



Compliments of the Hunter Education Program

Another “new normal” has struck Vermont and the hunter education program with the lifting of COVID guidelines in June. Courses are ramping up and we are so happy to be seeing smiling faces again! Amazingly, there are more courses currently scheduled on the calendar for the next 3 months than there was all of 2020 and we are extremely thankful for those who so quickly sprang into action.

And again, it is time to start thinking about those early fall seasons like early bear , rabbit and squirrel. Also consider helping a new hunter prep for their first season in the woods and teach them the ins and outs of pre-season prep. We hope the summer heat isn’t too unbearable to get out in the woods or on the water and enjoy this 4th of July weekend! Be safe and have a fantastic summer!

- Olivia Bussiere

Turkey Hunting Mentorship: Success!

On April 17th, the Vermont Hunter Education Program in partnership with the Vermont National Wild Turkey Federation hosted an event called Learn to Hunt: Spring Turkeys. The goal of the program was two-fold: to teach new hunters the skills they need to safely and successfully hunt turkeys in Vermont, and to pair new hunters with experienced volunteer hunting mentors. The day involved hands -on topics like scouting for turkeys, how to use a box call, and more. Lunch was provided by a grant from the LL Bean Outdoor Fund, and each participant received a box of turkey ammunition, a box call, and a turkey decoy, provided by the Vermont NWTF. At the end of the day, each new hunter was matched with a hunting mentor to go out hunting together this spring. Many pairs went hunting on Vermont’s inaugural novice turkey hunting weekend on April 24 and 25.



Volunteer hunting mentors are both mentors certified by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department as well as hunter education instructors.

We are excited to return to normal and begin (safely) hosting more events, and plan on hosting a similar event for upland hunting, and another for deer hunting. If you are interested in mentoring a new hunter, or knows someone who would make a good hunting mentor, please contact Nicole.Meier@vermont.gov ”

Online Big Game Harvest Reporting

Spring turkey season offered hunters the opportunity to report their turkeys online. Online reporting has been used in Vermont since 2020 and have been convenient for the hunter. Information collected has proven to be just as valuable for monitoring and managing wild turkey populations and we will be continuing to use online reporting in the fall.

Online reporting of deer will be open for the archery and muzzleloader seasons, but hunters are required to bring their deer and bear to a big game reporting station during both bear seasons, youth deer, novice deer, and rifle buck seasons.

In-person reporting of big game is always an option regardless of season, so if you are interested in showing off your freezer filler this fall stop into any of our reporting stations! You can find a reporting station at the link below.

Big Game Reporting Stations: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt/big-game-reporting-stations>

If online reporting isn't an option for you and you happen to be in an area isn't close to a reporting station, you may call the local warden. Use our online warden locator tools to determine who your warden is and their contact information.

Warden Contact Link: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/contact/contact-a-warden>



Moose and Antlerless Muzzleloader Lottery Schedule

June 30th: Moose lottery application deadline.

August 4th: Antlerless muzzleloader lottery application deadline.

August 4th: Moose lottery drawing.

August 11th: Moose auction bids must be received by close of business (4:30pm) at the Montpelier district office.

August 12th: Moose Auction bids opened and winners determined.

October 1st: Archery moose begins.

October 7th: Archery moose concludes.

October 16th: Regular moose begins.

October 21st: Regular moose concludes.



Mentoring a New Trapper

Last fall Paul Noel had caught beaver before and after his youth mentee, Will had joined to check traps. Will's first visit on the fisher line was uneventful also. Paul decided to set three beaver traps in mid March and asked if Will and his family wanted to come along to check traps. They were delighted, but when the group had set out to check traps they again found empty traps.

Just two days later Paul had checked his traps alone and found that he had caught a beaver! Again, Paul sets the traps and asked Will to join. Will was beginning to feel like a jinx, but decided he would go. It was that morning the trap that caught a beaver the previous day was sprung and empty.

Paul recalls, "That was disappointing to me since I felt that was the best set. I could feel Will's disappointment too. So we were approaching the second set and Will said YOU GOT A BEAVER! He actually spotted it before me."

Paul and Will skinned, fleshed and boarded the beaver. "He did real good," Paul said.



"I have always felt trapping is the black sheep of the sporting community sometimes even shunned and misunderstood by fellow hunters "

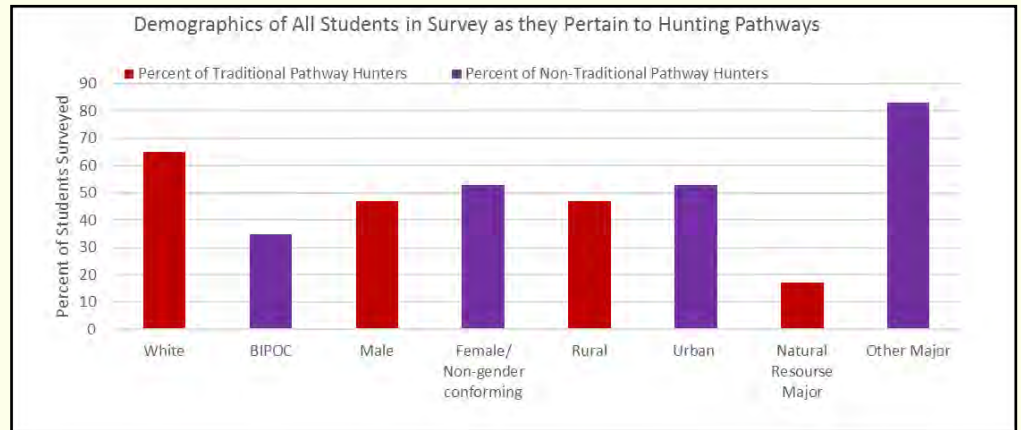
- Paul Noel



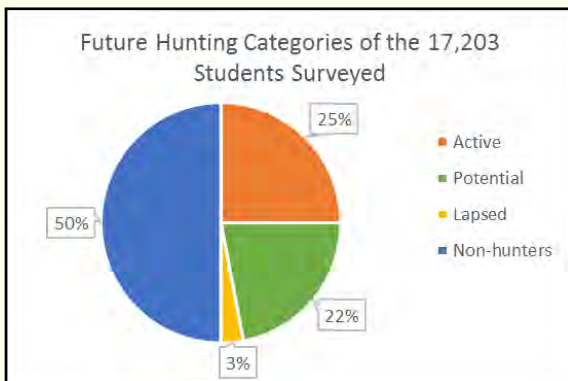
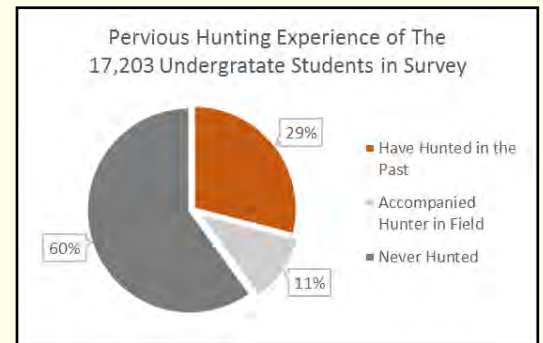
A Breakdown of R3 and Public Universities

A recent study surveyed over 17,000 undergraduate students from public universities across the United States from 2018 to 2020 to understand college students' perspectives on hunting. The red bars in Figure 1 . represent students that fit one or more aspect(s) of a "traditional hunting pathway" and the purple bars represent students

those who fit one or more "non-traditional hunting pathway" aspects. You can see that of the student body sampled, the nontraditional pathway demographics outnumber the traditional hunter demographics in every area other than race/ethnicity .



The study also investigated students' previous hunting experience. Of the 29% of students who had gone hunting alone in the past (Figure 2.), the study found that these students were dominantly white, male, from rural areas, and/or pursuing a degree in natural resources or agriculture. This is consistent with what we know about traditional hunting pathways.

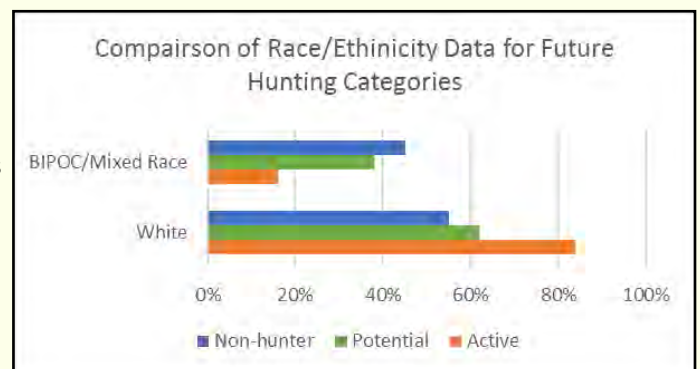


Additionally, the study split the students up based on their answers to survey questions pertaining to their likelihood to hunt in the future (Figure 3.), creating four future hunting categories:

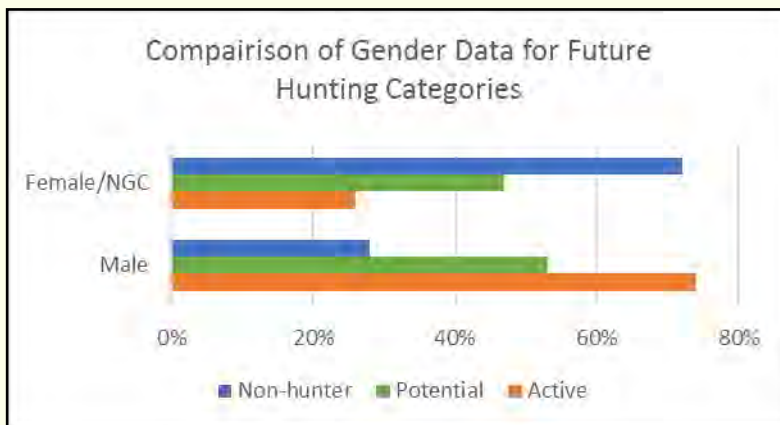
- Active Hunters (orange)
- Lapsed Hunters (Yellow)
- Potential Hunters (Green)
- Non-hunters (Blue)

Nearly half of the students' sampled (47%) were Active or Potential Hunters; This is dramatically higher than the national average and shows that college and university's may be a promising avenue for R3 efforts.

Moreover, by highlighting these categories, you can see that 84% of the Active Hunters in this survey identified as white (Figure 4.). This means that only 16% of the Active Hunters in the survey identified as BIPOC. In contrast, more than two times as many BIPOC were found in the Potential Hunter category, at 38%.

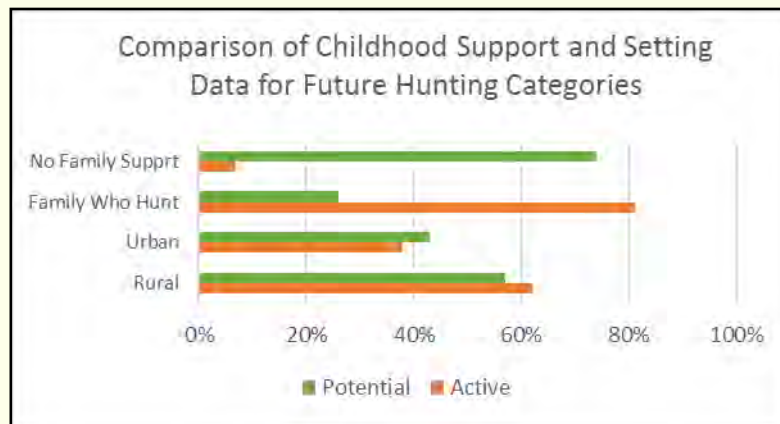


Of the Active Hunters, 74% were male and only 26% were female or non-gender confirming (Figure 5.). The opposite can be seen with the Non-hunters surveyed, only 28% were male and 72% were female or non-gender conforming. Interestingly, with the Potential Hunters, the gender data were almost even with 53% identifying as male and 47% identifying as female or non-gender conforming.



For the Potential Hunters, 57% came from rural backgrounds and only 26% had family who hunted (Figure 6.). This means that 43% of Potential Hunters came from an urban upbringing with 74% having no family support for hunting. Conversely, the Active Hunter category had 62% of students coming from rural upbringing with 81% of them having immediate family support for hunting. Surprisingly, 38% of Active Hunters come from the non-traditional hunting pathway of an urban upbringing and 7% had no family support.

In short, about half of the Potential Hunters identified in this survey were from minority demographics and/or reported non-traditional pathways into hunting. Additionally, the study “found many Potential Hunters who don’t share the same attributes as Active Hunters,” says Larson, one of the study’s leading authors. “What’s motivating them, what’s limiting their participation, and how do we build a bridge to help connect them to hunting and wildlife conservation?”



To answer this, the surveys also asked students about their values, constraints, and motivations for hunting or not hunting. Active hunters had the most positive beliefs related to hunting, followed by potential, lapsed, and Non-hunters. Conservation and caring were the highest ranking values amongst all future hunter types. Other activities were the main constraint amongst Lapsed Hunters; Non-hunters were equally drawn to other activities but ranked moral constraints higher than all other groups; Lack of skills and knowledge was the main constraint for Potential Hunters; Logistical constraints ranked highest for active hunters. Hunting for social connection or for sport were more prominent motivations among Active Hunters. “One of our biggest takeaways is that many students, regardless of their background, support ecological conservation motivations for hunting. They care about controlling over-populated species and about improving personal and environmental health by eating local game meat,” said the study’s lead author Victoria Vayer. “If we use messaging that relates to those motivations, instead of emphasizing contentious things like trophy hunting, we could reel in more Potential Hunters without eroding support among people who don’t hunt.”

Source: North Carolina State University. "The next generation of hunters could look different." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 10 May 2021. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210510143920.htm>.

Link: <https://wildlife.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1002%2Ffwjmg.22055>

Junior Waterfowl Hunter Training Program

After canceling the event in 2020 due to COVID, the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge will host their annual Junior Waterfowl Hunter Training Program on Saturday, August 21 at the Sportsman Club of Franklin County.

If you know a junior hunter who is interested in the training and a guaranteed hunting spot at the refuge, pre-register by calling the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge at 802-868-4781.”



Outdoor Educators Course

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department still has a few openings in our July 11-16 Fish and Wildlife summer course for teachers and other educators, a one-week, three-credit graduate course taught by Vermont Fish and Wildlife and other Agency of Natural Resources staff through Castleton University.

“This interactive field course gets educators out into Vermont’s streams, forests and wetlands with some of the state’s leading natural resource experts at the Buck Lake Conservation Camp in Woodbury,” said Fish and Wildlife’s Education Manager Alison Thomas.

“This course is unique in that it helps non-formal and pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers from any discipline -- math, language arts, physical education, or history -- improve their instructional strategies and make their lesson plans more relevant to their students.”

Tuition is \$650 for the course. Books, food, and overnight facilities are included. A limited number of partial scholarships are available.

A course description, schedule of activities and registration information are available on Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s website at <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/node/249>. If you have questions, you can email Ali at Alison.Thomas@vermont.gov

Turkey Brood Survey

Starting July 1st, if you see a flock of turkeys in Vermont , the department asks you to go to the turkey brood survey on its website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com) and report your observations including where and when you observed the turkeys along with the number of adult and young turkeys, or poults.

Information gathered from this survey helps the department monitor long-term trends in the productivity of Vermont’s wild turkey population as well as helps us assess the impacts of spring weather on the survival.



Black Bear Bacon

Ingredients:

- 3lbs bear bacon (from the saddle with a good ration of backstrap and back fat)
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 2 cups salt
 - 1 table spoon pink salt
 - 1 cup maple syrup
-

Directions:

1. Mix brown sugar, salt and pink salt in a bowl. Then add maple syrup and combine.
2. Pack the brine onto the meat. You want a good, solid coating.
3. Vacuum seal the meat in the brine if you have a vacuum sealer, or wrap in 6-7 layers of plastic wrap or a Ziploc bag and brine for about five days, flipping every day to let the liquid go through the meat. This will draw out a lot of water as well.

4. Remove the meat from the plastic wrap or vacuum seal bag and rinse thoroughly. Pat dry. It should feel a little sticky to the touch.

5. Place the meat in a smoker at 200 – 250 degrees Fahrenheit until it reaches an internal temperature of 160 degrees F.

6. Slice to desired thickness on a meat slicer.

7. Serve, or fry in a pan and serve with



Welcome Back Amanda!

Hello all!

My name is Amanda Preston. Some of you may remember me as the Hunter Education Technician from last year. I have returned and cannot wait to see what this new season brings! I graduated with a B. S. in Biology from Paul Smith's College; I have a passion for being outside and educating people about the world around them. Excluding my current role, my favorite jobs have included being a Camp Director for GMCC, a Tick Research Technician in the Adirondack Park, and a Vermont State Park Interpreter. Outside of work, you can find me hiking or mountain biking in the summer months and cross-country skiing or snowboarding in the snowy months. A fun fact about me: I was the Vermont Lady Junior Skeet Shooting Champion for both 2012 and 2013. A title that I think was made up for me since I was both the only lady and the only junior at the event the first year. This season, I am looking forward to being able to meet more of you all and, to work with you, to share Vermont's natural, cultural, and historic heritage with others that are interested in spending more time outdoors. I am thrilled to continue my work in outreach and environmental education and to be able to work with the Hunter Education Team again!



Hunt Smart. Hunt Safe. Wear Orange. Check for Ticks!

Contact Us!

This is YOUR newsletter!

We want to hear from you!

Have a photo or story you'd like to share?

E-mail us with your suggestions, stories, pictures or other input!

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Have a Great Summer!

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