

2017 VERMONT BLACK BEAR SEASONS



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Vermont's bear hunting season was expanded in 2013 to slow the growth in Vermont's bear population and to provide Fish & Wildlife Department biologists with data to better manage black bears in Vermont.

EARLY SEASON: September 1, 2017 through November 10, 2017

Requires a separate early season bear tag – residents \$5, nonresidents \$15.

LATE SEASON: November 11, 2017 through November 19, 2017

The "late season" bear tag is included on each hunting license except the nonresident small game license.

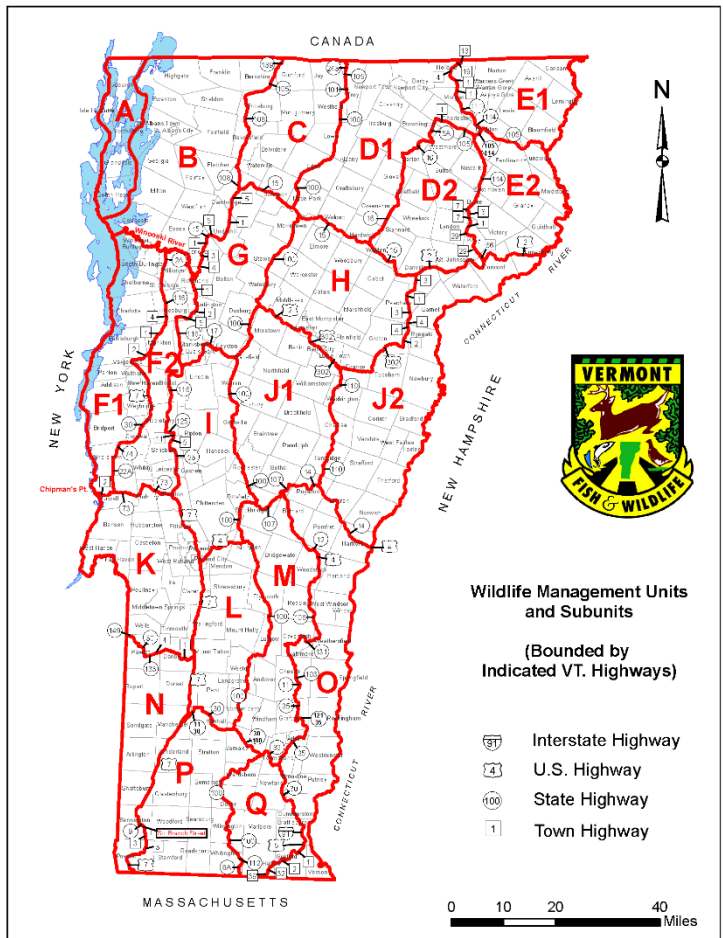
HUNTING HOURS: Hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

LIMIT: The annual limit for bears has not changed. A hunter may harvest only one bear per calendar year.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

There is a separate "early season bear tag" required for those hunters who want to hunt bear prior to the beginning of the November deer rifle season. It costs \$5 for residents and \$15 for nonresidents. **Hunters will continue to get a "late season" bear tag along with their deer tag on their general hunting license at no additional cost, which is valid during the first nine days of the November deer rifle season.**

The additional tag will enable the department to gather essential information about hunter effort and success, as well as an idea of overall bear hunter numbers. The early season tag gives



department biologists a better understanding of how many hunters are actively pursuing bears before the November rifle season.

Hunters who hunt with a *permanent license* (licenses for hunters 65 and older) do not need to buy an early season bear tag no matter when their license was bought, and they will not be charged for an early season bear tag. Their tag is valid for both early and late bear seasons every year in perpetuity.

Hunters who purchased a *lifetime license* before January 1, 2013 also do not need to buy an early season bear tag. Their tag is valid for both early and late bear seasons every year in perpetuity. This includes hunters whose license was purchased

before 2013 but whose license will not be activated until they take a hunter's education course, such as a license purchased for a young child.

However, hunters who purchased a lifetime license on or after January 1, 2013 must purchase an early season bear tag to hunt bear prior to the November deer rifle season.

Hunters who purchased a *five-year license* that is valid starting in the year 2013 will need to purchase an early season bear tag, regardless of whether they purchased the tag before or during 2013.

A digital version of your license carried with you is also acceptable, except for minor children who must still carry a paper license signed by their parent.

Purchase a License Online	Hunting Black Bear FAQs
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LIFETIME AND PERMANENT LICENSE RENEWAL

If you intend to hunt, fish, or trap in 2017, you must update your lifetime, permanent disability, or permanent license regardless of whether or not you used your tags. This is a new statutory requirement, and it has been put in place to allow the department to collect accurate harvest and licensing information for lifetime licenses.

This updated license will include current year tags. You may update your license at no cost on-line at our [website](#). If you are unable to go on-line, you may go to any authorized license agent or Fish & Wildlife Office and request to have your license updated. You can also call us at 802-828-1190 to be updated. A license agent may charge you up to \$1.50 for a reprint.

Update a Permanent License
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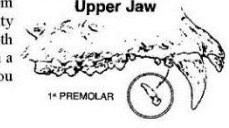
BEAR TOOTH COLLECTION IS REQUIRED

 The Fish & Wildlife Department needs your help. Knowing the age of the bears that are harvested by hunters is a very important part of Vermont's scientific bear management

program. Starting in 2017, a tooth is required to be submitted by the hunter from every bear harvested in Vermont.

Removing the bear's pre-molar tooth is easy and does not affect the mounting quality of the bear. Please ask the reporting station operator for a tooth envelope for you to send your bear's tooth sample to the department. Every tooth we receive from hunters helps the bear project.

Below are the directions for removing the tooth (from the back of the envelope provided by the reporting station):

<p>The Fish & Wildlife Dept. needs the first premolar tooth from your bear for aging purposes. The age of your bear and those from other hunters will provide needed data to determine the stability of the bear population. The upper premolar is the first tooth behind the large canine tooth; it can be pried out easily with a knife. Please send it to us in this envelope and we will send you your bear's age the following spring.</p>	 <p>First premolar tooth Upper Jaw</p> <p>1st PREMOLAR</p>
Please provide the following information:	
Hunter's Name _____ License# _____ Telephone# _____	
Mailing Address _____	
State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____	
Date of Kill _____ Town & WMU of Kill _____ Sex of Bear _____	
Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Hunter Harvest <input type="checkbox"/> Road Kill <input type="checkbox"/> Management Kill	

You will receive the age information in the spring when the age information is returned from the lab. Thank you.

Bear Tooth Removal Instruction Video
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PRE-HUNT PLANNING

Bear hunting is a physically demanding activity, especially removing a harvested bear from the woods. Pre-hunt planning is important to a successful and rewarding bear hunting experience.

Long before harvesting a bear, the hunter must decide how the meat will be processed and how the hide will be used. Hunters should arrange to have help available for all aspects of handling a harvested bear and have plans made ahead of time to ensure that the meat and hide are properly processed.

Bears have a tremendous amount of fat and thick hide that provide great insulation. Both the meat

and the hide can spoil quickly especially at temperatures above freezing. A dead bear can be large and cumbersome. Skinning, processing, and transporting a bear are difficult tasks and may be impossible without assistance.

As a result, it is imperative that you field dress the bear promptly and remove the hide as soon as possible to prevent meat spoilage. In temperatures above freezing, if there is going to be a delay in getting your harvested bear to a cooler, you should consider quartering it to allow the heavier portions to cool more quickly. Before taking your bear out from the place it is killed, pack bags of ice in the body cavity or around the quarters. You may dismember the carcass to pack it out of the place of kill as long as all of the carcass parts are present at check in and the identity of the sex is not destroyed.

[More Tips and Techniques](#)

CROSSBOWS

A crossbow may be used by anyone 50 years of age or older. Anyone 49 years of age or younger may hunt with a crossbow, provided they possess a crossbow disability permit. The crossbow disability permit is issued to a person so physically impaired that he or she cannot operate a standard bow and allows that person to hunt with a crossbow. A permit applicant must produce a licensed physician's certificate certifying that the disability requires the use of a crossbow. Obtain an application from Fish & Wildlife before visiting your doctor. Applicant must also appear before a state game warden to obtain a crossbow license. Be sure to make an appointment ahead of time.

[Crossbow Disability Permit Application \(49 years and younger\)](#)

PROHIBITIONS

- ❖ A hunter may take only one black bear in a calendar year.
- ❖ Bears may not be taken alive.

- ❖ Bears may not be trapped.
- ❖ Hunters may not use bait or a baited area to take a bear. A "baited area" is defined as an area where meat, carrion, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting bear has been placed or deposited.
- ❖ It is illegal to shoot a bear that is visiting a bird feeder.
- ❖ It is illegal to feed bears, even when not hunting for them.

TAGGING BEAR

Bear must be tagged immediately when taken. The tag must be placed on the carcass open to view and remain there until the carcass is cut up for consumption.

OPTIONAL VERMONT BIG GAME TAG

Optional Vermont Big Game Tags are available from license agents as durable alternatives to the paper tags on licenses. Optional tags may be used to tag deer, bear, or turkeys, but they are not for use with moose or muzzleloader antlerless deer. Record your CONSERVATION ID number (top left corner of your license) on the Optional Big Game Tag. A qualifying landowner may use the tag by writing "landowner" in the same space. The existing paper tag that comes with a license may also be used.

DURABLE VT BIG GAME TAGS
Available at License Agents Statewide

VERMONT TRANSPORTATION TAG

1. Fill out all information below

2. Affix tag to animal (circle one)
deer bear turkey

3. Transport to nearest Game Check Station
Name _____ Date ____/____/____
Address _____
Conservation ID# _____

Report Poachers
To report fish and wildlife violations and remain anonymous call:
OPERATOR GAME TRIP
1-800-75ALERT (1-800-752-6378) or web
<http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com>

Big Game Biological Data Needed
Please provide all biological data, including a tooth from black bears and info from white-tailed deer, to designated big game reporting stations. This data is critical to the sound management of Vermont's big game populations.

REPORTING A BEAR

A person taking bear shall within 48 hours report the taking and exhibit the carcass to the nearest game warden, official Fish & Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the commissioner to receive the reports.



It is now mandatory that the hunter provide a pre-molar tooth from the bear at the same time. No bear carcass shall be transported out of state without first being reported.

[Big Game Reporting Stations](#)

TRANSPORTING

A tagged bear may be transported only during the open season and for 20 days thereafter.

USE OF DOGS TO HUNT BEAR

PERMIT REQUIRED: Hunters may use dogs to take bear only when the person in control of the dogs has a bear-dog permit available from the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The permit is required to pursue black bear with the aid of dogs for training purposes or for hunting and taking a bear. Non-residents can only train their dogs in Vermont during the time period when the training season is open in their home state.

A person shall not advertise, barter, exchange goods or services, expose or otherwise sell the use of a dog or dogs for the purpose of taking black bear. It is unlawful to take a bear that is being pursued by hounds if you are not a permit or sub-permit holder.

[Bear-Dog Permit Application Form \(Resident\)](#)

[Bear-Dog Permit Application Form \(Non-Resident\)](#)

[Bear Management Rule](#)

RESEARCH PROJECT STUDY BEARS

Hunters in the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, Woodford, Stamford, Pownal, and Whitingham are urged to use special caution to avoid shooting bears wearing radio collars or yellow plastic ear tags. These marked bears are an important part of the Deerfield Wind Project Study. **It is not illegal to take a collared bear; however, if a bear wearing a collar is mistakenly harvested, it is crucial that the collar be turned in to the Fish & Wildlife Department so data can be retrieved from it.** If a

bear is harvested and has ear tags, then the numbers on the ear tags should also be reported.

[Black Bear Wind Energy Research Project](#)

[Deerfield Wind Black Bear Study – 2015 Update](#)

BEAR HUNTING SAFETY TIPS

Although wearing fluorescent orange clothing is not mandatory for hunting in Vermont, hunters and others are urged to wear a fluorescent orange vest and hat while in the woods. Use caution in identifying your target as anyone hunting deer during archery season, waterfowl, or turkeys will normally wear camouflage clothing.

DON'T SHOOT SOWS WITH CUBS

Bears are normally solitary animals and any groups of bears seen in the autumn are most likely females and their young. The department recommends not shooting sows accompanied by cubs or a bear that is part of a group of bears.

WHERE CAN I HUNT IN VERMONT?

Vermont has more than 800,000 acres of federal and state public land open to hunting: **National Wildlife Refuges**, the **Green Mountain National Forest**, and all **state forests**. **State Parks** are open to hunting outside the operating season.

Perhaps the crown jewel of hunting in Vermont is the state's system of 91 **Wildlife Management Areas**, or **WMAs**. All WMAs are open to hunting, trapping, fishing and other wildlife related outdoor activities.

Information about shooting ranges is available on our [website](#).

[Wildlife Management Areas](#)

[Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge](#)

[Green Mountain National Forest](#)

[Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation](#)

[Hammond Cove Public Shooting Range](#)

[Shooting Range Directory](#)

VERMONT HABITAT STAMP

Monies raised from sales of Vermont Habitat Stamps go to the Species and Habitat Conservation Fund, which is used to purchase and maintain Wildlife Management Areas.



Projects Supported by the Fund Include:

- 👉 Purchase lands for Wildlife Management Areas
- 👉 Improve public access to land for fish and wildlife-based activities such as birdwatching, hunting, fishing, enjoying wildlife or simply connecting with nature
- 👉 Protect and improve wetlands
- 👉 Protect and enhance deer wintering areas
- 👉 Implement wildlife habitat enhancement for turkeys, bears, deer, songbirds, bats, moose, and all of Vermont's native wildlife
- 👉 Use our [online donation form](#)
- 👉 **Hunting and Fishing License Purchase:** Donate when purchasing a hunting or fishing license by simply including your contribution when applying.

When you purchase a Vermont Habitat Stamp, you help improve wildlife habitat and open land for outdoor recreation.

Please note: A stamp is not required to hunt, fish or trap, nor do you have to buy a sporting license to donate for a stamp.

[Vermont Habitat Stamp Online Donation Form](#)



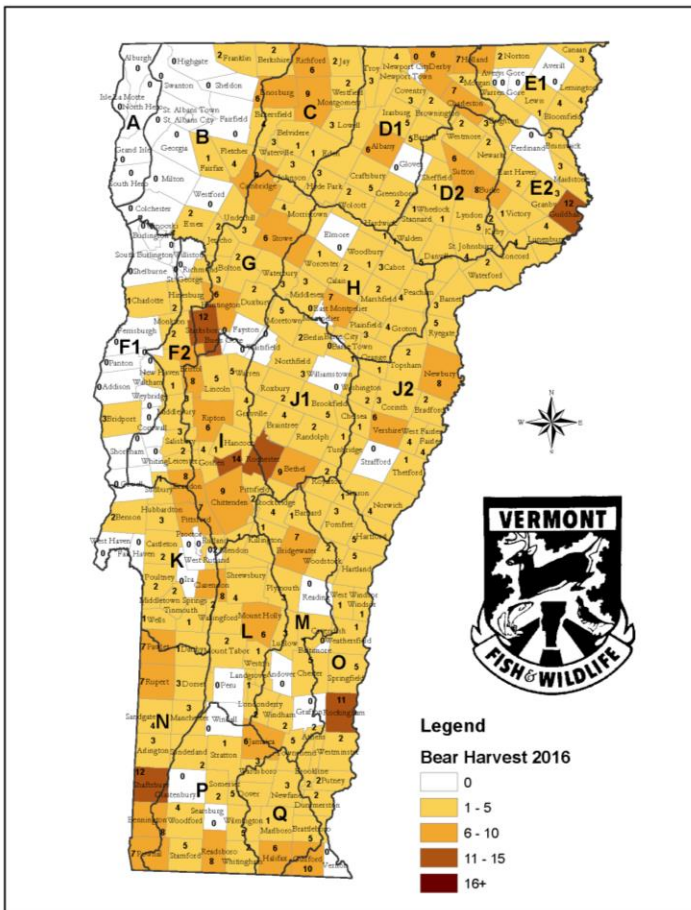
RECIPES

Additional recipes can also be found on our [website](#):

Charcoal Grilled Bear Ribs	
<p>Ingredients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full or half rack of ribs trimmed of all fat, gristle and silver skin. If ribs are too long, saw in half. ■ Your choice of spices to taste. ● To prevent charring, monitor temperature with a thermometer and use indirect-heat or hot-smoke cooking methods. ● Add smokewood chunks to charcoal to create a fragrant smoke on the meat! 	<p>Directions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare ribs, making sure to trim all meat and gristle along bottom of ribs. Trim all fat. <p><i>Caution: When grilling bear meat, dripping fat will ignite! Trim all fat before cooking!</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Sprinkle or rub all sides of the ribs evenly with spices. 3. Prepare charcoal grill for low to medium heat or an indirect-heat set up. 4. Place ribs on grill and cook slowly for 6-10 hours or until desired doneness, turning occasionally, and re-seasoning. 5. Allow bear meat to reach an internal temp of 160 degrees F before consumption.
<p>From: www.state.nj.us/depl/fgw/pdf/bear_recipeguide.pdf</p>	

Big Bear Stew	
<p>Ingredients</p> <p>4 lbs. bear meat ¼ cup all-purpose flour 1 tsp. dried oregano 1 tsp. salt 1 tsp. ground black pepper 4 tbsp. margarine 2 tbsp. olive oil 1 onion, chopped 1 cup beef broth 4 bay leaves 2 lbs. red potatoes, diced 1 lb. fresh mushrooms 5 carrots, sliced 2 turnips, cubed</p>	<p>Directions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, oregano, salt, and pepper. Place bear meat in the bowl a little at a time and coat well. 2. Heat oil and butter in a large skillet. Fry the bear meat until browned. Let drain on paper towels. 3. Fill a large Dutch oven with 2 to 3 quarts water. Add bear meat, onions, beef broth, bay leaves, potatoes, mushrooms, carrots, and turnips. Cook on medium-high heat for 2 to 3 hours. Add more water as needed.
<p>From: allrecipes.com/recipe/13438/big-bear-stew/</p>	

2016 BEAR HARVEST BY TOWN AND WMU



[2016 Black Bear Harvest Report](#)

[Previous Years Reports](#)



VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

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www.facebook.com/vtfishandwildlife



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