of home at no cost. There are still over 1,000 license agents that hunters can visit to purchase licenses and tags. To find a

license agent, hunters may visit dnr.wi.gov, and search keywords "[license agent](#)."

In 2016, there will be no over-the-phone purchasing of licenses in 2016 - hunters must purchase licenses online, at a DNR service center or at a license agent.

With licenses and tags being printed on plain paper, there are changes to the forms of proof for hunting licenses. Hunters may present, as proof of license, a paper copy of their license printed from Go Wild, their Wisconsin driver's license, a department-issued Conservation Card or a department-approved PDF of the license displayed on a mobile device. All deer carcass tags will be printed on plain paper and a hunter may only hold a single copy of any individual tag when afield. Read more about Go Wild at gowild.wi.gov.

EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH FOR THE 2016 DEER HUNTING SEASON.

For a complete overview of all deer hunting rules including changes for this season, please check the

CARCASS TAGS AND TAGGING IN 2016

Beginning in 2016, all deer carcass tags will be printed on plain paper. This allows hunters to easily reprint a lost or damaged tag, but will require some care when tagging their deer. To replace a tag, the easiest option with no cost is to go on their Go Wild account and reprint a lost/damaged

carcass tag from home. Having a carcass tag printed at a DNR service center is also free, but there is a \$2 fee for having a tag reprinted at a license agent.

While afield, a hunter may carry just one single copy of each individual carcass tag. Hunters must keep the tag intact and in legible condition. A plastic zip-top bag is recommended to keep tags intact. Hunters are still required to immediately

validate their carcass tag after harvesting a deer by writing in the date and circling the time on the tag. For this reason, hunters are encouraged to carry a pen in the field as well.

The department recognizes that immediately attaching a non-durable tag to a harvested deer could cause an increase in damaged or lost tags. To alleviate these issues, starting in 2016 hunters are

SEASON DATES

The **crossbow / archery** season runs **September 17, 2016 — January 8, 2016**. Hunters are reminded to purchase a crossbow license or archer/crossbow upgrade to hunt with a crossbow.

Gun Deer Hunt for Hunters with Disabilities season runs **October 1 — 9**

The **youth gun** season runs **October 8 — 9**

The traditional 9-day **gun deer** season starts the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Season runs **November 19 — 27**

The **muzzleloader** season runs 10 days immediately following the 9-day gun season. Season runs

November 28 — December 7

The statewide **December 4-day antlerless-only** hunt is once again an annual component of the season framework. **Season runs December 8 — 11** - during this season, all deer hunters may only harvest antlerless deer; buck harvest is not allowed.

The **antlerless-only Holiday Hunt** will be offered in select DMUs and will run from **December 24, 2016—January 1, 2017**. DMUs offering the holiday hunt in 2016 are: Brown, Columbia, Crawford, Green Lake, Marinette (Farmland Zone portion only), Marquette, Milwaukee, Pepin, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Waukesha and Waupaca. Only antlerless deer may be harvested with any weapon type during this season, in the listed DMUs. Buck hunting is allowed by archery/crossbow hunters in any DMU not included in the holiday hunt.



AUDRIANNE KIELER warms up with some cocoa. Photo by Dean Kieler

YOUTH DEER HUNT

The youth gun deer season will be held Oct. 8-9. This special hunt was established to provide youth hunters with an opportunity to hunt with the guidance of a mentor.

Resident and non-resident youth hunters ages 10-15 who possess a valid gun deer hunting license may participate.

no longer required to immediately attach their validated carcass tag to the deer. The tag is not required to be attached until the hunter leaves the animal. Examples of leaving the animal include: walking back to get a vehicle to retrieve the deer, leaving the deer in the truck when going into a gas station or leaving the deer at deer camp. Hunters are still required to keep their carcass tag with the meat until consumed.

A PLASTIC ZIP-TOP BAG IS RECOMMENDED TO KEEP CARCASS TAGS INTACT.

ELECTRONIC HARVEST REGISTRATION

More than 300,000 deer were registered electronically by phone or internet in 2015. While some expressed concern before the season, Wisconsin deer hunters adapted well to this new method of registration. Hunters experienced few problems, with 97 percent managing to register their deer with no assistance during the opening weekend of the gun deer season. The other 3 percent were provided assistance by talking directly to a Customer Service agent.

Hunter compliance was measured using several different methods. Results showed that 90 to over 93 percent of hunters complied and registered their deer. This range is estimated to be

similar to compliance rates when registering in person was required.

Successful deer hunters in 2016 are required to register their deer online, by phone, or at a participating walk-in registration station. For a list of participating businesses offering walk-in registration, search keyword "[registration stations](#)."

To register a deer electronically, hunters will visit gamereg.wi.gov or call 1-844-426-3734 (1-844-GAME-REG). To start, the electronic registration system will prompt hunters to enter the unique carcass tag number for the tag they have filled and their date of birth. Then, harvest information such as location of kill, age (adult or fawn) and sex (buck or doe) of the deer and weapon type

used to harvest the animal will be collected. Once hunters have provided this information, they will receive a unique 10-character confirmation number that must be written on the validated carcass tag. The tag with confirmation number will serve as proof that the deer was legally registered, and must be kept by the hunter and accompany the animal or processed carcass until the meat is consumed. All deer harvested during any deer season must be registered by 5 p.m. the day after harvest. For more information, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keywords "[electronic registration](#)."

COUNTY DEER ADVISORY COUNCILS AND ANTLERLESS TAGS

County Deer Advisory Councils were formed in 2014 to increase local involvement in deer management. Councils are comprised of representatives from local hunting or conservation clubs, forestry, agriculture, tourism and local governmental interests. Each council is led by local Wisconsin Conservation Congress delegates, while a team of three liaisons from the DNR's wildlife, forestry and law enforcement programs attend CDAC meetings to present data and offer

professional perspectives. Each of Wisconsin's 71 councils (Menominee County chose not to have a council) directly participate in setting population objectives, antlerless harvest quotas and antlerless tag levels. They also provide recommendations on various season structure elements that will affect the 2016 deer seasons. These include whether junior antlerless tags may be filled in a specific county, and whether to implement the December 24-January 1 antlerless-only "Holiday Hunt."

BE SURE TO READ THE 2016 WISCONSIN DEER HUNTING REGULATIONS FOR MORE INFORMATION.

During the fall of 2014, councils reviewed county deer herd metrics and solicited public input to develop three-year population objective recommendations to increase, decrease or maintain herd levels in each county. Once these population objectives were approved in early 2015, the CDACs immediately began

forming antlerless quotas and antlerless tag recommendations, relying on deer herd data and public feedback. They again met in the spring of 2016 to recommend antlerless harvest quotas, antlerless tag levels and certain season options that will guide the 2016 season.

FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING COUNTY DEER ADVISORY COUNCILS, VISIT DNR.WI.GOV AND SEARCH KEYWORD "[CDAC](#)."

MANAGEMENT ZONES AND DEER MANAGEMENT UNITS (DMUS)

Wisconsin's four Deer Management Zones and DMUs have not changed in 2016. DMUs follow county boundaries in most cases, and nine DMUs are split by zone boundaries.





STEVE MASLOWSKI / USFWS

2016 DEER HUNTS

Aside from the traditional archer, crossbow, 9-day gun deer and muzzleloader seasons, the following hunts will be offered in 2016.

ANTLERLESS-ONLY HOLIDAY HUNT

The antlerless-only Holiday Hunt will run Dec. 24 - Jan. 1, 2017. This hunt is only occurring in select Farmland (Zone 2) DMUs. For this year the Holiday Hunt will be offered in Brown, Columbia, Crawford, Green Lake, Marinette

(Farmland Zone portion of unit only), Marquette, Milwaukee, Pepin, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Waukesha and Waupaca counties. Hunters must possess an antlerless deer carcass tag valid for the zone, DMU and land type in which they choose to hunt during this season. No antlered deer can be harvested, with any weapon type, in a DMU where a holiday hunt is in progress. All hunters within the area of this hunt, with the exception of waterfowl hunters, are required to meet highly

visible clothing (blaze orange or florescent pink) requirements during this hunt.

DECEMBER STATEWIDE FOUR-DAY ANTLERLESS-ONLY SEASON

The four-day December antlerless-only deer season will once again be a statewide hunt, occurring in all DMUs (antlerless tag availability will limit participation), and will run Dec. 8-11. The season is restricted by antlerless tag

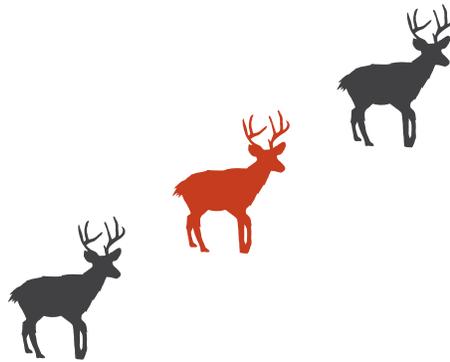
availability, and no antlered bucks can be harvested, with any weapon type, in a DMU. Therefore, all hunters must possess (or be in a group with someone that possesses) an antlerless deer carcass tag valid for the zone, DMU and land type in which they choose to hunt. All hunters with the exception of waterfowl hunters are required to meet highly visible (blaze orange or florescent pink) clothing requirements during this hunt.

YOUTH DEER SEASON

The youth gun deer season will be held Oct. 8-9. This special hunt was established to provide youth hunters with an opportunity to hunt with the guidance of a mentor.

The youth season will be held in all DMUs statewide. Resident and non-resident youth hunters ages 10-15 who possess a valid gun deer hunting license may participate. It is important to note that youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult parent or guardian during this hunt, even if the youth hunter holds a hunter education certificate. Qualified youth hunters may harvest one buck deer with their gun buck deer carcass tag and one antlerless deer to fill their statewide Junior Antlerless Deer Carcass Tag. Youth hunters may

harvest additional antlerless deer through the purchase of Bonus Antlerless Deer Tag(s), where available, or with a Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tag included with a license. Note these tags are not valid statewide and are specific to the zone, DMU and land type on the tag.



Youth hunters must be within arm's length of an adult mentor. No more than two youth hunters may be accompanied by a single mentor. Supervising adults may not hunt while accompanying or mentoring a youth deer hunt. All statewide deer, turkey and small game hunters, with the exception of waterfowl hunters, are required to meet blaze orange requirements during the 2016 youth gun deer hunt.

GUN DEER HUNT FOR HUNTERS WITH DISABILITIES

The 2016 gun deer hunt for hunters with disabilities will be held Oct. 1-9. This special hunt was established to provide an option to hunters

with disabilities to have more opportunities to participate in Wisconsin's deer hunting traditions. Disabled hunters with a valid Class A, C or D disabled permit, or a Class B permit that is issued for longer than one year (and authorizes hunting or shooting from a stationary vehicle) may participate.

"Sponsoring landowners all over the state have again stepped up, and we are grateful to them for their willingness to provide opportunities for disabled hunters," said DNR disabled hunt program coordinator Derek Johnson. "Providing access to over 77,000 acres of land in 45 counties is instrumental in making this unique opportunity a great success story."

The gun deer hunt for hunters with disabilities is not a statewide season. This special hunt is only authorized on lands specifically enrolled in the disabled hunt program. Landowners or managers interested in sponsoring lands for the 2017 hunt must submit an online application before June 1, 2017. Qualified disabled hunters are encouraged to contact sponsors before Sept. 1. For a list of sponsors for the 2016 season, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keywords "[disabled deer hunt](#)."



TAGS & LICENSES

With each deer hunting license, hunters will receive one Buck Deer Carcass Tag valid statewide and Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Carcass Tag(s) valid in the zone, DMU, and land type (public access or private) of the buyer's choosing at time of license purchase. Farmland Zone tags may not be used in the Northern Forest or Central Forest zones, but bonus antlerless tags may be available in these zones.

FARMLAND (ZONE 2) ANTLERLESS DEER TAGS

All hunters receive Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tag(s) with the purchase of each deer hunting license (archer/crossbow and gun). All Farmland (Zone 2) tags must be designated for use in a specific zone, DMU and land type (public access or private) at the time of issuance or selection may be deferred until a later date. New in 2016, Farmland Zone DMUs may issue more than one Farmland (Zone 2) tag with each license. This allows hunters more opportunities to harvest more deer, if they wish. For more information about farmland zone tags and how many are issued per DMU, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "[antlerless tags](#)."

JUNIOR ANTLERLESS DEER TAGS

Youth hunters age 10-17 will receive a Junior Antlerless Deer Tag, valid for harvesting one antlerless deer in any unit statewide except Ashland, Forest, and Sawyer counties. One junior antlerless tag is issued with each deer license. Youth hunters are not required to specify zone or DMU, but must indicate a land type where they will attempt to fill this tag. As a reminder, group hunting on these tags is not allowed. Only the youth hunter who was issued the tag may fill it.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STAFF ENCOURAGES ALL DEER HUNTERS TO ENJOY A SAFE, FUN AND SUCCESSFUL DEER HUNTING SEASON.

ANTLERLESS TAGS FOR DISABLED HUNTERS

Class A and C disabled hunters will receive Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer

Carcass Tag(s), of which one is valid for an antlerless deer in any DMU statewide, with each deer license. The tags will be designated to a zone, DMU and land type, but only one may be used in any DMU statewide as long as it is filled on the land type (public access or private land) designated on the tag.

BONUS ANTLERLESS DEER TAGS

Bonus tags are valid only in the Zone, DMU and land type (public access or private) indicated on the carcass tag. Bonus tags are limited in number, including ten counties in part or whole where zero bonus tags will be available for sale.

Hunters may purchase one bonus tag per day, where available, until the DMU or metro sub-unit is sold out or until the hunting season ends. Sales begin August 15 by zone, and begin each day at 10 a.m. Bonus tags cost \$12 for residents, \$20 for non-residents and \$5 for youth (ages 10 and 11).

Bonus antlerless tag availability may vary by zone, DMU and even metro sub-unit. For more information regarding bonus tag availability and sales, visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[antlerless tags](#)."



N. & M.J. Mishler / USFWS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR 2016

2016 BUCK-ONLY DEER MANAGEMENT UNITS

Ten county DMUs, in whole or in part, are designated as buck-only units. All buck-only units are restricted to the Northern and Central Forest zones and include Ashland, Bayfield Douglas, Florence, Forest, Iron, Jackson (Forest Zone portion only), Oneida, Sawyer, and Vilas Counties. Buck tags may not be used to tag a buck during any antlerless-only season. Bonus

antlerless tags are not available for purchase in buck-only DMUs, with the exception of the Superior Metro Sub-unit of Douglas County.

TRANSPORTATION

While afield, no person may possess or transport another hunter's deer, even after it has been registered (unless accompanied by the person for whom the carcass tag was issued). However, anyone may

transport another person's registered and tagged deer on a public road or possess it at a residence, camp or business. A hunter does not need to attach the carcass tag to the animal if they are in the vehicle carrying or directly following the vehicle carrying their deer.

**If you leave it,
tag it!**

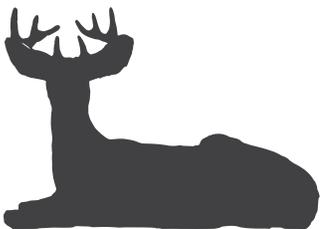


USE OF BOWS AND CROSSBOWS

All hunters using a crossbow to hunt deer must purchase a crossbow license or a crossbow upgrade after purchasing an archer license. Hunters may also hunt with a bow or crossbow under the authority of a gun deer license, but only during a firearm season. Laws regulating the use of bows and crossbows for hunting within cities or villages may have changed. Check with city or village authorities for local ordinance restrictions.

NEW RULES IN 2016

Due to a legislative change, back tags are no longer required to be worn while hunting. No back tags will be issued with the sale of a deer hunting license in 2016. Fluorescent pink may be worn by hunters as a substitute for blaze orange. Those hunters who wear fluorescent pink are subject to the same minimum clothing coverage requirements as those who wear blaze orange. Fluorescent pink cannot be used as a substitute for blaze orange when marking a ground blind on public lands.



A HUNTER DOES NOT NEED TO ATTACH THE CARCASS TAG TO THE ANIMAL IF THEY ARE IN THE VEHICLE CARRYING OR DIRECTLY FOLLOWING THE VEHICLE CARRYING THEIR DEER.

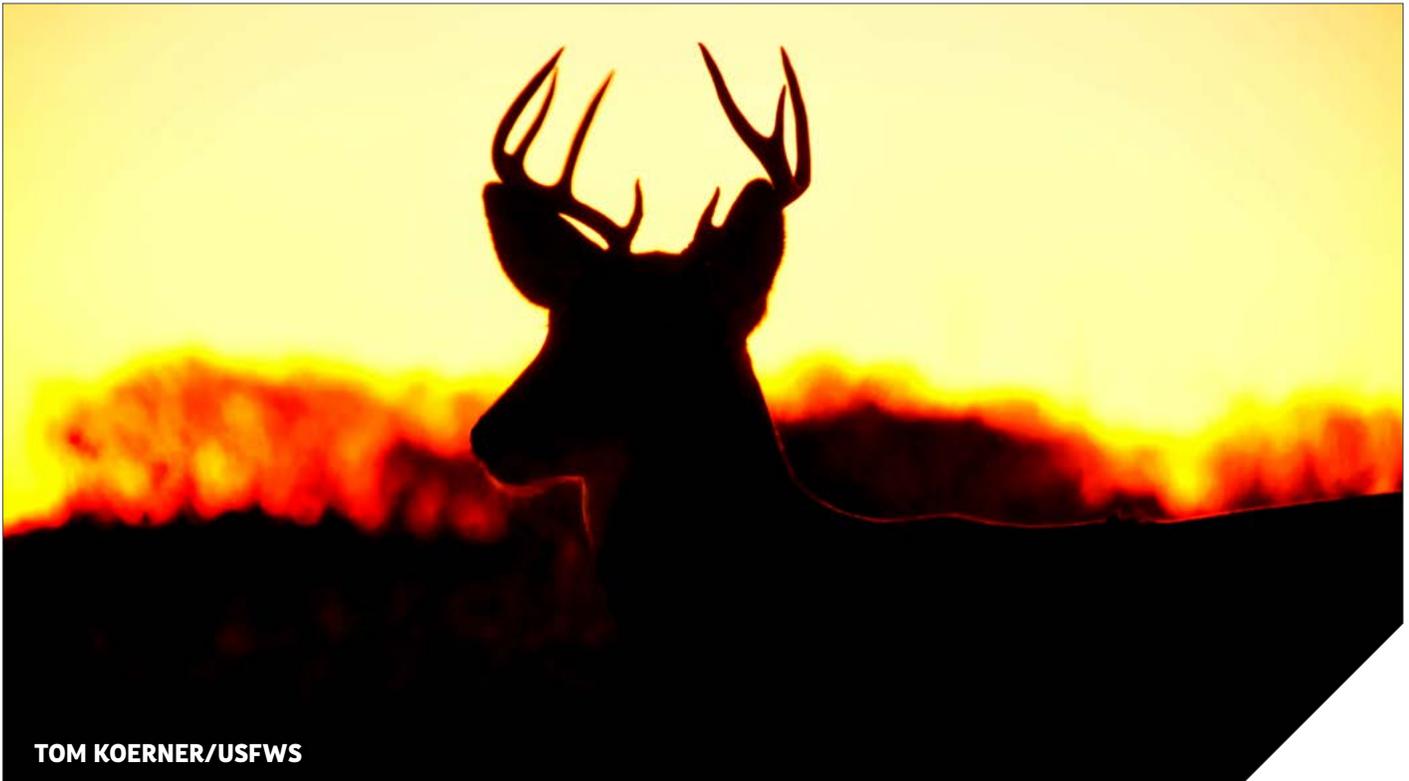
DEER MANAGEMENT ZONES AND DEER MANAGEMENT UNITS IN 2016

Deer management zones and DMUs remain unchanged from last year. However, deer hunters should be familiar with the zone, DMU and land type (public access or private) in which they plan to hunt. Hunters will need this information for their Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tag(s) and any Bonus Antlerless Tags that they purchase. All antlerless tags must be filled only in the zone, DMU and land type designated on the tag. For registration purposes, it is important that hunters properly enter the information regarding where they harvested the deer. For example, if a hunter shot an antlerless deer in Taylor County, the deer would be registered in the Northern Forest (Zone 1), the Taylor DMU and the land type (public or private) listed on the tag.

METRO SUB-UNITS

Six metropolitan areas are designated as sub-units to provide additional hunting opportunity, including extended gun and archery/crossbow seasons. Hunters wishing to pursue antlerless deer in a metro sub-unit must do so using a valid antlerless deer tag designated for the zone, DMU and land type within the sub-unit where they intend to hunt. Some local municipalities may have weapons restrictions - hunters are encouraged to check local ordinances before hunting in metro sub-units.





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BACK TAGS ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED TO BE WORN WHILE HUNTING.

Certain metro sub-units offer, at no cost, a Metro Sub-unit Antlerless Deer Tag. A metro sub-unit tag(s) will be issued upon request to any hunter who purchases a deer hunting license. These metro sub-unit tags are only valid within the zone, DMU, metro sub-unit and land type specified on the tag. Also, select metro sub-units

are offering Bonus Metro Sub-unit Antlerless Deer Tags for the same price as regular bonus antlerless tags. Bonus metro sub-unit antlerless tags are only valid for harvesting an antlerless deer in the zone, DMU, metro sub-unit and land type designated on the tag. These metro sub-unit tags will go on sale using the same schedule as normal Bonus Antlerless Deer Tags. The dates and times of sale are listed in a previous section.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

Hunters are encouraged to check out the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page for additional information. The FAQ feature provides brief responses to a

wide variety of deer hunting questions, ranging from DMU boundaries to antlerless tags. To help deer hunters prepare for the 2016 season, the department will host a number of online chats with wildlife and regulations experts. For more information and to view a schedule of upcoming chats, search keyword "[chat](#)."



WISCONSIN'S DEER MANAGEMENT GET INVOLVED

There are many opportunities available to play an active role in the management of white-tailed deer in Wisconsin:

DEER HUNTER WILDLIFE SURVEY

Help monitor the relative abundance and distribution of deer and other wildlife species in Wisconsin. Use an online form to record your experiences and submit information you collected during your time in the field. To submit your observations, search keywords "[deer hunter wildlife](#)."

OPERATION DEER WATCH

Help monitor deer reproduction in Wisconsin. Keep a tally sheet in your car, or go online, and record all deer sightings from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30. DNR biologists are interested in all buck, doe and fawn sightings. Operation Deer Watch data is combined with DNR staff observations to help estimate fawn-to-doe ratios and deer population estimates. For more information regarding Operation Deer Watch, search keywords "[operation deer watch](#)." Help monitor deer reproduction in Wisconsin. Keep a tally sheet in your car to record all deer sightings from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30.

DEER HERD FORUMS AND ONLINE PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

Beginning in 2015, annual deer herd forums were combined with spring County Deer Advisory Council quota and permit meetings. These meetings are open to the public, and comments are gathered during the public comment period of these meetings. CDAC meetings provide an opportunity to interact with local wildlife biologists and learn more about deer biology and management, population objectives, and harvest statistics in each county. Those interested in providing feedback on preliminary quota and bonus antlerless permit recommendations can also comment online. To provide input, search keyword "[CDAC](#)."

TRAIL CAMERA PHOTOS

Do you have a trail cam photo of a rare or unusual animal? Trail cameras are a valuable resource for documenting more elusive wildlife, including species that are endangered in Wisconsin. Send in your trail camera photos during any season of the year. To submit photos, search keywords "[deer hunter wildlife](#)."

CONSERVATION CONGRESS SPRING HEARINGS

Annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress meetings, held in each county statewide on the second Monday in April, give citizens the opportunity to comment and vote on proposed fish and wildlife rule changes and submit resolutions for future rule changes. This opportunity is unique to Wisconsin and helps play a significant role in determining how you enjoy your time in the outdoors. For more information regarding spring hearings, search keywords "[spring hearings](#)."

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BIOLOGIST

Wildlife biologists are available to speak with you and to answer questions, address any concerns you have and to gather input when setting the upcoming deer season framework. To get in touch with your local wildlife biologist, search keyword "[contact](#)."

THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS GIVES CITIZENS THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE THE STATE'S CONSERVATION POLICIES

WISCONSIN'S DEER MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTHY DEER AND HEALTHY HABITAT

The Wisconsin Deer Management Assistance Program provides habitat and herd management assistance to landowners interested in managing their property for deer and other wildlife. The department assists landowners with the implementation of forest regeneration and deer hunting practices that will help achieve property goals while considering the ecological and social impacts of white-tailed deer.

In its first year, DMAP enrolled over 43,000 acres across the state, and by the close of the 2016 enrollment period the total acreage enrolled in DMAP approached 221,000 acres. In 2015, more than 200 landowners were surveyed to help gain insight into their experiences with the program. Most landowners sought to improve habitat for deer and other wildlife, including turkey, grouse, woodcock, small game, songbirds and other species.

Survey responses indicated that landowners enjoyed the simplicity of enrollment and were satisfied with additional resources provided through the department's website. Over 90 percent of respondents expressed satisfaction with the site visit and working alongside a local DNR biologist and forester to achieve management goals, while 93 percent said the site-specific management plan was useful. Ninety-seven percent of DMAP enrolled landowners intend to implement at least some of the recommendations provided in their management plan. Overall, over 80 percent of landowners gave the program a good or very good customer service rating. The program is currently working with nearly 1000 landowners throughout Wisconsin. Properties can be enrolled by an individual landowner or through a cooperative of landowners whose property boundaries are within one-half mile of each other. A group

cooperative can be formed to qualify all landowners at a higher enrollment level. DNR staff have worked hard to expand program offerings to DMAP cooperators, and 2016 marks the second year of workshops offered around the state to share information with enrolled landowners about cost-share

ENROLL IN DMAP!

Landowners can enroll in one of three levels:

- Level 1: No acreage requirement, no annual fee (ongoing enrollment);
- Level 2: 160-640 acres; \$75/3 year commitment (annual enrollment deadline of March 1); or
- Level 3: 640+ acres; \$150/3 year commitment (annual enrollment deadline of March 1).



STEVE HILLEBRAND / USFWS

program availability, invasive species management, timber harvest strategies, and deer research and herd health updates. Workshops include landowner-led tours of DMAP properties to share experiences and lessons learned in land management. In addition, DMAP cooperators are able to voluntarily participate in a mentored hunting and trapping program that may help them achieve their property management goals while providing novice hunters access to their property. For more information regarding Wisconsin's DMAP, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "[DMAP](#)."

BENEFITS OF DMAP

DMAP participants receive (depending on their level of enrollment as outlined above):

- personal interaction with DNR staff and communication on land and herd management
- access to an online library of wildlife and habitat management resources
- invitations to a series of interactive workshops
- networking opportunities with other landowners with common goals
- property site visits from a wildlife biologist and forester
- written site-specific management plan; and
- reduced price antlerless tags.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Tim Marien, DNR Wildlife Health Biologist, (608) 264-6046, timothy.marien@wisconsin.gov

Wisconsin has monitored Chronic Wasting Disease for 14 years. Between 2002 and March 2016, the department tested over 193,000 free-ranging deer, of which over 3,100 have tested positive for CWD. There are currently 41 CWD-affected counties. These counties match the counties that are prohibited from baiting and feeding. A county is included if a wild or captive animal has been tested and confirmed to be positive for CWD in the county or if a portion of the county is within a 10-mile radius of a wild or captive animal that has been tested and confirmed to be positive for CWD.

CWD MONITORING IN WISCONSIN

During the 2015 deer hunting season, the department sampled 3,145 deer state-wide with 298 testing positive. Sampling strategies were aimed at detecting new locations and prevalence trends. Monitoring plans focused surveillance on adult deer (the age group most likely to have CWD).

Following the 2012 discovery of a CWD-positive adult doe near Shell Lake, 2015 marked the fourth year of surveillance efforts in Washburn County. Following recommendations from a local

community action team, local landowners, and hunters helped the department sample over 2,000 deer in the area over the last four years. No new positives have been detected. Based on four years of sampling, all information has indicated CWD is not widespread in the Washburn area, and occurs at a very low prevalence rate.



The 2012 discovery of CWD in wild deer in Juneau, Adams, and Portage counties prompted the 2013 surveillance effort in a ten mile radius surrounding the positives utilizing hunter harvested deer. Four additional positives were found in 2013 in Adams and Portage counties, while two additional positives were discovered in Adams County in 2014 and two

more in 2015. Surveillance was also conducted surrounding a CWD-positive captive deer farm in Marathon County, with no wild CWD deer detected.

New in 2015, wildlife staff sampled wild deer in the Fairchild/Augusta area in Eau Claire County, where DATCP discovered CWD-positive deer on a private deer farm. Eighty wild deer were sampled with no wild CWD deer detected.

CWD PREVALENCE IN WISCONSIN

CWD prevalence in Wisconsin has changed over time. Since 2002, CWD prevalence within the western monitoring area encompassing western Dane and eastern Iowa counties has shown an overall increasing trend in all sex and age classes. During the last 14 years, the trend in prevalence in adult males has risen from 8-10 percent to about 30 percent and from about 3-4 percent to nearly 15 percent in adult females. During that same time, the prevalence trend in yearling males has increased from about 2 percent to about 10 percent and from roughly 2 percent to about 8 percent in yearling females. Despite yearly fluctuations, overall prevalence in the endemic area of southern Wisconsin has doubled across

all sex and age classes of deer.

2016 CWD SAMPLING IN WISCONSIN

During the 2016 deer hunting season, the department will continue to sample deer within the Southern Farmland Zone and at select locations in the CWD-affected area. The department will also sample deer around CWD positive deer locations in Washburn, Adams, Juneau, and Portage counties, as well as in the wild deer herd surrounding CWD positive captive deer farms in Marathon, Eau Claire, and Oneida counties. CWD sampling will also occur in Vernon and Crawford counties for surveillance bordering CWD positive deer detected in northeast Iowa near the Mississippi River. Exact sampling locations will be available on the department's website prior to the 2016 archery and crossbow season opener.

Weighted surveillance will continue to play a key role in attempts to further increase the efficacy and efficiency of CWD surveillance efforts. Weighted surveillance focuses collection and sampling efforts on select age and sex classes of harvested deer that are most likely to have the disease. Since CWD is found at higher prevalence rates in adult

males than in other demographic groups of harvested deer, they are at the highest CWD risk and represent the most valuable group of harvested animals to test for CWD detection in areas where the disease has not previously been found. For 2016, weighted surveillance will continue in Marquette and Green Lake counties. In 2015, taxidermists in Marquette and Green Lake counties provided samples, with no positives detected.

A LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM HELPED THE DEPARTMENT SAMPLE OVER 2,000 DEER IN THE WASHBURN AREA OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS. NO NEW POSITIVES HAVE BEEN DETECTED.

CWD IN NORTH AMERICA

As of 2016, 23 states and provinces have identified CWD within free-ranging herds of deer, elk, and/or moose. In some of these states, CWD has been detected in only a handful of animals, while in others vast geographic areas and large numbers of deer are affected.

In Colorado and Wyoming, where CWD has been present for several decades, recent studies have documented high prevalence rates of 20-40 percent. In Wyoming, high prevalence rates at roughly 35 percent have been identified across extensive geographic areas encompassing more than 4,000 square miles. Research suggests CWD is reducing deer numbers in these populations. Examining CWD in other states helps the department anticipate future impacts of CWD in Wisconsin.

Successfully managing CWD will require a sustained effort for many years, and will require cooperation and communication among the department, hunters, agricultural agencies, landowners, farmed cervid producers, and the many citizens of the state who benefit from a healthy deer herd.

DNR game managers are grateful to hunters and other conservationists for their role in assisting with CWD surveillance during the past 14 years. Wisconsin is fortunate to have citizens with such a great conservation ethic and high appreciation for the natural world. For information regarding CWD in Wisconsin, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "CWD."

WHITE-TAILED DEER RESEARCH

Contributed by Daniel Storm, Ungulate Research Scientist, 715-365-4712 Daniel.Storm@Wisconsin.gov

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN DEER STUDY

DNR researchers are embarking on a new, comprehensive study of deer populations in southwestern Wisconsin. This new study will be similar to the recently-completed deer mortality studies, but with a few important differences. The new study will take place in the CWD-endemic area and will determine how CWD impacts deer survival and population growth. In addition, DNR researchers will collar bobcats and coyotes in order to understand the impact of these predators on deer populations in southwest Wisconsin.

WINTER SEVERITY INDEX

The winter severity index is a measurement to help gauge the effects of the winter weather on deer survival. The index was developed in the early 1970s, and is calculated by adding the number of days with 18 inches or more of snow on the ground

to the number of days when the minimum temperatures were 0°F or below. In general, the severity of the winter is based on the total number of points accumulated over the collection period. A winter with an index of less than 50

Winter in 2015 was mild across most of northern Wisconsin. The average winter severity index for northern Wisconsin was 22, which is considered mild and is also the fourth-mildest winter since record-keeping began in the winter of 1960-1961.

is considered mild, 50 to 79 is moderate, 80 to 99 is severe, and over 100 is very severe. Winter in 2015 was mild across most of northern Wisconsin. The average winter severity index for northern Wisconsin was 22, which is considered mild and is also the fourth-mildest winter since record-keeping began in the winter of 1960-1961. Most stations reported WSIs between 15 and

25, while the Gile, Upson, and Mercer stations in Iron County had WSIs in the mid-50s. Based on both history and the recent deer mortality studies, WDNR expects minimal impacts from last winter on deer survival and reproduction.

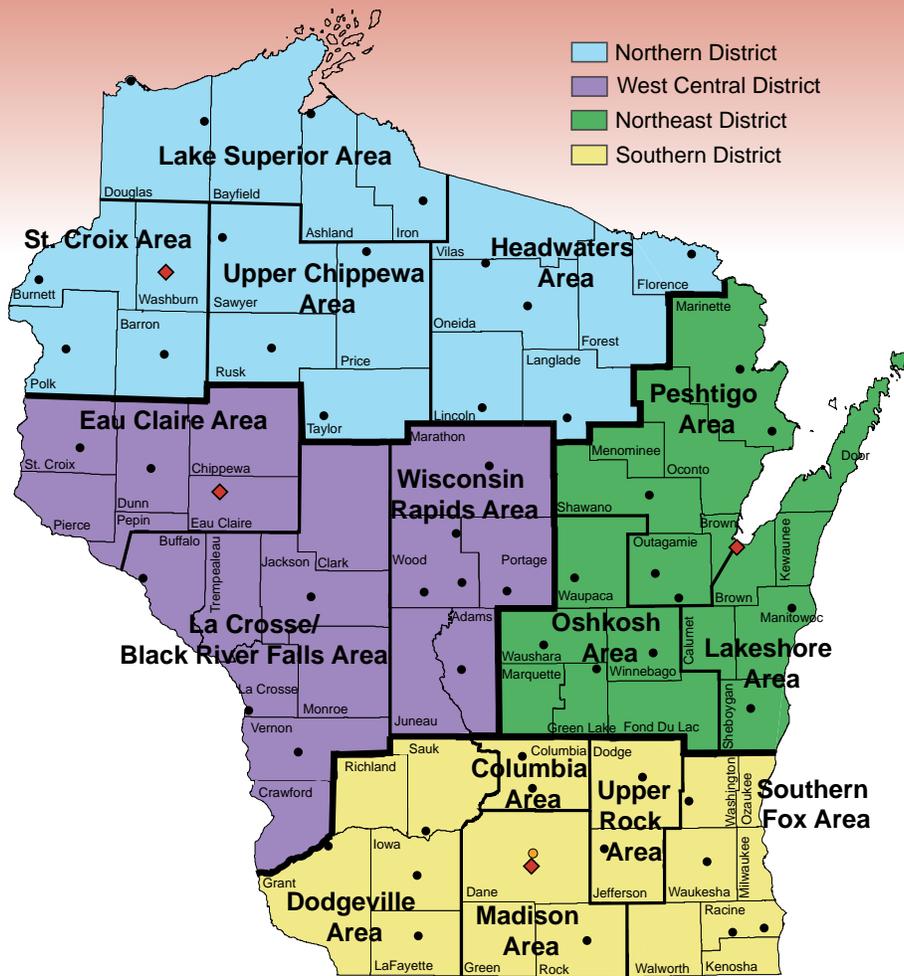
SNAPSHOT WISCONSIN

Snapshot Wisconsin is a trail camera project run by DNR staff and volunteers to help monitor deer, predators of deer, and other wildlife across the state of Wisconsin. This project launched in Spring 2016 in Iowa and Sawyer counties, where over 150 volunteers were enrolled by Summer 2016 to host a Snapshot Wisconsin trail camera on their property. Over the next five years, Snapshot Wisconsin will extend into all of Wisconsin's counties and reach over 3,000 volunteers. In fall 2016, Jackson, Iron, Manitowoc and Waupaca counties will open to interested volunteers. For more information, please visit dnr.wi.gov keyword "[Snapshot Wisconsin](#)."



2016 DEER SEASON

DISTRICT FORECASTS



- Wildlife Staff Offices
- ◆ Headquarter Office
 - Central Office
 - Staff Office

Note: Office locations are approximate.



WEST CENTRAL

Dave Matheys, DNR wildlife biologist, 608-637-3938, david.matheys@wisconsin.gov

Across the 19-county DNR West Central District, wildlife biologists are optimistic about deer hunting opportunities for the 2016 deer hunting seasons. As deer hunters may recall, the Deer Trustee Report led to numerous deer hunting regulations and deer management strategy changes in 2014, with deer management units now realigned to coincide with county boundaries. The WCD lies within three distinct deer management zones: the Southern

Farmland, Central Farmland, and Central Forest zones. Each deer management unit has a specific three-year population objective to increase, decrease, or stabilize the deer population. The 2015-2017 objective in all WCD farmland units, except for Buffalo, Chippewa, and Trempealeau counties, is to stabilize deer populations, while the objective in all Central Forest units is to increase deer populations. The objective in Buffalo County calls for a decrease

in deer numbers, while Chippewa and Trempealeau Counties opted to increase deer numbers. Season structure and antlerless deer permit numbers in each county Deer Management Unit reflect the strategies recommended by local County Deer Advisory Councils used to achieve these goals.

Generally speaking, from Dunn County in the north to Crawford County in the southern end of the district, deer in the WCD's farmland



zones are doing well, and hunters can expect an increase in deer numbers from those experienced in 2015. Deer numbers in the WCD's Central Forest Zone are comparable or slightly improved from 2015.

Wildlife biologist for St. Croix and Pierce Counties, Ryan Haffele, summarized the reasons for continued optimism shared by his fellow wildlife biologists throughout the WCD farmland zones: "Mild winter weather, good to excellent spring fawn production and survival, and conservative antlerless tag issuance over the past several years has boosted deer

populations. The increased populations should lead to increased hunter observations of deer and harvest opportunities. I expect very similar hunting conditions in 2016 in St. Croix and Pierce Counties as last year. We are seeing a lot of good fawn recruitment, with most does guiding two fawns around."

Those observations are echoed by Mark Rasmussen, wildlife biologist for Buffalo and Trempealeau counties who notes, "Deer numbers are very strong in both counties, and there should be ample hunting opportunities for archers and gun hunters - DNR staff

commonly see deer while in the field on both public and private lands. Farmers are reporting more deer this year than the past several years as well. With the mild winter and quick spring green-up, fawn recruitment appears to be excellent. Most does are being seen with at least one fawn, with twins being common as well."

While 4000 bonus antlerless tags are available for private lands and 500 for public lands in Buffalo County, Rasmussen mentions that only 500 bonus antlerless tags are available for private lands in Trempealeau County. There are no bonus antlerless permits for

Trempealeau County public lands. Farmland Zone antlerless tags are included with the purchase of each deer hunting license, so all hunters will have the opportunity to harvest at least one antlerless deer this fall.

Hunters in Dunn and Pepin Counties should generally expect to see slightly more deer this year following a second consecutive mild winter and exceptional fawn recruitment this spring, according to Jess Carstens, wildlife biologist for these two counties. "While irregular deer distribution throughout the two counties will continue to pose challenges to some hunters, overall herd numbers are strong," said Carstens.

This fall's acorn crop will be worth watching, as a late frost seemed to stunt the development of many oak trees in the area. Dunn and Pepin counties have a population objective of "maintain," and will have an abundant supply of bonus antlerless tags available to hunters for purchase in addition to the free Farmland (Zone 2) antlerless tag that comes with each license purchase. In Dunn County, there will be 2500 bonus tags available for purchase, with 2100 of those tags available for private land in the county, and 400 available for public land. The Dunn County CDAC

recognizes that the local herd is growing, and established an antlerless harvest quota of 7200, which, if achieved, will adequately maintain the population. The Pepin County CDAC also recognizes a higher rate of population growth - as such, two Farmland Zone antlerless tags (valid only in Pepin Co.) will be issued with

THE 2015-2017 OBJECTIVE IN ALL WCD FARMLAND UNITS, EXCEPT FOR BUFFALO, CHIPPEWA, AND TREMPEALEAU COUNTIES, IS TO STABILIZE DEER POPULATIONS, WHILE THE OBJECTIVE IN ALL CENTRAL FOREST UNITS IS TO INCREASE DEER POPULATIONS.

each license purchased. Also, a seven day antlerless only Holiday Hunt, running from Dec. 24 - Jan. 1 is in place, in addition to the standard Farmland Zone season structure. Pepin County will also offer 1000 bonus antlerless tags, with 925 tags available for private land and 75 available for public lands.

It is also worth noting that both Dunn and Pepin Counties currently have open

seats on their County Deer Advisory Councils. Anyone interested in filling a seat and taking an active role in deer population management should visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "[CDAC](#)" for more information.

Bill Hogseth, DNR wildlife biologist for Eau Claire County, notes that hunters in northern Chippewa County will be pleased that recent timber harvests in the Chippewa County Forest are creating ample deer habitat as regenerating timber provides plentiful food and thick shelter for winter cover and fawn production. In an effort to rebuild the deer herd, members of the local CDAC have chosen to not include Farmland Zone antlerless tags with each license in 2016; instead, only a limited number of bonus tags will be available for those wishing to harvest an antlerless deer.

Deer hunters in Crawford, Vernon, La Crosse, and the farmland portions of Monroe, Adams, and Juneau Counties should also encounter strong deer populations this fall. Some of the stronger deer numbers in the WCD continue to reside in Vernon County. "Like most counties in the driftless area, Vernon County's rugged topography and small amount of public land leads



to challenging deer hunting,” said Anna Jahns, DNR wildlife technician in Viroqua. Jahns further explains that these two factors, however, play vital roles in the county’s notoriety for producing large-antlered bucks. Two Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tags are included at no cost with the purchase of each deer hunting license in Crawford and Vernon Counties. While there are no bonus tags available for purchase for use on public land in Crawford County, 3,500 private land bonus tags are available. In Vernon County, 100 public land and 1,000 private land bonus tags will be available for purchase. The La Crosse Metro Sub-unit and Hudson Metro Sub-unit have extended archery and gun deer seasons again this year in an effort to help control deer numbers. Please see the

2016 Wisconsin Deer Hunting Regulations for Metro Sub-unit hunting season dates and visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[antlerless tags](#)” for tag availability. Hunters interested in hunting the La Crosse or Hudson Metropolitan Sub-units should be aware that they may now obtain a Farmland Zone tag at no cost for St. Croix or Pierce County valid countywide, as well as an additional Metro Sub-unit antlerless tag valid only in those metro areas to help increase harvest pressure on the urban deer. Hunters who traditionally hunt the Central Forest Zone areas of Eau Claire, Clark, Jackson, Wood, Adams, Juneau, and Monroe Counties should notice more deer this year. The department’s Black River Falls wildlife biologist, Scott Roepke, offers, “After another exceptionally mild winter and low overall antlerless harvest, deer numbers continue to rebound in both Jackson and Clark counties.” Hunters, motorists, and outdoor recreationalists all report seeing an increased number of deer on the landscape compared to previous years. Crop and natural forage production should be at or near their maximum potential this summer, providing deer a smorgasbord of food options on the landscape. Keying in on what deer are feeding on

at specific times during the hunting season can work to a hunter’s advantage. The Forest Management Zone areas of Jackson and Clark counties are a constantly evolving landscape due to timber harvest activities. Timber harvests are important for many reasons and in most cases provide deer with improved habitat conditions. Hunters are encouraged to scout their hunting area prior to the season rolling around and adjust their stand locations accordingly. Bonus antlerless tags will be in limited supply or not available in certain areas again as recommended by the CDACs. The Forest Zone of Jackson County will see another season of buck-only hunting and no bonus antlerless permits will be issued for public lands in the Farmland Zone in Jackson County. If hunters are interested in harvesting antlerless deer in the Farmland Zone of Jackson County, they are encouraged

HUNTERS WHO TRADITIONALLY HUNT THE CENTRAL FOREST ZONE AREAS OF EAU CLAIRE, CLARK, JACKSON, WOOD, ADAMS, JUNEAU, AND MONROE COUNTIES SHOULD NOTICE MORE DEER THIS YEAR.

to utilize the Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tag included with the purchase of their deer hunting licenses.

Roepke reminds hunters that elk reintroduction efforts continue in the Central Forest Zone of Jackson County, and elk are currently a protected species. As always, hunters must exercise the basic principles of hunter safety, and deer hunters in this area should be particularly mindful to be sure of their target and what lies beyond.

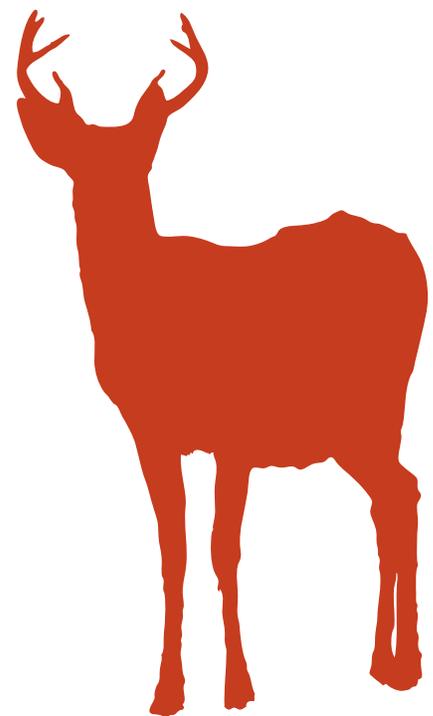
Long-time Central Forest Zone DNR wildlife biologist Wayne Hall forecasts deer numbers and deer hunting opportunities throughout the Central Forest Zone to be improved from 2015 due to two mild winters in a row and increased fawn recruitment. The deer herd in the Central Forest Zone is not as productive as in the Farmland zones, and is slower to increase. Hall further notes that adequate and timely spring and summer moisture has vegetation in excellent, lush conditions. Blueberries, huckleberries, and blackberries all have abundant fruits highly sought by deer.

Portage County DNR wildlife biologist Lesa Kardash also expects deer numbers and hunting opportunities to be improved from 2015 due to mild winter conditions and continued



conservative antlerless tag issuance. According to Darren Ladwig, DNR wildlife biologist for Adams and Juneau Counties, "A few years of conservative antlerless tags and increased fawn production in the Central Forest portion of these two counties continue to facilitate deer herd growth." Similar observations have also been noted in the Eau Claire County and Clark County areas of the Central Forest Zone. Ladwig also points out that timber harvests on public lands in Adams and Eau Claire counties over the past several years are regenerating aspen and oak, creating ideal deer habitat that will have positive impacts on deer for years to come. In the Central Forest Zone portion of Eau Claire County, a low number of antlerless deer were harvested in 2015, which may translate into a greater reproduction rate

and an expanding herd size. Hunters in the Augusta and Fairchild area are encouraged to offer their harvested deer for CWD testing to assist the DNR in determining the potential effects on the wild deer herd following detection of a captive CWD positive deer at a game farm in 2015.





THERE ARE MANY OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF WHITE-TAILED DEER IN WISCONSIN

Hunters should be aware that Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tags are unit (county) and land type specific (public access or private). Some counties - Pepin, Buffalo, Vernon, and Crawford - also offer two farmland antlerless tags with the purchase of each deer hunting license. All hunters purchasing deer hunting licenses in the Southern Farmland or Central Farmland Zones have the option to declare this tag at the time of purchasing their deer hunting license, and will designate its use for either public or private land. Hunters who hunt both private and public land should think carefully before declaring their land choice. Limited quantities of bonus antlerless tags are available for sale

in most Farmland Zone units. For more information about bonus antlerless tags, visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[antlerless tags](#)." Many counties within either the Central or Southern Farmland Zones have deer populations that are above goal, and hunters will find great opportunities to put some meat in the freezer this fall if they are able to spend some time scouting and find areas that deer frequent. Deer are currently in their summer patterns, and hunters can key in on those movements and have great success in the first few of weeks of archery season. Bucks will likely be in bachelor groups and can be very visible and predictable in late August into mid-September. Lichtie advises early

season archery hunters to pay close attention to the mast crops where they hunt. The late frost that occurred this spring seems to have reduced many soft mast-producing food sources like apples, dogwood berries, and wild plums. Hard mast like acorns and hickories may also have been affected by the frost. Hunters should pay particular attention to areas

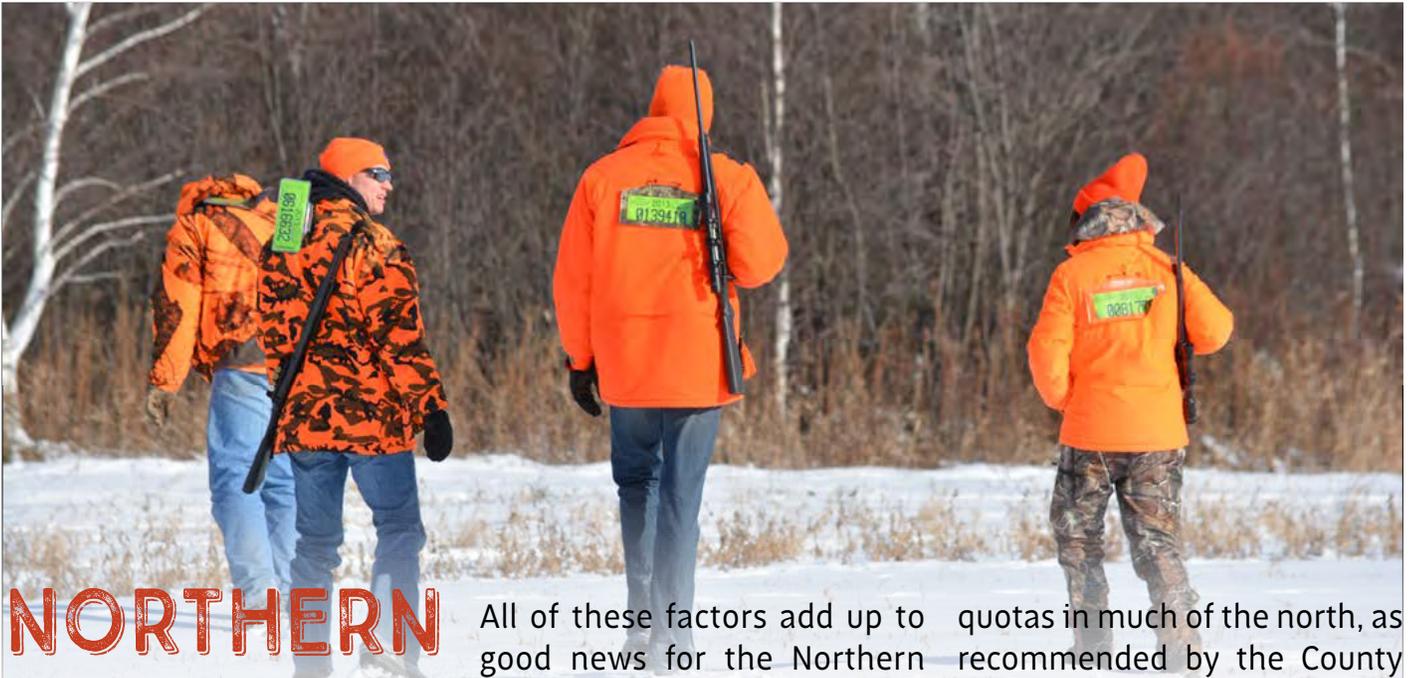
BUCKS WILL LIKELY BE IN BACHELOR GROUPS AND CAN BE VERY VISIBLE AND PREDICTABLE IN LATE AUGUST INTO MID-SEPTEMBER.

with concentrations of white and bur oak. Once white and bur oaks begin to drop acorns, deer will key in on this vital food resource and their movement patterns will change accordingly.

Hunters in portions of Adams, Clark, Crawford, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, Marathon and Portage counties should also be aware that the department will continue to sample hunter harvested deer for Chronic Wasting Disease and appreciate the assistance of hunters to obtain those samples. A network of cooperating taxidermists and meat processors will be assisting in collecting samples throughout the fall from hunter harvested deer. This testing will allow the department to track the prevalence and geographic distribution of the disease. Tests are conducted free of charge to hunters who submit samples with the required hunter and location information. More information regarding CWD surveillance areas and sampling locations can be found at dnr.wi.gov, keywords "[CWD sampling](#)."

West Central District wildlife management staff encourages all deer hunters to enjoy a safe, fun, and successful 2016 deer hunting season.





NORTHERN

Mike Zeckmeister, DNR Northern District wildlife supervisor, 715-635-4090, mike.zeckmeister@wisconsin.gov

An extremely mild winter in 2015-16 and an early spring green-up in 2016 will have a big impact on deer populations across northern Wisconsin. Conditions during the winter of 2014-15 were much milder compared to the very severe winter we experienced in 2013-14. Winter health assessments conducted during late winter and early spring reinforce what we already suspected: body conditions of these deer were in good shape and there was good productivity of does. We had several cases of doe fawns (born in 2015) carrying fawns. Although this is more common in southern Wisconsin, it is more significant for northern Wisconsin.

All of these factors add up to good news for the Northern Forest Deer Management Zone. Researchers and local wildlife managers expect fawn recruitment to be very good. This is good news for those counties where we have had zero or very low quotas the past few years in an attempt to rebuild the deer herd. However, hunters can expect that this re-building will still take some time - especially in northern tier counties.

AN EXTREMELY MILD WINTER IN 2015-16 AND AN EARLY SPRING GREEN-UP IN 2016 WILL HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON DEER POPULATIONS ACROSS NORTHERN WISCONSIN.

Likewise, we should see excellent antler development due to the milder winter. Conservative

quotas in much of the north, as recommended by the County Deer Advisory Councils, should spell increased deer numbers in Northern Wisconsin. It will, however, take several years to get over the 2013-14 very severe winter from a deer age structure perspective. Lower deer numbers should allow a few years of much-needed relief on forest communities that deer rely on. As always, the best way to prepare deer for the upcoming winter is to thin the herd and to create good browse through wise forest management.

According to Joe Weiss, Washburn County CDAC Chair, "I am encouraged by the number of young deer I am seeing this summer and despite the opinion that shooting does is not popular, it does seem to be warranted in many areas. We are hoping that our predictions for herd growth are proven right this fall."

NORTH -EAST

**Jeff Pritzl, DNR Northeast
District wildlife supervisor,
(920) 662-5127,**

jeffrey.pritzl@wisconsin.gov

Deer harvest in the Northern Forest Zone portions of Marinette and Oconto counties did not show evidence of herd growth during the 2015 season, but after a second mild winter, we can expect more adult deer in the herd this fall. Buck sightings should improve as fawns from 2015 will be sporting their first set of antlers. County Deer Advisory Councils in these counties recommended a conservative antlerless harvest approach, waiting to see harvest evidence that the herd is growing before making more aggressive recommendations in the coming years. Antlerless quotas are reduced a bit in the Forest Zone portions of the counties, and held steady in the Farmland Zone. Conditions appear favorable for a solid acorn crop, although this can quickly be impacted, like in 2015 when what looked like good acorn numbers did not turn into a good food source as many acorns were attacked by insect larvae which consumed the nuts. Hopefully this year, more will be full of meat.



CARLY BROWN / DNR

Fawn production and survival is expected to be very good again this year in the Central Farmland Zone. Some Farmland Zone County Deer Advisory Councils are finding it challenging to meet their objective to stabilize their deer herd in the face of high fawn productivity. Antlerless quotas increased compared to 2015 in 10 counties in the Northeast District, but some counties held steady, acknowledging that the quota is already higher than historical harvests.

The call for increasing the antlerless portion of the harvest in an attempt to stabilize herd growth was led by the Waupaca County CDAC's initial recommendation to have an antlerless-only season in 2016. Their final recommendation was to allow buck harvest, but the message from Waupaca

and surrounding counties, as well as the Lake Michigan coast counties of Door, Kewaunee and Manitowoc is that in order to demonstrate the ability to maintain a stable deer population, the antlerless harvest must increase. Those counties have provided hunters generous opportunities to achieve that goal in the form of multiple antlerless permits and implementation of the Holiday Hunt in some counties. Buck harvests are expected to be good throughout the District this year. Of course there are many variables that make hunting somewhat unpredictable, but that is also what makes hunting intriguing and an adventure every day. This year is a great opportunity to explore some new areas and enjoy all the bounties that the autumn landscape provides.



USFWS PHOTO

SOUTHERN

Bret Owsley, area wildlife supervisor, 920-387-7874, bret.owsley@wisconsin.gov

The fall 2016 deer herd across the 18-county Southern District, all of which falls within the Southern Farmland Zone, came through an extremely mild winter. In general, the population is looking very good to great. Many DNR staff and the general public have reported seeing deer frequently this summer - including a high number of fawns. With lower than historic antlerless harvest

last year, hunters should see numbers slightly higher than last fall. However, it is important for hunters to keep in mind that there is great variation in the habitat as well as the quality of the habitat across the landscape and as a result, the number of deer between individual properties can vary significantly. An expected increase in deer numbers has resulted in higher antlerless permit recommendations by most County Deer Advisory Councils (CDACs) within the district. This was the second year of operation for the CDACs, which encourage and provide opportunity for public involvement in deer management decisions. Department staff encourages the public to

be involved with their local CDAC in developing the deer season structure.

The Southern District encompasses a wide range of deer habitat types, from high wooded ridges and coulees in the southwest, to flatter, agriculturally-dominated landscape in Green, Rock and Walworth counties along the Illinois border. We also have rolling southern kettles in the east and extensive wetland and woodland areas in Dodge and Columbia counties. This high level of variation in habitat types and conditions results in local deer numbers that can vary dramatically from one square mile to the next.

Early season food sources appear to be doing well and should provide plenty of opportunities for hunters to

locate deer taking advantage of the hard and soft mast produced during this time of year. In addition, agricultural crops are currently about two weeks ahead of schedule so as long as the growing season continues to go well and the amount of rain in the fall is not excessive, hunters should expect that the corn and soybeans will be harvested early which will impact deer movements. Hunters should keep in mind that once these seasonal food sources are no longer available, deer will start to expand their range looking for other food sources. In areas where deer numbers are the highest, you can expect to see the quality of habitat decrease, resulting in deer traveling further looking for other sources of food. This is where the appropriate habitat and herd management practices can assist in your success throughout the hunting season. I encourage people interested in learning more about habitat and herd management to sign up for the Deer Management Assistance Program at dnr.wi.gov, keyword "[DMAP](#)." Most Southern District deer are harvested on private property, which makes up more than 90 percent of the landscape, but good deer hunting can also

be found on the thousands of acres of county, state and federally owned lands open to deer hunting in southern Wisconsin. Those looking for public land available for hunting can visit dnr.wi.gov and search keywords "public hunting lands." Those hunters interested in hunting on private lands are advised to get out well in advance of deer season to meet with landowners and seek permission to hunt. Remember to get out early to scout the areas you plan to hunt throughout the fall. Keep an eye out for those natural food sources that will attract deer, and pattern their movements to and from those sources.

HUNTERS SHOULD EXPECT THAT THE CORN AND SOYBEANS WILL BE HARVESTED EARLY WHICH WILL IMPACT DEER MOVEMENTS

Another important aspect for Southern District deer hunters to keep in mind is that the prevalence of Chronic Wasting Disease continues to increase in prevalence and geographic area. All but Ozaukee County in the southern district is within the CWD Affected Area and as a result, baiting and feeding of deer is prohibited. With one year of electronic harvest registration under

our belt, hunters interested in getting their deer tested for CWD will be able to go to one of the co-op CWD sample stations or self-service kiosks that will be posted on the DNR website prior to the season opener.

Returning for the first time in a few years in 2016, hunters in six counties within the Southern District will have the opportunity to enjoy the Holiday Hunt during the winter holidays. Those counties include Columbia, Milwaukee, Richland, Rock, Sauk and Waukesha. Other surrounding counties just outside the district will also offer a Holiday Hunt, including Crawford, Green Lake and Marquette counties. The Holiday Hunt runs from Dec. 24 to Jan. 1.

Hunters in the Southern District will also receive 1 to 2 free Farmland (Zone 2) Antlerless Deer Tags with each deer hunting license. The number of tags received will depend upon the county of choice and the recommendations made by CDACs. In the Southern District, all counties have Bonus Antlerless Deer Tags available for sale, except Kenosha and Racine Counties in the far southeastern portion of the District.

We anticipate an excellent deer season in the Southern District in 2016, and wish everyone a safe and successful fall.

2015 SEASON

HIGHLIGHTS



GUN TOTALS

DEER MANAGEMENT ZONE	ANTLERED	ANTLERLESS	*UNKNOWN	TOTAL
Central Farmland	52,136	78,840	0	130,976
Central Forest	5,497	3,563	0	9,060
Northern Forest	19,528	9,266	0	28,794
Southern Farmland	22,596	31,279	2	53,877
Unknown	0	24	0	24
Total	99,757	122,972	2	222,731

ARCHERY TOTALS

DEER MANAGEMENT ZONE	ANTLERED	ANTLERLESS	*UNKNOWN	TOTAL
Central Farmland	17,394	14,367	0	31,761
Central Forest	1,610	520	0	2,130
Northern Forest	4,628	1,123	0	5,751
Southern Farmland	7,597	5,765	0	13,362
Unknown	0	0	0	0
Total	31,229	21,775	0	53,004

CROSSBOW TOTALS

DEER MANAGEMENT ZONE	ANTLERED	ANTLERLESS	*UNKNOWN	TOTAL
Central Farmland	11,112	9,208	0	20,320
Central Forest	1,184	428	0	1,612
Northern Forest	4,723	1,227	0	5,950
Southern Farmland	3,575	2,637	0	6,212
Unknown	0	0	0	0
Total	20,594	13,500	0	34,094

*Includes damage deer



2016

WISCONSIN

DEER

HUNTING

FORECAST

STARTING NEW TRADITIONS

