



# 2018 VERMONT WILDLIFE HARVEST REPORT – MOOSE



**VERMONT**  
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# 2018 Vermont Moose Harvest Report

Most of the programs described in this report are funded through the *Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program*. This program was initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid in Wildlife Act and created a system whereby taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States. The State of Vermont uses these monies for acquiring land, and for restoring and managing wildlife. These excise tax dollars, coupled with state hunting license fees, have been the predominant source of money funding the successful restoration and management of Vermont's wildlife resources.

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*The MISSION of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.*

## Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

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# 2018 Moose Report

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

## Archery Season

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

## Harvest Data

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



## Regular Season

For the 2018 regular season, three permits were granted as Special Opportunity Permits, issued through a sponsoring organization to youths with a life-threatening illness. The remaining five permits were issued through a lottery, open only to resident military veterans. A total of 100 valid Veteran applications were received. Two of the auction winners elected to hunt during the regular season, making a total of 10 permits issued for the regular season. The five winning auction bids (archery included) totaled \$43,702.83, which will help fund Fish & Wildlife Department educational programs such as the Green Mountain Conservation Camps for youths. All permits were valid only for bull moose.

**Table 1. 2018 Vermont Moose Archery Season Harvest Data**

WMU	TOWN of KILL	AGE	ESTIMATED WEIGHT (POUNDS)	SPREAD (INCHES)	TOTAL POINTS
E1	Lemington	2	650	31	7



## Harvest Data

Vermont’s 26<sup>th</sup> moose season began on the third Saturday in October (20<sup>th</sup>) and ran for six days. The opening weekend weather was generally favorable, with cool overnight temperatures climbing into the 50s on Saturday and 30s on Sunday. There was no appreciable precipitation except light flurries on Sunday, and winds were generally light with only occasional high gusts. Completely-dressed carcass weights were obtained from all moose harvested in the regular season (Table 2). The largest was a 756-pound, 9-year old taken in Lemington. This bull also had the widest spread, largest beam diameter, and the most points.

The Department again sampled larval winter tick loads on moose harvested in 2018 and found an average of 33.8 ticks/bull, up from 25.5 the previous year but 32% lower than the first count in 2013 (49.6 ticks/bull). These sample counts ranged from 6 to 75 ticks/moose and represent only a small fraction of the actual number of larval ticks attached to each moose, which is often in the tens of thousands. In some years

an extended warm autumn with no appreciable snowfall can prolong the period when larval tick can attach to moose, resulting in moose carrying even a heavier burden of ticks into the winter. The cold and snow arrived relatively early last autumn, and hopefully the tick-attachment period ended during or shortly after moose season.

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

## Hunter Success

Eighty percent of resident permit holders (4/5) were successful, as were all of the non-residents (5/5). Non-resident permittees hailed from 4 different states: two from Ohio and one each from New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. Subpermittees took 3 (33%) of the moose killed. All moose were taken with a rifle.

**Table 2. 2018 Vermont Moose Regular Season Harvest Data**

WMU	TOWN of KILL	AGE	WEIGHT	BEAM	PTS/L	PTS/R	SPREAD
E1	Averill	2	598	45.5	4	4	31
E1	Averill	4	675	51.5	5	6	43
E1	Bloomfield	2	579	44	4	4	33
E1	Bloomfield	3	664	45	5	6	41
E1	Brighton	1	466	32	3	2	25.5
E2	East Heaven	3	544	42	3	3	31.5
E1	Lemington	9	756	64	9	8	51
E1	Lemington	2	545	40.5	5	4	33
E2	Maidstone	11	535	47	7	5	43

*Weight is carcass weight completely dressed in lbs., Beam is in millimeters, Pts./Left and Right are number of points at least 1 inch long; Spread is in inches measured to the nearest half-inch. Age is cementum age except for 0.5 is a calf aged by tooth replacement at Department-operated reporting station; Blank cells are unknown or missing data.*