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2019 Black Bear Season Handbook
HISTORY OF BEAR MANAGEMENT

In 1941, the black bear was elevated to the status of a big game animal and received protection under Vermont’s laws. The techniques of black bear harvesting were further regulated by banning trapping in 1967, controlling the use of hunting dogs, outlawing baiting, and prohibiting the shooting of bears at dumps in 1972.

Because of improvements in habitat and through management efforts, Vermont’s black bears have made a strong comeback. Their numbers are higher today than they have been in 200 years.

Close monitoring and management of Vermont’s black bear population is necessary to ensure it remains healthy and abundant in the future. The principle concern for their future relates to their habitat. Major concerns include development and varying availability of their critical wild foods, such as acorns and beechnuts.

Vermont’s black bear management program has four components:

- Educating the public,
- Protecting bear habitat,
- Regulating harvest and utilization,
- Responding to animal damage and public safety issues.
POPULATION STATUS

By examining the sex and age from harvested bears each year, wildlife biologists are able to estimate the bear population in Vermont. Bear numbers are now believed to be higher than at any time since before European settlement.

Regulated hunting is used to align population estimates with biological data, habitat limitations, and public satisfaction data to sustain a bear population between 4,500 and 6,000 animals.

Before European settlers arrived, most of Vermont was dense forestland, providing ideal bear habitat. However, by the 1850s, almost 75 percent of Vermont’s land area was cleared for farmland. Consequently, bears were at their lowest population level at that time.

From the 1850s to the present, land use changed drastically. The once-abundant pastures and fields slowly reverted to woodlands, and today over 80 percent of Vermont is once again forested. As a result, the quality of Vermont’s black bear habitat has greatly improved.

The highest numbers of bears can be found in the center spine of the Green Mountains, from Massachusetts to Canada, and in the northeastern part of Vermont.
2019 BEAR SEASONS

Vermont’s bear hunting season was expanded in 2013 to slow the growth in Vermont’s bear population and to provide Fish & Wildlife Department biologists with data to better manage black bears in Vermont.

EARLY SEASON: September 1, 2019 through November 15, 2019

Requires a separate early season bear tag – residents $5, nonresidents $15.

LATE SEASON: November 16, 2019 through November 24, 2019

The “late season” bear tag is included on each hunting license except the nonresident small game license.

HUNTING HOURS: Hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

LIMIT: The annual limit for bears has not changed. A hunter may harvest only one bear per calendar year.
LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

There is a separate “early season bear tag” required for those hunters who want to hunt bear prior to the beginning of the November deer rifle season. It costs $5 for residents and $15 for nonresidents. **Hunters will continue to get a “late season” bear tag along with their deer tag on their general hunting license at no additional cost, which is valid during the first nine days of the November deer rifle season.**

The additional tag will enable the department to gather essential information about hunter effort and success, as well as an idea of overall bear hunter numbers. The early season tag gives department biologists a better understanding of how many hunters are actively pursuing bears before the November rifle season.

Hunters who hunt with a **permanent license** (licenses for resident hunters 66 and older) do not need to buy an early season bear tag no matter when their license was bought, and they will not be charged for an early season bear tag. Their tag is valid for both early and late bear seasons every year in perpetuity.

Hunters who purchased a **lifetime license** before January 1, 2013 also do not need to buy an early season bear tag. Their tag is valid for both early and late bear seasons every year in perpetuity. This includes hunters whose license was purchased before 2013 but whose license will not be activated until they take a hunter’s education course, such as a license purchased for a young child.

However, hunters who purchased a lifetime license on or after January 1, 2013 must purchase an early season bear tag to hunt bear prior to the November deer rifle season.

A bear hunter using a bow or crossbow must have either a bow license or a certificate showing completion of the bow hunter education course in addition to a hunting license.
LIFETIME AND PERMANENT LICENSE RENEWAL

If you intend to hunt, fish, or trap in 2019, you must update your lifetime, permanent disability, or permanent license regardless of whether or not you used your tags. This is a new statutory requirement which was put in place to allow the department to collect accurate harvest and licensing information for lifetime license holders.

This updated license will include current year tags. You may update your license at no cost on-line at our website. If you are unable to go on-line, you may go to any authorized license agent or Fish & Wildlife Office and request to have your license updated. You can also call us at 802-828-1190 to be updated. A license agent may charge you up to $1.50 for a reprint.

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<th>Purchase a License Online</th>
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http://vtfishandwildlife.com/licenses-and-lotteries/license-center
BEAR TOOTH COLLECTION IS REQUIRED

The Fish & Wildlife Department needs your help. Knowing the age of the bears that are harvested by hunters is a very important part of Vermont’s scientific bear management program. A pre-molar tooth is required to be submitted by the hunter from every bear harvested in Vermont.

Any person who harvests a bear shall collect a premolar tooth and submit the tooth to a game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the Commissioner to receive the biological collection, within 48 hours of taking the bear.

Removing the bear’s pre-molar tooth is easy and does not affect the mounting quality of the bear. Please ask the reporting station operator for a tooth envelope for you to insert the tooth in before placing in the tooth bucket found at the reporting station. Every tooth we receive from hunters helps the bear project.

We will publish the age information on our website in the spring.

Bear Tooth Extraction Video  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0n3i91OAXGc&feature=youtu.be

HABITS AND HABITAT

The best habitat for black bears in Vermont is a mixture of coniferous trees, hardwoods, wetlands, and variation in terrain. Because they need dense cover to escape danger, the wary and elusive black bears prefer rough and wooded habitats. The habitat should also have a good water supply nearby. Coniferous trees provide concealment and protection from severe weather. Stands of beech and oak, along with wetlands, are important feeding areas for bears in Vermont.

Bears are usually silent and usually travel alone. Exceptions are family groups and breeding adults during the mating season. Family groups typically consist of the adult female and her cubs, which travel with her through their second spring.

Black bears climb trees to eat on ripening fruit and as a means to escape danger. Bears will sit near the trunk of a tree on a large branch and pull other branches towards them to eat the nuts. This eating place looks like a large bird’s nest, with all the branches pulled toward the center. Bears climb trees with the use of their claws, and claw marks can usually be seen on the trunk.

Although bears are often thought to hibernate, they are not true hibernators. During true hibernation, body temperature, respiration, and metabolic rates are considerably decreased. A bear’s respiration and metabolic rate do decrease during the winter sleep, but its body temperature remains close to normal. Thus a bear in a winter den can be easily aroused within moments, whereas in a true hibernator, it may take several hours.

Food supplies are the most critical factor determining when bears go to den in the fall. When foods are abundant, bears will continue eating throughout the snows of November and into December. When fall foods are scarce, most bears are denned by mid-November.
FOOD HABITS

Although the black bear belongs to the order Carnivora, it is a true omnivore, eating both plants and animals. Major food sources include seeds and insects, but the black bear is an opportunist and will eat just about anything that crosses its path.

Early spring is the most difficult time of the year for bears. At this time, food is scarce, and bears must scavenge intensively to stay alive. Because wetlands green up first, wetland grasses and green, leafy plants have been found to be the primary food of the black bear in the spring. However, these have limited nutritional value, so bears continue to draw from any remaining fat reserves. From the time they emerge from their dens to the end of July, their activities center around forested wetlands, beaver dams, and along streams and riverbanks.

Typically, bears must wait until early to midsummer before regaining an adequate level of nutrition. By early summer, bears have the opportunity to eat a variety of succulent plants such as the roots of the jack-in-the-pulpit and berries that are beginning to become available. Bears may also prey upon young deer and moose at this time, although bears do not actively hunt for these food sources. During this time, no single food source is available in such abundance that bears can concentrate on only one item.

As summer progresses, raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries ripen. If these crops are abundant, bears can at last immerse themselves in a concentrated food source with a high sugar content.

By late August, bears seek foods with the highest nutritional value. In an effort to store as much energy as possible, they will eat up to 24 hours a day. If beechnuts and acorns are plentiful, bears will move into productive beech and oak stands and consume high quantities of the nuts. Bears may travel many miles to reach fall food supplies and will continue to forage for beechnuts for several weeks.

Other fall foods include cherries, apples, succulent plants, and berries. Bears will also eat available crops of corn and oats, and will commonly raid beehives if they are not protected with electric fences.
Bear hunting is a physically demanding activity, especially removing a harvested bear from the woods. Pre-hunt planning is very important to a successful and rewarding bear hunting experience.

Long before harvesting a bear, the hunter must decide how the meat will be processed and how the hide will be used. Hunters should arrange to have help available for all aspects of handling a harvested bear and have plans made ahead of time to ensure that the meat and hide are properly processed.

Bears have a tremendous amount of fat and a thick hide that provide great insulation. Both the meat and the hide can spoil quickly especially at temperatures above freezing. A dead bear can be large and cumbersome. Skinning, processing, and transporting a bear are difficult tasks and may be difficult without assistance.

As a result, it is imperative that the hide be removed as soon as possible to prevent meat spoilage. In temperatures above freezing, if there is going to be a delay in getting your harvested bear to a cooler, you should consider quartering it to allow the heavier portions to cool more quickly. Before taking your bear out from the place it is killed, pack bags of ice in the body cavity or around the quarters. You may dismember the carcass to pack it out of the place of kill as long as the identity of the sex is not destroyed.

**Know Your Capabilities.** To help ensure the future of bear hunting, and all hunting, it is incredibly important to instill respect for the outdoors and acceptable hunting ethics for all hunters. Making a clean kill as humanely as possible is a fundamental component of ethical hunting. Incorrect shot placement on a black bear can lead to unnecessary suffering, wounding, and failure to retrieve the animal.

Making a clean kill should be the top priority for hunters who decide to shoot a bear. An animal that is harvested humanely shows more character in a hunter than just a lucky shot. Especially if you are taking a youth or apprentice hunter bear hunting, help it be a positive experience by emphasizing ethics and making a clean kill.

To be ethical, all hunters need to be proficient with their firearm or bow, understand their personal effective range, and have an understanding of basic bear anatomy for shot placement. This will help lead to a quick and effective kill and minimize the chance for wounding the bear.

**Planning the Shot.** The following are some general tips to help ensure correct shot placement:

- Hunters must understand that bears are built differently than deer and other big game animals. The chest of a bear is compressed compared to that of a deer when looking at it from the side.

- If you make a poor shot, a wounded bear can run for considerable distances before dying. Heavy bones, hides, and fat layers may prevent quick-clotting blood from dripping and leaving a good trail, making an injured bear hard to track.
KNOW YOUR CAPABILITIES AND KNOW YOUR SHOT!

A bear’s most vital area is an 8” circle behind the front shoulder.

The best shot opportunity is a broadside shot or “quartering away” for penetration into the vital organs.

To take your shot, wait for the bear to step forward with the near side leg exposing the heart/lung area.

Shots directly in the shoulder bone are not recommended. Bears have massive, muscular shoulders and heavy bones. A hunter who shoots ahead of the front shoulder may miss or injure the animal.

A head shot is not recommended since a bear skull is very dense. The blunt, rounded shape may cause bullets or arrows to glance off or become lodged in the skull without penetrating.

Frontal shots or shots from directly overhead (like might occur from a tree stand) are not recommended because they offer little opportunity for penetration of the vital organs (especially with archery equipment).

NEVER take a shot you are unsure of, at a bear that is not clearly visible, or one that is positioned in such a way that you cannot cleanly hit the vital area.

The National Bowhunter Education Foundation has created an excellent document called Advanced Black Bear Anatomy and Shot Placement Guide for both archery and firearm hunters (including muzzleloaders); the following photos have been adapted from the NBEF publication.
Best shot placement for gun or bow.

Shoulder and leg bones protect the heart and lungs when the near front leg is behind during stride. Wait until the near front leg is in front or ahead during stride.

National Bowhunter Education Foundation (https://nbef.org/)
CROSSBOWS

A crossbow may be used by anyone 50 years of age or older. Anyone 49 years of age or younger may hunt with a crossbow, provided they possess a crossbow disability permit. The crossbow disability permit is issued to a person so physically impaired that he or she cannot operate a standard bow and allows that person to hunt with a crossbow. A permit applicant must produce a licensed physician’s certificate certifying that the disability requires the use of a crossbow. Obtain an application from Fish & Wildlife before visiting your doctor. Applicant must also appear before a state game warden to obtain a crossbow license. Be sure to make an appointment ahead of time.

CROSSBOW SAFETY

Keep these tips in mind when using a crossbow to ensure a safe and enjoyable hunt.

USING A CROSSBOW:

🔍 Keep the string waxed and lubricate the rail periodically.

🔍 Make sure your fingers are well away (below rail) from the path of the string and cables.

🔍 Never dry-fire a crossbow.

🔍 Make sure the limbs are free of obstructions before firing; be particularly careful if you are hunting from a ground blind.

🔍 Never use a cocking device to uncock unless you have a model that is specifically designed to do so. Most are not.

🔍 To uncock, shoot a specially-designed unloading point or a field tip into soft ground; or shoot a field tip into a target.

🔍 Practice often and avoid shots at game that are beyond your effective range, generally less than 40 yards.

TREE STANDS AND CROSSBOWS:

🔍 Always cock the crossbow without a bolt on the ground before climbing into the stand.

🔍 Once seated and secured, pull up your unloaded crossbow with a haul line.

🔍 Do not place bolt on the crossbow until you are safely secured in your stand.

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Crossbow Disability Permit Application (49 years and younger) https://vtfishandwildlife.com/sites/fishandwildlife/files/documents/Licenses%20Center/Printable%20Applications/Crossbow_Application.pdf
PROHIBITIONS

- A hunter may take only one black bear in a calendar year.
- Bears may not be taken alive.
- Bears may not be trapped.
- Hunters may not use bait or a baited area to take a bear. A “baited area” is defined as an area where meat, carrion, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting bear has been placed or deposited.
- It is illegal to shoot a bear that is visiting a bird feeder.
- It is illegal to feed bears, even when not hunting for them.

TAGGING BEAR

Bear must be tagged immediately when taken. The tag must be placed on the carcass open to view and remain there until the carcass is cut up for consumption.

TRANSPORTING

A tagged bear may be transported only during the open season and for 20 days thereafter.

OPTIONAL VERMONT BIG GAME TAG

Optional Vermont Big Game Tags are available free from license agents as durable alternatives to the paper tags on licenses. Optional tags may be used to tag deer, bear, turkeys, or moose. Record your CONSERVATION ID number (top left corner of your license) on the Optional Big Game Tag. A qualifying landowner may use the tag by writing “landowner” in the same space.

The existing paper tag that comes with a license may also be used. Optional Big Game Tags may only be used by a person who has purchased the appropriate license and tag for the species they are hunting.
REPORTING A BEAR

A person taking bear shall within 48 hours report the taking and exhibit the carcass to the nearest game warden, official Fish & Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the commissioner to receive the reports.

It is now mandatory that the hunter provide a pre-molar tooth from the bear. Tooth envelopes are available at all check stations as well as green buckets for the envelopes that contain teeth. No bear carcass shall be transported out of state without first being reported.

A hunter must take a warden to the kill site of a bear if requested to do so by a warden.

Bears must be field dressed prior to reporting.

It is also legal to skin the bear and cut it up in order to carry it out of the woods. Although the bear must be reported within 48 hours, Fish & Wildlife urges doing so quickly to cool the meat.

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<th>Big Game Reporting Stations</th>
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2019 Black Bear Season Handbook
BIG GAME REPORTING STATIONS

2019 BIG GAME REPORT STATIONS
Updated: 09/19/2019

ADDISON COUNTY

State Wardens
Spc. Dale Whitlock, East Middlebury – 777-6269
Wesley Butler, Middlebury – 382-9097

Deputy Wardens
Eugene Stearns, Addison – 759-2944

Reporting Stations
Bridport Town Clerk, Bridport – 758-2483
Buxton’s Country Store, Orwell – 948-2112
C & S Hunting Supplies, Middlebury – 388-8401
Granville General Store, Granville, – 767-4600
Green Mountain Trails End LLC, Bristol – 453-4679
Lake Hortonia Country Store, Hubbardton – 273-3445
Lincoln General Store, Lincoln – 453-2981
Rack N Reel, New Haven – 453-2000
Vermont Field Sports, Middlebury – 388-3572
West Addison General Store, Addison – 759-2071

BENNINGTON COUNTY

State Wardens
Sgt. Travis Buttle, Shaftsbury – 442-4383
Justin Turner, Arlington – 430-7135

Deputy Wardens
Greg Eckhardt, Landgrove – 824-3792

Reporting Stations
Bellows Falls Fire Dept, Bellows Falls – 463-4343
Bennington Fish Culture Station, Bennington – 447-2844
Buck Stop Mini Mart, Bennington – 379-8158
Gun Supply of Vermont, Bondville – 375-5183
H N Williams Store, Dorset – 867-5353
JJ Hapgood, Peru – 824-4800
Lost Target Shooting Supplies, Bennington – 442-8953
Manchester Town Clerk, Manchester Center – 362-1315
Marty’s Sports & Gunsmithing, Inc., Bennington – 442-8826
Stamford Town Clerk, Stamford – 694-1361
Tift’s Trading Post, Woodford – 753-7941

**CALEDONIA COUNTY**

**State Wardens**
- Lt. Sean Fowler, St. Johnsbury – 751-0103
- Spc. Russell Shopland, East Hardwick – 472-3040
- Will Seegers, West Danville – 498-5351

**Reporting Stations**
- Lead & Tackle Co., Lyndonville – 359-3634
- Paul’s Whistle Stop, Mclndoes Falls – 633-4189
- Rick’s Gun Shop, East Burke – 626-1014
- Riteway Sports, Inc., Hardwick – 472-5916
- St. Michaels Defense, St Johnsbury – 751-5074
- Upper Valley Grill, Groton – 584-3101
- Wheelock Village Store, Wheelock – 626-8030
- West Barnet Quick Stop, West Barnet – 633-2624

**CHITTENDEN COUNTY**

**State Wardens**
- Lt. Carl Wedin, Essex – 879-5669
- Robert Currier, Essex Jct. – 871-5200
- Dana Joyal, Charlotte- 498-5469

**Reporting Stations**
- Dattilio’s Guns & Tackle, South Burlington – 862-5516
- Bucky’s Pub, Hinesburg – 578-7667
- Jericho General Store, Jericho – 899-4661
- Lakeshore Ace Hardware, Colchester – 863-4910

**ESSEX COUNTY**

**State Wardens**
- Sgt. Trevor Szymanowski, North Concord – 695-1314
- Randy Hazard, Bloomfield – 962-3492
- Cody Jackman, East Haven – 279-3560

**Deputy Wardens**
- Jacob Johnson, Waterford – 751-9202

**Reporting Stations**
Barnie’s Market, Concord – 695-8133
Cunningham’s Full Service Station, Canaan – 266-8900
DeBanvilles General Store, Bloomfield – 228-2284
Lunenburg Variety, Lunenburg – 892-1147
Northern Wildlife, Island Pond – 723-6290

FRANKLIN COUNTY

State Wardens
Josh Hungerford, Sheldon – 933-9313
Dustin Snyder, Fairfax – 279-9275
Matthew Thiel, Swanton – 868-6325

Deputy Wardens
Zachary Roy, Fairfax – 881-8195
Scott Frennner, Fairfield – 849-9320

Reporting Stations
#338 Montgomery Jolley, Montgomery – 326-4104
4C’s, Ste. Marie’s, Inc., Swanton – 868-3538
Back Country Sports, St. Albans – 782-8270
Franklin General Store, Franklin – 285-2033
Fletcher General, Fletcher – 849-6292
Georgia Market, Georgia – 527-1100
M&R Guns & Ammo, Highgate Center – 868-4288
Pop-A-Top Redemption, Richford – 370-0066
The Village Deli & Market, Bakersfield – 827-6155
West Enosburg Country Store, LLC, Enosburg Falls – 933-5001
Wetherby’s Quick Stop, Inc., Richford – 848-3550

GRAND ISLE COUNTY

State Wardens
Matthew Thiel, Swanton - 868-6325

Reporting Stations
A&B Beverage, Inc., Grand Isle – 372-4531
Isle LaMotte Town Clerk, Isle LaMotte – 928-3434

LAMOILLE COUNTY

State Wardens
Ethan Coffey, Morrisville – 888-2964
Jeremy Schmid, Cambridge – 644-6352

Deputy Wardens
Ronald Audet, Johnson – 730-8196
Reporting Stations
Cambridge Village Market, Cambridge – 644-2272
The Old Fishing Hole, Morrisville – 888-6210

ORANGE COUNTY

State Wardens
Sgt. Keith Gallant, East Braintree – 728-9215
Mark Schichtle, Wells River – 757-2121
Jeffrey Whipple, Veshire – 685-7813

Reporting Stations
Coburn’s General Store, Inc., South Strafford – 765-4421
David McLam, Bradford – 222-4707
East Corinth General Store, East Corinth – 439-5525
Farm ‘N Country Hardware, Williamstown – 433-1158
Fifields Auto Repair, West Fairlee- 333-3022
Floyd’s General Store, Randolph Center – 728-5333
Kevin’s Custom Arrows, Veshire – 685-3252
Kidder’s Smoke & Cure, Orange – 498-4550
Middle Branch Market & Deli, East Randolph – 728-5750
Mid State Guns & Tack, Randolph – 728-3100
Newbury Village Store, Newbury – 866-5681
Thetford Center Village Store, Thetford – 785-4655
Tunbridge Firearms, Tunbridge – 889-3259
VT 110 Quick Stop, Chelsea – 625-2100
Waits River Country Store, Waits River – 439-9510
Wing’s Market, Fairlee – 333-9568

ORLEANS COUNTY

State Wardens
Jason Dukette, Derby – 334-2904
Jenna Reed, Newport Center – 334-1215

Reporting Stations
Bob’s Quick Stop, Irasburg – 754-2104
C. Village Store, Craftsbury – 586-2554
Currier’s Market, Glover – 525-8822
E M Brown, Barton – 525-3422
Evansville Trading Post, Brownington – 754-6305
Glovers Family Market, Newport Center – 334-8056
Green Mountain Sporting Goods, Irasburg – 754-6165
Higliers Store, Newport Center – 334-5622
Mister O’s Sporting Goods, Newport – 334-5525
Morgan Country Store, Morgan - 895-2927
Olney’s General Store, Orleans – 754-6365
Smith’s Grocery, Greensboro Bend – 533-2631
Wright’s Enterprises, Newport – 334-6115

RUTLAND COUNTY

State Wardens
Lt. Justin Stedman, Rutland – 786-3865
Timothy Carey, Shrewsbury – 492-8292
Spc. Robert Sterling, Fair Haven – 265-4602
Dustin Circe, Wells – 793-6629
Abigail Serra, Rutland – 747-3303

Deputy Wardens
Ronald Audet, Johnson – 730-8196
Brendan Reilly, Rutland – 518-682-7085

Reporting Stations
Belmont General Store, Belmont – 259-2292
Cones Point General Store, Poultney – 287-9925
Engine Joe’s Guns & Bows, Hydeville – 265-8155
G & L General Store, Inc., Benson – 537-4041
Grant’s Village Store, Middletown Springs – 235-2251
J A B Restaurant (Bruno’s), West Rutland – 802-342-0330
Junction Store & Deli, Brandon – 247-3794
Keith’s Country Store, Inc., Pittsford – 483-6489
Kelley, Betsy A, Poultney – 287-5800
Loretta’s Good Food Deli, North Clarendon – 772-7638
Mart’s Sporting Goods, Poultney – 287-9022
Swiss Farm Market, Pittsfield – 746-9939
The Reel Angler, Manchester – 362-0883
Tinmouth Town Clerk, Tinmouth – 446-2498
Wooden Barrel Country Store, Chittenden – 775-5355

WASHINGTON COUNTY

State Wardens
Chad Barrett, Waterbury – 224-6324
Paul Brown, Northfield – 485-4432
Mike Scott, Washington – 685-2151

Reporting Stations
Harry’s Hardware, Cabot – 563-2291
Kenyon’s Hardware & Farm Supply, Northfield – 485-9676
Marshfield Village Store, Marshfield – 426-4321
Mountain Deer Taxidermy, Northfield – 485-7184
Maplefields, Plainfield – 454-7111
Parro’s Gun Shop & Police Supplies, Inc., Waterbury – 244-8401
R&L Archery, Barre – 479-9151
Roxbury Country Store, Inc., Roxbury – 485-8857
Village Grocery, Waitsfield – 496-4477

**WINDHAM COUNTY**

**State Wardens**
- David Taddei, Townshend – 221-4066
- Kelly Price, Brattleboro – 251-2171
- Richard Watkin, Wilmington – 368-7302
- Kyle Isherwood, Londonderry – 875-3707

**Reporting Stations**
- C&S Beverage and Dairy, Wilmington – 464-8062
- Grafton Country Store, Grafton – 490-2233
- Newfane Market, Newfane – 365-7775
- MKT: Grafton, Grafton – 843-2255
- Mike & Tammy’s Main Street Market/Deli – 824-8100
- Putney Sunoco, Putney – 387-2234
- Wardsboro Country Store, Wardsboro – 896-6411

**WINDSOR COUNTY**

**State Wardens**
- Lt. Dennis Amsden, Springfield – 289-0630
- Jason Gravelle, Hartland – 484-7435
- Asa Sargent, Hartland – 698-8371

**Deputy Wardens**
- Roni Johnson, Royalton – 763-8451
- Steve Majeski, Woodstock – 562-640-3080

**Reporting Stations**
- Ascutney Farm Stand, Ascutney – 952-9557
- Barrows Trading Post, Quechee – 295-1050
- Bridgewater Corners Country Store, Bridgewater Corners – 672-6241
- Chester Hardware, Chester – 875-2693
- Chester Town Clerk, Chester – 875-2173
- Locust Creek Outfitters, Bethel – 234-5884
- Singleton’s Store, Proctorsville – 226-7666
- Steve’s Bait Shop, North Hartland – 296-7331
- The Hardware at Rochester, Rochester – 767-4200
- Tracy’s Midway Station, Sharon – 763-8177
- Tyson Store, Ludlow – 228-2284
- Windsor Fire & Ambulance, Windsor – 674-9043

[Big Game Reporting Stations](http://vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt/big-game-reporting-stations)
USE OF DOGS TO HUNT BEAR

Any person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a black bear with the use of dogs must hold a Vermont Big Game Hunting License, use only Department Registered Dogs and have purchased a valid bear tag. In addition, the person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a black bear with the use of dogs must hold a valid bear dog permit or accompany a bear dog permit holder. The permit shall be carried at all times by the permittee while hunting with dogs or taking black bear and exhibited to a game warden, landowner, or law enforcement officer upon demand.

PERMIT REQUIRED: Hunters may use dogs to take bear only when the person in control of the dogs has a bear-dog permit available from the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The permit is required to pursue black bear with the aid of dogs for training purposes or for hunting and taking a bear. It is unlawful to shoot a bear that was pursued by dogs without a permit. Non-residents can only train their dogs in Vermont during the time period when the training season is open in their home state.

A person shall not advertise, barter, exchange goods or services, expose or otherwise sell the use of a dog or dogs for the purpose of taking black bear. It is unlawful to take a bear that is being pursued by hounds if you are not a permit or sub-permit holder.

Non-resident bear hound hunters may not hunt in Vermont until September 15th.

Additional changes to Vermont’s bear hound hunting laws have been made and will be included with information provided in a bear hound hunter’s permit.

§ 7. Bear Management Rule

1.0 Authority

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and fur-bearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the bear population.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4084, this rule establishes season and possession limits for game; prescribes the manner and means of taking; and establishes territorial limits for the taking of bears.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to establish seasons for the taking of bear, to establish legal methods of taking bears, and to establish limits on the number of bears to be taken annually.

3.0 Definitions:

3.1 "Bait" means as any animal, vegetable, fruit or mineral matter placed with the intention of attracting wildlife.

3.2 "Baited area" means an area where meat, carrion, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting bear has been placed or deposited including, but not limited to, bird feeders.

3.3 "Bear Dog Permit" or "Permit" means a permit to take bear with the aid of dogs issued by the Commissioner to a person who owns dogs wishes to hunt, pursue or take bear with the aid of said dogs.

3.4 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.
3.5 "Control of Dog/Dogs" means control shall be construed as the transportation, loading or unloading of dogs from vehicle(s); handling, catching, restraining or releasing dogs; use of telemetry to locate or track dogs.

3.6 "Department" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.7 "Dog Registration" means a numbered dog license valid for the current calendar year issued to the dog's owner by the town for the purpose of identification of the individual dog and the owner of the dog.

3.8 "Legal means" or "Legal method" means the taking of a bear by muzzleloader, rifle, handgun, or archery equipment.

3.9 "Pack of Dogs" means pack of dogs shall be defined as one to six dogs, acting as a unit during the pursuit of bear. Dogs may be added to the pack during the course of a hunt, up to a total of 6 dogs forming an original pack of dogs.

3.10 "Nonresident Dog Owner" means an individual person who is a nonresident as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4001(21) whose dog is kenneled in another state other than in Vermont and has a dog license issued by a town not in Vermont valid for the current calendar year.

3.11 "Non-hunting person" means an individual person may accompany the permit holder as long as he or she does not have control of dog/dogs. The non-hunting person does not require having a valid hunting license.

3.12 "Hunting party" means two or more hunters hunting in a group, all using firearms, muzzleloaders, or archery equipment that is engaged in the act of hunting together and who are in contact with at least one other member of the party.

3.13 "Registered Dog" means a dog that has a numbered dog license valid for the current calendar year issued to the dog's owner by the municipality for the purpose of identification of the individual dog and the owner of the dog.

3.14 "Relaying Dogs/Packs" means the removal and replacement of one or more dog or dogs to the trail of a bear to the original pack of dogs consisting of a maximum of a six dog unit, once the pursuit has begun.

3.15 "Resident Dog Owner" means a person who is a Vermont resident as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 4001(20) whose dog is kenneled in Vermont and has a dog license issued by a Vermont municipality valid for the current calendar year.

3.16 "Sub-permittee permit" means a written authorization issued by the Department that allows a person to assist a permit holder in taking a bear with the aid of dogs.
3.17 "Sub-Permittee" means any person designated or recognized by the permit holder to assist or take a bear with the aid of dogs.

3.18 "Tag" means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a bear.

3.19 "Unregistered Dog" means a dog that does not have a valid numbered dog license as described in 3.13.

4.0 Seasons and Shooting Hours

4.1 Early and Late Season

a) Early Season: September 1 through the day before the first day of the Regular Deer Season.

b) Late Season: The first day of the Regular Deer Season through the second Sunday of the Regular Deer Season.

4.2 Shooting hours: One half hour before sunrise until one half hour after sunset.

5.0 Tags and Bag Limit

5.1 To take a bear during the Early Season, a person must, in addition to having a valid Big Game Hunting license, obtain an Early Season Tag issued separately by the Department.

5.2 To take a bear during the Late Season, a person must have a valid Vermont Hunting license issued with a Late Season tag.

5.3 A person shall not take more than one bear per calendar year, not to include animals taken pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4827.

6.0 The taking of bear with the aid of dogs

6.1 Licenses and Permits Any person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a bear with the use of dogs must hold a valid Vermont Hunting License and valid bear dog permit, and valid bear tag or be a bona fide sub-permittee of a valid bear dog permit holder. The permit shall:

a) Be carried at all times by the permittee while taking bear and exhibited to a game warden upon demand.

b) Specify the particular dog(s) to be included in the permit, including the town dog license number(s).

6.2 A person shall not take a bear into his/her actual possession except by killing the bear by lawful means by the use of firearm, muzzleloader, or archery equipment.
6.3 Dogs and Packs

a) A person shall not take black bear with the aid of dogs unless the person is in control of the dog or dogs.

b) A person may only take a bear with the aid of a dog that is listed on the permittee's valid bear dog permit.

c) A person taking bear with the aid of dogs shall attach a metal identification name plate with the person’s name, address and telephone number to the dog’s collar.

d) A person shall not take black bear with the aid of more than six dogs acting as a unit to pursue bear. The person shall not pursue black bear by relaying dogs/packs, unregistered dog/dogs, or dog/dogs not listed on the person's bear dog permit.

e) Two or more permit holders may hunt together and combine dog(s) listed on each permit holder's permit. The combined permit holders shall not take black bear with the aid of more than six dogs combined forming a unit of a single pack of dogs. The combined permit holders shall not pursue black bear by relaying dogs/packs, or dogs not listed on their bear dog permits.

6.4 A Vermont resident shall not list a dog(s) owned by a nonresident on any resident bear dog permit application. A nonresident shall list a dog(s) owned only by a nonresident of the same state as the nonresident applicant.

6.5 Sub-Permittees and Parties

a. The sub-permittee may have control of the dog(s) while assisting the permit holder. The sub-permittee must have a valid Vermont Hunting License.

b. The sub-permittee must be given a sub-permittee permit by the permit holder and must carry it on their person during the hunt. The permit holder must collect the sub-permittee's permit at the end of the sub-permittee's involvement in the hunt of that particular day.

c. Permittees and sub-permittees may pursue bear as members of a party so long as one member of the party possesses a valid unused bear tag.

d. The sub-permittee may take a bear with the aid of dogs only while accompanying a permittee.

e. The Permit holder may automatically receive six sub-permittee permits with an issued bear dog permit. The Permit holder may request additional sub-permittee permits in writing to the Commissioner as needed.

7.0 Prohibitions

7.1 No person shall take bear by using bait or in a baited area.
7.2 A person shall not advertise, barter, exchange goods or services, expose or otherwise sell the use of a dog or dogs for the purpose of taking any black bear.

8.0 Biological Collection

8.1 Any person who harvests a bear shall collect a premolar tooth and submit the tooth to a game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the Commissioner to receive the biological collection, within 48 hours of taking the bear.

8.2 Unless otherwise specified by statute, the failure to collect and submit a bear tooth shall not result in license suspension points and shall be considered a minor violation subject to a civil fine. (Added 1972, Fish and Game Board Reg. No. 845, eff. _______ ; amended 1982, Fish and Game Board Reg. No. 935, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1982; 2007, Fish and Game Board Reg. No. 935, § 1, eff. June 1, 2007; 2012, Fish and Wildlife Board Reg. eff. January 1, 2013; 2017, Fish and Wildlife Board Reg. eff. January 1, 2017.)

• [Section 7 effective January 1, 2018; see also section 7 effective until January 1, 2018 set out above.]

§ 7. Bear Management Rule

1.0 Authority

1.1 This rule is adopted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4081(a). In adopting this rule, the Fish and Wildlife Board is following the policy established by the General Assembly that the protection, propagation, control, management, and conservation of fish, wildlife and fur-bearing animals in this State is in the interest of the public welfare and that the safeguarding of this valuable resource for the people of the State requires a constant and continual vigilance.

1.2 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4082, this rule is designed to maintain the best health, population and utilization levels of the black bear population.

1.3 In accordance with 10 V.S.A. § 4084, this rule establishes season and possession limits for black bear, and prescribes the manner and means of taking black bears.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to establish seasons for the taking of black bear, to establish legal means or methods of taking black bears, and to establish limits on the number of black bears to be taken annually.

3.0 Definitions:

3.1 "Accompany" for the purposes of hunting bear with dogs means that:
a. A Sub-permittee engaged in the control, handling, transporting or intercepting of Department registered dogs while hunting with dogs, shall be under the express direction of the permit holder, and

b. A Sub-permittee who harvests a black bear shall be under the direct control and supervision of the bear dog permit holder, including the ability to see and communicate with each other without the aid of artificial devices such as radios or binoculars, except for medically necessary devices such as hearing aids or eyeglasses.

3.2 "Bait" means as any animal, vegetable, fruit, mineral matter, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting black bear or any other wildlife.

3.3 "Baited area" means an area where any animal, vegetable, fruit, mineral matter, honey, or any other substance capable of luring or attracting black bear or any wildlife, has been placed or deposited including, but not limited to, bird feeders.

3.4 "Bear Dog Permit" or "Permit" means a permit issued by the Commissioner to a person who wishes to hunt, pursue or take black bear with the aid of dogs.

3.5 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.6 "Control of Dog/Dogs" means the transportation, loading or unloading of dogs from vehicle(s); the handling, catching, restraining or releasing dogs; and the use of telemetry/GPS to locate or track dogs.

3.7 "Department" means the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

3.8 "Department Registered Dog" means a dog bearing a numbered identification dog-tag (Department Registration Dog-Tag) approved or issued by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, with the permit holder's bear dog permit number and a number one through six.

3.9 "Hunting with Dogs" for the purposes of this rule means that one or more dog(s) with Department Registered Dog-Tags are on the ground whether in pursuit of a black bear or not.

3.10 "Legal means" or "Legal method" means the taking of a black bear by muzzleloader, rifle, handgun, archery equipment, or crossbow when authorized.

3.11 "Pack of Dogs" means one to six dogs, acting as a unit during the pursuit of black bear.

3.12 "Sub-Permittee" means any person with a valid Vermont hunting license designated by the bear dog permit holder to assist or take a bear with the aid of dogs, in accordance with written authorization issued by the Department.

3.13 "Relaying Dogs/Packs" means the removal and replacement of one or more dog or dogs to the trail of a bear to the original pack of dogs once the pursuit has begun. If the hunting or
pursuit of a black bear commences with fewer than six dogs in the original Pack of Dogs, the addition of a dog or dogs shall not be considered relaying, provided that no more than the same six dogs are part of a single Pack of Dogs during the hunting, pursuing or taking of a black bear.

3.14 "Bear Tag" means a document issued by the Department authorizing the taking of a black bear in the current season.

3.15 "Unregistered Dog" means a dog that does not have a valid numbered dog license as described in 3.8.

4.0 Seasons and Shooting Hours

4.1 Early and Late Season

a) Early Season: For Vermont Residents: September 1 through the day before the first day of the Regular Deer Season. For Non-Vermont Residents without the use of dogs: September 1 through the day before the first day of the Regular Deer Season. For Non-resident Bear Dog Permit Holders: The early black bear season shall be open to Non-Resident bear dog permit holders on September 15 and not before.

b) Late Season: For Vermont Residents and Nonresidents: The first day of the Regular Deer Season through the second Sunday of the Regular Deer Season.

4.2 Shooting hours: One half hour before sunrise until one half hour after sunset.

5.0 Tags and Bag Limit

5.1 To take a black bear during the Early Season, a person must, in addition to having a valid Vermont Big Game Hunting license, possess an Early Season Bear Tag issued separately by the Department.

5.2 To take a black bear during the Late Season, a person must have a valid Vermont Big Game Hunting license.

5.3 A person shall not harvest more than one black bear per calendar year, not to include animals taken pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 4827.

6.0 The taking of bear with the aid of dogs

6.1 Licenses and Permits Any person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a black bear with the use of dogs must hold a valid Vermont Big Game Hunting License, use only Department Registered Dogs and possess a valid bear tag. In addition, the person hunting, pursuing, harvesting, or in any manner involved in the taking of a black bear with the use of dogs must hold a valid bear dog permit or accompany a bear dog permit holder.
The permit shall be carried at all times by the permittee while hunting with dogs or taking black bear and exhibited to a game warden, landowner, or law enforcement officer upon demand.

6.2 A person shall not take a black bear into his/her actual possession except by killing the bear by legal means or methods.

a) A person taking black bear with the use of a bow and arrow or crossbow shall, upon demand of a game warden or other law enforcement personnel, show proof of having a prior archery license, or of having passed a bow hunter education course in Vermont, another state or a province of Canada approved by the Commissioner.

6.3 Dogs and Packs

a) A person shall not take black bear with the aid of dogs unless the person is in control of the dog or dogs.

b) No person shall take a black bear with the aid of any Unregistered Dog. No person shall have an Unregistered Dog in his or her possession while hunting, pursuing or taking a black bear.

c) A person hunting with dogs, pursuing, and taking black bear with the aid of dogs shall attach a Department Registration Dog-Tag and a metal identification name plate with the person's name, address and telephone number to the dog's collar.

d) A person taking a black bear with the aid of dogs shall only take a black bear with a Pack of Dogs as defined in this rule. No person shall pursue, hunt, or take black bear by Relaying Dogs/Packs.

e) Two or more permit holders may hunt together and combine Department Registered dog(s) to form a Pack of Dogs. The combined bear dog permit holders shall not take black bear with the aid of more than six dogs combined forming a single pack of dogs. Once hunting with dogs commences, dogs not on the hunt shall be restrained in the dog box or inside the vehicle. The combined bear dog permit holders shall not possess any Unregistered Dogs while hunting, pursuing or taking black bear.

7.0 Prohibitions

7.1 No person shall place bait to attract black bear for the purposes of allowing a bear dog to catch/strike the scent of a black bear. No person take bear by using bait or a baited area.

7.2 A person shall not advertise, barter, exchange goods or services, or otherwise sell the use of a dog or dogs for the purpose of taking any black bear.

7.3 While hunting with dogs, no person shall have in their possession an Unregistered Dog while possessing Department Registered dogs.
7.4 It shall be a violation for a Vermont resident to apply for a bear dog permit for the purpose of allowing a nonresident bear dog owner to hunt bear in Vermont with the aid of dogs.

7.5 No person shall hunt black bear with a bow and arrow or crossbow if the arrow or bolt has an arrowhead that measures less than seven-eighths of an inch at its widest point or that has less than two sharp cutting edges.

8.0 Reporting

8.1 The black bear carcass shall be field dressed prior to reporting.

8.2 Upon request of a Game Warden, the person harvesting the bear and the permit holder shall show and return to the kill site with a Game Warden.

8.3 All bear harvests shall be reported to a game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or a person designated by the Commissioner within 48 hours. The person who harvested the bear and the bear dog permit holder must both be present to legally report the harvest. If the bear dog permit holder harvested the bear, only he or she must be present when reporting the harvest.

8.4 It shall be unlawful to provide false information when reporting a black bear taken with the aid of dogs.

8.5 The fine, points and any other penalty for any violation of this subsection 8 shall be assessed to the violator and in addition, to the permit holder if the violator is not the permit holder.

9.0 Biological Collection

9.1 Any person who harvests a bear shall collect a premolar tooth and submit the tooth to a game warden, official Fish and Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the Commissioner to receive the biological collection, within 48 hours of taking the bear.

9.2 Unless otherwise specified by statute, the failure to collect and submit a bear tooth shall not result in license suspension points and shall be considered a minor violation subject to a civil fine. (Added 1972, Fish and Game Board Reg. No. 845, eff. _______ ; amended 1982, Fish and Game Board Reg. No. 935, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1982; 2007, Fish and Game Board Reg. No. 935, § 1, eff. June 1, 2007; 2012, Fish and Wildlife Board Reg. eff. January 1, 2013; 2017, Fish and Wildlife Board Reg. eff. January 1, 2018.)

Bear Management Rule  https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/10APPENDIX/001/00007
RESEARCH PROJECT STUDY BEARS

Hunters in the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, Woodford, Stamford, Pownal, and Whitingham are urged to use special caution to avoid shooting bears wearing radio collars or yellow plastic ear tags. These marked bears are an important part of the Deerfield Wind Project Study. It is not illegal to take a collared bear; however, if a bear wearing a collar is mistakenly harvested, it is crucial that the collar be turned in to the Fish & Wildlife Department (802-289-0613) so data can be retrieved from it. If a bear is harvested and has ear tags, then the numbers on the ear tags should also be reported.

Green Mountain National Forest Bear Study FAQs

BEAR HUNTING SAFETY TIPS

Although wearing fluorescent orange clothing is not mandatory for hunting in Vermont, hunters and others are urged to wear a fluorescent orange vest and hat while in the woods. Use caution in identifying your target as anyone hunting deer during archery season, waterfowl, or turkeys will normally wear camouflage clothing.

DON’T SHOOT SOWS WITH CUBS

Bears are normally solitary animals and any groups of bears seen in the autumn are most likely females and their young. The department recommends not shooting sows accompanied by cubs or a bear that is part of a group of bears as bears seen together in the fall are more likely a female accompanied by her cubs.
SALE OR PURCHASE OF GAME

**BIG GAME:** The only time it is legal to buy or sell big game or the meat of big game within the state is during the open season and for 20 days after the season ends. The meat of big game animals is not to be bought or sold to be transported out of the state. It is illegal to buy or sell wild turkey at any time.

Other than the meat mentioned above, a person may buy or sell at any time:

- The head, hide, and hoofs of legally taken deer or moose; or
- The head, hide, paws, and internal organs of a legally taken black bear.

**BEAR PARTS:** International trade in hides, claws, skulls, or teeth of black bear is regulated by federal law and international treaty. If you plan to sell bear hide or parts outside of the United States, you must obtain an export permit (for a fee) from the Federal Wildlife Permit Office, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, 1-800-358-2104. These products must be shipped through one of eleven designated ports (Boston is the nearest), or through another port under special permit (for a fee) from the same office. You do not need export permits and declarations to sell to domestic or foreign buyers within Vermont or the rest of the United States, or to sell through brokers who possess the necessary permits.
WHERE CAN I HUNT IN VERMONT?

Vermont has more than 800,000 acres of federal and state public land open to hunting: National Wildlife Refuges, the Green Mountain National Forest, and all state forests. State Parks are open to hunting outside the operating season.

Perhaps the crown jewel of hunting in Vermont is the state’s system of 99 Wildlife Management Areas, or WMAs. All WMAs are open to hunting, trapping, fishing and other wildlife related outdoor activities.

Lands managed by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department are open to regulated hunting throughout the year. The only exceptions to this are the State Parks which are closed to hunting during the parks operating season.

Listed below are some of the more common guidelines and policies pertaining to use of State Forests and Wildlife Management Areas. This is only a partial listing. If you have any questions, please call the ANR district office in your area.

Please note that all State motor vehicle laws apply and all state hunting regulations apply to State Forest lands and Wildlife Management Areas.

The following activities are prohibited:
1. Use of off-road, all terrain vehicles.
2. Permanent tree stands and ground blinds.
3. Cutting standing timber or vegetation alive or dead without a permit.
4. Abandoning any personal property.
5. Restricting or blocking use of any road, trail, or gate.
6. Causing damage to any road or trail.
7. Commercial activities without a permit.

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2019 Black Bear Season Handbook
HUNTERS, TICKS AND LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease has started to become more prevalent in Vermont during the last 10 years. Ticks that cause Lyme disease are still active in the fall in Vermont so hunters that spend time in tall grass, weed, and brushes, along with successful hunters handling a deer, should follow a few simple tick-repelling precautions.

Treat your clothing and gear with permethrin before you hunt, making sure to follow the product instructions. Tuck your pants into your socks or boots to keep ticks from crawling up your legs. After returning from the hunt, check all over your body for ticks including your hair, and shower immediately.

Tickborne illnesses are most frequently transmitted between early spring and late fall since ticks are most active during warm months. Be tick smart and follow these four recommendations to decrease your risk of infection.

Protect
• Use an EPA-approved tick repellent on skin
• Apply permethrin to clothing
• Wear light-colored pants and long sleeves

Check
• Perform daily checks on yourself, your children and pets
• Shower soon after spending time outdoors

Remove
• Use tweezers to grab tick close to skin
• Pull tick straight up, do not twist
• Wash hands and bite area with soap and water
• Put clothing in dryer for 10 minutes on high

Watch
• Watch for symptoms of tickborne diseases, such as fever, muscle aches, fatigue, and joint pain
• Most Vermonters with Lyme disease develop a rash, but 30% do not
• If you develop any of these symptoms, contact your health care provider

What is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that features a skin rash, swollen joints, and flu-like symptoms. The number of reported cases in Vermont has steadily increased since 2005. Lyme disease cases have been reported from every county, although most cases occur in the southern and western regions of the state.

How is Lyme Disease Transmitted?

You get the disease from the bite of an infected black-legged tick, also known as a deer tick. The deer tick is smaller than the common dog tick and lives in wooded areas and adjacent grasslands. They feed on small and large animals like mice, shrews, birds, raccoons, opossums, deer, and occasionally humans.

A tick bite is not painful. The tick is so small that its presence often goes unnoticed. In most cases the tick simply bites, draws blood for its nourishment and drops off.

If the tick happens to be infected with the spirochete bacterium (causative agent for Lyme disease), it may transmit the spirochetes during the feeding process.

In most cases, an infected tick must be attached for at least 36 hours in order to transmit Lyme disease. It is important to realize that a tick bite does not always result in Lyme Disease. Prompt removal of ticks can prevent infection.
How Do I Remove a Tick?

The best way to remove ticks is to use small tweezers. Do not squeeze the tick’s body. Grasp it where the mouth parts enter the skin and tug gently, but firmly, until it releases its hold on your skin. Wipe the bite area thoroughly with antiseptic.

Save the tick in a jar labeled with the date, the body location of the bite, and the place where you think you acquired the tick. Your doctor may find this information and the tick specimen helpful in diagnosis, in case a rash or other symptoms of Lyme disease subsequently appear.

What are the Symptoms of Lyme Disease?

The symptoms of Lyme disease can vary because different parts of the body may be affected. The skin, joints, nerves, or heart may be involved.

Early symptoms of Lyme disease typically appear within 3 to 30 days after a tick bite and include one or more of the following:

- Fatigue
- Chills and fever
- Muscle and joint pain
- Headache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Erythema migrans (EM)

EM is a characteristic skin rash associated with Lyme disease. It occurs in up to 80% of people. The EM rash usually appears as an expanding rash at or near the site of the tick bite. The rash usually appears within 7 to 14 days. The center of the rash may clear as it spreads, giving it the appearance of a bull’s-eye. The rash may be warm, but it is usually not painful or itchy.

What is the Treatment for Lyme Disease?

Appropriate treatment of Lyme disease with antibiotics almost always results in a full cure. While early treatment is best, most people diagnosed later in the course of illness can also be successfully treated.

How Do I Avoid Lyme Disease?

While there is no sure way to completely eliminate the chance of contracting Lyme disease, there are several preventative measures you can take:

- Wear long pants ticked into boots or socks and wear long-sleeved shirts buttoned at the cuff.
- Use tick repellents containing 0.5% permethrin or mosquito repellents containing 30% DEET.
- Checking your clothing, skin, and pets for ticks and remove them promptly.

What is the Risk from Lyme Disease?

Be aware of Lyme disease, but don’t be so concerned that you stop enjoying the outdoors. The risk of developing the illness is minimal in most of Vermont and even if infection occurs, the disease can be diagnosed and treated with antibiotics.

| Ticks in Vermont | http://www.healthvermont.gov/disease-control/tickborne-diseases/information-ticks-vermont |
| Preventing Ticks Among Hunters Factsheet | https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/resources/Hunterfactsheet.pdf |
HOW TO BUTCHER A BEAR

**Tools**

- 6- to 8-inch hunting knife
- Cutting board
- Bone-saw, heavy duty
- Hacksaw or electric saw
- Large refrigerator or freezer
- Large, cleanable table
- 9- to 12-foot upright/free-standing structure *(optional)*
- 12- to 20-foot chain *(optional)*
- Hook *(optional)*

**Directions**

- Skin your bear so that you are left with a headless and paw-less carcass covered in layers of white fat. Lay the bear carcass out on your large table or suspend the bear from its hind legs about 3 feet from the ground using your chain, hook, and upright.

- Cut off the layers of fat with your hunting knife. Bears have two types of fat: the outer layer is jelly-like while the layer closer to the muscle is firmer, like beef tallow. Use carefully executed cuts to shave off the fat in chunks, getting as close to the red bear meat as possible. Discard the fat or reserve the pieces to render into bear lard or grease.

- Remove the fillets. To do this, saw the sternum down the middle then split the rib cage into two halves. The tenderloins or fillets are the muscles that run along the spine from the bottom of the rib cage to just before the hind legs. Reserve these if you want bear steaks or simply cube into roughly 2½ by 2½ inch pieces like you will be doing to the rest of the bear meat.

- Peel the meat from the ribs. Insert the knife just under the rib meat on the outside of the animal’s rib cage making a generous incision. Run your knife along flesh and the rib bones as you pull the meat back, peeling off the rib meat.

- Remove the meat from the front and back legs. Holding out the limb, use your knife to cut the meat, sinew, and tendons away from shoulder and hip joints and then saw off each limb at the exposed joint. Cut meat away from each leg and cube.

- Strip and cube the remaining meat from the carcass. The remaining meat will mostly be around the shoulders.

- Place cubes of meat in an airtight container or in plastic tags. Place in your refrigerator or freezer, or grind with spices and other meat (traditionally pork) to make ground meat for hamburgers or sausage.

*Courtesy of “2014 Black Bear Recipe Guide”, New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife*

[https://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/pdf/bear_recipenguide.pdf](https://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/pdf/bear_recipenguide.pdf)
BEAR HIDE

1. Ensure field dressing cut is down center.

2. Skin bear as soon as possible (leave pads and head attached, if necessary).

3. Place hide in cool place until body heat is minimized.

4. Fold hide in half once – HAIR OUTSIDE – HIDE INSIDE (with the head outside) – consult a taxidermist prior to your hunt.

5. Place cooled hide in plastic garbage bag.

6. If freezing is not possible, do not put hide in plastic. Just keep cool and transport to a taxidermist as soon as possible.

7. If freezing or taxidermist is not available for more than 24 hours, skin out head and paws, flesh entire hide clean, and salt entire hide using uniodized salt.

8. Never wash a hide with water or drag or handle a bear by the neck.

Courtesy of American Taxidermy Incorporated
https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/recreation/hunting/bear/bear_handling.pdf
HUNTERS SHARING BEAR MEAT

Since early times when man first lived in family groups and settled in village communities, the hunt has brought benefits to many people. Whole villages would turn out to greet hunters returning from the hunt. The hunter was always viewed and respected as a contributor to the community and society. Successful hunts were a time of joy, celebration, and reflection for the entire village. This system was based on mutual respect – respect for people, respect for the animals harvested, and respect for the environment. People reflected upon the animals taken during the hunt for the sustenance they provided. Hunters observed the ethic that animals are taken with respect. People respected the harvested animals in that they were not wasted. Today…like the hunts of long ago…we still observe and respect these basic principles.

It is in keeping with these time-honored customs, Vermont hunters in their communities can share their success and good fortune with people in need – by offering a gift of game meat from their hunt.

If you are interested in continuing this time-honored tradition of the hunt, by sharing your bear meat as a gift to those in need in your communities, simply follow the instructions listed below. Thank you for your stewardship of Vermont’s wildlife and your generosity to your neighbors in need.

Hunters donating bear meat by law must observe the following:

- Meat must be processed and refrigerated.
- Each package must be properly labeled with the hunter’s name, conservation ID number, type of game meat (bear in this case), tag number, and date of donation.

Successful hunters willing to share their bear can do so by donating it directly to a food shelf or meal site. Proper processing and labeling instructions are available at www.vtfoodbank.org.
FIELD-TO-FORK: WILD FOOD COOKING SERIES

Check out Fish & Wildlife and Rooted in Vermont’s Field-to-Fork Wild Food Cooking Series. Come learn how to prepare game meats and sample our delicious creations!

Add some wild game meat to your locally foraged ramps, leeks, and fiddleheads. It’s nutritious, sustainable, and rooted in Vermont.

#Rooted in Vermont is a program of the Vermont Farm to Plate Network. Hunting, fishing, and foraging for our food is #RootedinVermont!

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<td># Rooted in Vermont</td>
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RECIPES

Bear Meat Loaf

Ingredients
2 lbs. bear burger                               3 eggs, beaten
1 tbsp. dry minced onion                        ¼ cup seasoned breadcrumbs which have been
1 tbsp. parsley flakes                          mixed with crushed cornflake crumbs
½ tsp. garlic powder                           2 tbsp. Kikkoman’s Teriyaki Sauce
1 regular size can tomato soup, undiluted

Directions
1. Mix well and place in a greased large loaf pan or baking dish.
2. Shape into a loaf and top with pan spray.
3. Bake at 350° for approximately 1 hour. Place foil over the top until the last 20 minutes.

From: Diana Spear

Bear Meat Loaf

Ingredients
2 lbs. ground bear-meat                          ¾ cup tomato sauce
½ cup milk                                      1 cup onions (minced)
2 eggs                                          1½ cups dry mustard
¼ tsp. thyme                                    1 small can mushrooms
¼ tsp. oregano                                  1 cup breadcrumbs

Directions
1. Mix all ingredients well and place in a roasting pan.
2. Pre heat oven at 350° and bake for 45 minutes.
3. Remove from oven and spread ketchup/BBQ sauce over the top.
4. Replace in oven and bake for another 15 minutes till done.
5. Serve warm.

From: http://www.huntingtipsandtricks.com/a/Bear_Meat_Recipes
Bear Meat Quiche

Ingredients
2 cups of shredded cheese on top of the crust  2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
1 lb. of precooked bear sausage on top of the cheese
1 cup chopped onions

Directions
1. Line a 9 x 9 baking pan or pie plate with pie crust.
2. Layer: (don’t mix).
3. Bake for 45 to 60 minutes at 350°. It’s done when a knife removes cleanly from the center. Let cool 10 minutes before cutting.

From:  http://robinfollette.com/bear-meat-quiche/

Bear Roast

Ingredients
5 lbs. bear roast  ¼ cup Kikkoman’s Teriyaki Marinade
2 cloves garlic, sliced thin  1 large can cream of mushroom soup plus 1½ cans of water
1 large onion, chopped

Directions
1. Place in a large crockpot which has been sprayed with pan spray.
2. Add all the other ingredients and spray the top of the roast with pan spray to seal in juices and moisture.
3. Cook on low setting for 8-9 hours. Never cook bear meat on high.

You can also use the same ingredients minus a full can of water in a browning oven bag which is coated with tbsp. flour. Spray top of roast and seal bag with tie. Place in a pre-heated oven at 275° for 5 hours or so as needed.

From:  Diana Spear
Bear Sausage Shepherd’s Pie

**Ingredients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ½ lbs. bear sausage (or bear burger if no sausage available)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 medium chopped onion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ tsp. garlic powder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 can of cream of mushroom soup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 can cream-style corn</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 can niblet corn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 cups mashed potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup cheddar cheese, grated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter, melted</td>
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**Directions**

1. Brown bear sausage with chopped onion and garlic powder until cooked well.
2. Add cream of mushroom soup (undiluted) and place in the bottom of a sprayed 13x9 baking pan.
3. Add a can of cream-style corn and a can of niblet corn over the top of the meat mixture.
4. Spread mashed potatoes over the top of the corn layer and top with melted butter and cover with foil.
5. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes until bubbly then remove foil and add grated cheddar cheese over the top and continue to bake for 20 minutes until cheese is melted and browned.

*From: Diana Spear*

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**Bear Sausage**

**Per pound of meat**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tr>
<td>¼ lb. pork fat</td>
<td>¼ tsp. rubbed sage</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 tsp. salt</td>
<td>¼ tsp. ground black pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ tsp. dried parsley</td>
<td>¼ tsp. dried thyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>¼ tsp. crushed red pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>¼ tsp. coriander</td>
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**Directions**

1. Run meat through grinder to desired consistency. Mix pork fat evenly.
2. In a bowl, combine salt, parsley, sage, pepper, thyme, and coriander. Sprinkle evenly over ground meat mixture and mix with hands to distribute evenly throughout.
3. It is important to note that bear meat can carry the trichinosis parasite also once found in raw pork; therefore it must be cooked thoroughly in order to kill it.

Bear Venison Jerky

Ingredients
4 lbs. of venison shopping list
1 cup of barbecue sauce shopping list
2 tbsp. of liquid smoke shopping list
1 tsp. of chili powder shopping list
1 tbsp. of Worcestershire sauce shopping list
And just a few grains of cayenne pepper shopping list

Directions
1. Cut meat into strips of your liking.
2. Combine ingredients and marinate meat in the fridge overnight.
3. Dehydrator - go accordingly to your dehydrator’s manual.
4. Oven: Set oven to lowest temp., lay out on foil over racks and keep door propped open for ventilation.


Black Bear Chili

Ingredients
4 cups dry black beans
2 tbsp. cumin
2 tbsp. oregano
1/2 cup olive oil
2 lbs. flank steak, cut into cubes
2 large onions, chopped
1 green pepper, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
4 1/2 tsp. paprika
1 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 tsp. salt
1 large can crushed tomatoes
1/4 cup jalapenos, sliced
1 red bell pepper 6 oz.
Romano cheese, grated
Sour cream
Warm flour tortillas

Directions
1. Place beans in large pot and cover with cold water. Bring to boil. Remove from heat and let stand 2 hrs.
2. Drain beans and return to pot. Add enough cold water to cover by 2 inches. Cover and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until beans are tender about 2 hrs. Add water as necessary.
3. Drain beans into Dutch oven, reserving 3c liquid. Add 1 cup of liquid to beans. Heat olive oil in large skillet and brown steak. Add onions, green pepper, and garlic. Stir for 3min.
4. Add spices and cook for 10 min, stirring often. Mix in jalapenos and tomatoes. Bring to boil then add to beans. Add remaining reserved liquid to thin. Simmer covered 1/2hr.
5. Serve over tortillas. Top with sour cream, Romano cheese, and diced red bell peppers.

From: http://www.chilicookin.com/Recipes/Web/Bear.htm
Black Bear Meatballs

**Ingredients**
- A lb. or two of ground black bear meat
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup or so breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup or so grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper
- Couple tsp. Italian seasoning (or parsley, thyme, etc.)

**Directions**
1. Combine everything above and form into little meatballs.
2. Heat a skillet with olive oil over medium-high heat. When hot, add meatballs and turn frequently to brown the outside.
3. Add pasta sauce (we used Vodka sauce, but you could use red sauce or anything) into the pan and simmer over low until the meatballs are cooked through.
4. Serve this all over pasta.

From: [http://alaskagraphy.wordpress.com/2012/06/10/black-bear-recipes-part-ii/](http://alaskagraphy.wordpress.com/2012/06/10/black-bear-recipes-part-ii/)

Canned Bear Meat

**Directions**
1. Chop bear meat into 1-inch cubes and pack into quart jars to within 2 inches of top.
2. Add a half onion (cut up), 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. black pepper, and a clove of sliced garlic.
3. Pour hot water into jars to within 1 inch of top – run a knife down the inside of jars to release any air bubbles and add more water to reach the desired 1-inch space.
4. Wipe top of jar and place a hot lid and ring and tighten.
5. Place in a pressure cooker that holds quarters (I do 7 at a time and add 2 quarts of hot water to canner).
6. Place lid on canner and place pressure valve at 15 lbs. of pressure.
7. Turn on burner and when the canner pressure valve jiggles, time for the hour and it should jiggle approximately 3-4 times a minute which is controlled by the setting on the heated burner.
8. Shut off the canner and let cool for a couple of hours until the pressure is gone in canner.
9. Do not force the pressure out as it will loosen the lids and not seal properly.
10. You can do this in a water bath canner if you don’t have a pressure cooker, but the water has to be at least 2-3 inches over the top of the jars, and it will need to be timed for 3 hours after it comes to a boil.

This is a handy way to have cooked meat available for stews or meat pies and can be thickened and have over mashed potatoes or noodles.

From: Diana Spear
Corned Bear

This recipe can be used for any cut of meat, but it is especially useful for turning those less tender portions of the animal into melt-in-your-mouth deliciousness. The brining process takes seven days but is not labor intensive. Eat hot or cold, by itself or on a sandwich with rye bread and mustard or make some corned hash. It doesn't get much better than this.

**Prep Time:** A long time, but it takes little effort and is definitely worth the wait.  
**Cook Time:** 3-4 hours  
**Servings:** A whole bunch!

**Ingredients**
- 2 quarts of distilled water
- 1/2 cup of canning or pickling salt
- 1/2 cup of tenderizing salt
- 3 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. mixed pickling spices (You can find this in the spice aisle of most grocery stores)
- 2 bay leaves
- 8 whole black peppercorns
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3-5 lbs. of bear, venison, or moose meat

**Directions**
1. Combine the water, salt, sugar, pickling spices, bay leaves, peppercorns, and garlic in a bowl. Mix until ingredients are dissolved.
2. Put the mixture in a boiling pan and bring to a boil for 2 minutes, then cool.
3. If you have a meat syringe, it is recommended to inject some of the brine solution into the center area of the cut of meat. (This is optional but does produce a corned flavor throughout the whole cut of meat.)
4. In a large zip-close storage bag or container with lid, submerge the meat in brine solution.  
5. Marinate in the refrigerator at least seven days, turning the meat daily.
6. When you are ready to cook it, rinse off the brine solution with fresh water and cover the meat with water in a pot just large enough to hold it and cover it with water.
7. Bring water to a boil, and then reduce the heat, simmering until tender, about 3-4 hours.
8. Serve hot or cold with your favorite garnishings.

From: [http://www.foxworthyoutdoors.com/blog/wild-game-recipe-of-the-week-corned-bear-venison-or-moose](http://www.foxworthyoutdoors.com/blog/wild-game-recipe-of-the-week-corned-bear-venison-or-moose)
Crock Pot Bear Chili

**Ingredients**

- 2 lbs. bear steaks, cubed
- 1 can red beans
- 1 can jalapeno black beans
- 1 lb. pork sausage
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 1 can tomato sauce
- 1 can diced green chilies

**Directions**

1. First cube up all your bear steaks to a uniform size.
2. Add sausage and bear to your crock pot.
3. Add all the cans into your crock pot.
4. Cook on high for 4-6 hours or until the meat has finished cooking.


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Marinade for Skewered Bear Meat

**Ingredients**

- ½ cup soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. honey
- ¼ cup peanut oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 onion, large, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, mashed
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper

**Directions**

1. Cut bear meat into bite-size pieces.
2. Mix all the ingredients together and put into a plastic zip lock bag or glass bowl with lid.
3. Add bear meat and place in fridge for several hours turning to coat as needed.
4. Soak skewers in water for an hour and thread bear meat onto skewers along with any veggies you may want or the bear meat alone.
5. Grill to your preference of doneness.

From: [https://www.geniuskitchen.com/recipe/marinade-for-skewered-bear-meat-126266](https://www.geniuskitchen.com/recipe/marinade-for-skewered-bear-meat-126266)
Red Mountain Barbecued Bear
Prep Time: 35 mins Total Time: 4 hrs 35 mins Yield: 1 roast

Ingredients
1/4 cup vinegar 1 tsp. chili powder 1 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tbsp. sugar 5 drops Tabasco sauce 1/4 cup salad oil
1/2 tsp. pepper 1/2 cup water 1/2 cup ketchup
1/4 tsp. garlic powder 1 tsp. dry mustard 2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 onion, minced 1 1/2 tsp. salt 1 bear roast

Directions
1. Mix all sauce ingredients except ketchup and Worcestershire sauce.
2. Simmer 20 minutes, uncovered.
3. Add ketchup and Worcestershire sauce and bring to a boil.
4. Remove from heat.
5. Place bear roast in oven at 325°.
6. Roast 3-4 hours or until tender.
7. Baste frequently with sauce.

From: http://www.food.com/recipe/red-mountain-barbecued-bear-74956

Teriyaki Jerky

Ingredients
3 lbs. boneless bear meat 1 tbsp. liquid smoke
½ cup Worcestershire sauce ½ tbsp. salt
½ cup teriyaki sauce ½ tbsp. pepper

Directions
1. Combine all wet ingredients together.
2. Add meat to wet mixture and soak in refrigerator overnight.
3. Sprinkle salt and pepper onto meat before drying it.
4. Smoke it on a low heat until dry, 5 hours or longer.
5. Rearrange racks periodically and add more wood chips when necessary.
6. When dried, sprinkle jerky with salt and pepper to taste.
7. Refrigerate jerky for storage.

From: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/pdf/bear_recipeguide.pdf
**WildCheff’s Root-Bear Barbacoa**

**Ingredients**

- 1½-2 lbs. of bear meat, trimmed of sinew and cubed
- ½-1 tbsp. of WildCheff blackening seasoning
- 2 tsp. of WildCheff roasted garlic powder
- WildCheff Mexican oregano, to taste
- 1 tbsp. of brown sugar
- WildCheff lime olive oil
- ½ large sweet onion, small sliced into half moons
- 3-4 garlic cloves, minced
- juice of 1 lime
- 2 cups veal stock (beef can be substituted)
- 1 all-natural root beer (made with unrefined cane sugar) or Not Your Father’s Root Beer
- All WildCheff products available at WildCheff.com

**Directions**

1. Place the cubed bear meat into a large bowl.
2. Season the meat by coating with lime olive oil, followed by blackening seasoning, roasted garlic powder, Mexican oregano, and brown sugar.
3. Place 1-2 tablespoons of lime oil into a small porcelain-coated cast iron pot. Heat the oil over medium high heat, and then add the meat to the pot.
4. Sear the meat so it is browned and then remove.
5. Add onions and cook until they are past the raw stage, then add the minced garlic. Stir until fragrant (about 2 minutes).
6. Add the meat and juices back to pot, followed by the stock, root beer, and lime juice.
7. Bring to a boil, and then lower to a simmer and cover pot.
8. Braise meat for 90-120 minutes until tender enough to shred. (You may need to add more stock during the cooking process).
9. Allow meat to cool. Shred with two forks and use for your favorite recipe ideas.

**From:** Northwoods Sporting Journal (August 2018) – www.wildcheff.com/
HUNT, POST, SHARE, LIKE

Vermont Fish & Wildlife suggests the following tips to accurately reflect a positive hunting experience in social media.

Display respect for the animal in its life and in its death. Ask yourself if your non-hunting friends would view the photo as respectful of this animal’s life.

Make sure the animal looks its best. Place the tongue back in mouth and try to minimize blood in the photo to instead focus on the beauty of the animal. Try to take a photo of a successful hunt in the animal’s natural habitat. Blue sky, forest, and mountains place hunting in the context of its natural surroundings.

Don’t just post ‘grab and grin’ photos after a successful hunt. Show all the aspects of the hunt to give people a more complete picture of what hunting means to you. Post photos of a silent snowy forest or quality time spent outdoors with friends and family.

Include posts from after the hunt too. A photo of you enjoying a plate of tasty venison with friends and family will help people make the connection that wild meat is a healthy, local, sustainable food source.

If you see friends posting unethical behavior, don’t be afraid to speak up. Please forward any posts that include illegal activity to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife’s Facebook page so our wardens can look into it.

If done properly, social media can be a great opportunity to show non-hunters why you are passionate about hunting and to inspire conservation and spark interest.
VERMONT HABITAT STAMP

Monies raised from sales of Vermont Habitat Stamps go to the Species and Habitat Conservation Fund, which is used to purchase and maintain Wildlife Management Areas.

Projects Supported by the Fund Include:

- Purchase lands for Wildlife Management Areas
- Improve public access to land for fish and wildlife-based activities such as bird-watching, hunting, fishing, enjoying wildlife or simply connecting with nature
- Protect and improve wetlands
- Protect and restore state-owned riparian stream banks
- Protect and enhance deer wintering areas
- Implement habitat enhancement for turkeys, bears, deer, songbirds, bats, moose, aquatic organisms, and all of Vermont's native wildlife

Use our [online donation form](http://vtfishandwildlife.com/get-involved/donate/vermont-habitat-stamp).

**Hunting and Fishing License Purchase:** Donate when purchasing a hunting or fishing license by simply including your contribution when applying.

When you purchase a Vermont Habitat Stamp, you help improve wildlife habitat and open land for outdoor recreation.

**Please note:** A stamp is not required to hunt, fish or trap, nor do you have to buy a sporting license to donate for a stamp.

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**YOUR HABITAT STAMP DONATIONS HELP CONSERVE LAND**