

# Update

## WELCOME TO HUNTING AND TRAPPING IN PENNSYLVANIA

LICENSE BUYERS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TAKING PLACE THIS YEAR.

Here are some of the changes this year that hunters and trappers need to know:

Statewide, **antlerless deer license allocations** are similar to last season, with fewer tags being allocated in WMUs 2G, 2H and 3A to allow the deer herd to further grow there. Information on the allocation, as well as the dates on which antlerless licenses for each Wildlife Management Unit sold out last year is found with the application instructions. The first day for residents to apply is July 11. ❖ The schedule for accepting **antlerless license applications from nonresidents** has been changed to make the process more fair, while still giving preference to Pennsylvanians. Nonresident hunters, many of whom are native Pennsylvanians who return home to hunt deer with family, now may apply on the third Monday of July, which this year is July 18. ❖ The boundary between **WMUs 5C and 5D** has changed again this license year. Nearly 52,000 acres – or 81 square miles – that previously had been part of WMU 5C has been moved to WMU 5D to provide a more logical boundary between more urban and less developed areas. New maps are included in the WMU section of this digest. ❖ **Disease Management Area 2**, where deer hunters must abide by special rules to slow the spread of chronic wasting disease, has expanded again. A new map is included within the deer-hunting section of this digest, but hunters should make a habit of checking the Game Commission's website for the latest boundary changes. DMA 2 is the only area of the state where CWD has been detected in free-ranging deer, and the Game Commission this year will be working with hunters to address this threat to Pennsylvania's rich hunting heritage. **DMA 2 antlerless deer permits** again will be made available this year through The Outdoor Shop website. ❖ The **amount hunters and trappers pay** for each license and privilege they purchase has increased by 20 cents this year due to a higher fee charged for use of the Pennsylvania Automated Licensing System. ❖ There is an **earlier opener for the cottontail season**, Oct. 15, as well as the youth season, Oct. 1. The shift aligns the cottontail and squirrel seasons. ❖ An **extended black bear season in WMU 1B** will be held Nov. 30 to Dec. 3, the first week of the firearms deer season, to prevent further expansion of bears into the western part of the WMU, where the potential for human-bear conflicts is high. Meanwhile, the **extended black bear season has been eliminated in WMU 3A**. ❖ The length of the **fall turkey season has been reduced** in WMUs 1A, 1B, 2A and 4C due to declining turkey populations within those WMUs. ❖ The length of the **fisher season has been doubled** in the 13 WMUs with an open season. ❖ A **one-week river otter season** has been established for WMUs 3C and 3D, eliminating the need to extend the season if the harvest quota isn't met. ❖ The **snowshoe hare season has been extended to one week** statewide to simplify regulations and reflect the fact harvest mortality is not a major driver of hare populations. ❖ It now is **illegal to possess expired hunting or furtaker licenses or harvest tags** while hunting or trapping. The change addresses problems with expired tags being used unlawfully to hunt, trap or harvest game over the limit. Hunters and trappers are reminded to remove expired licenses and tags from their license holders or wallets after purchasing new licenses. ❖ A total of 124 **elk licenses** have been allocated this year. Twenty-five antlered elk licenses and 99 antlerless elk licenses will be awarded by lottery. Application instructions can be found in the elk section of this digest. The application deadline is July 31, and the drawing is Aug. 20. ❖ A **Veterans with Disabilities Waterfowl Hunt** is set to be held this year at Pymatuning Wildlife Management Area. Resident Disabled Veteran and Resident Reduced Fee Disabled Veteran license holders may hunt alongside three guests if selected by drawing. An application is in the **waterfowl section**, which itself is a new addition to the digest.

## Wildlife Classifications

The Game and Wildlife Code protects all of Pennsylvania's wildlife. The code classifies wildlife as follows:

### Game Animals:

Black bear, cottontail rabbit, elk, squirrels (red, gray, black and fox), snowshoe hare, white-tailed deer and woodchuck (groundhog)

### Game Birds:

Brant, bobwhite quail, coot, gallinule, geese, grouse, Hungarian partridge, merganser, mourning and Eurasian collared doves, pheasant, rail, snipe, swan, wild ducks, wild turkey and woodcock.

### Big Game:

Bear, elk, white-tailed deer and wild turkey.

### Small Game:

Game birds and game animals not classified as big game.

### Furbearers:

Badger, beaver, bobcat, coyote, fisher, mink, muskrat, opossum, otter, pine martin, raccoon, red and gray fox, striped skunk and weasel.

### Protected Mammals:

Wild mammals not classified furbearers or game animals (For example, chipmunks are protected).

### Protected Birds:

Wild birds not classified game birds.

*Protection is removed from wildlife, except migratory birds, big game and threatened or endangered species, when personal property, other than an agricultural crop, is being destroyed or damaged. Wildlife may be taken only by the owner or person in charge of the personal property affected. Wildlife taken to protect personal property must be surrendered to a Game Commission representative.*

**THE PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION  
MANAGES ALL WILD BIRDS AND MAMMALS,  
AND THEIR HABITATS, FOR CURRENT  
AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**