

Happy Holidays from the Vermont Hunter Education Program!



Why do you teach hunter education? There are so many reasons: to put forward ethical and safe hunters and trappers, to interact with (and learn from!) new hunters, to enjoy time with family and friends, and so much more. I think one of the primary reasons many of us teach is to see the outdoors from the eyes of a new hunter.

I love watching the relationship that forms between children and the outdoor world. On a walk recently, my son asked to “follow the tracks!” He was so excited to see where the prints began and ended, and try to figure out who they were from (it was just a cat, but I won’t tell him that!). I feel like we are doing something right when we let children lead their relationship with the outdoors with curiosity, excitement, and joy. It is this enthusiasm we foster each time we a class.

Share your love for the outdoors. Share the stories of why hunting and trapping is meaningful to you. Share the memories, the beauty, the excitement, the bounty. Share your passion with a neighbor, a co-worker, the general store clerk, and take a turn to listen to them, too. Share your values so we are heard.

Thank you for creating the next generation of outdoor lovers. Our future depends on you.

-Nicole Meier, Hunter Education Program Coordinator

Deer seasons are wrapped up, there is finally snow in the forecast, snowmobile trails are cut and signed, and Christmas lights have gone up around the state! I hope you were able to get out into the woods this fall with some bit of success! It was a bit of an odd season weather wise, but I still saw a bunch of beautiful deer getting reported. Some of which put my 3-pointer to shame!

It was a busy year for everyone involved in the Hunter Education Program. We had a refreshing number of Hunter, Bowhunter, and Trapper Education courses across the state. Additionally, we kept up many of our continuing education and mentoring programs. Our Learn to Hunt series continue to be popular both with new or first-time turkey and deer hunters. This fall we also introduced a Learn to Hunt waterfowl event in the Champlain Valley, and it was highly attended. We look forward to these events every year are always looking for more folks to be in-the-woods mentors to these new hunters.

We also held our first instructor appreciation banquet for the first time in a long while and it was a great time with great food, great people, and great raffle prizes. The date is already being set for the 2023 banquet so keep an eye out for that! There are some other big announcements in this newsletter so be sure not to skip anything!

Enjoy the holiday season and thank you for all you do to make Hunter Education a successful, popular, and worthwhile program in Vermont!

-Nathan Lafont, Hunter Education Training Coordinator



Vermont Hunter Education Year End Numbers

From January 1, 2022 to December 1, 2022:

- We have had 306 volunteer instructors teach.
- Of those 306 volunteers, on average, each instructor taught or assisted in 2 classes in 2022.
- Total hours volunteered: 7,145.5 (this is more than twice the number of hours volunteered in 2021!)
- 2 new instructor trainings offered

Class highlights:

- 9 in-person bowhunter education courses offered
- Instructor professional development events offered
- 29 In-person homestudy hunter education courses offered
- 24 In-person traditional hunter education courses offered
- 24 In-person combination hunter/bowhunter education courses offered
- 10 In-person trapper education courses offered (5 for the general public, 5 at Green Mountain Conservation Camps)

Student highlights:

- 65 students certified in bowhunter education in person
- 432 students certified in traditional hunter education in person
- 333 students certified in homestudy hunter education in person
- 756 students certified combination hunter/bowhunter education in person
- 108 students certified in trapper education in person
- Total 1,694 students certified in person in 2022

Student highlights (online)

- 1668 students certified in hunter education online
- 1095 students certified in bowhunter education online
- The majority of students taking the online course are between the ages of 18-35.



Photo courtesy VTFWD

Instructor Discounts and Gifts!

Photo courtesy IHEA-USA



How do we properly thank over 300 volunteers for their contributions to the future of hunting and trapping in Vermont? This year more than ever we struggled with what to give out as a winter gift. You will see in this package the coveted 2023 Fish and Wildlife Calendar—it was a no brainer with its season dates and awesome pictures, but there had to be something more.

The International Hunter Education Association (IHEA) has put together a great membership program in the last few years and you will soon be an official member! This membership will give you access to teaching aides, online annual conference registration, and best of all **INSTRUCTOR DISCOUNTS!**

The old password protected instructor discounts has been moved under the membership umbrella, so many of the discounts you were familiar with are there along with some cool new ones. Shortly after receiving this newsletter, you will get an email from us with more details as well as login information for your membership.

Please watch your email for this and keep in mind it may end up in your junk/spam folder. In the meantime, feel free to check out the new IHEA website: www.ihea-usa.org.

Vermont Becomes the 49th State to Join NASP® (Better late than never!)

National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP®) is coming to Vermont! NASP® is a national program that focuses on archery as part of in-school curriculum to improve educational performance and boost participation in the shooting sports for grades 4-12. It's a different kind of team sport. It is open to all students. Units of Study were written by Education, Conservation, and Target archery experts to meet state and national educational standards. Vermont just signed on with NASP® this fall and we are in the very early stages of getting it off the ground. If you know someone who works in a school that may be interested in administering NASP® there, please let them know and send them to us! Much more information can be found on their website: www.naspschools.org



Photo courtesy NASP

Instructor Award Nominations

There are so many volunteers in our program that should be recognized for their outstanding service. In this vein, the Vermont Hunter Education Program instituted a new volunteer recognition/awards program last year. Award winners will be announced this upcoming spring at the annual instructor recognition banquet (more information to be announced). Nominations will be accepted now through March 1, 2023. We are now accepting nominations for the following awards:

Instructor of the Year Award. This award is given to a certified instructor who went above and beyond for hunter/bowhunter/trapper education in 2022.

Teaching Team of the Year Award. This award is given to a teaching team who went above and beyond for hunter/bowhunter/trapper education in 2022. The team must include at least one certified instructor.

Volunteer of the Year. This award is given to a non-certified instructor who went above and beyond in their assistance with hunter/bowhunter/trapper education in 2022.

Outstanding Partner to Hunter Education in Vermont. This award is given to any partner who went above and beyond for hunter/bowhunter/trapper education in 2022. Examples of partners include a local recreation department, local NWTFF chapter, local food shelf, or any other organizations that partner with the Vermont Hunter Education Program. Please include the organization's name, a contact name for the organization, and why they deserve this award.

Outstanding Outreach/Innovation Award. This award is given to any certified OR non-certified volunteer who has done a great job with an outreach program, such as mentoring, hosting seminars, etc.

Please submit your nomination here: <https://tinyurl.com/HEAward2022> or by e-mailing HunterEducation@vermont.gov

2021 Instructor Award Honorees

Hunter education instructor award winners for 2021 were honored at the volunteer instructor appreciation banquet, which was held at the Waterbury-Stowe Fish & Game Club on June 25, 2022. All instructors honored with awards were nominated by fellow instructors. Final selections were made by a panel of Fish & Wildlife Department staff members. Thank you to all of our award winners, the people who nominated them, and thank you to all of our volunteers across Vermont. This program would not exist without you!



Above: 2021 Teaching Team of the Year—Bob Raskevitz and Tom Malanchuk

Below: IHEA USA Sig Sauer State Instructor of the Year—Brett Ladeau



Above: 2021 Outstanding Outreach—Michael Frisbie and Art Greenbaum

Below: 2021 Instructor of the Year—Paul Conover



Upcoming Events

Save the date! There are some upcoming events listed below. For more information or to get involved with any of these, please contact HunterEducation@vermont.gov or call 802-828-1193.

Event Name	Date(s)	Location
Yankee Sportsman Classic	January 20-22, 2023	Champlain Valley Fairgrounds
Chief Instructor Meeting	February 11, 2023 (tentative)	TBA
Instructor Banquet	June 24, 2023 (tentative)	TBA
New Instructor Training	March 25, 2022 (tentative)	TBA
Learn to Hunt: Turkey	April 1, 2023 (tentative)	TBA

Hunting and Target Shooting Participation More Diverse Than Ever

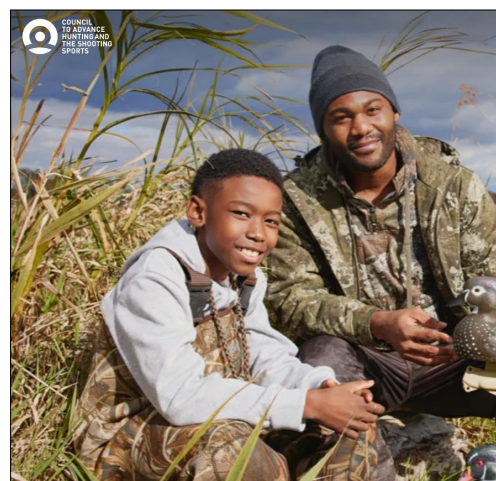
The Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports (Council) recently released the *2022 Special Report on Hunting and the Shooting Sports*, which provides a comprehensive look at the more than 30 million people in the US ages 6 and older who participated at least once in hunting or target shooting in 2021. The report identifies trends and includes detailed information about participation including motivations, barriers, and preferences of participants.

Highlights from the report include:

- 27% of participants were female, up from 16% 10 years ago.
- Share of hunters who were Black or Hispanic increased 4% and 1% respectively on average for the last 3 years.
- The number one motivation for hunting was for food.
- 49% of hunters first participated before the age of 18.
- 68% of hunters were introduced to hunting by family members.

Read the full report here:

<https://cahss.org/our-research/2022-special-report-on-hunting-and-the-shooting-sports/>



YouTube Video Resources for Instructors

Many instructors have requested updated video resources for use in their classes. Below you will find a list of short videos that you might find useful for different portions of your classes. If you have suggestions or other videos that you like to use, please send them along for us to share with other instructors!

Basic Hunter Education

Topic	Link	Notes/Length of Video
4 Basic Rules of Hunter Education	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEaWcaJdi8o	Less than 2 minutes.
Firearm Types, Carries, Fence Crossing, & Firearm Safety	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdJfuAwbkQY	Oklahoma Hunter Education. 21 minutes.
Safe Zones of Fire	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwULORQI3_E	6 minutes.
Field Dressing	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWWgsICsyng	Vermont Fish & Wildlife. 11.5 minutes.
Safe Wingshooting	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I1o4t0xUA0	4.5 minutes.
How to Coach New Shooters (Shotguns)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9vgpp1cX_0	14 minutes.

Bowhunter Education

Topic	Link	Notes/Length of Video
Treestand Types	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dE8h0tcYhPg&list=PL8CB439A4F	Oklahoma Hunter Education. Less than 2 minutes.
How to Set Up a Treestand	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUYSajryJGk&list=PL8CB439A4F8	Oklahoma Hunter Education. 6.5 minutes.
NASP 11 Steps to Archery Success	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgDNNS4Ere0	2 minutes.
Crossbow Safety Tips	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcWEZyJlInE	7 minutes.

YouTube Video Resources for Instructors (continued)

Trapper Education

Topic	Link	Notes/Length of Video
Trap Type Rundown	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07JIP5SKUF4	8 minutes.
Dirt Hole Sets	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FW-vi11HRjs	9.5 minutes
Trapping in Today's World	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3dmEZ9hc3s	Vermont Fish & Wildlife. 17.5 minutes
Best Management Practices	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdGwQjx79zE	6 minutes.
Managing Vermont's Furbearer Animals	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFrFhcHZ2z8	Outdoor Journal/Vermont Fish & Wildlife. 9 minutes.
DIY Fur Fashion with Molly Cook	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhSrk1hRIR0	Vermont Fish & Wildlife. 21.5 minutes.

Instructor Professional Development Videos

Topic	Link	Notes/Length of Video
National Trends in Hunter Education with IHEA-USA	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnpxgkulTpU	Presented in December 2021. 1.5 hours.
Tales of a Vermont Game Warden with Eric Nuse	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Buo3R7EfwzI	Presented in January 2022. 1.5 hours.
Teaching Students Who are Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoFUmLvAc_U	Vermont Fish & Wildlife. 47 minutes.

These videos and other resources can also be found on the instructor resources section of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife website, here:

<https://vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt/hunter-education/instructor-resources>

Do you have videos or other resources to share? Please send them to us and we will distribute to other instructors!

Green Mountain Conservation Camps Update

Greetings from Green Mountain Conservation Camp (GMCC)! My name is Hannah Phelps and I tackle Hunter Education through our camp program at both Buck Lake and Kehoe. We have had some changes in the GMCC world; our long-time Camp Registrar retired in October. We wish her all the best, and I am very excited to take over her duties in my new position as Education Specialist focusing on all things GMCC! I started with the program as a camper back in 2009 and have come back every summer since in various volunteer and paid positions. I can not wait to continue my work with GMCC during the upcoming summer and hopefully many more to come!

As many of you know, Hunter Education has always had a large role at GMCC, and it continues to do so today. We have roughly 600 campers complete the Hunter and Bowhunter combo course at our Basic sessions each summer. Another 60+ campers are certified in Trapper Education at our Advanced sessions. These campers come from all over Vermont (and beyond!) to participate in our camp program. This provides a group of campers each week with a diversity of backgrounds and prior experiences with hunting.

We will be hitting the ground running in January with registration for the 2023 season opening January 3rd! We are especially looking forward to jumping into the new year with an expanded scholarship program to allow more children to attend despite financial barriers. If you know a child aged 12-14 who would like to attend this summer, or a college student who would be interested in working for us, please send them our way! Thank you for all that you do to support Hunter Education in Vermont, and we look forward to another great year.



Contact Us!

Alison Thomas

Outreach Division Director

E-mail: Alison.Thomas@vermont.gov

Cell: 802-371-9975

Nathan Lafont

Hunter Education Training Coordinator

E-mail: Nathan.Lafont@vermont.gov

Cell: 802-522-5580

Nicole Meier

Hunter Education Program Coordinator

E-mail: Nicole.Meier@vermont.gov

Cell: 802-318-1347

Hunter Education Main Office

E-mail: HunterEducation@vermont.gov

Main Office: 802-828-1193

Address: 1 National Life Dr,
Dewey Building, Montpelier, VT 05620



The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) operates its programs, services, and activities without discriminating on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), ancestry, place of birth, disability, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or breastfeeding (mother and child). Questions or Complaints/Free Language Services:

anr.civilrights@vermont.gov.