

# 2024 VERMONT BLACK BEAR SEASONS



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Fifty years ago, Vermont’s bear population was estimated to be less than 1,500. Over the past thirty years the population has fluctuated from 4,000-6,500. Population estimates for the most recent few years indicate the population may have increased beyond this range. The robust bear population is the result of habitat conservation and hunting regulations designed for a sustainable harvest of black bears. The *2020-2030 Big Game Management Plan* population objectives is 3,500-5,500 bears. Incidents of bear-human interactions and bear-caused property damage have increased, including areas where few bears existed earlier. The “early season” bear hunting regulation changes were intended to provide the Fish & Wildlife Department with information that is important in improving Vermont’s bear management program.



## 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 by regulation to be submitted by the hunter from every bear harvested in Vermont.

**Early Season:** September 1, 2024 through November 15, 2024.



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

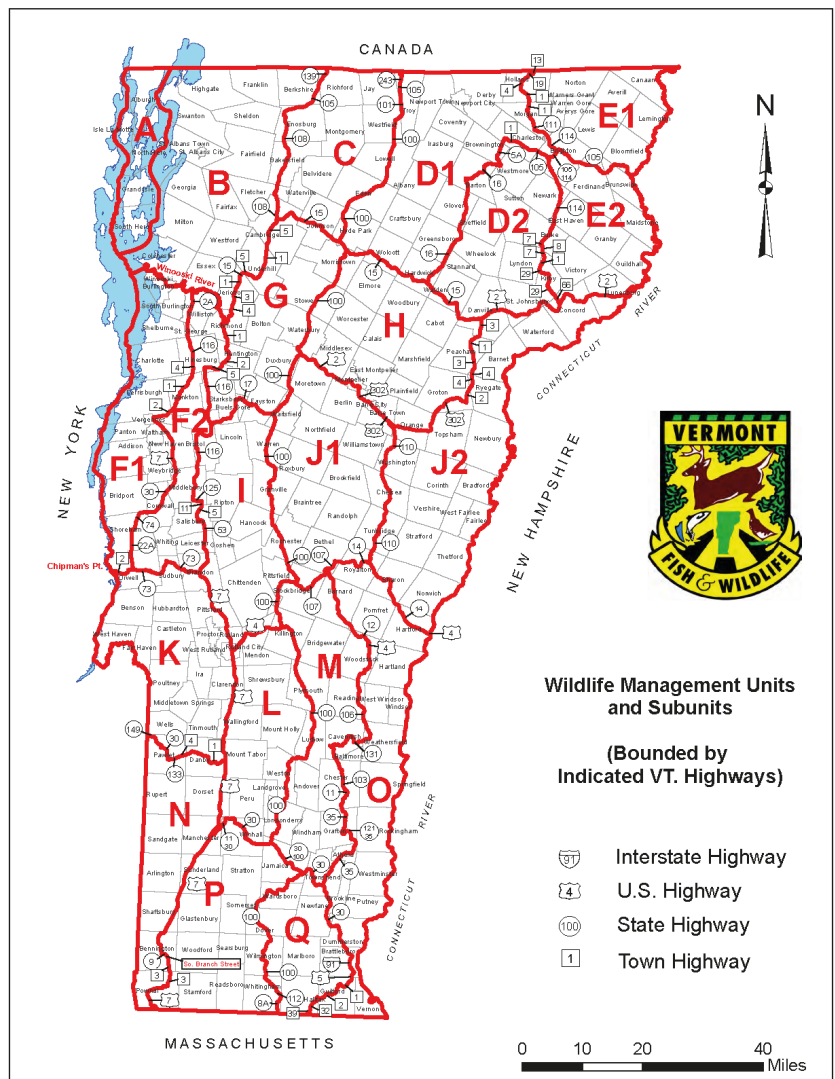
**Late Season:** November 16, 2024 through November 24, 2024.

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.

-  [Black Bear Harvest Summary Reports](#)
-  [Upcoming Seminars](#)
-  [Hunter Education](#)
-  [Black Bear Natural History](#)





A person who takes a bear shall collect a premolar tooth from the bear and submit it to a game warden, official Fish & Wildlife Department Reporting Station, or to a person designated by the commissioner to receive it **within 30 days** of taking the bear.

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.**

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 white bear tooth envelope so you can fill out the information, remove the tooth, seal it in the envelope, and deposit it in the green tooth bucket at any reporting station. **Remember to clearly print your name and Conservation ID number on the envelope.** If you don’t put it in the reporting station bucket, you must give it to a warden within 30 days. Every tooth we receive from hunters is needed to accurately estimate the size of Vermont’s bear population.

**BEAR TOOTH**

CID# \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

DATE OF KILL \_\_/\_\_/\_\_      VT F&W

The age of your bear will be available on the [department’s website](#) in the spring after it is returned from the lab.

- [Bear Tooth Removal Instruction Video](#)
- [Check the Ages of Black Bears](#)
- [Find a Vermont Game Warden](#)

**DON’T SHOOT SOWS WITH CUBS**

Black bear cubs are dependent on sows until they are approximately 16-18 months old. Cubs are born in January and forage, travel, and rest with their mother during their first fall. It isn’t until the following spring that they are ready to strike out on their own.

It is important that hunters take precautions to avoid harvesting sows accompanied by cubs. Follow these steps to increase the likelihood that you will correctly identify bear family groups:

- **Be observant.** Most adult female bears in Vermont weigh between 120 to 180 lbs. Cub sizes can vary widely by their first fall depending on food availability throughout the year, the fitness of the sow, and the number of cubs in a litter. Cubs can range from as small as 20 lbs. to over 50 lbs. Be diligent to observe bears of these sizes to determine if they are alone before harvesting. Pre-scout your hunting spots with a remote camera to learn which bears frequent the area.
- **Be patient.** Family groups may not always be within sight of each other, but members will be nearby. Take time to observe a bear to determine if it is alone before harvesting. Select a shooting location that offers views of the surrounding area to increase the chance of observing potential cubs.
- **When in doubt, don’t shoot.**



Photo Courtesy NH Fish and Game

Female black bear (sow) with cub standing behind her.

## EAR TAGGED BEARS

Occasionally, bears are marked with ear tags for monitoring purposes. If a bear is harvested and has yellow plastic or small metal ear tags, then the numbers on the ear tags should also be reported.

## NEW! 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 anadromous Atlantic salmon taken in the Connecticut River Basin and/or 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 and the head or hide of legally taken black bears. **The sale of paws or internal organs of a black bear is prohibited.**

## NEW! RETRIEVAL AND USE OF COVERED WILD ANIMALS

*A person shall not intentionally or knowingly kill a covered wild animal and intentionally or knowingly fail to make a reasonable effort to retrieve it.*

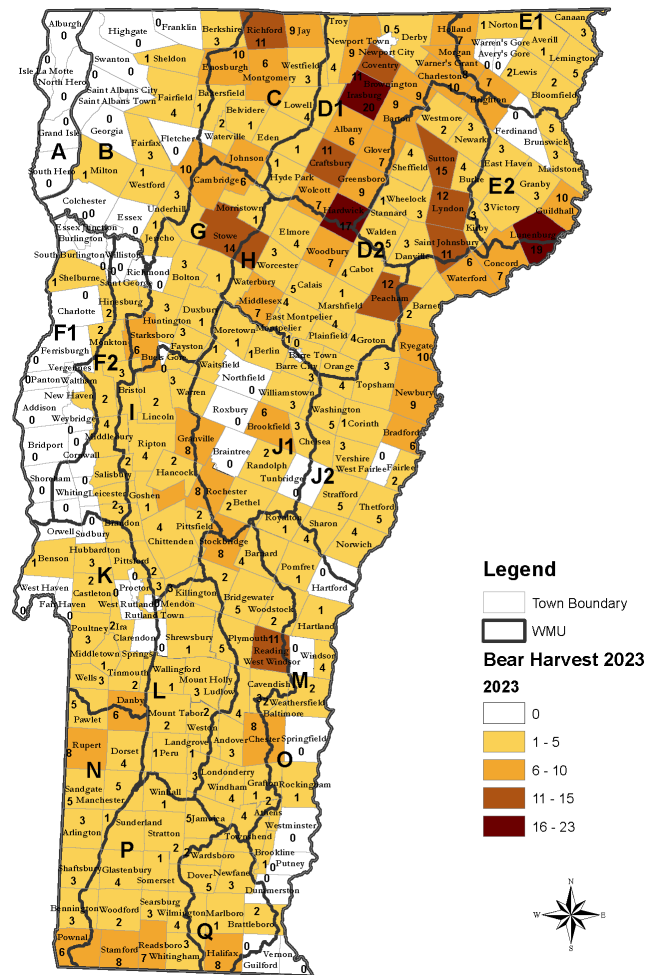
**Covered Wild Animals:** moose, deer, bear, wild turkeys, gray squirrels, snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbits, game birds, crows, and furbearers.

The covered wild animal must be processed as food, fur, hide, or feathers, or used for taxidermy. Coyotes that are taken by lawful means other than trapping and are retrieved and disposed of legally are excepted from these required uses. A coyote or its parts, or parts of the other covered wild animals, may not be left along a public right-of-way or highway, on posted property without landowner permission, or where otherwise prohibited by law.

**Exceptions:** animals unfit for consumption, theft, loss to another wild animal, lack of access because of posting, defense of a person or property, and animals that are sick or diseased.

“Take” and “Taking” mean pursuing, shooting, hunting, killing, capturing, trapping, disturbing, harrising, worrying, wounding, snaring or netting fish, birds or other animals. It includes placing, setting, drawing or using any net or other device commonly used to take fish or wild animals, whether they result in taking or not. It includes every attempt to take and every act of assistance to another person in taking or attempting to take fish or wild animals.

## 2023 BEAR HARVEST BY TOWN AND WMU



Read the annual Vermont Black Bear Harvest Summary Reports to learn more about past bear harvests.

[Bear Harvest Report Summary Library](#)



## 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 costs, 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 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.

-  [Purchase a License Online](#)
-  [Hunting Black Bear FAQs](#)

## LIFETIME AND PERMANENT LICENSE RENEWAL

**If you intend to hunt, fish, or trap in 2024, you must update your lifetime, permanent disability, or permanent license regardless of whether or not you used your tags.** This is a 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 online, 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.

-  [Update a Permanent License](#)

## ARCHERY HUNTING

In addition to a hunting license, a bear hunter using a bow or crossbow must have a previous or current bow license or a certificate providing completion of a bow hunter education course.

## CROSSBOWS

A crossbow may be used as a means of take by any person during any hunting season that permits the use of bow and arrow.

Unless otherwise provided, any game which may be taken by shooting may be taken by use of bow and arrow or crossbow.

All arrows, including crossbow arrows, must have an arrowhead of at least 7/8 of an inch wide and at least two cutting sides.

A crossbow may not be transported cocked in a motor vehicle.

Any person wishing to hunt **turkey, bear, or deer** with a bow and arrow or crossbow must hold proof of having held an archery license or a certificate of satisfactory completion of a bowhunter education

course from Vermont or another state or province in Canada.

## 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.

## 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 mandatory that the hunter provide a premolar tooth from the bear. Tooth envelopes for bear are white in color and are available at all check stations. Place the completed envelope and tooth in the green buckets available at all check stations.**

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.

-  [Big Game Reporting Stations](#)
-  [Wild Game Processors](#)

## TRANSPORTING

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

## LEASHED TRACKING DOG TO RECOVER BEAR

A hunter who believes they have legally killed or wounded a bear during hunting season may engage a person who has a “Leashed Tracking Dog Certificate” issued by the department to track and recover the animal during the season or within 24 hours after the season ends.

-  [List of Leashed Tracking Dog Handlers](#)
-  [Leashed-Tracking Dog Permit Application Form](#)



## USE OF DOGS TO HUNT BEAR

Bear dogs may be used with a permit, but no commercial guiding is allowed with bear dogs. Hounds are allowed, provided the person in charge of the dogs has a bear-dog permit, and no more than six dogs are used.

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 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 license and permit are also required for training dogs to pursue bear.

Any bear taken with the use of dogs must be accompanied by the bear dog permit holder at the time of reporting.

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

-  [Permit Application to Take Black Bear with Dogs \(Resident\)](#)
-  [Permit Application to Take Black Bears with Dogs \(Non-Resident\)](#)

## PROHIBITIONS

- An early season tag is required from September 1 through the day before the first day of the November rifle deer.
- 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 any animal, vegetable, fruit, mineral matter, honey, or 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.

## 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.

## FLUORESCENT ORANGE

Hunter orange is not required by law in Vermont, but wearing it might save your life. Almost all of Vermont’s hunting-related shootings could have been prevented if hunters had been wearing hunter orange.

A New York study found that 94% of hunters involved in mistaken-for-game accidents were not wearing hunter orange. This is even more startling when you consider that 81% of New York hunters wear hunter orange.

Most states and Canadian provinces require it for hunting upland and big game animals.

Wearing at least a fluorescent orange hat and vest will help other hunters see you. It’s your responsibility to follow the four basic rules of safe hunting:

1. Treat every gun as if it is loaded.
2. Point your gun in a safe direction.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
4. Be sure of your target and beyond.

## 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.

### SAFELY FIELD DRESS YOUR HARVEST

Wildlife diseases are increasingly common in Vermont. These diseases can spread to humans – but much risk is preventable with some simple steps. To help control the spread of wildlife diseases, hunters and trappers should be especially careful to protect themselves when processing game. You can protect yourself from exposure to several diseases by following these steps:

- Do not shoot, handle, or consume any animal that is acting abnormally or appears sick.
- When field-dressing game, wear disposable gloves, start with a clean knife, and minimize the use of a bone saw to cut through the brain or spinal cord (backbone).
- If you do not have gloves, wash hands and arms thoroughly with soap and water after field dressing.
- Minimize contact with brain or spinal cord tissues, eyes, spleen, or lymph nodes while field dressing.

- Avoid consuming brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils, pancreas, and lymph nodes of harvested animals. Normal field dressing, coupled with boning out a carcass, will remove most, if not all, of these body parts. Cutting away all fatty tissue will remove remaining lymph nodes.
- Refrain from eating, drinking, and smoking while handling and field dressing game.
- Always wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing and processing game meat.
- Disinfect knives, saws, and cutting table surfaces by soaking in a solution of 50 percent unscented household bleach and 50 percent water for an hour. Thoroughly rinse all utensils in water to remove the bleach. Afterward, allow them to air dry.
- Wear disposable gloves when processing and packing the meat.

### PRE-HUNT PLANNING

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 can be a difficult task and may be physically demanding 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. To help with the cooling process, 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 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.

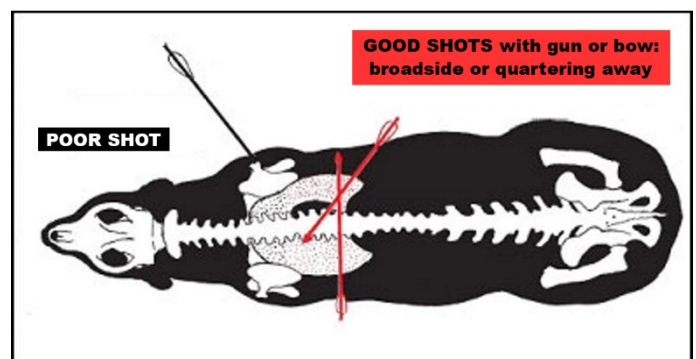
To be ethical, all hunters need to be proficient with their firearm or bow, understand their personal effective range, and have an understanding of basic bear anatomy for lethal shot placement. This will help lead to a quick and effective kill and minimize the chance for wounding the bear.

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

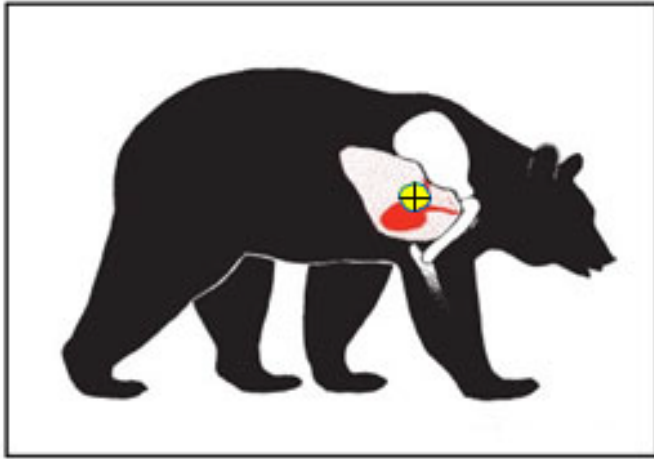
- Hunters must understand that bears are built differently than deer and other big game animals. The chest of a bear is compressed compared to that of a deer when looking at it from the side.
- If you make a poor shot, a wounded bear can run for considerable distances before dying. Heavy bones, hides, 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.

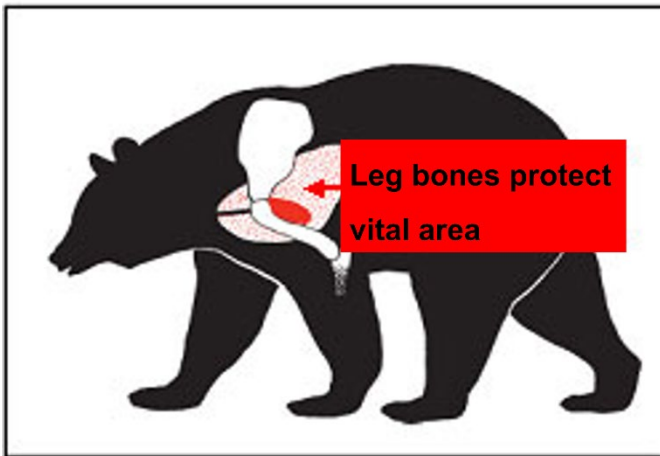
The **National Bowhunter Education Foundation** has created an excellent document called *Advanced Black Bear Anatomy and Shot Placement Guide* for both archery and firearm hunters (including muzzleloaders); the following photos have been adapted from the NBEF publication:







*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.*

## 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 more than 100 **Wildlife Management Units (WMAs)**. All WMAs are open to hunting, trapping, fishing, and other wildlife-related outdoor activities.

Information about shooting ranges is available on our [website](#).

- 👣 [Wildlife Management Areas](#)
- 👣 [Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation](#)

- 👣 [Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge](#)
- 👣 [Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge](#)
- 👣 [Green Mountain National Forest](#)
- 👣 [Vermont Shooting Ranges](#)
- 👣 [Hammond Cove Shooting Range](#)
- 👣 [West Mountain Shooting Range](#)

## TIPS FOR HUNTERS – BEING A GOOD LAND USER

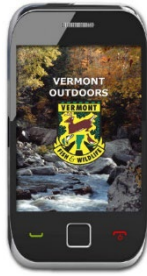
Landowners who permit you to hunt on their land are doing you a favor and placing their trust in you. Here are some recommendations to prove their trust was not misplaced, help with your relationship with the landowner, and portray a positive image of hunting:

- Respect the landowner's property – hunting, fishing, trapping or otherwise using it only when and where the landowner approves.
- Understand clearly where you can and cannot drive or park your vehicle and abide by those restrictions.
- Leave your name, address, phone number and also make, model, and license number of your vehicle with the landowner or use the Courtesy Permission Cards.
- If you have permission to return, find out if there are certain times or places that you should avoid. Always attempt to let the landowner know where you will be and when.
- Know the property boundaries and do not trespass on adjacent property.
- Try to keep the size of your hunting party small and always let the landowner know exactly who else will be hunting with you.
- Don't walk through unharvested crops or hunt near livestock or buildings.
- Leave gates as you find them. Cross fences in a manner that will not break or loosen wires or posts.
- Don't litter. Carry away litter left by others.

- 👣 [Courtesy Permission Card](#)

## VERMONT OUTDOORS – MOBILE APP

Vermont Outdoors, a mobile application, will connect you with department lands and fish and wildlife regulations. The app will help new and existing recreationalists find opportunities to hunt, fish, trap, or view wildlife on public lands and waters. Additionally, you will have easy access to fish and wildlife law digests, bait fish dealers, department news and current events, and reporting fish or wildlife violations.



The app can be downloaded at the Apple App Store for iPhones and Google Play for Android phones.

## TAKE THE LEAD AND GO NON-LEAD

Vermont Fish & Wildlife encourages hunters to voluntarily use non-lead ammunition. The department knows finding any hunting ammunition can, at times, be challenging.

### *Biting the Non-Lead Bullet is Easy*

- Non-fragmenting solid copper and copper alloy bullets are factory loaded by most manufacturers in most popular big game hunting calibers.
- Solid copper and copper alloy bullets offer consistent expansion and excellent weight retention and, as a result, deliver deep penetration.
- Less fragmentation means less meat loss.
- Non-lead bullets are longer. Experts recommend reducing bullet grain size by 15-20% for comparable performance to your current lead bullet.
- Highly frangible (brittle), non-lead small caliber bullets are available for both centerfire and rimfire cartridges.
- Required for waterfowl hunting for over 30 years, non-lead shotshells now cover anything from woodcock to wild turkey. This includes .410.

To learn more about switching to non-lead ammunition, and for tips to finding the right non-lead ammunition, visit: [www.nonleadpartnership.org](http://www.nonleadpartnership.org) and [www.huntingwithnonlead.org](http://www.huntingwithnonlead.org).

 [Choose Non-Lead Ammunition](#)




## VENISON FOR VERMONTERS

For years Vermont Game Wardens have coordinated the donation of venison to Vermonters in need. Today, the department's **Venison For Vermonters** program is making venison accessible to more Vermonters by coordinating the butchering and distribution of wild game meat for local food shelves and Vermonters in need.



You can help us feed our neighbors by donating today. 100% of your donation goes to covering the cost of butchering wild game meat.

An average-sized Vermont bear will provide nutritious, delicious, local meat for 141 meals. So far, more than 3,000 pounds of wild meat has been donated to the program and distributed to food shelves across Vermont.

-  [Venison For Vermonters](#)
-  [Donate Today](#)
-  [Interview with Wardens Serra and Whipple about the program](#)

## 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:

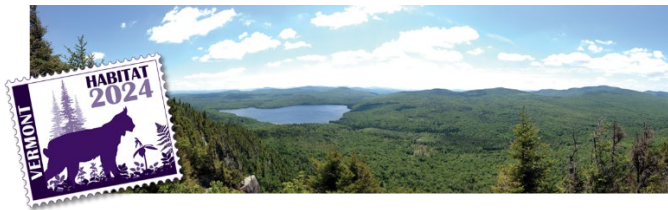
- Purchase lands for Wildlife Management Areas.
- Improve public access to land for fish and wildlife-based activities such as bird-watching, hunting, fishing, enjoying wildlife or simply connecting with nature.
- Protect and improve wetlands.

- 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](#).

**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.

- 👣 [Vermont Habitat Stamp Donation Form](#)
- 👣 [Vermont Habitat Stamp Annual Reports](#)

## 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 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 health, 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 [ANR.FWInformation@vermont.gov](mailto:ANR.FWInformation@vermont.gov) 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.

## HUNTERS, TICKS AND LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease has started to become more prevalent in Vermont during the last 10 years. Ticks that carry Lyme disease are still active in the fall in Vermont so hunters that spend time in tall grass, weed, and brush, 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.

Successful hunters handling a deer should remain vigilant for ticks even after they’ve returned from the field. Place a pan of soapy water under a hanging deer to kill any ticks that fall off the deer.

- 👣 [Be Tick Smart](#)
- 👣 [Prevent Tick Bites & Tick Bite Illnesses](#)

## HUNTERS SHARING THEIR BEAR

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](http://www.vtfoodbank.org).

## RECIPE

### Bear Teriyaki

1 to 1.5 lbs. of lean, cubed bear meat  
½ cup low sodium soy sauce  
2-3 tbsp. olive oil, divided  
1-2 tbsp. brown sugar  
2 cloves fresh garlic, minced  
1 tbsp. fresh ginger, minced (1 inch chunk) *or*  
1-2 tsp. dried ginger powder  
Dash of cayenne pepper  
Dash of black pepper  
2 cups chopped veggies for stir fry – like broccoli, snow peas, carrots, peppers or a bag of frozen stir fry veggies

A day or two ahead of time, make the marinade by placing soy sauce, olive oil, brown sugar, garlic, ginger, and pepper in a large zip-lock bag. Add cubed bear meat to bag and gently squeeze the bag all over to massage the marinade into the meat. Place bag in bowl (in case it leaks) and put in frig. Every now and then, squeeze the bag to incorporate marinade into meat.

When ready to cook, heat up 1 tbsp. olive oil over medium high heat. Using a slotted spoon, remove bear meat from bag and cook in the oil until nicely browned on all sides. Add a bit of marinade to pan and continue cooking to a medium temperature about 5 minutes more.

If using frozen veggies, cook until just tender according to package directions. If using fresh veggies, cook until just tender. Add veggies to the meat and stir to combine. There should be sauce from the meat, but if desired, you can add more teriyaki sauce for serving. Do NOT use the marinade that the raw meat was in unless it boils/cooks for at least 2 minutes.

[From The Wild Harvest Table](#)

 [Black Bear Recipes](#)

## BLACK BEAR RECIPES

Below are links to black bear recipes from other state wildlife agencies:

-  [Alaska Department of Fish and Game](#)
-  [Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife](#)
-  [Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife](#)
-  [New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife](#)
-  [Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation](#)
-  [Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources](#)

### [Vermont Wild Kitchen](#)

-  [Roasted Poultry and Bear Stuffing](#)
-  [Bear Fat Seared Walleye Cheeks, Hominy, Wild Rice & Bean Salad](#)



	<b>VERMONT FISH &amp; WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT</b> 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2 Montpelier, VT 05620-3702 802.828.1000 <a href="http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com">www.vtfishandwildlife.com</a>
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