



Compliments of the Hunter Education Program

The leaves are finally changing and the hint of autumn is in the air. I hope you are all enjoying this time and spending it in the woods as much as possible!

This issue of the newsletter is filled with updates from the Hunter Education staff and instructors. If you have something you would like to add to our next issue, please e-mail us!

-Nicole Meier and the Vermont Hunter Education Program

Teaching by Example

Hello fellow instructors! It is a very busy year for me. I am sure it has been for you as well.

I plan to hunt as soon as I can. I have a checklist I like to share with my students. I believe this list is important to live by and to share with students. The bullet points below are not necessarily in order of importance.

- I have received landowner permission to hunt. They know my car, where I will park and who may be with me.
- I have scouted for the game I will hunt.
- I have become proficient with the bow, rifle or shotgun I plan to use to cleanly take game with.
- I am prepared to take a good shot or no shot.
- I have a friend and a family member who will know where I am when I go hunting.
- I have visited the landowners several times in the last few months. I know any special conditions on their land that may affect my decision on where to hunt.
- I have packed my compass and emergency kit. It will come with me even on a short hunt.

The above list is not complete. It is fun and educational to find at least three more points to add to the list with our students. Please give it a try and let us know the results.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Lajoie

Vermont Hunter Education Instructor

West Mountain Shooting Range Opens to Public



The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department says a newly developed West Mountain Shooting Range in Ferdinand, Vermont, is now open for public use.

Shooters are required to follow all range rules, including hours of operation and the requirement to have a Vermont hunting or fishing license.

The West Mountain Range is the second shooting range developed by the Fish & Wildlife Department to be open for

public use. Sited within an existing gravel pit that was already popular for target shooting, this new facility in Essex County meets a need long identified by the department as well as a local conservation group and area hunter education instructors. The range was developed to transform this site into a safe, accessible and environmentally friendly shooting range. Funds for development of the range came through a combination of federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funds and state capital funds.

The range includes four shooting lanes with overhead baffles, side berms, a backstop and a small parking area. Targets are movable from 15, 50, 75, and 100 yards. This facility is located 3.2 miles along South America Pond Road, within the West Management Wildlife Management Area.

The West Mountain Shooting Range will be operated Monday through Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to sunset, April 16 to December 14, unless otherwise posted at the discretion of the Fish & Wildlife Commissioner. Given the wet and snowy conditions of this region for several months of the year, the range will only be open when South America Pond Road is accessible by motor vehicle.

Before using the range, shooters should review the range rules on Vermont Fish & Wildlife's website: www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

"Vermont has some of the safest and most conservation-minded hunters anywhere," said Vermont Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter. "They need a publicly accessible place where they can sight in their rifles and practice their shooting skills. West Mountain Shooting Range will provide just that, especially for residents of Essex County and adjacent communities."

Walter Cabell Shooting Range Opens to the Public Three Weekends in October



Photo courtesy of VT Fish & Wildlife

The Walter Cabell Shooting Range in Woodbury, Vermont will be open for limited public use this October during the three weekends leading up to the November deer season.

Shooters will be required to follow all range rules, including following limited hours of operation. A range safety officer will be on site to assist users and ensure rules are adhered to.

The range will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. starting October 15th.

Walter Cabell Shooting Range was developed by the Fish & Wildlife Department at the Buck Lake Green Mountain Conservation Camp. Every year approximately 500 students attend summer camp here and use this facility to

obtain their hunter education certificates. The range was developed to create a safe, accessible and environmentally friendly shooting range for campers. Funds for development of the range came through a combination of federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funds and state capital funds.

“Vermont has some of the safest and most conservation-minded hunters anywhere,” said Vermont Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter. “They need a publicly accessible place where they can sight in their rifles and practice their shooting skills.”

The range is located at 1081 Buck Lake Road in Woodbury, Vermont, and includes several lanes and benches with an overhead shelter, side berms, a backstop and a small parking area. Target backstops range from 15, 25, and 50 yards.

More information about the range can be found on the department website www.vtfishandwildlife.com or by calling 802-828-1000.

Range hours of operation 10am to 3pm	
Saturday, October 15	Sunday, October 16
Saturday, October 22	Sunday, October 23
Saturday, October 29	Sunday, October 30

Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources

Have you heard about the Blue Ribbon Panel? Curious as to what it is or want to learn more?

On July 6, Congressman Don Young (R-AK) and Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI) introduced the Bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 5650) calling for \$1.3 billion in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to be dedicated to the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program. This historic legislation would provide each state fish and wildlife agency with an average of \$26 million in new apportionment funding to implement State Wildlife Action Plans and support conservation education and wildlife-



dependent recreation programs. The goal is to secure at least 10 Republicans and 10 Democrats as co-sponsors by the end of the summer. The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) will be reaching out to the states to help with the co-sponsorship drive.

To learn more about this bill and what it means for you, [click here](#). You can check out the full press release here: [Link to press release](#).

Accidents Happen

Just las month, an instructor contacted the Hunter Education Program with an accident that occurred during class. The following is the narrative from the instructor:

I was leading the "safe fence crossing" exercise, which entails crossing the fence safely and then reloading a shotgun and firing at a stationary clay target about 10 yards away or less. The clay targets were placed at the base of a wooden tomato stake so they could be held upright. In the past when I have done this exercise I had placed the clay targets in tufts of grass to hold them upright. My team had used the stakes before and wanted to use them again. They did hold the clays upright nicely and I didn't think much of it.

After going through the demo a few times, two participants and I walked back to the starting line behind which the waiting participants were congregated. A woman mentioned she had felt a little sting on her leg through her pants. The waiting crowd was about 30 yards behind the stakes. No injury was evident. We were using 20 gauge steel shot.

So it appears a pellet ricocheted straight back and struck the woman. A good example to stress the importance of wearing safety glasses at all times. In the future I will suggest using a soft backstop such as straw bale or berm to hold stationary clays upright.

It is important that instructors notify the Hunter Education Program with any issues in class. Staff will be supportive and helpful to the best of their ability. Thanks for sharing.

Homestudy/Online Course FAQs

What is it?: The online course (for hunter or bowhunter education) is homework that students complete before their in-person class. This online class is not meant to take the place of an in-person class, but can count as 4 extra hours toward the course. This online class includes new videos, text, and lots of photos. The text in the online course is taken right from the Today's Hunter and Today's Bowhunter manuals, **so the content is virtually the same as if students were completing a manual, just with additional learning styles accommodated. The same publishing group who writes Today's Hunter and Today's Bowhunter also produced our online courses.**

What is the in-person requirement? Any student who completes the online course must attend at least 8 hours in-person with an instructor for a hunter education course, or at least 6 hours in person for a bowhunter education course.

How was it developed? Who is the author? The online courses were developed by Kalkomey, the same company that writes the Today's Hunter and Today's Bowhunter manuals. Kalkomey also creates the Event Manager program that we use to list our classes and submit student and instructor results.

How do I know that it is the student completing it and not someone else? When a student shows up in class, it is pretty easy to notice whether or not they have completed the homework ahead of time. A student who has not completed the online course typically doesn't perform as well as other students who have completed it. As online learning becomes more prevalent in the world of education (think of all the online college courses out there), online hunter education programs are advancing, too.

Shouldn't we be working to limit screen time as outdoor enthusiasts? That is a great point. If students don't want to complete the online homework, they don't have to. They can still use the workbook and manual. Some people enjoy using their laptops, phones, or other mobile devices, so why limit them and their learning preference? It is important to be inclusive of all learning styles, and some people learn better from a screen with the aid of video.

Is there a fee for the online course? As with the hunter education online course, this online component is free for resident students to take.

What about proof of completion? Proof of completed homework is the certificate of completion that students receive at the end of the online portion. This proof of homework should be shown to instructors either on paper, or electronically (they can show you the completion certificate on their smartphone, tablet, or laptop, or even e-mail it to you).

We hope that allowing students the opportunity to complete homework before the first day of class will allow for a more dynamic and hands-on field day for students and instructors to enjoy. We encourage our instructors to try the online courses themselves!

Try the hunter education online class here: <https://www.hunter-ed.com/vermont/>

Try the bowhunter online class here: <https://www.bowhunter-ed.com/vermont/>

Hunters Reminded of Rules on Importing Deer and Elk



Photo courtesy of VT Fish & Wildlife

It is illegal to import or possess deer or elk, or parts of deer or elk, from states and Canadian provinces that have had chronic wasting disease, or from captive hunt or farm facilities with the following exceptions:

- Meat that is cut up, packaged and labeled with hunting license information and not mixed with other deer or elk during processing;
- Meat that is boneless;
- Hides or capes with no part of the head attached;
- Clean skull-cap with antlers attached;
- Antlers with no other meat or tissue attached;
- Finished taxidermy heads;
- Upper canine teeth with no tissue attached.

Hunters traveling outside Vermont to hunt deer or elk need to keep in mind that a regulation designed to protect Vermont's wild deer from chronic wasting disease remains in effect, according to a reminder from the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a fatal disease of the brain and nervous system in deer and elk. Abnormal prion proteins produce lesions in the brain that cause disorientation and emaciation in conjunction with other abnormal behaviors. For the latest information on CWD, check these websites: www.vtfishandwildlife.com and www.cwd-info.org.

The potential exists for CWD prion proteins to be introduced to the environment through the bodily fluids of CWD-positive ungulates and then persist in the environment for extended periods of time.

"CWD is a very persistent disease that can resurface after years of absence," said Mark Scott, Vermont's director of wildlife. "Vermont's regulations are designed to help prevent CWD from infecting Vermont's deer and the drastic de-population

measures that would be required if it appears here."

"Hunters bringing deer or elk from any of the CWD-listed states or provinces into or through Vermont simply have to get them processed according to the regulation before doing so."

A fine of up to \$1,000 and loss of hunting and fishing licenses for one year are applicable for each deer or elk imported illegally.

Vermont's CWD importation regulations currently apply to hunters bringing in deer or elk carcasses from the following states and provinces:

Alberta, Arkansas, **Colorado**, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, **Maryland**, Michigan, **Minnesota**, Missouri, Montana, **Nebraska**, New Mexico, **New York**, North Dakota, **Ohio**, Oklahoma, **Pennsylvania**, **Saskatchewan**, South Dakota, **Texas**, **Utah**, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

Reminders: Online Requisitions, New Videos

The online requisition tool is new as of 2016. Lots of instructors have used it to much success. Online requests via e-mail is really convenient and helpful for staff—it allows us to have an electronic record of all requests made by instructors in one place without having to worry about accidentally losing paper requests (it happens a lot!).

When an instructor presses “submit,” the instructor will get an e-mail confirmation. This means that the equipment for the class was successfully requested. From there, the equipment request is automatically sent to the whole Hunter Education team, and then the magic starts.

If you haven’t already checked out the new online requisition form, you can check it out at <http://tinyurl.com/VTMuzzleControl> and enter the password **VTMuzzleControl** when prompted.

Let us know if you have any recommendations or improvements for the form!

For one month this summer, the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Outreach Division hosted intern Brian Gosselin from Norwich University. While working with the Department, he produced educational videos as well as a recruitment video for the Hunter Education program.



Feel free to use any of these videos in your classes or for your own use. You can view all of our videos on YouTube by searching for our channel Vermont FishWildlife (two words, not three!), or by clicking on the links below:

Field Dressing Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWWgslCsyng>

Deer Butchering Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiW02YfkuQg>

Deer Skinning Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNAsalozLUM>

Become an Instructor Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lWqbZ3mgqk4>

Contact Information for State Employees

Over the summer, the State of Vermont announced new contact information would be in effect for all employees. All employee e-mail addresses now end in [@Vermont.gov](mailto:)

Here is the updated contact information for us in the Hunter Education Program. Please update your records:

All Hunter Education Staff

E-mail: ANR.FWHunterEd@Vermont.gov

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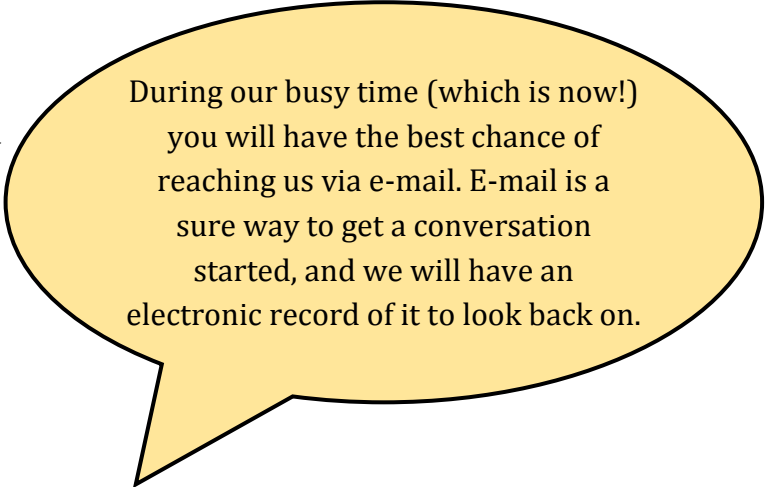
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During our busy time (which is now!) you will have the best chance of reaching us via e-mail. E-mail is a sure way to get a conversation started, and we will have an electronic record of it to look back on.

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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? E-mail us at ANR.FWHunterEd@vermont.gov with your suggestions, stories, pictures or other input!.

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Fish & Wildlife: <https://www.facebook.com/VTFishandWildlife>

<https://twitter.com/VTFishWildlife>