



Photo courtesy of Tom Rogers

Compliments of the Hunter Education Program

Thank you to all who helped with our New Instructor Training Class at Buck Lake, and a big congratulations to those instructors who were lucky enough to obtain moose permits! How exciting to hear some of your names get called on the radio! We are in full-on busy season mode right now, so if you have an equipment request, try to get it to us as soon as possible so that we can accommodate you! If you have any articles, pictures, or comments, please e-mail them to Nicole.Corrao@state.vt.us

Insights

Securing Permission

August. I see it as the last official month of swimming holes and sandals, the Sunday of summer. This is the time to tie up all those loose ends, finish what needs to be done for the summer, and get ready for all things autumn. For lots of people, that means getting ready for hunting season.

Target practice starts getting more intense. Your groupings have got to be the best they can be, and evening drives have more purpose (on the lookout for any corn, fields with groups of deer, or other signs). You've purchased your license, put in for a moose permit, and maybe you're looking at new scopes, new sights, or something else to give you that edge you need this fall.

This season of summer twilight is also a great time to ask your neighbors (or strangers!) for permission to hunt their land—a task that could wrack you with apprehension. I've never been brave enough to knock on a stranger's door and ask them if I could hunt their property. Luckily, in Vermont it seems like everyone knows everyone... but maybe not so much these days. With lots of out of state-ers moving in, we may see less of these landowners' faces than we are used to.

The key to asking a landowner for permission is putting yourself in the landowner's shoes. Arrive looking neat, bring your kids, try not to look threatening, smile. The part of asking permission that is paramount is how the landowner perceives you. Understand who they are, let them understand who you are, and that you are respectful and will extend that respect to the landowner and their property.

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Securing Permission

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When approaching the landowner, introduce yourself. Tell him or her that you are interested in hunting their land, and to let you know what areas are off-limits, where you can go, what gates to be aware of, if there are any holes or hazardous areas, etc.

If the landowner says no, just tell him/her you are grateful for their time and you understand their decision. Don't try to change their mind—they own the land, it is ultimately their decision.

If they say yes, thank them. Go out of your way to be courteous and respectful. Tell them the make and model of your vehicle, what game you plan on hunting, when you plan on hunting, and give them your phone number. If you want to set up a stand, now is the time to ask if you can do so. Tell them if you plan on scouting ahead of time, or if you'll be hunting with a blind, with dogs, with your kids, friends, etc. If they have any limitations on any of this, it is better to know up front and be honest about your intentions—you would want honesty from anyone using your land!

Of course, when utilizing the land be sure to be mindful of any trash, and leave the place in better condition than you found it, if possible. Maybe you can help mow, plant trees, or prune brush, with permission from the landowner. Maybe if they aren't around all the time, you can be their eyes and ears as to what is going on throughout the year.

After the hunt, we teach that offering game is a great way to show appreciation to landowners. Why stop there? You have a relationship with this person, how about sending a thank you note, or a holiday card? These are all nice gestures that can only help your relationship with the landowner.

When all else fails—just remember to be pleasant. Don't give up. Keep asking. Good luck!

Meet the New Recruits!

On July 18 and 19, Hunter Education staff along with three instructors (Charlie Wilbur, Jeff Houde, and Brock Quesnel) trained new potential Hunter Education Program volunteers. The trainees learned teaching techniques, program policies, enjoyed a bonfire, and even had a chance to show off their own teaching skills! Thank you to all who attended that fun weekend! Feel free to contact any of these newbies, as they need experience teaching before becoming fully certified!
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Instructor trainees took time to learn how to run a shooting range, but also got a chance to do a little bit of shooting, too!

Photo courtesy of Nicole Corrao, Vermont Fish & Wildlife

Meet the New Recruits!

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Take a look at the list of new trainees! If you are interested in contacting them to help out in a class, call Dylan (802-828-1193), and he will get you their e-mail address or phone number. All of the trainees pictured below were enthusiastic, bright, and downright good people! We give them our glowing endorsement! As of this newsletter, Kendra Wilbur and Nathan Poore have been fully certified. Congratulations!

Name	County	Name	County
Xavier Quesnel	Addison	Kendra Wilbur	Washington
Alan Mitchell	Windsor	Kevn Sare	Washington
Arthur Wood	Caledonia	Nate Poore	Franklin
Eric Holbrook	Orange	Randy Young	Bennington
Fred Schroeder	Addison	Terry Reil	Washington
Gabe Muraca	Essex	Tyler Mitchell	Chittenden



Back row, from left to right: Nathan Poore, Fred Schroeder, Terry Reil, Randy Young, and Chief Instructor Charles Wilbur. Front row from left to right: Instructor Brock Quesnel, Kevn Sare, Eric Holbrook, Tyler Mitchell, Alan Mitchell (no relation), Gabe Muraca, Xavier Quesnel, Arthur Wood, Kendra Wilbur, and Chief Instructor Jeff Houde.

Vermont Moose Hunting Permit Winners are Drawn

The winners of Vermont's 2014 moose hunting permits were determined Thursday, July 17, at a lottery drawing in Montpelier.

Governor Peter Shumlin, standing alongside Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter, started the computer-generated selection process that randomly picked 335 winners among more than 11,600 lottery applications.

The drawing is done by a random sort of applications that were submitted by a June 17, 2014 deadline. Lottery applications cost \$10.00 for residents and \$25.00 for nonresidents.

As part of the regular lottery drawing, a "special priority drawing" was held for five permits to go to applicants who have received, or are eligible to receive, a Campaign Ribbon for Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom (in Afghanistan). The unsuccessful applicants from the Iraqi-Afghanistan drawing were included in the larger regular drawing that followed. All applicants for both drawings who did not receive a permit were awarded a bonus point to improve their chances in future moose permit lotteries.

The lottery was held for 50 moose permits to be used in the Vermont's October 1-7 archery moose hunting season and 285 moose permits for the October 18-23 regular moose season.

"Today's lottery drawing helps celebrate one of Vermont's successes in science-based wildlife management," said State Wildlife Biologist Cedric Alexander. "Vermont's first moose hunt was in 1993, when 25 moose were taken with 30 permits issued. We expect close to 150 moose will be taken this fall in a carefully regulated hunt."

Lottery winners will purchase resident hunting permits for \$100 and nonresident permits for \$350. Ten percent of the permits go to nonresidents. Payments for the hunting permits must be by money order, bank check or credit card. Personal checks are not accepted.

Winners in this year's moose hunting lottery are posted in a searchable database on the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com). Click on "Hunting and Trapping" and then on "Lottery Applications and Winners."

If your name wasn't drawn, you can still bid in Vermont's auction for five moose hunting permits, which is open until August 14. Sealed bids must be received by Vermont Fish & Wildlife by 4:30 p.m. that day. Contact the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department to receive a moose permit bid kit. Telephone 802-828-1190 or email (cheri.waters@state.vt.us).

Vermont law prohibits anyone who has held a Vermont moose hunting permit within any of the previous three calendar years from applying for a moose hunting permit or a bonus point in the current year.

Seminars Announced for First-Time Hunters

Are you a brand new hunter or archer with no mentor to guide you in your first hunting experience? Do you lack the skills to properly field dress and process your first deer? If so, the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has a solution for you. The department is holding a series of free seminars covering the basics to get you started in hunting.

“Starting in mid-August, we are hosting a series of seminars in different aspects of hunting to properly equip inexperienced hunters with the tools to be successful in the Vermont outdoors,” says John Pellegrini, hunter education training coordinator. “Our experienced volunteer instructors will be teaching courses on archery, waterfowl, turkey and deer hunting as well as processing, storing and cooking game. You will learn what to wear on your first hunt and how to select a firearm or archery equipment.”

The seminars are being held in different parts of the state. With the Vermont deer, turkey and bear populations in good shape, now is the time to give hunting a try.

Pellegrini stresses these seminars are for beginning hunters, not for the hunting veteran. “We’ve heard from a number of hunter education graduates who are new to the sport that they need additional hands-on experience before going into the field. These seminars are designed to be the bridge to successful participation.”

A hunting license is not required, and equipment is provided for use during the seminars.

Vermont has more than 70,000 licensed hunters. Each year they provide a critical service to the state by helping manage the various game species in Vermont. Additionally, they provide more than \$268.7 million in revenue to the state’s economy, according to a recent national study. By training the next generation of hunters, the department ensures this tradition remains strong in Vermont.

A list of the seminars with descriptions, dates, locations, and registration information is on the Vermont Fish & Wildlife website: (http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/edu_hunt_seminars.cfm).

For additional information, contact John Pellegrini at john.pellegrini@state.vt.us, or at 802-272-2909. Register early, as these seminars will fill up quickly.



Photo courtesy of VT Fish & Wildlife

NRA Youth Hunter Education Day, Sat., Aug 23

Vermont's annual NRA Youth Hunter Education Day will be held 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 23, at the Buck Lake Conservation Camp in Woodbury, VT.

The event is free, and offers young hunters the chance to practice their skills in firearms, archery, wildlife identification and land navigation. Events include shotgun, rifle, map and compass, and a search and rescue demo. Lunch will be provided.

The Youth Hunter Education Day is open to all youth 18 years of age and under who have completed hunter education. Mentors, parents and guardians are encouraged to attend.

Pre-registration is required by August 19. To register, call Vermont's Hunter Education Program at 802-828-1193 or email nicole.corrao@state.vt.us.

This event is co-sponsored by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, Vermont Bearhound Association and the Friends of the National Rifle Association.

"This event underscores the importance of youth hunters to the future of hunting in Vermont," said Nicole Corrao, Vermont Fish & Wildlife's hunter education information and education specialist. "But more importantly, it offers plenty of learning and fun for young hunters and their families."



Vermont's NRA Youth Hunter Day, Aug. 23 this year, provides a practical environment for reinforcing and testing a young hunter's skills. Pre-registration is required by Aug. 19

Photo courtesy Nicole Corrao, Vermont Fish & Wildlife

FAQ with Nicole



Nicole on the range.

Photo courtesy of instructor DJ Rousseau

Q: What if a student doesn't have a computer? How do they sign up for class?

A: Since we no longer use paper for registration purposes, all class registration, student results, and instructor hours should be recorded on Event Manager. If your student doesn't have a computer, you can register them from your side of the website, or you can tell them to call Dylan at 802-828-1193 and he will sign them up for the class!

You can also choose to write down students' information and record it on the website later. If you don't know your Event Manager log in information, call Nicole or Dylan and they can help you get started!

The Cookhouse

Venison Burgers adapted with permission from Hank Shaw, *Hunter, Angler, Gardener, Cook*

Venison burgers are a staple in many a game cook's repertoire, but I actually rarely make burgers. But when I do, I tend to sex them up with herbs and spices. This recipe is sorta vaguely Hungarian style, but it tastes really, really good.

Most venison is too lean to make into a burger by itself: In these cases, mix with the fattiest ground pork you can find – or better still, ground pork fat. I don't much care for mixing my venison with beef fat because it is worse for your health than pork fat — plus, pork fat tastes more neutral than beef suet.

Use this recipe as a guide, not a crutch: You can vary the spices any way you want, and even vary the amounts once you know how much is going to do what. Develop a taste memory for the way spices and herbs interact and you can whip these delicious burgers up with whatever you have handy.

Link to original article:

<http://honest-food.net/wild-game/venison-recipes/burger-meatball-recipes/venison-burgers/>

Venison Burgers

Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground venison
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon ground fennel seeds

Directions:

Mix everything together well. Form patties about the size of your palm. Don't work them too hard or they will become tough. Grill, fry or broil them to your liking, about 10-15 minutes. Flip only once, and don't press down on the burgers while cooking (this lets out juices and will make your burger tougher and drier). Steady, medium heat is important. Top with your favorite cheese or wild mushrooms if you can find them!

Black Bear Complaints on the Rise

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has received a large number of calls recently from members of the public complaining about bears.

“Our phones have been ringing constantly the last couple of weeks with calls from people asking what to do about a bear that has been visiting their yard,” said Col. David LeCours, Vermont Fish & Wildlife’s director of law enforcement. “The first thing we tell them is to identify and remove whatever is attracting the bears.”

People often inadvertently encourage bears to come out of the forest by providing food without realizing it. Some of the most common sources of food that attract bears are pet food, bird feeders, barbecue grills, household trash containers or dumpsters, and campsites with accessible food or food waste.

Bears that have found food near someone’s house nearly always return to find more, developing habits that can lead to the bear’s ultimate demise. Relocating a nuisance bear is very difficult – they frequently have to be put down.

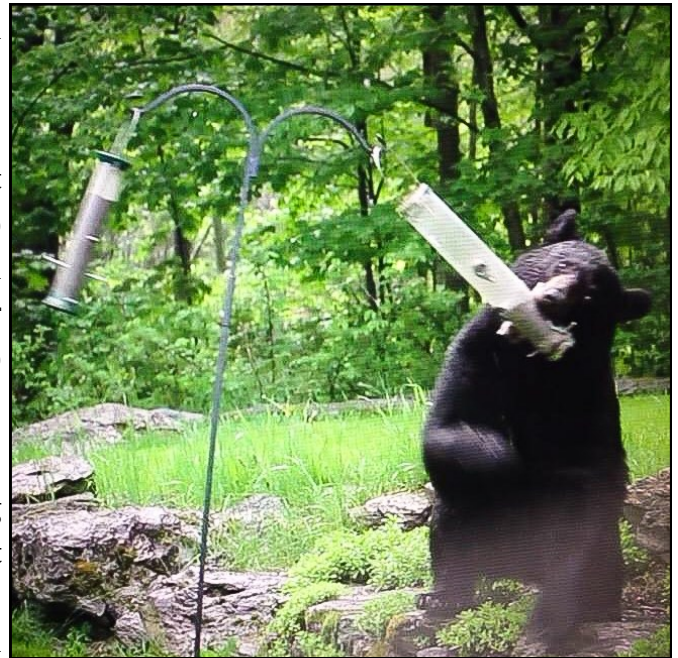
“People often assume that we can just capture and move a bear to a more remote area once it becomes a problem,” said Forrest Hammond, Vermont Fish & Wildlife’s bear project leader. “Bears can easily move dozens or even hundreds of miles in search of food, so there’s really nowhere in Vermont we can put a bear that it won’t find people’s houses if it’s determined. Prevention is really the key. The only way to deal with a problem bear is to remove whatever is attracting it in the first place.”

Feeding a bear is not just bad for the bear, it’s also illegal. A law was passed in 2013 making it against the law to feed a bear and wardens have begun issuing tickets to violators.

Vermont law also states that residents must take reasonable measures to protect their property from bears before lethal force can be taken. Some of these measures include:

- Keep chickens and honeybees secure within an electric fence or other bear-proof enclosure.
- Never feed bears, deliberately or accidentally.
- Feed your pets indoors.
- Do not feed birds April 1 through November 30. Bringing feeders in at night doesn’t work, because of seed that is spilled on the ground.
- Store trash in a secure place. Trash cans alone are not enough.

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Bear complaints are on the rise in Vermont and residents are asked to remove things that might attract a bear from their yard such as trash, dog food, or bird feeders. Photo courtesy of Gillian Stippa

Black Bear Complaints on the Rise

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“We’re in a period of transition with this new law,” said Hammond. “People are really starting to get the message and have been taking steps to scare bears away or remove attractants as the law dictates, rather than just shooting the bear.”

“Our wardens have been a tremendous help in our efforts to habituate bears to stay away from people when there is a problem,” said Hammond. “They’ve been working overtime trying to help landowners while also striving to save the lives of these bears.”

For more information about living with Vermont’s black bears, see the Vermont Fish & Wildlife website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com). Fish & Wildlife also asks that you use a form on their website to report any incidents you may have with Vermont bears at www.tinyurl.com/ReportBearVt.

Man Charged for Feeding Bears

A Montgomery Vermont man was charged by the Fish & Wildlife Department for intentionally feeding bears.

Jeffrey Messier, 54, of Black Falls Road was charged with feeding bears after Game Warden Sgt. Carl Wedin received a report of a bear being killed in self-defense at a neighboring residence on June 22, 2014. Sgt. Wedin responded and recovered the bear. Its stomach contained a large number of sunflower seeds.

The investigating warden went to Jeffrey Messier’s residence where he discovered evidence of bear feeding and encountered a bear walking around the residence. The bear showed no sign of being afraid of people and walked right up to the warden. The bear then approached a picnic table where sunflower seeds were placed. It was obvious to the warden that this bear had been intentionally fed on several occasions and had lost its fear of humans.

Further investigation by Sgt. Wedin revealed that several other bears also came to the residence often enough to be named and that many of them in recent years may have been killed or injured in incidents with other landowners.

According to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, black bears are found in most forested portions of Vermont where they rely on wild foods such as berries, cherries, beechnuts, apples and acorns to survive. But the department also points out that bears can easily become attracted to other foods such as birdseed, garbage and pet food.

“Bears are normally shy and not aggressive toward humans,” says bear biologist Forrest Hammond. “However, a bear that has been fed by humans soon loses its shyness and can become dangerous, especially to the landowner feeding the bears and to their neighbors. Often, as in this case, fed bears will seek similar foods elsewhere, and in the process cause property damage and scare people not expecting to find bears on their porches and in their back yards.”

“At this time we are responding to reports throughout the state of bears causing damage while attempting to get at chicken feed, bird seed, stored garbage, and food kept in screened porches. In most cases this does not end well for the bears.”

“People such as Mr. Messier that feed bears often think they are helping them,” said Hammond, “but in reality such behavior causes problems for other landowners and often ends with the death of the bears being fed. When we start receiving multiple reports of bears causing problems in an area we most often find that someone is intentionally feeding them.”

The intentional feeding of bears is illegal in Vermont. If convicted Messier faces a fine of up to \$1,000 and a one-year revocation of his hunting, fishing and trapping licenses.

For information about living with Vermont’s black bears, see the Vermont Fish & Wildlife website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com).

Speaking of Bears...

Instructor Charles Lucot says a family of black bears has been using his yard for the past few weeks. The male has been around earlier, and Charles says he weighs about 300 pounds! This snapshot below was from the first time the sow and her cubs have been seen in the area, around July 17th.

Check out the photo below, because who doesn't love looking at wildlife?



Photo courtesy of Instructor Charles Lucot

Eating Wild-Caught Fish Can be Healthy for You and the Environment

Fishing is a favorite summer pastime among Vermonters and visitors to the state for good reason—fish tastes great. While anglers may enjoy fishing as a chance to get in the outdoors with friends and family, many also appreciate the benefit of bringing their catch home for a nutritious meal.

Vermont anglers can hook many of the traditional fish like trout, bass and salmon that are beloved by chefs. But many other fish species such as yellow perch, crappie and pumpkinseeds are also abundant in Vermont's waters and are easy to catch. These species are often referred to as panfish because they are delicious when pan-fried.

“Well-regulated fishing can be one of the most ecologically-friendly and sustainable ways for people to gather food,” said Eric Palmer, director of fisheries for the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. “Vermonters are generally very conscious of what they eat and where it originates. When you catch a perch from a Vermont pond, you can be assured it is local, organic, free-range and absent added hormones or antibiotics.”

By purchasing a fishing license, anglers also help the environment. These funds support the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's efforts to improve fish habitat. The department also monitors fish populations and sets harvest limits to ensure that a species will not be over-fished.

As for potential health risks associated with eating fish, Palmer noted that most Vermont fish are perfectly safe to eat.



Photo courtesy of Tom Rogers, Vermont Fish & Wildlife

“People hear reports on the news on initiatives to reduce runoff into Lake Champlain, so they often mistakenly assume that fish caught there are unsafe,” said Palmer. “These efforts are focused on reducing excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, rather than on issues with mercury and PCBs that can sometimes make fish unsafe to eat.”

The Vermont Department of Health issues guidelines on which fish species are safest to eat. “In general, Vermont's wild fish are safe to eat if you follow these few simple guidelines,” said Palmer.

The Department of Health's guidelines for eating wild Vermont fish are available at www.tinyurl.com/VtHealthyFish. A quick web search will reveal thousands of fish recipes to try.

Vermont Turkey Brood Survey Starts Aug. 1

Wild turkeys are found throughout most of Vermont, but their reproductive success is monitored annually by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department with a little help from “citizen scientists” who report the number and size of turkey families they see during August.

Fish & Wildlife is again asking the public for help. If you see a group of young turkeys in Vermont during August, the department wants you to go to the turkey brood survey on its website (www.vermontfishandwildlife.com) where you can record where and when you observed the number of adult and young turkeys, or poults.

“Data gathered from the survey will help establish long-term trends in turkey reproductive success and recruitment,” says Vermont Fish & Wildlife’s turkey biologist Amy Alfieri. “It will also answer questions about the impacts of spring and winter weather on the survival of poults and adult turkeys, which helps in setting turkey seasons and harvest limits.”

Over-abundant turkey populations can damage crops and food stored for livestock in bunker silos.

“We monitor Vermont wild turkey numbers annually in order to maximize the benefits of having turkeys while minimizing the liabilities,” says Alfieri. “Turkey hunting is a mechanism for managing Vermont’s turkey population within these limits.”

More than 5,100 wild turkeys were taken by hunters in Vermont’s 2014 spring hunt. Alfieri says this is less than last year’s record spring hunt total of 6,362 turkeys likely due to poor poult production caused by extended wet weather and harsh winter conditions in some areas of the state in 2013.

Alfieri says this year’s online turkey brood survey will be especially important.

“Last year’s low poult production may result in fewer hens and fewer poults this year,” she said. “Combined with the harsh winter we just had, I am not expecting to see large numbers of birds this year. The online survey will help us get a snapshot of turkey production throughout the state.”

“Please help us scientifically manage the turkey population by reporting your Vermont turkey sightings during August,” added Alfieri.

Starting Aug 1, VT Fish & Wildlife is asking people who see wild turkey broods during the month to provide information about their sightings via a survey on the Department’s website.

Photo courtesy of VT Fish & Wildlife.



Peregrine Falcon Nesting Cliffs Reopened for Hikers



At least 37 pairs of peregrine falcons nested in Vermont this year, with at least 27 pairs successfully producing 50 or more young.

Photo courtesy of C.P. Merrill and Vermont Fish & Wildlife

Vermont Fish & Wildlife has reopened the cliffs closed to hiking and access earlier this spring to protect nesting peregrine falcons.

“The young peregrines have fledged, and nesting data suggest the species had a good year due, in part, to cooperation from hikers and rock climbers during this critical nesting period,” said Fish and Wildlife’s migratory bird biologist John Buck. “Peregrine nesting success is also helped by the nearly 40 volunteers who monitor the nest sites from March to the end of July.”

According to Audubon biologist Margaret Fowle, who coordinates the monitoring effort, biologists and volunteers monitored 41 peregrine pairs that occupied Vermont cliffs in early spring and summer. Preliminary results indicate of the 41 pairs, at least 37 pairs nested, and 27 pairs successfully produced an estimated 50 young. Two new nesting sites were discovered this year suggesting additional falcon pairs are selecting their territories.

“We greatly appreciate the time and effort volunteers put into monitoring the population this year, and we thank landowners and recreationists for their cooperation in protecting nesting peregrines from human disturbance,” said Fowle.

“We appreciate the cooperation of the trail and cliff users,” added Buck. “The success of the peregrine nesting season reflects that this mutual effort was very worthwhile.”

Vermont Fish & Wildlife and Audubon Vermont partner to monitor and protect peregrine nesting sites in Vermont. Peregrine falcons were removed from the state’s Threatened and Endangered Species List in 2005. Ongoing cooperation from recreationists and continued monitoring efforts by Audubon and Fish and Wildlife will help ensure the peregrine’s remarkable recovery in future years.

Antlerless Deer Permit Application Deadline

August 15

The deadline to apply for a Vermont muzzleloader antlerless deer hunting permit is fast approaching – August 15.

Hunters can apply on the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com). A quick-link to the information and application is provided on the home page. Or, they can apply with a paper application available from license agents.

“The online application is a really swift and easy process that ensures you are immediately entered into the lottery,” said Deer Project Leader Adam Murkowski. “Plus, it saves you postage. We encourage you to use the online application because it is more efficient for you and for us. Be sure to apply before the August 15 deadline.”

Like in the past, a person may apply in the lottery category, or as a landowner. However, it is a violation for a landowner to apply for a landowner antlerless permit if they are posting their land against hunting. Fish & Wildlife says it will be closely monitoring landowner applications and listing permit winners in both categories on its website.

The number of December muzzleloader season antlerless permits is 17,050 distributed in 13 of Vermont's 20 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs).



Photo courtesy of Vermont Fish & Wildlife

Contact Us!

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Sound Off!

This is YOUR newsletter! Have a photo or story you'd like to share? Is there something that's missing in the newsletter? E-mail Nicole.Corrao@state.vt.us with your suggestions, stories, pictures or other input!.

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