



2018 Moose Harvest Summary Report

Overview

Ten moose were harvested in Vermont's 2018 moose seasons. One moose was taken during the archery-only season and nine in the regular season. An estimated 1.5 tons of moose venison was harvested during the combined seasons, providing an estimated 12,000 meals.

Archery Season

Due to the low number of overall permits allocated, no lottery was held for the archery-only moose season. Three of the five moose auction winners, however, elected to hunt during the archery season. The bull-only permits were valid for Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) E1 or E2.

Harvest Data

The archery moose season ran for seven days, from October 1-7, during the peak of the moose rutting season. Bulls are more responsive to calling at this time of year compared to mid-October, thus increasing the odds that bow hunters can call in moose to within shooting distance. The one harvested moose was taken by crossbow, and its biological measurements are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. 2018 VERMONT MOOSE ARCHERY SEASON HARVEST

WMU	TOWN of KILL	AGE	ESTIMATED WEIGHT (pounds)	SPREAD (inches)	TOTAL POINTS
E1	LEMINGTON	2	650	31	7

Regular Season

For the 2018 regular season, three permits were granted as Special Opportunity Permits, issued through a sponsoring organization to youths with a life-threatening illness. The remaining five permits were issued through a lottery, open only to resident military veterans. A total of 100 valid veteran applications were received.

Two of the auction winners elected to hunt during the regular season, making a total of ten permits issued for the regular season.

The five winning auction bids (archery included) totaled \$43,702.83, which will help fund Fish & Wildlife Department educational programs such as the Green Mountain Conservation Camps for youths. All permits were valid only for bull moose.

Harvest Data

Vermont's 26th moose season began on the third Saturday in October (20th) and ran for six days. The opening weekend weather was generally favorable, with cool overnight temperatures climbing into the 50s on Saturday and 30s on Sunday. There was no appreciable precipitation except light flurries on Sunday, and winds were generally light with only occasional high gusts.

Completely dressed carcass weights were obtained from all moose harvested in the regular season (Table 2). The largest was a 756-pound, 9 year-old taken in Lemington. This bull also had the widest spread, largest beam diameter, and the most points.

The department again sampled larval winter tick loads on moose harvested in 2018 by searching four small patches of hide, each about the size of an iPhone. We found an average of 33.8 ticks/bull, up from 25.5 the previous year but 32 percent lower than the first count in 2013 (49.6 ticks/bull). These sample counts ranged from 6 to 75 ticks/moose and represent only a small fraction of the actual number of larval ticks attached to each moose, which is often in the tens of thousands.

In some years an extended warm autumn with no appreciable snowfall can prolong the period when larval ticks can attach to moose, resulting in moose carrying even a heavier burden of ticks into the winter. The cold and snow arrived relatively early last autumn, but tick loads sampled on calves captured in January 2019 (for our collared moose study) found no change from tick loads sampled in January 2018.

A central incisor tooth was collected from all ten harvested moose to establish age data. The average age of adult moose was 3.90 years. Thirty percent of adults were four years old or older, which is slightly above the minimum goal of 25 percent as called for in the 10-year Big Game Plan. The oldest moose was an 11 year-old bull taken in Maidstone.

Hunter Success

Eighty percent of resident permit holders (4/5) were successful, as were all of the non-residents (5/5). Non-resident permittees hailed from four different states; two from Ohio and one each from New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Kentucky. Subpermittees took three (33 percent) of the moose killed. All moose were taken with a rifle.

TABLE 2. 2018 VERMONT MOOSE REGULAR SEASON HARVEST DATA

WMU	TOWN of KILL	AGE	WEIGHT	BEAM	PTS/L	PTS/R	SPREAD
E1	AVERILL	2	598	45.5	4	4	31
E1	AVERILL	4	675	51.5	5	6	43
E1	BLOOMFIELD	2	579	44	4	4	33
E1	BLOOMFIELD	3	664	45	5	6	41
E1	BRIGHTON	1	466	32	3	2	25.5
E2	E HAVEN	3	544	42	3	3	31.5
E1	LEMINGTON	9	756	64	9	8	51
E1	LEMINGTON	2	545	40.5	5	4	33
E2	MAIDSTONE	11	535	47	7	5	43

Weight is carcass weight completely dressed in lbs.; Beam is in millimeters; Pts./Left and Right are number of points at least 1 inch long; Spread is in inches measured to the nearest half-inch. Age is cementum age.