

OHIO

HUNTING AND TRAPPING REGULATIONS 2026-27

Effective
September 1, 2026
to August 31, 2027



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
wildohio.gov

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF WILDLIFE



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The Division of Wildlife's mission is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all.

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1-800-WILDLIFE
(1-800-945-3543)
(1-614-265-6300)

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1-800-POACHER
(1-800-762-2437)
(1-614-799-9538)

OHIO GAME CHECK
HuntFishOH.gov
1-877-TAG-IT-OH
(1-877-824-4864)

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1-877-HIP-OHIO
(1-877-447-6446)

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DIVISION OF WILDLIFE DISTRICT OFFICES

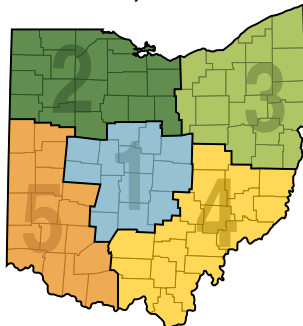
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2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

THIS SUMMARY is intended for the convenience of hunters and trappers and IS NOT INTENDED to cover all laws and regulations. THIS SUMMARY is not intended for use as evidence or as a defense in a criminal or civil case. Because of possible changes, this summary may not be an accurate reflection of the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code, which contains the details of these regulations. Copies of the actual laws are available for review at each Division of Wildlife district office and online at codes.ohio.gov.

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2026-27 NOTEWORTHY CHANGES

- Deer management permits can be used throughout the deer season. See page 6.
- County bag limits for deer hunting changed in Athens, Defiance, Meigs, Paulding, Warren, and Washington counties as well as in the disease surveillance area. See page 7.
- The disease surveillance area expanded to include all of Allen County, Holmes Township in Crawford County, and Van Buren Township in Hancock County. See page 11.
- Wild turkey hunting during the fall season is permitted only with shotguns using shotshells. See page 12.
- Ruffed grouse hunting will be limited to controlled hunting with a permit on designated areas. See page 17.
- Revised waterfowl hunting zones take effect in the 2026-27 seasons. See page 19.

The primary source of funding for the Ohio Division of Wildlife comes from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, federal excise taxes on hunting, fishing, and shooting equipment, capital bond dollars, and donations from the public. We care about all wildlife and maintaining stable, healthy wildlife populations. Our challenge is to balance the needs of wildlife, habitat, and people.

On the cover:
Beagle, Ruby



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- Purchase licenses and permits
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- Apply for controlled hunts
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Official licensing app of the Ohio Division of Wildlife

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

SEASONS & DATES

	SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	PAGE
White-tailed Deer HUNTING	Archery	Sept. 26, 2026	Feb. 7, 2027	6
	Youth Gun	Nov. 21, 2026	Nov. 22, 2026	6
	Gun	Nov. 30, 2026 Dec. 19, 2026	Dec. 6, 2026 Dec. 20, 2026	6
	Muzzleloader	Jan. 2, 2027	Jan. 5, 2027	6
DSA Deer HUNTING	DSA Archery	Sept. 12, 2026	Feb. 7, 2027	11
	DSA Early Gun	Oct. 10, 2026	Oct. 12, 2026	11
Wild Turkey HUNTING	Fall Turkey (select counties)	Oct. 1, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026	12
	Spring Turkey	To be announced		12
Small Game & Furbearer HUNTING	American Crow (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday only)	June 5, 2026 June 4, 2027	March 7, 2027 March 5, 2028	16
	Squirrel (red, gray, and fox)	Sept. 1, 2026	Jan. 31, 2027	16
	Ruffed Grouse	Controlled hunts only		16
	Cottontail Rabbit	Nov. 6, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	16
	Ring-necked Pheasant	Nov. 6, 2026	Jan. 10, 2027	16
	Chukar	Nov. 6, 2026	Jan. 10, 2027	16
	Bobwhite Quail (select counties and wildlife areas)	Nov. 6, 2026	Nov. 29, 2026	16
	Fox (red and gray), Raccoon, Skunk, Opossum, and Weasel	Nov. 10, 2026	Jan. 31, 2027	16
	Coyote	No closed season		16
	Groundhog	No closed season		16
	Youth Small Game	Oct. 24, 2026 Oct. 31, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Nov. 1, 2026	16
Furbearer TRAPPING	Fox (red and gray), Raccoon, Skunk, Opossum, and Weasel	Nov. 10, 2026	Jan. 31, 2027	23
	Mink, Muskrat	Nov. 10, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	23
	Coyote	No closed season		23
	Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Opossum, Skunk, Weasel (select counties)	Nov. 10, 2026	March 15, 2027	23
	Beaver	Dec. 26, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	23
	River Otter	Dec. 26, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	23

SEASONS & DATES

	SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	PAGE
Early Waterfowl HUNTING	Canada Goose	Sept. 5, 2026	Sept. 13, 2026	18
	Teal (Blue-winged, Green-winged, and Cinnamon)	Sept. 5, 2026	Sept. 13, 2026	18
Youth Waterfowl HUNTING	Hunters 17 years old or younger	Oct. 3, 2026	Oct. 4, 2026	19
Military Waterfowl HUNTING	Active duty military and veterans	Oct. 3, 2026	Oct. 4, 2026	19
Zone A Waterfowl HUNTING	Goose (Canada, White-fronted, Snow, Blue, Ross's), Brant	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 14, 2026	Nov. 1, 2026 Feb. 1, 2027	19
	Duck, Coot, and Merganser	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 14, 2026	Nov. 1, 2026 Dec. 27, 2026	19
Zone B Waterfowl HUNTING	Goose (Canada, White-fronted, Snow, Blue, Ross's), Brant	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 21, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Feb. 15, 2027	19
	Duck, Coot, and Merganser	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 21, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Jan. 10, 2027	19
Zone C Waterfowl HUNTING	Goose (Canada, White-fronted, Snow, Blue, Ross's), Brant	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 21, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Feb. 15, 2027	19
	Duck, Coot, and Merganser	Oct. 17, 2026 Dec. 12, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Jan. 31, 2027	19
Migratory Bird HUNTING	Dove (Mourning and Eurasian collared)	Sept. 1, 2026 Dec. 12, 2026	Nov. 8, 2026 Jan. 1, 2027	18
	Rail (Virginia, Sora)	Sept. 1, 2026	Nov. 9, 2026	18
	Gallinule	Sept. 1, 2026	Nov. 9, 2026	18
	Wilson's Snipe	Sept. 1, 2026 Dec. 12, 2026	Nov. 25, 2026 Jan. 1, 2027	18
	American Woodcock	Oct. 16, 2026	Nov. 29, 2026	18

HUNTER ORANGE REQUIRED



Hunting any wild animal (except waterfowl) from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset during the **youth deer gun season, deer gun seasons, and the deer muzzleloader season** is unlawful unless the hunter is visibly wearing a vest, coat, jacket, or coveralls that are either solid hunter orange or camouflage hunter orange.

This requirement applies statewide on both public and private land.

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNTING

SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	STATEWIDE LIMIT
Archery	Sept. 26, 2026	Feb. 7, 2027	Only one may be antlered. Statewide limit is six deer. Hunters may combine individual county harvests to reach the statewide limit.
Youth Gun	Nov. 21, 2026	Nov. 22, 2026	
Gun	Nov. 30, 2026	Dec. 6, 2026	
Bonus Gun	Dec. 19, 2026	Dec. 20, 2026	
Muzzleloader	Jan. 2, 2027	Jan. 5, 2027	
DSA SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	
Archery	Sept. 12, 2026	Feb. 7, 2027	
Early Gun	Oct. 10, 2026	Oct. 12, 2026	

► See page 7 for specific DSA area and boundaries. See page 11 for more information about the DSA.

HUNTING HOURS

Hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.



PUBLIC HUNTING AREAS

No more than two antlerless deer may be taken from all public hunting areas per license year. A list of public hunting areas is available at wildohio.gov. Authorized Division of Wildlife controlled hunts; Andreoff, Big Island, Delaware, Killdeer Plains, Lake La Su An, Lawrence Woods, and Wyandot wildlife areas are exempt.

Hunters may not hunt deer over bait on any public hunting area.

YOUTH DEER GUN SEASON

- Deer taken by youth hunters during the youth deer gun season count toward the county and statewide bag limits.
- All youths and nonhunting adults must visibly wear the required hunter orange clothing.

DEER PERMITS

In addition to a valid Ohio hunting license, hunters are required to purchase an either-sex deer permit or a deer management permit to hunt deer in Ohio, unless exempt.

- The either-sex deer permit is valid statewide from Sept. 26, 2026 to Feb. 7, 2027. In the disease surveillance area, the either-sex deer permit is valid from Sept. 12, 2026 to Feb. 7, 2027.
- The deer management permit is valid statewide from Sept. 26, 2026 to Feb. 7, 2027. In the disease surveillance area, the deer management permit is valid from Sept. 12, 2026 to Feb. 7, 2027.

EITHER-SEX DEER PERMIT

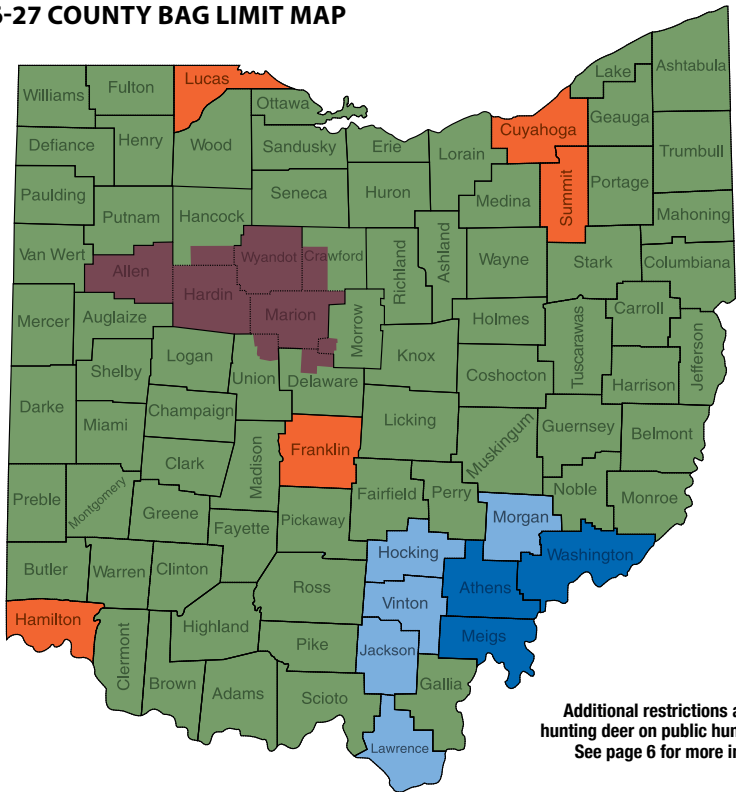
The either-sex deer permit may be used to hunt an antlered or antlerless deer. This permit may be used during any of the deer hunting seasons and controlled hunts. This permit may be purchased individually throughout the entire deer season.

Only one antlered deer may be taken during the 2026-27 season. An antlered deer has at least one antler 3 inches or longer in length.

DEER MANAGEMENT PERMIT

Deer management permits may only be used to take antlerless deer. The permits are valid on both private and public land, and during authorized controlled deer hunts, throughout the deer season.

2026-27 COUNTY BAG LIMIT MAP



Additional restrictions apply when hunting deer on public hunting areas. See page 6 for more information.

2026-27 BAG LIMITS

TWO DEER COUNTY	A hunter may harvest no more than two deer in a two-deer county during the 2026-27 season. No more than one deer may be antlerless. A hunter may use two either-sex permits or one either-sex permit and one deer management permit.
TWO DEER COUNTY	A hunter may harvest no more than two deer in a two-deer county during the 2026-27 season. A hunter may use two either-sex permits, two deer management permits, or one of each.
THREE DEER COUNTY	A hunter may harvest no more than three deer in a three-deer county during the 2026-27 season. A hunter may use three either-sex permits, three deer management permits, or any combination.
FOUR DEER COUNTY	A hunter may harvest no more than four deer in a four-deer county during the 2026-27 season. A hunter may use four either-sex permits, four deer management permits, or any combination.
SIX DEER DSA ONLY	A hunter may harvest no more than six deer in the Disease Surveillance Area (DSA) during the 2026-27 season. A hunter may use six either-sex permits, six deer management permits, or any combination.

DSA: All of Allen, Hardin, Marion and Wyandot counties; Bucyrus, Dallas, Holmes, and Tod townships in Crawford County; Marlboro, Troy, and Oxford townships in Delaware County; Westfield Township in Morrow County; Delaware, Madison, and Van Buren townships in Hancock County; and Claibourne and Jackson townships in Union County.

TAG AND CHECK

A hunter is required to complete the game check process following the harvest of a white-tailed deer. See page 14 for more information.

HUNTING OTHER GAME DURING DEER FIREARM SEASONS

COYOTE

Coyote hunters are required to wear hunter orange clothing and may only hunt during legal deer season hours, using hunting implements legal for that deer firearm season, with a hunting license and valid deer permit.

FURBEARERS (EXCEPT COYOTE)

During legal deer season hours, furbearer hunters may only hunt with a shotgun using No. 4 shot size or smaller and are required to visibly wear hunter orange clothing. Hunter orange clothing is not required from 30 minutes after sunset to 30 minutes before sunrise.

WATERFOWL

Waterfowl hunters are not required to wear hunter orange clothing and may use any shot size.

ALL OTHER GAME

Hunters may hunt with a shotgun using No. 4 shot size or smaller and are required to wear hunter orange clothing.

LEGAL HUNTING EQUIPMENT

DEER ARCHERY HUNTING

Longbow or Bow: The minimum draw weight is 40 pounds. This includes compound bows and recurve bows. The arrow tip needs a minimum of two cutting edges, which may be exposed or unexposed and a minimum 3/4-inch width. Expandable and mechanical broadheads are legal.

Crossbow: The minimum draw weight is 75 pounds. The arrow tip needs a minimum of two cutting edges, which may be exposed or unexposed and a minimum 3/4-inch width. Expandable and mechanical broadheads are legal.

DEER GUN HUNTING

Shotgun: 10 gauge or smaller shotgun using one ball or one rifled slug per barrel (rifled shotgun barrels are permitted when using shotgun slug ammunition).

Straight-walled cartridge rifles: All straight-walled cartridge calibers from a minimum of .357 to a maximum of .50 (includes .350 Legend).

Straight-Walled Cartridge



Shotguns and straight-walled cartridge rifles can be loaded with no more than three shells in the chamber and magazine combined.

Cartridge with Shoulder



Muzzleloading rifle: .38 caliber or larger.

Muzzleloading shotgun: 10-gauge or smaller using one ball per barrel.

Handgun: With a 5-inch minimum length barrel, using straight-walled cartridges .357 caliber or larger. The barrel is measured from the front of the cylinder or the chamber to the end of the barrel.

DEER MUZZLELOADER HUNTING

Muzzleloading rifle: .38 caliber or larger.

Muzzleloading shotgun: 10-gauge or smaller using one ball per barrel.

► You may carry only **ONE** hunting implement while hunting deer. (See Concealed Handguns on page 35)

A DEER HUNTER MAY DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. A successful deer hunter may aid or assist another hunter who is hunting deer if the deer permit has been filled in, he or she does not carry any hunting implement commonly used to kill wild animals, and has a valid hunting license. Those persons exempted from having a hunting license and deer permits for deer hunting on their property are required to have a hunting license and deer permit to aid another hunter off of their property or hunt deer off of their property.
2. Take more than one deer per day as long as the harvested animal's information has been recorded on the permit or submitted to game check.
3. Hunt deer over bait, except on public hunting areas and in the Disease Surveillance Area. Restrictions apply, see pages 10, 11, 35, and 36.
4. Carry a printed or electronic copy of the deer permit.
5. Possess a communication device.
6. Use a leashed dog to recover a wounded deer.
7. Leave a deer or deer parts with a taxidermist, fur buyer, cold storage, locker plant, or meat processing plant as long as the confirmation code is attached to the animal and all of its separate parts. Persons receiving a deer from another person must keep the confirmation code with the animal and all of its separate parts.
8. Archery hunt during the youth deer gun season, if the archery hunter is not accompanying a hunter participating in the youth deer gun season and is visibly wearing hunter orange.
9. Aerial drones may be used to aid in the recovery of a deer, provided that no one involved in the recovery is carrying a hunting device at the time. If the deer is found alive, the use of the drone will be discontinued before hunting can resume. In this limited case, the drone operator may provide the location where the deer was last located by the drone. See wildohio.gov for additional information. All other uses of a drone or aircraft to hunt or aid in the hunting of deer are unlawful.

A DEER HUNTER MAY NOT DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Pursue wounded deer or recover dead deer, including shed antlers, from private property without the written permission of the landowner.
2. Hunt with a shotgun or straight-walled cartridge rifle loaded with more than three shells in the chamber and magazine combined. This does not apply to handguns.
3. Possess a loaded firearm during any of the deer firearms seasons at any time other than 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. Muzzleloading firearms are considered unloaded when the cap is removed or priming powder is removed from the pan, or when the battery is removed on electronic systems.
4. Use a muzzleloading handgun to hunt deer.
5. Have more than one hunting firearm while hunting deer.
6. Have attached to a longbow or crossbow any mechanical, electrical, or electronic device capable of projecting a visible beam of light. This does not include a device such as a range finder that utilizes nonvisible light.
7. Possess shotshells containing shot during any deer gun season.
8. Use dogs to hunt deer.
9. Check a deer using a permit that was purchased after the animal was harvested.
10. Construct, place, or use a permanent-type tree stand, or place spikes, nails, wires, or other metal objects into a tree to act as steps or to hold a tree stand on public hunting lands. It is also unlawful to make any of these changes to trees on private property without first getting the permission of the landowner or the landowner's authorized agent.
11. Check a deer as a landowner if the hunter is a tenant of the property, unless the tenant is an individual who resides on land for which he or she pays rent and whose annual income is primarily derived from agricultural production conducted on that land.
12. Submit a game check under the account of anyone other than the hunter who harvested the animal.
13. Carry a firearm while deer hunting with a longbow or crossbow (except when legally carrying a concealed handgun, See CONCEALED HANDGUN on page 35).



CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal neurological disease of white-tailed deer. There is no strong evidence that CWD is transmissible to humans. In December 2020, Ohio confirmed its first CWD-positive wild deer in Wyandot County. Additional cases have been confirmed in every year since 2020.

To monitor the prevalence of and implement regulations to slow the spread of the disease, a Disease Surveillance Area (DSA) has been established.

PROTECT OHIO'S DEER HERD

- Properly dispose of a deer carcass. Be sure to double-bag all high-risk parts (brain, spinal cord, eyes, and lymphoid tissues) and dispose of them with your household trash.
- It is illegal to bring high-risk carcass parts into Ohio from anywhere outside the state, or to remove high-risk carcass parts from a disease surveillance area, unless the animal is delivered to a Division of Wildlife certified processor or taxidermist authorized to handle these carcass parts within 24 hours (see Deer Carcass Regulations on page 11).
- Contact a Division of Wildlife district office or state wildlife officer if you see a deer that appears sick, is acting abnormally, or has a visible ear tag.

Scan the QR code with your mobile device for current information on CWD in Ohio ►



DSA RULES INCLUDE:

- The placement of or use of bait (salt, minerals, or any food) to attract or feed deer within the Disease Surveillance Area (DSA) boundaries is prohibited, as is the hunting of deer by the aid of bait.
- Normal agricultural activities, including feeding domestic animals, as well as hunting deer over food plots, naturally occurring or cultivated plants, and agricultural crops are not prohibited in the DSA.

PRECAUTIONS FOR HUNTERS

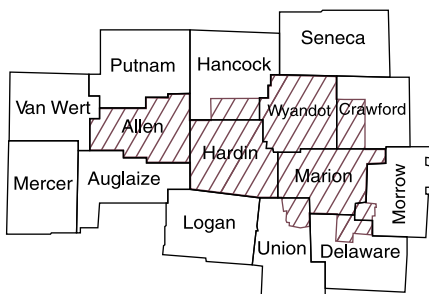
A deer infected with CWD typically does not immediately show signs of the disease. As the disease progresses, the animal begins to lose body condition and stagger, carry its head and ears lowered, drool excessively, and show little fear of humans. They will eventually appear weak and emaciated.

- Wear rubber gloves when field-dressing and thoroughly wash your hands and instruments after field-dressing and butchering.
- Bone out the meat from your animal and minimize the handling of brain and spinal tissues.
- Do not eat the brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils, and lymph nodes.
- Do not consume meat from any animal that tests positive for CWD.
- Hunters who harvest a deer and wish to have it tested for CWD have several options. Scan the QR code at the bottom of this page for current information on where and how to submit a sample for testing.



DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AREA (DSA)

DSA: All of Allen, Hardin, Marion and Wyandot counties; Bucyrus, Dallas, Holmes, and Tod townships in Crawford County; Marlboro, Troy, and Oxford townships in Delaware County; Westfield Township in Morrow County; Delaware, Madison, and Van Buren townships in Hancock County; and Claibourne and Jackson townships in Union County.



SEASON	OPENING	CLOSING
DSA Archery	Sept. 12, 2026	Feb. 7, 2027
DSA Early Gun	Oct. 10, 2026	Oct. 12, 2026

MANDATORY SAMPLING FOR DEER HARVESTED WITHIN THE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AREA (DSA)

- Mandatory sampling is required for ALL deer harvested Oct. 10-11 and Nov. 30-Dec. 1. Staffed sampling locations will be available during the mandatory sampling days at the addresses below.

Hunters can utilize self-serve kiosks to drop their deer off for testing throughout the deer season. Participation is voluntary outside of the four mandatory days noted above. Kiosk locations and dates of operation are available at wildohio.gov and instructions for sample submission will be provided at the kiosk.

Delaware Wildlife Area Shooting Range

1110 State Route 229
Ashley, OH 43003

Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area HQ

19100 CH 115 • Harpster, OH 43323

Hardin County Fairgrounds

14134 County Rd. 140 • Kenton, OH 43326

Hog Creek Game Club

11851 Stemple Rd. • Ada, OH 45810

Rural King

233 American Blvd. • Marion, OH 43302

Wyandot County Fairgrounds

10171 OH 53 • Upper Sandusky, OH 43351

DEER CARCASS REGULATIONS

To minimize risk of spreading CWD, possessing high-risk carcass parts from Cervids (deer, moose, elk, and caribou) harvested anywhere outside of Ohio or removed from a disease surveillance area is prohibited.

Only the following parts may be possessed from any Cervid imported from anywhere outside of Ohio or removed from a disease surveillance area: deboned meat; meat that is cut and securely wrapped either commercially or privately with no part of the spinal column or head attached; quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached; antlers; antlers attached to a skull cap from which all soft tissue has been removed; upper canine teeth from which all soft tissue has been removed; hides and capes without any part of the head or lymph nodes attached; finished taxidermy mounts; and soft body tissue wrapped and packaged for use by a diagnostic research laboratory.

Out of state hunters traveling through Ohio may possess any Cervid carcass (or part of a carcass), provided the carcass or parts are not off-loaded from the vehicle.

Hunters returning to Ohio with a complete Cervid carcass or parts NOT on the list above, as well as hunters who wish to move a complete carcass or parts NOT on the list above, out of Disease Surveillance Areas, may do so provided that they present the complete carcass or parts not listed above to a certified processor or taxidermist authorized to handle these carcass parts within 24 hours of entering the state or leaving a Disease Surveillance Area.

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

WILD TURKEY HUNTING

SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	BAG LIMIT
Fall Wild Turkey: Select Counties	Oct. 1, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026	1 (either sex)
Spring Wild Turkey	To be announced		

Please refer to the HuntFish OH app or wildohio.gov for the spring wild turkey season dates and hours, which should be available by January 2027.

WILD TURKEY HUNTING

A harvested wild turkey must be checked by 11:30 p.m. on the day of kill.

It is unlawful to hunt or take wild turkeys with the aid or use of bait. An area is considered baited for 10 days after the complete removal of any bait.

It is unlawful to use a live decoy while hunting wild turkeys.

It is unlawful to possess or use an electronic calling device while hunting wild turkeys.

It is unlawful to take or attempt to take a wild turkey while it is in a tree.

It is unlawful to possess more than one hunting implement while turkey hunting. See Concealed Handgun License on page 35.

A successful wild turkey hunter may aid or assist another hunter who is hunting wild turkeys if the turkey permit has been filled in, he or she does not carry any hunting implement commonly used to kill wild animals, and has a valid hunting license. Those persons exempted from having a hunting license and wild turkey permits for turkey hunting on their property are required to have a hunting license and turkey permit to aid another hunter off of their property or hunt turkey off of their property.

TAG AND CHECK

A hunter is required to complete the game check process following the harvest of a wild turkey. See page 14 for information.

YOUTH WILD TURKEY

- A valid hunting license and wild turkey permit are required, unless exempt.
- Hunting hours for youth turkey season are 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset.



FALL WILD TURKEY

- Wild turkey hunting during the fall season is permitted only with shotguns using shotshells. Fall turkey hunting with archery equipment is not permitted.
- A valid Ohio hunting license and fall turkey permit are required, unless exempt.
- A wild turkey of either sex may be hunted during the fall season. The bag limit is **one turkey**.
- Fall wild turkey hunting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset.
- It is legal to use dogs to assist in taking wild turkeys during the fall season only.

2026 FALL WILD TURKEY OPEN COUNTIES MAP



Counties open for fall hunting

SPRING WILD TURKEY

- It shall be unlawful for any person to take or possess a wild turkey during the spring wild turkey season that does not have a visible beard.
- A valid Ohio hunting license and spring turkey permit are required, unless exempt.
- It is legal to use a leashed dog to recover wounded wild turkeys in the spring turkey season.



LEGAL HUNTING EQUIPMENT

FALL WILD TURKEY HUNTING

Shotgun: 10 gauge or smaller shotgun using shot, includes muzzleloading shotguns.

SPRING WILD TURKEY HUNTING

Longbow or Bow: The minimum draw weight is 40 pounds. This includes compound bows and recurve bows. The arrow tip needs to have a minimum of two cutting edges which may be exposed or unexposed, and a minimum 3/4-inch width. Expandable and mechanical broadheads are legal.

Crossbow: The minimum draw weight is 75 pounds. The arrow tip needs to have a minimum of two cutting edges which may be exposed or unexposed, and a minimum 3/4-inch width. Expandable and mechanical broadheads are legal.

Shotgun: 10 gauge or smaller shotgun using shot, includes muzzleloading shotguns.

APPALACHIAN HILLS WILDLIFE AREA

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Linkedin.com/company/
ohio-division-of-wildlife



Ohio Landowner-Hunter ACCESS PARTNERSHIP

The Ohio Landowner-Hunter Access Partnership program (OLHAP) is a way for Ohio hunters to get access to private properties. Access will be granted through an online check-in system from Sept. 1 to June 1 each year between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Visit wildohio.gov or scan the QR code.

GAME CHECK

All hunters who harvest a white-tailed deer or wild turkey are required to complete the game check process.

For deer, the hunter must complete the game check process and receive a confirmation code by noon the day after the kill. If the deer is killed on the last day of a season, it must be checked in by 11:30 p.m. on the day of the kill. For wild turkey, the hunter must complete the game check process and receive a confirmation code by 11:30 p.m. on the same day it was killed.



FILL IN THE PERMIT OR TAG

- Fill in the deer or wild turkey permit immediately upon harvest and prior to moving the carcass with the date, time and county of kill. Submitting through the Division of Wildlife's mobile application fulfills this requirement. **A temporary tag or mobile photo of a permit does not fulfill this requirement.** The game must be tagged once the hunter leaves the animal unattended or arrives at a residence or temporary lodging.
- Exempt landowners are required to make a tag and include their name, date, time, and county of kill. Submitting through the Division of Wildlife's mobile application fulfills this requirement. The tag may remain unattached until the hunter leaves the animal unattended or arrives at a residence or temporary lodging.
- Once the hunter leaves the game unattended, the completed permit or tag, or confirmation code, must be attached. The permit or confirmation code is required to remain with the game at all times.

Regardless of game check method, the hunter must provide the 10-digit permit number, which is printed in large numbers on every permit. Exempt landowners do not need to provide a permit number.

The hunter must answer a series of questions. The hunter will be issued a confirmation code at the end of the process.

The confirmation code may be written on the corresponding permit or tag and attached to the game. When a hunter checks a deer or wild turkey by internet, agent, or mobile application, they will receive a game check receipt with their confirmation code printed on it. Hunters using the telephone game check method will receive the confirmation code over the phone. Hunters using the Division of Wildlife's mobile application will receive their confirmation code once their phone has service.

The confirmation code must remain attached to the game and its parts. The code may be written on the back or bottom of a mount.

A game check receipt may be printed by accessing Ohio's Wildlife Licensing System at HuntFishOH.gov after the game check process is complete.

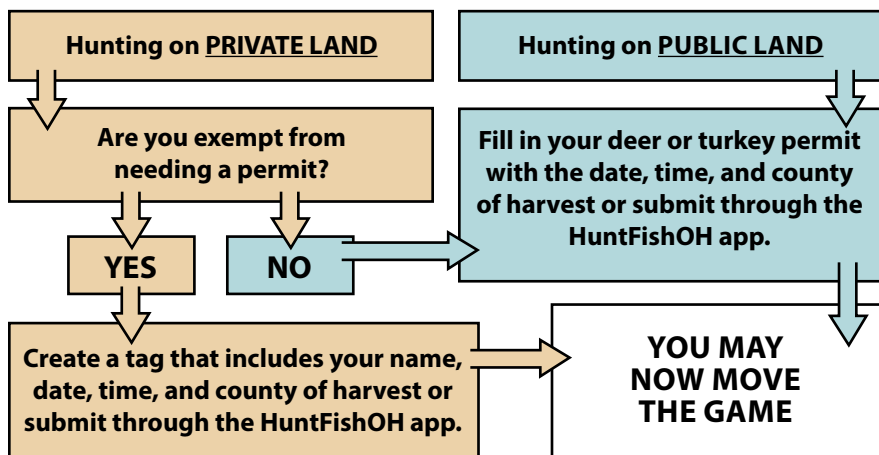
The game check process must be completed prior to skinning or removing the head from a deer, and prior to removing the feet, beard, meat, or feathers from a wild turkey. This does not include field dressing.



COMPLETING THE GAME CHECK PROCESS

WHITE-TAILED DEER & WILD TURKEY

Congratulations on your Ohio deer or turkey harvest!
Before you move your game, follow the steps below.



Complete the game check process through one of the following approved methods

MOBILE APP: HuntFish OH

ONLINE: HuntFishOH.gov

CALL: 1-877-TAG-IT-OH
 (1-877-824-4864) automated

IN-PERSON: Visit any authorized license sales agent

LANDOWNERS ONLY: 1-866-703-1928
 (operator assisted, fees apply)

You will be issued a confirmation code when finished. The code may be written on the corresponding permit or tag and attached to the game. Keep this code attached to the game and its parts, including mounts.

Proceed with processing or butchering the carcass.

ENJOY THE REWARDS OF A SUCCESSFUL HARVEST!

CROWN CITY WILDLIFE AREA



NEW OHIO DOE-NATION PROGRAM

Hunters who harvest a white-tailed deer and don't need the meat can donate their deer at no cost through the Division of Wildlife's deer donation program. Once they've tagged, game checked, and field dressed their harvest, hunters can drop deer off for donation at specified dates and locations during the hunting season. The Division of Wildlife coordinates processing and donation of the venison to local food pantries. **Visit wildohio.gov for more information.**

During the pilot program in the 2025-26 season, Ohio hunters donated more than 5,000 pounds of processed venison to Ohioans in need.

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

SMALL GAME & FURBEARER HUNTING

SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	DAILY LIMIT
Crow: Friday, Saturday, & Sunday only	June 5, 2026 June 4, 2027	March 7, 2027 March 5, 2028	No Limit
Squirrel (red, gray, black, fox)	Sept. 1, 2026	Jan. 31, 2027	6
Ruffed Grouse	Controlled hunts only		See permit
Cottontail Rabbit	Nov. 6, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	4
Ring-necked Pheasant	Nov. 6, 2026	Jan. 10, 2027	2 (males only)
Chukar	Nov. 6, 2026	Jan. 10, 2027	4
Bobwhite Quail: Select counties and wildlife areas	Nov. 6, 2026	Nov. 29, 2026	2
Fox, Raccoon, Skunk, Opossum, Weasel	Nov. 10, 2026	Jan. 31, 2027	No Limit
Coyote	No closed season		No Limit
Groundhog	No closed season		No Limit
Youth Small Game	Oct. 24, 2026 Oct. 31, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Nov. 1, 2026	Same as the regular season

FOX, RACCOON, SKUNK, OPOSSUM, AND WEASEL

No restrictions on hours. Hunters must purchase a hunting license and a fur taker permit to hunt these species.

COYOTE HUNTING

Rifles and night vision scopes are legal for coyote hunting, except for hunting coyotes during any deer gun or deer muzzleloader season, then the hours and legal hunting devices are the same as for the deer season.



QUAIL HUNTING

Hours are sunrise to sunset on private land in open counties, Tri-Valley Wildlife Area, and Crown City Wildlife Area (Crown City offers controlled hunts only). Quail hunting is closed on all other public hunting areas.

2026 BOBWHITE QUAIL OPEN COUNTIES MAP



Counties open for quail hunting on private land only

SQUIRREL HUNTING

Red, gray, black, and fox squirrels are legal game. Hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset

GROUSE HUNTING

Ruffed grouse hunting is limited to controlled hunts on designated areas. Only hunters with a permit are permitted to hunt grouse. Permits are available via controlled access lotteries in July; see page 27.

PHEASANT HUNTING

Hours are sunrise to sunset. Only male pheasants may be killed.

The Division of Wildlife will release pheasants for the youth small game weekends, Oct. 23 and Oct. 31. Additional releases will occur for Nov. 6, Nov. 14, and Nov. 26.

Public releases will take place at Charlemont Metro Park (Lorain County), and the following wildlife areas: Appalachian Hills, Berlin, Caesar Creek, Camp Belden, Darke, Delaware, Fallsville, Grand River, Highlandtown, Indian Creek, Oxbow Lake, Resthaven, Rush Run, Spencer, Spring Valley, Tiffin River, Tri-Valley, West Branch, Wyandot, and Zepernick. Select pheasant hunting fields on Caesar Creek, East Fork, Fallsville South, Funk Bottoms, Killbuck Marsh, Kokosing, Parkersburg, Pater, Pickerel Creek, Shreve Lake, Tranquility, and Wolf Creek wildlife areas, as well as Hancock County Wildlife Area 5 and Wood County Wildlife Area 5, require a controlled access permit on all Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from Oct. 15 to Nov. 15; the Wednesday before Thanksgiving; and Thanksgiving Day. Killdeer Plains, Pleasant Valley, and Salt Fork wildlife areas offer both controlled access pheasant hunts and public hunts. A special permit is required to hunt on Ringneck Ridge Wildlife Area; find additional information from the Sandusky County Park District.

RABBIT HUNTING

Hours are sunrise to sunset.

YOUTH SMALL GAME

Youth small game hunting season is open for rabbit, pheasant, chukar, and quail (in select areas), as well as all other legal game that is in season.

- Quail may be taken only in those counties and wildlife areas which are open to quail hunting.
- Pheasant releases will occur for youth hunts on the following wildlife areas: Appalachian Hills, Berlin, Caesar Creek, Camp Belden, Darke, Delaware, Fallsville, Grand River, Killdeer Plains, Oxbow Lake, Resthaven, Ringneck Ridge (by permit only, find additional information at lovemyparks.com), Rush Run, Spencer, Spring Valley, Tiffin River, Tri-Valley, and Charlemont Metro Park (Lorain County). Daily bag limits are the same as during the regular hunting season.

FERAL SWINE (WILD BOAR)

Feral swine are a non-native, invasive species. Feral swine are also known as wild boar, feral hogs, and feral pigs. Notify the Division of Wildlife within 24 hours if you are aware of the presence of feral swine on public or private property.

- Hunting feral swine (wild boar) is prohibited. The landowner or their agent can eradicate these animals without a hunting license provided they contact the Division of Wildlife and follow the division's instructions for handling, preserving, testing, and disposing of the carcass as soon as practical but no later than 24 hours after the eradication or attempted eradication. See wildohio.gov for additional information.
- Wild boar and feral swine cannot be taken on public hunting areas.

LEGAL HUNTING EQUIPMENT

SMALL GAME & FURBEARER HUNTING

Longbow or Bow: compound and recurve	Handgun: Any caliber
Crossbow	Rifle: Any caliber
Shotgun: 10 gauge or smaller	Airgun

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

WATERFOWL & MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING

SEASONS	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	DAILY LIMIT
Dove (Mourning and Eurasian Collared)	Sept. 1, 2026 Dec. 12, 2026	Nov. 8, 2026 Jan. 1, 2027	15
EARLY: Canada Goose	Sept. 5, 2026	Sept. 13, 2026	5
EARLY: Teal (Blue-winged, Green-winged, & Cinnamon)	Sept. 5, 2026	Sept. 13, 2026	6
Rail (Virginia, Sora)	Sept. 1, 2026	Nov. 9, 2026	25
Gallinule	Sept. 1, 2026	Nov. 9, 2026	15
Wilson's Snipe	Sept. 1, 2026 Dec. 12, 2026	Nov. 25, 2026 Jan. 1, 2027	8
American Woodcock	Oct. 16, 2026	Nov. 29, 2026	3

HUNTING HOURS are sunrise to sunset, unless posted.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sets the frameworks for waterfowl and other migratory game birds. Migratory bird hunting is governed by both state and federal regulations. Waterfowl hunting is permitted when seasons are open during the youth deer gun season, the deer gun season, and the deer muzzleloader season. **The possession limit for waterfowl and migratory birds after the second day is three times the daily bag limit.**

OPENING DAY

No person on the opening day of the season shall possess any freshly killed migratory game birds in excess of the daily bag limit, or aggregate daily bag limit, whichever applies.

TAGGING REQUIREMENT

No person shall put or leave any migratory game birds at any place (other than at their personal abode), or in the custody of another person for picking, cleaning, processing, shipping, transportation, or storage (including temporary storage), or for the purpose of having taxidermy services performed, unless such birds have a tag attached, signed by the hunter, stating their address, the total number and species of birds, and the date such birds were killed. Migratory game birds being transported in any vehicle

as the personal baggage of the possessor shall not be considered as being in storage or temporary storage.

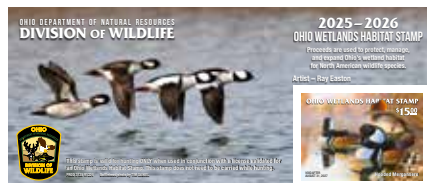
MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING

To hunt migratory birds in Ohio, you must have the following:

- A valid Ohio hunting license.
- Harvest Information Program (HIP) certification.

In addition to the requirements above, to hunt waterfowl in Ohio, you must also have the following:

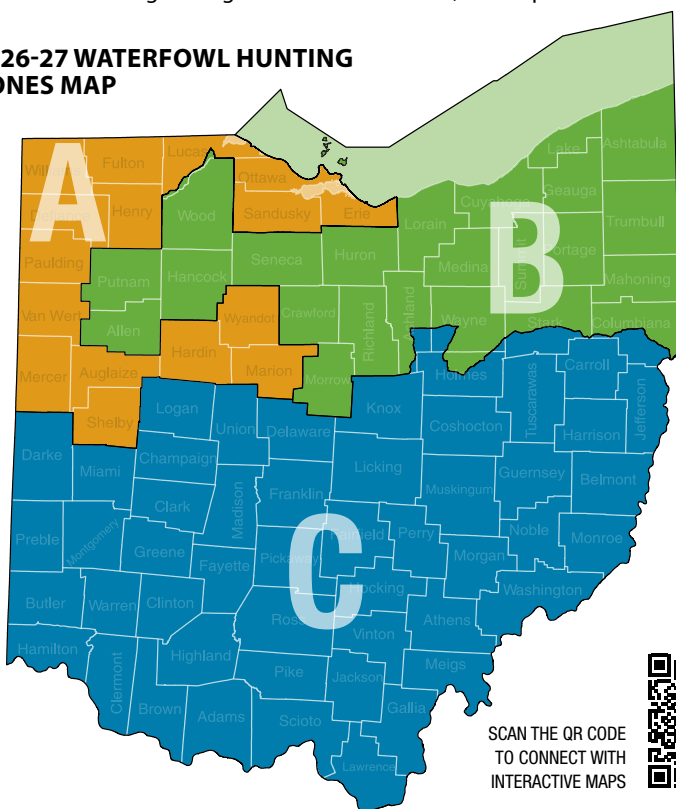
- An Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp endorsement is required of all persons 18 or older.
- A signed federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp (Duck Stamp), or federal Electronic Duck Stamp (E-Stamp) is required of all persons age 16 and older.



SEASONS	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	DAILY LIMIT
Youth Waterfowl Season	Oct. 3, 2026	Oct. 4, 2026	Same as the regular season
Military Waterfowl Season	Oct. 3, 2026	Oct. 4, 2026	Same as the regular season
Goose: ZONE A	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 14, 2026	Nov. 1, 2026 Feb. 1, 2027	GEESE 5 combined: Canada goose, white-fronted goose, and no more than 1 brant. 10 combined: snow goose, blue goose, Ross's goose.
Goose: ZONE B	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 21, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Feb. 15, 2027	
Goose: ZONE C	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 21, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Feb. 15, 2027	DUCKS The daily bag limit is 6 ducks, which may include no more than 4 mallards (only 2 hens), 3 wood ducks, 3 pintails, 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, or 1 mottled duck. 1 scaup during the first 15 days of the season; 2 scaup during the next 45 days.
Duck: ZONE A	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 14, 2026	Nov. 1, 2026 Dec. 27, 2026	
Duck: ZONE B	Oct. 17, 2026 Nov. 21, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Jan. 10, 2027	MERGANSERS & COOTS 5 mergansers (only 2 hooded), and 15 coots.
Duck: ZONE C	Oct. 17, 2026 Dec. 12, 2026	Oct. 25, 2026 Jan. 31, 2027	

HUNTING HOURS are 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset during the regular waterfowl season, unless posted.

2026-27 WATERFOWL HUNTING ZONES MAP



HIP SURVEY

All hunters, including landowners, who plan to hunt migratory game birds, including mourning doves, ducks, geese, woodcock, rails, coots, and snipe must have a Harvest Information Program (HIP) certification number on their hunting license. To complete the HIP certification requirement, call 1-877-HIP-OHIO (1-877-447-6446), go to wildohio.gov, or use the HuntFish OH app and answer the survey questions. After the survey you will be given a certification number. Write the certification number on your annual hunting license in the space provided.

Multiyear license and lifetime license holders are required to complete the HIP certification requirement annually. The certification number is required to be carried while hunting.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS & FEDERAL MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING STAMP

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

For additional information on federal regulations, go to fws.gov or ecfr.gov

Hunters should know:

- Federal Duck Stamps are valid from July 1 through the following June 30.
- You must sign the front of your Duck Stamp in order for it to be valid. Only you may use your Federal Duck Stamp.
- The E-Stamp may be purchased through any participating state, even if you are not a resident of that state. An E-Stamp is valid immediately and for the entire length of the season. Hunters are required to carry either a signed physical Duck Stamp or an E-Stamp certification while hunting. Your purchase/credit card receipt is not valid as a Duck Stamp. Physical duck stamps are mailed to E-Stamp purchasers after the season.
- Hunters 16 years of age and older are required to purchase this stamp to hunt waterfowl. These stamps are available at many U.S. post office branches, usps.com, or duckstamp.com.



OHIO WETLANDS HABITAT STAMP

The Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp will not be issued at the time of purchase. A license will be issued stating Ohio Wetlands Stamp. The stamp will be mailed later in the year. The stamp does not need to be carried while hunting.

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING

Hunters 17 years old or younger may hunt waterfowl statewide (on public and private lands) on Oct. 3 and Oct. 4, 2026. Ducks, geese, and coots may be taken under bag limits established for the regular season. Hunting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset.

MILITARY WATERFOWL HUNTING

Active duty military and veterans may hunt waterfowl on Oct. 3 and Oct. 4, 2026. Bag limits are the same as the regular season. Active duty military and veterans and youth may hunt waterfowl together during this special season.

The hunter must be a veteran or a member of the armed forces on active duty.

DOVE HUNTING

Hours for dove are sunrise to sunset. Doves may be hunted with lead shot. Dove field maps are available at wildohio.gov.

Doves may be hunted on areas that have been manipulated (for example, mowed or bush-hogged) for wildlife management purposes, in addition to areas that have been planted or harvested in a normal agricultural manner. Neither waterfowl nor doves may be hunted on areas where grain or other feed has been distributed once it has been removed from or stored on the field where grown. Contact a Division of Wildlife district office or a state wildlife officer for clarification on baiting regulations before you hunt.

Harvest Information Program (HIP) certification is required to dove hunt. See HIP SURVEY on page 20.

MOURING DOVE



ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

It is legal to take migratory game birds including waterfowl and coots on or over the following lands or areas that are not otherwise baited areas:

- Standing crops or flooded standing crops (including aquatics);
- Standing, flooded, or manipulated natural vegetation; flooded harvested croplands; or lands or areas where seeds or grains have been scattered solely as the result of a normal agricultural planting, harvesting, post-harvest manipulation, or normal soil stabilization practice;
- From a blind or other place of concealment camouflaged with natural vegetation;
- 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; or
- Standing or flooded standing agricultural crops where grain is inadvertently scattered solely as a result of a hunter entering or exiting a hunting area, placing decoys, or retrieving downed birds.

ANDREOFF WILDLIFE AREA

TURN IN A POACHER

IF YOU OBSERVE A WILDLIFE VIOLATION

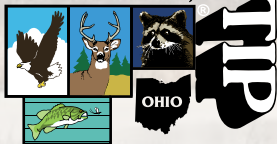
1-800-POACHER

(1-800-762-2437)

OR WILDOHIO.GOV

You do not have to give your name.
JUST GIVE THE FACTS • ACTIVE 24/7

Turn In a Poacher, Inc.



CALL 1-800-POACHER

SUNRISE & SUNSET RESOURCES

Sunrise and sunset times are available from a variety of sources, including:

- The Ohio Division of Wildlife's **HuntFish OH** app
- Sunrise-sunset and weather apps
- Local newspaper, television, or radio outlets
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) solar calculator: **gml.noaa.gov**
- U.S. Navy Astronomical Applications Dept.: **<https://aa.usno.navy.mil>**

While these are some examples, any reliable source is acceptable for determining the sunrise and sunset times at your hunting location.

ILLEGAL HUNTING METHODS

NO PERSONS SHALL TAKE MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS:

1. With a crossbow, trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10 gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine-gun, fish hook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance;
2. From or by means, aid, or use of a sinkbox or any other type of low-floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water;
3. From or by means, aid, or use of any motor vehicle, motor-driven land conveyance, or aircraft of any kind;
4. From or by means of any motorboat or other craft having a motor attached, or any sailboat, unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sails furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased;
5. By the use or aid of live birds as decoys; although not limited to, it shall be a violation of this paragraph for any person to take migratory waterfowl on an area where tame or captive live ducks or geese are present unless such birds are and have been for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to such taking, confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such birds from the sight of wild migratory waterfowl;
7. 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;
8. With any device that emits recorded or electrically amplified bird calls or sounds, or recorded or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds. It is illegal to possess such devices while hunting waterfowl in Ohio;
9. By the aid of baiting or on or over any baited area.

NONTOXIC SHOT

No person may take ducks, geese (including brant), rails, snipe, gallinules, or coots while possessing shot (either in shotshells or as loose shot for muzzleloading) other than approved nontoxic shot. For a list of approved nontoxic shot, see fws.gov.

LEGAL HUNTING EQUIPMENT

WATERFOWL & MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING

Shotgun: 10 gauge or smaller shotgun using nontoxic shot, includes muzzleloading shotguns. In order to hunt migratory game birds, your shotgun cannot be capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.

Only nontoxic shot may be used to take waterfowl, rail, snipe, and common gallinule. Dove and woodcock may be taken with lead shot.

Longbow: This includes compound bows and recurve bows.

MAGEE MARSH WILDLIFE AREA

H2Ohio

The filtering process
of wetlands improves
water quality.

The H2Ohio Fund will help
ensure safe and clean
water across Ohio by
providing the resources
necessary to plan, develop,
and implement targeted
long-term water solutions.

H2.OHIO.GOV

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

FURBEARER TRAPPING

SEASON	OPENING DATE	CLOSING DATE	BAG LIMIT
Fox, Raccoon, Opossum, Skunk, Weasel	Nov. 10, 2026	Jan. 31, 2027	No limit
Mink, Muskrat	Nov. 10, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	No limit
Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Opossum, Skunk, Weasel: Lucas County east of the Maumee river, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Erie Counties	Nov. 10, 2026	March 15, 2027	No limit
Beaver	Dec. 26, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	No limit
River Otter	Dec. 26, 2026	Feb. 28, 2027	See page 24
Coyote	No closed season		No limit

TRAPPING REGULATIONS

- A hunting license and fur taker permit are required to hunt and/or trap furbearing animals (except coyote) in Ohio.
- Except for river otters, there are no restrictions on bag limits.
- All traps and snares must be checked and all animals removed once every calendar day.
- All foothold or foot-encapsulating traps set on land must have at least two swiveling points.
- Foothold traps set on land must be covered.
- Foothold traps that are submerged may not have an inside jaw spread greater than 8¼ inches.
- Deadfalls are illegal.
- Foothold traps set on land may not have an inside jaw spread greater than 5⅜ inches, except foothold traps greater than 5⅜ inches but 6 inches or less may be utilized provided they have a minimum of three swiveling points and the gripping surface is ⅝-inch or greater.
- Except for cage traps, no traps or snares may be set within 150 feet of another person's occupied residence without advising the resident.
- Body-gripping traps set on land, or in a tile, den, or burrow on land may not have an inside diameter jaw spread greater than 5 inches in diameter.

- Traps with teeth in the gripping surface are prohibited.
- Body-gripping traps with an inside diameter jaw spread greater than 5 inches, but less than or equal to 7 inches must be set in a natural body of water.
- Body-gripping traps with an inside jaw spread greater than 7 inches must be completely submerged in water and may only be utilized during the beaver or river otter season.
- All furbearers are required to be killed immediately and reduced to the person's possession, or released immediately at the capture site.
- No person may disturb a legally set trap or snare or remove a furbearing animal from a trap or snare of another person without permission.
- All flesh baits must be totally covered.



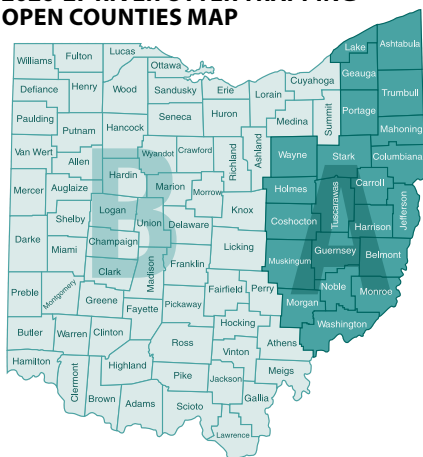
RIVER OTTER AND BEAVER TRAPPING ON PUBLIC HUNTING AREAS

Beaver and river otter trapping is prohibited on state managed areas, including state wildlife areas, state parks, and state forests without a special beaver and/or river otter trapping permit from the Division of Wildlife.

RIVER OTTER TRAPPING

The season bag limit is three river otters, of which only one may be taken from river otter Zone B.

2026-27 RIVER OTTER TRAPPING OPEN COUNTIES MAP



OTTER TRAPPING TOTAL SEASON BAG LIMIT – 3



ZONE B – 1



ZONE A – 3

RIVER OTTER CHECKING AND TAGGING REQUIREMENTS

The pelt of each harvested river otter is required to be checked in and tagged within five business days of take. The pelt may be checked and tagged by a wildlife officer (by appointment), at a designated otter check station (by appointment, go to wildohio.gov for locations), or at a district office (by appointment, call 1-800-WILDLIFE (800-945-3543) to schedule). All state offices are closed on holidays.

Each trapper must personally present their own river otter, and may not present a river otter taken by another person. Trappers must also provide a copy of their fur taker

permit at the time of checking, and provide information about the date and location in which the river otter was trapped.

AVOIDANCE TECHNIQUES

Trappers who have reached the river otter bag limit are encouraged to implement river otter avoidance techniques while beaver trapping. If you catch an otter in excess of your season bag limit and it is still alive, carefully release it without causing injury to yourself or the animal. If the otter is dead, leave it in the trap and contact the wildlife officer assigned to that county.

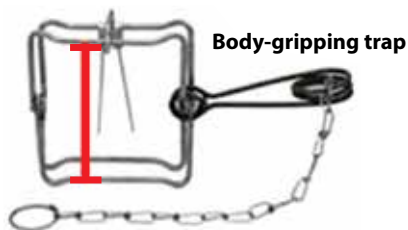
RIVER OTTER CARCASS COLLECTION

The Division of Wildlife uses a population model to monitor river otter trends in Ohio. Harvested otter carcasses are requested to be turned in to aid in this research. Carcasses also provide valuable information on age and reproductive patterns, disease prevalence, diet, and other factors. Contact 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543) for more information.

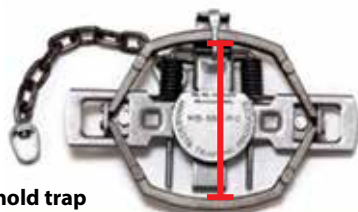
FIRST-TIME TRAPPERS

All first-time trappers, except apprentice license buyers, must successfully complete a hunter and a trapper education course offered through the Division of Wildlife before purchasing a hunting license and fur taker permit to trap furbearers.

HOW TO MEASURE JAW SPREAD



Body-gripping trap



Foothold trap

TRAPPERS MAY DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Set, use, and maintain snares for the purpose of taking furbearing animals. All snares must have a relaxing lock and a stop to prevent the opening of the snare from closing to less than 2½ inches in diameter, or a relaxing lock system with a breaking point of not greater than 350 pounds.
2. Attach a drag to a foothold trap.
3. Trap coyotes without a fur taker permit. However, anyone hunting, trapping, or snaring coyotes must have a valid hunting license.

TRAPPERS MAY NOT DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Pursue, hunt, trap, or snare furbearing animals between sunset and sunrise without use of a continuous white light visible for at least ¼ mile. However, persons hunting fox, coyote, or raccoon with a call from a stationary position may use a continuous single beam of light of any color. When two or more people are hunting or trapping together for these animals only one light is required and may be carried by any member of the party.
2. Use or possess climbers or any other device, except climbing tree stands, that may be used for climbing trees while hunting, trapping, or pursuing furbearing animals.
3. Erect, post, or place any stake, flagging, or any other type of marker for the purpose of identifying a potential trap set location on any area designated as a public hunting area, unless authorized by the chief of the Division of Wildlife.
4. Set, use, or maintain a trap or snare in or upon any path or road ordinarily used by domestic animals or humans.
5. Set, use, or maintain a trap or snare to take a wild animal, unless that trap or snare has attached to it a durable, waterproof tag bearing the name and mailing address or the unique Division of Wildlife Customer ID Number of the user in English that is legible at all times, or which has the name and mailing address or the unique Division of Wildlife Customer ID Number of the user stamped into the trap in English that is legible at all times.
6. Set a snare with a loop diameter of more than 15 inches.
7. Attach a snare to a drag. Snares must be staked or otherwise attached to an immovable object.
8. Set traps on state public hunting areas, including state parks and state forests, for beaver or river otter without a permit (See Beaver and Otter Trapping on Public Hunting Areas).
9. Set, use, or maintain a snare on public hunting areas, except for beaver and river otter (See Beaver and Otter Trapping on Public Hunting Areas).
10. Use any snare constructed of any material other than multi-strand steel cable.
11. Have attached to a snare any spring-loaded or mechanical device to assist the snare in closing.
12. Set, use, or maintain any snare that does not comply with the requirements listed above.
13. Set, use, or maintain a foot-encapsulating trap that has an opening greater than 2 inches in diameter or 2 inches along one side.
14. Game birds and game quadrupeds may not be taken by trapping.



2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

CONTROLLED HUNTING & TRAPPING OPPORTUNITIES

TYPE	SPECIES	APPLICATION METHOD	APPLICATION PERIOD
Hunting	Turkey	online/phone	March 1 - March 31
	Deer, Small Game, Dove, Waterfowl, and Waterfowl Blind	online/phone	July 1 - July 31
Trapping	Beaver, Otter, and Furbearer	in-person	October 3 , 2026 (1 day)

Controlled access lotteries offer unique opportunities for you to pursue several different species across the state on areas not normally open to hunting and trapping. Successful applicants will receive a permit, rules, and a hunting area map. Permits are offered for dove, quail, grouse, waterfowl, white-tailed deer, ring-necked pheasant, small game, and turkey hunting and furbearer trapping. Controlled access permits may not be bought, sold, bartered, traded, or exchanged.

CONTROLLED HUNTING

Controlled hunting permits are selected through a computer-generated random lottery system. Hunters may apply at wildohio.gov, on the HuntFish OH app, or by calling 1-866-703-1928 with a convenience fee. A non-refundable \$3 application fee applies to each hunt. Customers may apply for more than one hunt but can only apply for each hunt once per year.

All applicants, youth and adult, are required to possess a valid Ohio hunting license and meet age requirements. Youth hunters must be under 18 at the time of the hunt to participate. Adults must be 18 or older at the time of the application.

CONTROLLED DEER HUNTS

Those wishing to apply for controlled deer hunts are required to have a valid deer permit, along with a valid hunting license, at the time of applying. Participants may use a deer management permit during controlled deer hunts. Deer management permits may also be used in controlled hunts not administered by the Division of Wildlife if the entity holding the hunt has received authorization from the chief of the Division of Wildlife. It is the hunter's responsibility to check with the agency administering the hunt to see if deer management permits may be used. A deer harvested during

a controlled hunt does not count toward a county and statewide bag limit. Up to six total additional deer may be taken during controlled hunts. Only one antlered deer may be taken per season across all regular season dates and controlled hunts.

DEER ARCHERY HUNTS

Deer archery hunts will be open to all applicants, except the Deer Creek SP and Steinen WA youth archery hunts which will be open for youth applicants only, and the Buck Creek SP veterans archery hunt which will be open to veterans only. Permittee and one hunting partner will be allowed to hunt. The hunting partner must remain the same for the duration of the permit. Permits will be issued for 2-week periods throughout the season generally starting on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday. This may vary at the beginning and end of the season. If permitted, refer to the dates listed on the permit.

DEER FIREARM HUNTS

Hunts will be offered for adults, youth, mobility impaired, and mentor/mentees. Permittee and one hunting partner will be allowed to hunt. Permits will be issued for one day, on a Saturday or Sunday. If permitted, refer to the date listed on the permit.

WILD TURKEY

Turkey hunts are open to all applicants. Permittee and one hunting partner will be allowed except for youth hunts. For youth turkey hunts only the permitted youth may hunt and must be accompanied by a non-hunting adult. Youth permits will be issued for one day during the youth weekend. Throughout the regular season, permits will be issued for three-day periods: Thursday-Friday-Saturday for mentor hunts and Sunday-Monday-Tuesday for regular hunts.

SMALL GAME

Pheasant, squirrel, grouse, and quail hunts will be available at select locations. Refer to the Controlled Hunting Access Lotteries webpage at wildohio.gov for more information.

MOURNING DOVE HUNTS

Dove hunts will be open to all applicants. Youth and mentor hunts will be offered at select locations. Permittee and one hunting partner will be allowed to hunt. One-day permits will be issued for either September 1 or September 2.

WATERFOWL BLIND LOTTERIES

Waterfowl blind lotteries will be open to all applicants. Permits will be issued for August 15, 2026. Permittees are responsible for arriving at the address listed on the permit at 8 a.m. on August 15, 2026 to make their blind selection.

WATERFOWL HUNTS

Waterfowl hunts will be open to all applicants. Youth hunts will be offered for the youth waterfowl weekend. Permittee and two hunting partners will be allowed to hunt. Youth hunts allow the permittee, one youth hunting partner, and one non-hunting adult. Beyond those opportunities, permits for additional waterfowl hunting will be issued for Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays throughout the season. Permits will be offered via online lottery on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Lotteries will be complete by 1 p.m. and permits issued for Tuesday and Thursday hunts at select locations. Scan QR code below for more information.

CONTROLLED TRAPPING

Controlled trapping permits are issued via **in-person** lotteries held annually on the first Saturday in October at each Division of Wildlife district office. Trappers will be randomly drawn from submitted applications and successful applicants will be announced at that time.

Each permittee may select one partner to accompany them for the duration of the season. Beaver and river otter trapping lotteries are grouped by region; trappers may apply in only one district (central, northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest). Beaver and river otter trapping permits are valid from Dec. 26, 2026, to Feb. 28, 2027.

HOW TO APPLY



You must be fully licensed and permitted to hunt the species for which you are applying. Hunters may apply for each hunt once annually. Apply online in March for turkey hunts and July for all other hunts. Each online application is \$3 and is nonrefundable; scan the QR code for more information. Apply in-person in October for trapping.

DELAWARE WILDLIFE AREA

BUCKEYE BIG BUCK CLUB

Since 1957, the Buckeye Big Buck Club establishes and maintains a record of Ohio's trophy white-tailed deer.

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION



buckeyebigbuckclub.org

LISTEN TO THE WILD OHIO PODCAST

Look for the Wild Ohio Podcast on popular streaming platforms such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, YouTube, and iHeartRadio. New episodes are available monthly.

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS LICENSES AND PERMITS

CATEGORIES	
Youth	For anyone 17 years old and younger.
Resident Adult	For Ohio residents age 18-64.
Nonresident Adult	For all nonresidents 18 years old and older.
Apprentice	For residents and nonresidents accompanied by a licensed hunter.
Resident Senior	For Ohio residents age 65 and older born on or after January 1, 1938.
Resident Free Senior	For Ohio residents born on or before December 31, 1937.

OHIO RESIDENCY STATUS

An Ohio resident is a person who has resided in the state of Ohio for the past six consecutive months. All others are considered nonresidents and must purchase a nonresident license. Nonresident students who are actively enrolled full-time in an Ohio college or university qualify for a resident license if they live in Ohio at the time of purchase.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

A permanent customer identification number will be assigned to all applicants of hunting or fishing licenses.

Every customer who applies for a license or permit is required to provide their Social Security Number (SSN). Federal Statute 42 requires the SSN of any individual to whom the state issues a recreational hunting or fishing license. Applicants who do not have an active SSN must affirm their status at the time of application. Applicants must also declare their residency and provide their full name, date of birth, gender, mailing address, height, weight, hair color, and eye color. Once provided and recorded in the licensing system, applicants will only be required to update their information on file if it changes.

PURCHASE A LICENSE

Visit an authorized agent, the HuntFish OH mobile app, or wildohio.gov to purchase a license or permit. Authorized agents are located in every county in Ohio. Visit wildohio.gov or call 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543) to find an agent.

HUNTING LICENSES

Ohio's annual hunting licenses are valid from March 1 to the last day in February. Multiyear licenses are valid from the date of purchase to the same date in three, five, or 10 years, whichever applies. All costs include a writing fee. A transaction fee may apply for online and in-app purchases. All sales are final. No refunds.

All hunters, regardless of age, must carry a valid hunting license to hunt or trap game in Ohio. Hunting deer, turkey, waterfowl, or hunting or trapping of furbearers requires the hunter to possess an additional game-specific permit.

Licenses and permits purchased at retail outlets or at home will be printed on plain white paper. The paper may be trimmed and folded down. It is highly recommended to protect your licenses and permits from the elements. Customers must be present to purchase a license or permit.

ELECTRONIC LICENSES

Licenses and permits may also be purchased on a mobile device or through the Division of Wildlife's mobile application, HuntFish OH. Hunters must carry their licenses and permits at all times while hunting, and must present their license upon request. Licenses and permits may be displayed on a mobile device.

DUPLICATE LICENSES

Lost, stolen, or destroyed licenses and permits may be re-issued at any license sales location or at wildohio.gov. Reprints are free at wildohio.gov and cost \$4 at a license agent.

LICENSES		COST
Youth LICENSES	Resident & Nonresident Youth 1-Year Hunting License	\$10.00
	Resident & Nonresident Youth 1-Year Apprentice License	\$10.00
	Resident Youth 3-Year Hunting License	\$27.04
	Resident Youth 5-Year Hunting License	\$45.07
	Resident Youth 10-Year Hunting License	\$90.14
	Resident Youth Lifetime Hunting License	\$430.56
Adult LICENSES	Resident 1-Year Hunting License	\$19.00
	Resident 1-Year Apprentice License	\$19.00
	Resident 3-Year Hunting License	\$54.08
	Resident 5-Year Hunting License	\$90.14
	Resident 10-Year Hunting License	\$180.27
	Resident Lifetime Hunting License	\$449.28
	Nonresident 1-Year Hunting License	\$180.96
	Nonresident (Tourist) 3-Day Hunting License Nonresident 3-day license not valid for deer, turkey, or furbearers	\$40.56
	Nonresident 1-Year Apprentice Hunting License	\$180.96
Senior LICENSES RESIDENTS ONLY	Resident Senior 1-Year Hunting License	\$10.00
	Resident Senior 1-Year Apprentice License	\$10.00
	Resident Senior 3-Year Hunting License	\$27.04
	Resident Senior 5-Year Hunting License	\$45.07
	Resident Senior Lifetime Hunting License	\$84.24
	Resident Free Senior Hunting License	Free

KILLDEER PLAINS WILDLIFE AREA

ORDER ONLINE TO GET SIX ISSUES FOR ONLY \$5

Go to wildohio.gov to sign up online,
or visit any store that sells hunting
licenses and sign up to have the
magazine mailed to you.

WILD OHIO MAGAZINE

HUNTER EDUCATION

The Division of Wildlife offers two
types of hunter certification courses:

- Instructor-led training.
- Online course for residents 12 and older.

New hunters also have the option of
hunting with an apprentice license before
taking a hunter education course.

Call **1-800-WILDLIFE** (1-800-945-3543
or 1-614-265-6300) or visit wildohio.gov
for information on courses in your area.

PERMITS & STAMPS		COST
Deer Either-Sex PERMITS	Adult Permit: Resident	\$31.20
	Adult Permit: Nonresident	\$218.40
	Youth Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$16.00
	Senior Permit: Resident Only	\$12.00
	Free Senior Permit: Resident Only	FREE
Deer Management PERMITS	Adult and Youth Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$15.00
	Senior Permit: Resident Only	\$15.00
	Free Senior Permit: Resident Only	FREE
Fall Turkey PERMITS	Adult Permit: Resident	\$31.20
	Adult Permit: Nonresident	\$38.48
	Youth Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$16.00
	Senior Permit: Resident Only	\$12.00
	Free Senior Permit: Resident Only	FREE
Spring Turkey PERMITS	Adult Permit: Resident	\$31.20
	Adult Permit: Nonresident	\$38.48
	Youth Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$16.00
	Senior Permit: Resident Only	\$12.00
	Free Senior Permit: Resident Only	FREE
Migratory Bird & Waterfowl STAMPS	Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp	\$25.00
	Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp: Resident & Nonresident	\$15.00
	Free Senior Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp: Resident Only	FREE
Fur Taker PERMITS	Adult Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$15.00
	Youth Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$8.00
	Senior Permit: Resident Only	\$8.00
	Free Senior Permit: Resident Only	FREE
	Apprentice Adult Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$15.00
	Apprentice Senior Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$8.00
	Apprentice Youth Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$8.00
Shooting Range PERMITS	One-Year Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$24.00
	One-Day Permit: Resident & Nonresident	\$5.00
	Annual Permit & Hunting License Combo: Resident Valid until Feb. 28, 2027	\$29.12
	Annual Permit & Apprentice Hunting License Combo: Resident Valid until Feb. 28, 2027	\$29.12

A transaction fee may apply for online and in-app license and permit sales.

OHIO HUNTER AND TRAPPER EDUCATION

All first-time hunting license buyers, except apprentice license buyers, must successfully complete a hunter education course before purchasing a hunting license. The hunting course is designed to instill a code of ethics and responsibility, as well as provide instruction on guns and how they work, types of ammunition, gun handling, field care of game, wildlife identification, wildlife management, hunting regulations, and other topics. Statistics show that hunter education has helped reduce the number of hunting related injuries and incidents.

Anyone applying for a hunting license is required to successfully complete a hunter education course. Applicants must do one of the following:

- Present a previously held hunting license.
- Present evidence of having successfully completed a hunter education course (from any state).
- Attest they are 21 years of age or older and previously held a legal hunting license (from any state).
- Obtain an apprentice license.

The trapper education course, taken after successful completion of a hunter education course, covers trap set making, trapping equipment, pelt preparation, furbearer life history, identification, and management. These courses provide an opportunity for adults to introduce another person to hunting and trapping and to share the excitement that goes with it. To obtain a fur taker permit for trapping, applicants must do one of the following:

- Present a previously held trapping license (from any state).
- Present evidence of having successfully completed a trapper education course.
- Attest they are 21 years of age or older and previously held a legal trapping license (from any state).
- Obtain an apprentice permit.

THE OHIO CONSERVATION CARD

The Ohio Conservation Card is available with the purchase of a lifetime or multiyear license. Lifetime licenses are only sold at Division of Wildlife offices, online at wildohio.gov, and through a mailed application. Multiyear licenses are available for purchase at license agents.



APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Ohio residents and nonresidents may purchase an apprentice hunting license or apprentice fur taker permit without having taken a hunter or trapper education course.

Apprentice hunting licenses and apprentice fur taker permits allow new hunters and trappers, both adults and youth, to sample the experience of hunting and trapping under the mentorship of a licensed adult prior to completing a hunter or trapper education course.

To hunt or trap, apprentice license and permit holders must be accompanied by a licensed hunter or trapper 21 years old or older. The licensed hunter may not accompany more than two apprentice license holders at the same time.

Accompany means to go along with another person while staying within a distance from the person that enables uninterrupted, unaided visual and auditory communications.

Having previously held an apprentice license does not qualify the holder to purchase a regular hunting license or fur taker permit. To obtain a regular hunting license, a hunter education course must be successfully completed. To obtain a regular fur taker permit, a hunter education course and trapper education course must be successfully completed. Apprentice licenses and fur taker permits are available to both Ohio residents and nonresidents, youth and adults.

LICENSE EXEMPTIONS

Certain categories of persons are exempted from buying licenses, permits, and stamps.

1. A resident who owns land in Ohio, and the owner's spouse, parents, children of any age, and grandchildren under 18 years of age, may hunt on that land without a hunting license, deer permit, turkey permit, fur taker permit, or wetlands habitat stamp.
2. Some nonresident landowners may qualify for license exemptions. Please follow the QR code link for additional information.
3. If a limited liability company or a limited liability partnership owns land in Ohio and consists of three or fewer individual members or partners, then an individual member or partner who is a resident of Ohio and the member's or partner's parents, children of any age, and grandchildren under 18 years of age may hunt on the land owned by that company or partnership without a hunting license, deer permit, turkey permit, fur taker permit, or wetlands habitat stamp.
4. If a trust owns land in Ohio and consists of three or fewer individual trustees or beneficiaries combined, then an individual trustee or beneficiary who is a resident of Ohio and the trustee's or beneficiary's parents, children of any age, and grandchildren under 18 years of age may hunt on the land owned by that trust without a hunting license, deer permit, turkey permit, fur taker permit, or wetlands habitat stamp.
5. Tenants and their children on land on which they reside, pay rent, and from which they derive the majority (more than 50 percent) of their income from agricultural production on that land are not required to have a hunting license, deer permit, turkey permit, fur taker permit, or wetlands habitat stamp when they are hunting or trapping on land where they reside.
6. Members of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty while on leave or furlough are not required to purchase a hunting



license, Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp, or fur taker permit. All other licenses and permits are required.

Members of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty stationed in Ohio, but NOT on leave or furlough are required to purchase a resident Ohio hunting license and other applicable permits before hunting deer, turkey, or hunting and trapping furbearers, and an Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp for hunting waterfowl.

FREE LICENSE ELIGIBILITY

Free licenses may be obtained from a license agent and must be carried while hunting. License applications are available at wildohio.gov or by calling 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543).

1. Ohio residents born on or before Dec. 31, 1937 will receive a free fishing license, hunting license, either-sex deer permit, deer management permit, spring and fall turkey permits, Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp, and fur taker permit. Ohio residents age 65 and older who were born on or after Jan. 1, 1938 are eligible for reduced-cost licenses and permits.
2. Ohio residents who are holders of a veteran's license plate displaying the international wheelchair symbol must apply in writing for a free hunting license, fur taker permit, either-sex deer permit, spring or fall turkey permit, and an Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp endorsement. Applications must be certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
3. Permanently and totally disabled veterans who receive pension or compensation due to their service-related injuries and who are Ohio residents must apply in writing for a free hunting license, fur taker permit, either-sex deer permit, turkey permit, and Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp. Applications must be certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
4. Ohio residents who are former prisoners of war must apply in writing for a free hunting license, fur taker permit, and Ohio Wetlands Habitat Stamp. All other licenses and permits are required to be purchased. Applications must be certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS GENERAL INFORMATION



- Electronic callers may be used while hunting, except while hunting migratory game birds (waterfowl, rails, and shorebirds) and wild turkeys. It is lawful to use electronic callers for crow hunting.
- Spotlighting of wild animals from vehicles, including illuminating with headlights, is prohibited. Spotlighting is illegal whether hunting implements are carried in the vehicle or not.
- Persons hunting, trapping, or pursuing furbearing animals at night must carry a continuous white light visible for at least $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. When two or more persons are hunting or trapping together for furbearing animals, only one light is required and may be carried by any member of the party. Persons hunting foxes, coyotes, or raccoons with a call from a stationary position may use a single beam of light of any color.
- All hunting from motor vehicles, except boats and machinery being used in farm operations, is prohibited. Hunting small game and furbearers except mink, muskrat, otter, and beaver is lawful from a boat or powercraft if the motor has been completely shut off and the powercraft has come to rest.
- Using an aerial drone or aircraft to hunt or aid in the hunting of a wild animal is strictly prohibited, except as provided for deer recovery. Aerial drones may be used to aid in the recovery of a deer, provided that no one involved in the recovery is carrying a hunting device at

the time. If the deer is found alive, the use of the drone will be discontinued before hunting can resume. In this limited case, the drone operator may provide the location where the deer was last located by the drone.

- Poisoned or explosive arrows are unlawful. While hunting, it is unlawful to have attached to a longbow or crossbow any mechanical, electrical, or electronic device capable of projecting a visible beam of light. This does not include a device such as a range finder that utilizes nonvisible light.
- It is unlawful to possess a hunting device while training or working a dog pursuing coyotes from sunset to sunrise.
- All hunters younger than 16 years old need to be accompanied by an adult. It is unlawful for the responsible adult to allow a person under 16 years of age to hunt alone.
- The holder of an all-purpose vehicle permit may hunt wild quadrupeds or game birds from a vehicle while on private property. Go to wildohio.gov for more information.
- It is unlawful to shoot from, on, across, or along a public road or highway, including the berm, shoulder, and road right of way.
- It is unlawful to receive or possess a deer or parts of a deer unless such deer or deer part is tagged as required, or unless the deer or part of a deer has a statement showing when and where legally taken, the date received, and from whom received; or a Division of Wildlife tag, seal, or certificate or other proof of ownership which shows the deer was killed by a motor vehicle in Ohio; or an official tag or seal and valid nonresident license issued by another state if taken from outside Ohio; or certificate of ownership or receipt issued by a law enforcement officer. Shed antlers do not require a certificate of ownership or receipt by a wildlife officer.

YOUTH HUNTING SEASONS

Designated youth hunting seasons are available to anyone who is 17 years old or younger during the season dates. All hunters are required to have the appropriate licenses and permits. All youth hunters participating in youth hunting seasons, regardless of age, must be accompanied by a nonhunting adult. A nonhunting adult is any person age 18 or older who accompanies the youth hunter to and from the field and is present with the youth hunter while the youth hunter is engaged in hunting. The nonhunting adult may not possess any hunting implements and a hunting license is not required.

GINSENG

It shall be unlawful to dig, harvest, cut, root up, gather, or otherwise collect wild ginseng from its natural habitat except during the season of Sept. 1 through Dec. 31 of each year without written authorization from the chief of the Division of Wildlife. Full details are available in section 1501:31-40.

The landowner's written permission is required of anyone harvesting ginseng in Ohio. Anyone selling ginseng is required to show a state-issued photo identification card at the time of sale.

DOG TRAINING

The Division of Wildlife has established designated dog training areas on some of its wildlife areas. Dogs may not be trained or exercised on state public hunting areas from May 1 through Aug. 31 of each year, except on these designated dog training areas. A nonresident may not train, work, or exercise a dog in Ohio at any time if Ohio residents are not permitted to train, work, or exercise dogs in the nonresident's state. Training dogs while pursuing furbearing animals is permitted only from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Firearms may not be carried by persons training or working dogs during the closed season for furbearing animals.

Designated dog training areas are located on portions of Appalachian Hills, Berlin, Caesar Creek, East Fork, Delaware, Fallsville, Grand River, Indian Creek, Killdeer Plains, Kokosing, Lake La Su An, Magee Marsh, Oxbow Lake, Pickerel Creek, Resthaven, Rush Run, Salt Fork, Spencer, and Tri-Valley wildlife areas.

ON ALL WILDLIFE AREAS

It is unlawful to operate or park any vehicle on properties administered by the Division of Wildlife, except on designated roads and parking areas.

Portions of Deer Creek, Killdeer Plains, Resthaven, Lake La Su An, Berlin Lake, Big Island, Delaware, Grand River, Brush Creek, Waterloo, Cooper Hollow, East Fork, Woodbury, Spring Valley, and Fallsville wildlife areas will be open for persons with severe mobility impairments to drive their cars, trucks, or all-purpose vehicles to designated interior areas for hunting. Disabled persons are required to have an all-purpose vehicle permit. Find more information or download a permit application at wildohio.gov.

Camping is prohibited on state wildlife areas, except within posted designated camping areas at Appalachian Hills, Simco, and Woodbury wildlife areas. No person may camp for more than 14 days in any 30 day period, use more than one designated camping site, or park more than two motor vehicles at a designated site. Camping at Simco Wildlife Area and the Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area equine camp is limited to equine camping at designated sites. All campers at Woodbury Wildlife Area must possess a valid hunting license, fishing license, or fur taker permit. Call 1-800-WILD-LIFE (1-800-945-3543) for more information.

All wildlife areas are closed to all activity other than hunting, trapping, and fishing from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Sept. 1 through May 1, and from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. May 2 through Aug. 31 of each year.

State parks have special hunting and trapping regulations. Some are not open to hunting or trapping. A permit is required to build a duck blind on state park lakes.

VIOLATOR COMPACT

Ohio is a member of the agreement between states that if a person loses their hunting, trapping, or fishing privileges in one of those states, they may lose those privileges in all of the member states. If you lose your right to hunt, trap, or fish in Ohio, it is your responsibility to check with any other state before you hunt, trap, or fish there to ensure you have not lost your privileges in that state as well.

ON PUBLIC HUNTING LANDS

It is unlawful for any person to use a rifle, pistol, revolver, shotgun, or other firearm at any time on any land or water area controlled or administered by the Division of Wildlife except while lawfully trapping or hunting wild animals, or target practicing on a designated Division of Wildlife target range. Fully automatic firearms, trigger assisting devices that alter a firearm to shoot like a fully automatic firearm, and tracer ammunition are not permitted.

It is unlawful for any person to distribute, place, or scatter salt, grain, or other feed capable of luring, enticing, or attracting wild birds or deer on lands owned, controlled, or maintained by the Division of Wildlife, including lands managed by the division by virtue of a lease or an agreement.

A tree stand on Division of Wildlife public hunting areas is legal as long as it is portable and uses no nails, steps, or any other device placed or inserted into a tree. The tree stand may be installed from Sept. 1 to the last day in February, annually.

HUNTING WITH PERMISSION

Written permission is required to pursue a wild animal or their parts on the property of another, including for deer recovery and shed hunting, even without a hunting device. Permission slips are available at all Division of Wildlife district offices, at wildohio.gov, by calling 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543), and on page 37 of this publication.

HUNTING WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION

The maximum penalty for hunting without written permission of the landowner for a first offense is 60 days in jail and a \$500 fine. The maximum penalty for a second offense is 90 days in jail and a \$750 fine.

A person must carry written permission (see page 37) at all times while engaging in hunting or trapping on private land and exhibit it upon request to a state wildlife officer, sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer, other law enforcement officer, owner of the land, or the landowner's authorized agent.

POSSESSION

It is unlawful to buy, sell, or possess non-game birds or their parts, dead or alive.

Game birds may be possessed for up to 10 days without obtaining a noncommercial propagating license when they are accompanied with a proper receipt.

A hunter may not receive or possess a deer or parts of a deer unless such deer or deer part is tagged as required, or unless the deer or part of a deer has a statement showing when and where legally taken, the date received, and from whom received; or a Division of Wildlife tag, seal, or certificate or other proof of ownership which shows the deer was killed by a motor vehicle in Ohio; or an official tag or seal and valid nonresident license issued by another state if taken from outside Ohio; or certificate of ownership or receipt issued by a law enforcement officer. Shed antlers do not require a certificate of ownership or receipt by a wildlife officer.

Live furbearing animals, amphibians, reptiles, game quadrupeds, or game birds may not be held in captivity or sold except by propagation permit.

Hides of furbearing animals taken legally during the open season may be sold during that open season or may be held for sale until June 15 following the close of the season.

Furbearers may not be taken alive during open hunting and trapping seasons.

Those who buy green or dried fur must have a fur dealer's permit.

CONCEALED HANDGUN

A person legally allowed to possess a concealed handgun may carry it while hunting. They may also hunt with their concealed handgun as long as it meets all of the requirements for the game that is being hunted.

FIREARM SUPPRESSOR

A person authorized through state and federal law to own a firearm noise suppressor is permitted to use it to hunt legal game animals. A valid hunting license is required to hunt with a suppressor. A suppressor is also called a silencer.

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

LEGAL DEFINITIONS

As used in Chapters 1531 and 1533 of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code.

ACCOMPANY means to go along with another person while staying within a distance from the person that enables uninterrupted, unaided visual and auditory communications.

ACTIVE DUTY means full-time duty in the Armed Forces (U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard, including the reserve components thereof), other than active duty for training; Service as a cadet at the U.S. Military, Air Force, or Coast Guard Academy, or as a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy.

BAG LIMIT means the number, measurement, or weight of any kind of crayfish, aquatic insects, fish, frogs, turtles, wild birds, and wild quadrupeds permitted to be taken.

BAITED AREA means any area where shelled or unshelled, shucked, or unshucked corn, wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed whatsoever capable of luring, attracting, or enticing game animals or birds is directly or indirectly placed, exposed, deposited, distributed, or scattered. Such area is considered a baited area for 10 days following complete removal of all such corn, wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed.

BAITING means the placing, exposing, depositing, distributing, or scattering of shelled or unshelled corn, wheat, or other grain, salt, or other feed so as to constitute for wild turkeys, mourning doves, migratory birds, or other game animals a lure, attraction, or enticement to, on, or over any area where hunters are attempting to take them.

CROSSBOW means a device for propelling an arrow by means of limbs and a string, with a shoulder-mounted stock, and having a working safety.

HUNTING means pursuing, shooting, killing, following after or on the trail of, lying in wait for, shooting at, or wounding wild birds or wild quadrupeds while employing any device commonly used to kill or wound wild birds or wild quadrupeds, whether such acts

result in such killing or wounding or not. It includes every attempt to kill or wound and every act of assistance to any other person in killing or wounding or attempting to kill or wound wild birds or wild quadrupeds.

LONGBOW or **BOW** means a device for propelling an arrow by means of limbs, and a string which is hand held, hand drawn, and held in a drawn position by hand or a hand-held mechanical release or by a mechanical device with a working safety. This would include compound bows and recurve bows.

MUZZLELOADING RIFLE and **MUZZLELOADING SHOTGUN** means a primitive weapon that shoots a projectile or projectiles loaded exclusively from the muzzle and that is incapable of firing modern-day ammunition.

TENANT means an individual who resides on land for which he or she pays rent and whose annual income is primarily derived from agricultural production conducted on that land, as agricultural production is defined in Section 929.01 of the Ohio Revised Code.



TRAPPING means securing or attempting to secure possession of a wild bird or wild quadruped by means of setting, placing, drawing, or using any device that is designed to close upon, hold fast, confine, or otherwise capture a wild bird or wild quadruped whether such means result in such capturing or not. It includes every act of assistance to any other person in capturing wild birds or wild quadrupeds by means of such device whether such means result in such capturing or not.

VETERAN means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

2923.15 ORC No person, while under the influence of alcohol or any drug of abuse, shall carry or use any firearm or dangerous ordnance.

2923.16 and 1547.69 ORC No person shall knowingly transport or have a firearm in a motor vehicle unless it is unloaded, and is carried in one of the following ways:

1. In a closed package, box, or case.

2. In a compartment which can be reached only by leaving the vehicle.
3. In plain sight and secured in a rack or holder made for the purpose.
4. If the firearm is at least 24 inches in overall length as measured from the muzzle to the part of the stock farthest from the muzzle, and if the barrel is at least 18 inches in length in plain sight with the action open or the firearm stripped, or, if the firearm is of a type which the action will not stay open or which cannot easily be stripped, in plain sight.

A person may carry a concealed handgun in compliance with motor vehicle transportation guidelines of the Ohio Revised Code.

As used in this section, unloaded means with respect to a firearm employing a percussion cap, flintlock, or other obsolete ignition system, that the firearm is uncapped, or that the priming charge is removed from the pan.

The above sections also apply to watercraft, except while lawfully engaged in hunting.

PERMISSION FOR HUNTING OR TRAPPING ON PRIVATE LAND

Permission is hereby granted to the undersigned sportsperson for hunting/trapping on land owned by the undersigned landowner or their agent for the date(s) listed.

In accepting this permit, I agree to assume and release the landowner from any or all liability for personal injuries, property damage, or for the loss of life or property resulting from, or in any way connected with the issuance of this permit.

HUNTING/TRAPPING PERMISSION

DATE(S): ____ / ____ / ____ TO ____ / ____ / ____

CHECK ONE:

- ☐ DAILY
☐ SEASONAL

SPORTSPERSON'S SIGNATURE

TODAY'S DATE

SPORTSPERSON'S ADDRESS:

SPORTSPERSON'S TELEPHONE NO: (____) _____

VEHICLE LICENSE NO: _____

RESTRICTIONS: _____

MAKE & MODEL: _____

LANDOWNER OR AGENT'S SIGNATURE

2026-27 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS PUBLIC SHOOTING RANGES

The Ohio Division of Wildlife provides public shooting ranges at state parks, fish hatcheries, wildlife areas, and other locations across Ohio to get you ready for upcoming hunting seasons.

Division of Wildlife shooting ranges are categorized by class, which will help you decide which range best fits your needs; Class A are supervised rifle and pistol target ranges; Class B are unsupervised rifle and pistol target ranges; Class C are unsupervised clay target shotgun ranges; Class D are unsupervised archery target ranges; and Class O are other public ranges not classified by the Division of Wildlife.

All Class A ranges have fully accessible parking, shooting benches, and restroom facilities and are staffed by knowledgeable range attendants. Not all Class B, C, or D ranges have a range attendant or restroom facilities. Anyone age 18 and older who is shooting on Class A, B, and C ranges is required to purchase a shooting range permit. You do not need a permit to visit any of the Division of Wildlife's public archery ranges. Range rules will be posted at the front of the range or shared with you during check-in at Class A, B, and C ranges.

Safety is a priority regardless of which implement you are using. Basic safety rules should be followed at all times when handling firearms or archery equipment.

Those new to gun ranges should consider visiting a Class A range first as there are staff available to assist you. At Class A ranges, you will need to check in and show your range permit. This is also a great time to ask any questions! Choose a bench in the appropriate area of the range. A range attendant or range safety officer can help you determine when to load and unload your implement.

Each year, the Ohio Division of Wildlife offers a free range day which allows anyone to try out Class A, B, and C ranges without purchasing a range permit. On-site instruction by trained firearms staff is also available at select locations.

SUPERVISED HOURS OF OPERATION

Hours of operation vary and can be found at wildohio.gov. All Class A ranges are open Wednesday through Sunday. All Class A ranges are closed on the following dates: Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Years Day, Easter, and Juneteenth.



CLASS A, B, AND C RANGES

All persons age 18 and older are required to purchase a shooting range permit. Those age 17 and younger are not required to purchase a permit, but must be accompanied by an adult (age 18 and older) holding a valid range permit.

These permits can be purchased at wildohio.gov, on the HuntFish OH app, at all license agents, and at Division of Wildlife district offices.

One-year and one-day range permits may be printed or displayed on a mobile device.

Select ranges have handicap accessible parking, shooting benches, and restrooms. If interested, please contact the individual location for details.

CLASS D SHOOTING RANGES

No permit is required to shoot at Class D ranges.

2025-26 OHIO HUNTING & TRAPPING REGULATIONS

PUBLIC SHOOTING RANGES

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RANGES

PUBLIC AREA	COUNTY	CLASS	TYPE
Delaware Wildlife Area	Delaware	A C D	Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, & Archery
Grand River Wildlife Area	Closed for renovation. Visit wildohio.gov for updates.		
Spring Valley Wildlife Area*	Greene	A C D	Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, & Archery
Deer Creek Wildlife Area	Fayette	B C D	Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, & Archery
Woodbury Wildlife Area	Coshocton	B C D	Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, & Archery
Indian Creek Wildlife Area	Brown	B C D	Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, & Archery
Wolf Creek Wildlife Area	Morgan	B C D	Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, & Archery
Monroe Lake Wildlife Area	Monroe	B	Rifle & Pistol
Tranquility Wildlife Area	Adams	B	Rifle & Pistol
Oxbow Lake Wildlife Area	Defiance	C	Shotgun
Resthaven Wildlife Area	Erie	C	Shotgun
Rush Run Wildlife Area	Preble	C	Shotgun
Salt Fork Wildlife Area	Guernsey	C	Shotgun
Wyandot Wildlife Area	Wyandot	C	Shotgun
Berlin Lake Wildlife Area	Portage	D	Archery
Cooper Hollow Wildlife Area	Jackson	D	Archery
Wildlife District Two Office	Hancock	D	Archery
Wildlife District Five Office	Greene	D	Archery
Fallsville Wildlife Area	Highland	D	Archery
Hebron State Fish Hatchery	Licking	D	Archery
Spencer Lake Wildlife Area	Medina	D	Archery
St. Marys State Fish Hatchery	Auglaize	D	Archery
Tri-Valley Wildlife Area	Muskingum	D	Archery

OTHER STATE AGENCY RANGES

PUBLIC AREA	COUNTY	CLASS	CONTACT
Fernwood State Forest	Jefferson	C O	(330) 339-2205
Barkcamp State Park	Belmont	D	(740) 484-4064
Beaver Creek State Park	Columbiana	D	(330) 385-3091
Caesar Creek State Park	Warren	D	(513) 897-3055
East Harbor State Park	Ottawa	D	(419) 734-4424
Geneva State Park	Ashtabula	D	(440) 466-8400
Hocking Hills State Park	Hocking	D	(740) 385-6842
Hueston Woods State Park	Butler, Preble	D	(513) 523-6347
Lake Hope State Park	Vinton	D	(740) 596-4938
Lake Vesuvius/ Wayne National Forest	Lawrence	D	(740) 534-6500
Paint Creek State Park	Highland, Ross	D	(937) 393-4284
Punderson State Park	Geauga	D	(440) 564-2279
Rocky Fork State Park	Highland	D	(937) 393-4284
Salt Fork State Park	Guernsey	D	(740) 439-3521
Shawnee State Park	Scioto	D	(740) 858-6652
Veto Lake	Washington	D	(740) 589-9930
Wingfoot Lake	Portage	D	(330) 962-2048
Dillon Lake	Licking, Muskingum	O	(740) 452-3529
Harrison State Forest	Harrison	O	(419) 994-5125
Mohican State Park	Ashland	O	(937) 393-4284
Zaleski State Forest	Vinton	O	(740) 596-5781

(*) Supervised Trap & Skeet Range; Unsupervised Hand Trap Range (call for details)

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION: 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543)

To report a wildlife violation: 1-800-POACHER (1-800-762-2437)

OHIO WILDLIFE OFFICERS

ADAMS	Gus Kiebel	(937) 776-0688	LORAIN	Vacant	(330) 802-9172
ALLEN	Craig Barr	(419) 348-7243	LUCAS	Mike Ohlrich	(419) 345-8821
ASHLAND	Evan Huegel	(330) 245-3044	MADISON	Matt Teders	(614) 309-3465
ASHTABULA	Joshua Quail	(330) 802-9171	MAHONING	Tom Frank	(330) 245-3038
ATHENS	Ryan Donnelly	(740) 541-8266	MARION	Chad Grote	(614) 745-7210
AUGLAIZE	Mark Schemmel	(937) 728-4192	MEDINA	Eric Moore	(330) 245-3043
BELMONT	Breyer Ehrnfeld	(614) 563-1680	MEIGS	Chris Gilkey	(614) 563-4492
BROWN	Micah Collier	(513) 646-4014	MERCER	Brad Buening	(419) 236-8787
BUTLER	Andrew Dowdell	(513) 403-6591	MIAMI	Jasmine Grossnickle	(937) 470-1917
CARROLL	Scott Cartwright	(330) 802-9163	MONROE	Jacob Parker	(614) 563-5033
CHAMPAIGN	Nick Oliver	(937) 206-9320	MONTGOMERY	Jeff Wenning	(937) 545-6768
CLARK	Mathew Bourne	(937) 206-9321	MORGAN	Ben Smith	(614) 563-5338
CLERMONT	Lucas Wildman	(513) 673-1566	MORROW	Tyler Eldred	(614) 400-0756
CLINTON	Isaiah Gifford	(937) 776-1850	MUSKINGUM	Jeffrey Berry	(740) 447-0570
COLUMBIANA	Jesse Janosik	(330) 245-3039	NOBLE	Anthony Lemle	(614) 563-7705
COSHOCTON	Jerrod Allison	(740) 502-4586	OTTAWA	Reid Van Cleve	(419) 429-8389
CRAWFORD	Nathan Cass	(419) 429-8380	PAULDING	Levi Farley	(614) 852-7879
CUYAHOGA	Michael Greer	(330) 245-3033	PERRY	Mark Basinger	(614) 565-0137
DARKE	Brady Stevens	(937) 621-5779	PICKAWAY	Josh Elster	(614) 203-3406
DEFIANCE	Austin Dickinson	(419) 429-8381	PIKE	Matt Van Cleve	(614) 565-0140
DELAWARE	Maurice Irish	(614) 400-0631	PORTAGE	Marino Pellegrini	(330) 245-3040
ERIE	Michele Butler	(419) 356-8213	PREBLE	Vacant	(937) 510-1154
FAIRFIELD	Jade Heizer	(614) 307-5519	PUTNAM	Jason Porinchok	(419) 957-2524
FAYETTE	John Coffman	(614) 565-2538	RICHLAND	Nathan Kaufmann	(419) 565-1311
FRANKLIN	Mark T. Williams, Jr.	(614) 956-8479	ROSS	Bob Nelson	(614) 565-9754
FULTON	Adam Stachler	(419) 356-4706	SANDUSKY	Charles McMullen	(419) 345-7173
GALLIA	Levi Boggs	(614) 563-1843	SCIOTO	Tyler Fields	(614) 565-9064
GEAUGA	Matthew Madgar	(330) 245-3035	SENECA	Brock Williamson	(419) 619-9832
GREENE	Alex Almeter	(937) 545-6327	SHELBY	Logan Ambrister	(937) 545-5849
GUERNSEY	Cole Tilton	(614) 563-2355	STARK	Scott Traver	(330) 245-3041
HAMILTON	Vacant	(513) 446-7028	SUMMIT	Zach Hillman	(330) 245-3042
HANCOCK	Ryan Burke	(419) 202-0090	TRUMBULL	Marty Cisine	(330) 245-3037
HARDIN	Ryan Kennedy	(419) 429-8385	TUSCARAWAS	Michael Budd	(614) 230-6347
HARRISON	Nick Turner	(330) 245-3049	UNION	Brian Motsinger	(614) 315-4999
HENRY	Matthew R. Smith	(419) 889-8312	VAN WERT	Nolan Johnson	(419) 348-0311
HIGHLAND	Matt Roberts	(937) 205-3020	VINTON	Kiri Williams	(614) 565-0805
HOCKING	Taylor Combs	(614) 257-7792	WARREN	Jacob Losekamp	(513) 520-9896
HOLMES	Cory Burroughs	(330) 390-0180	WASHINGTON	Scot Gardner	(740) 412-9184
HURON	Matthew D. Smith	(419) 346-9038	WAYNE	Aaron Brown	(330) 323-2554
JACKSON	Ted Witham	(614) 563-4138	WILLIAMS	Ethan Bingham	(419) 619-6880
JEFFERSON	Craig Porter	(330) 245-3050	WOOD	Eric VonAlmen	(419) 356-3193
KNOX	Austin Levering	(614) 400-0731	WYANDOT	Payton Phenicie	(419) 429-8398
LAKE	Ryan Pawlus	(330) 245-3034	•• LAKE ERIE ••		
LAWRENCE	Darin Abbott	(614) 563-3946	EAST	Jason Warren	(740) 963-6036
LICKING	Antoinette Freet	(614) 400-0744	WEST	Brian Baker	(419) 706-0702
LOGAN	Adam Smith	(937) 441-5224			