

# **Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Cervid Working Group Meeting Report**

**Meeting Convened:** July 22, 2025 8:00 AM CT

**Chaired by:** Blaise Korzekwa, TX.

**Cervid Working Group Members in Attendance:** Ralph Meeker, AR; Charlie Killmaster, GA; Joe McDermott, KY; Jason Isabelle, MO; April Pope, NC; Dallas Barber, OK; Charles Ruth, SC; Adam Edge, TN; Blaise Korzekwa, TX; Justin Folks, VA; Brett Skelly, WV.

**Other Attendees Involved in Cervid Working Group:** Courtenay Conring, AL; Jeremy Brown, AR; Sam Millman, DE; Becky Peters, FL; Kevin Rose, GA; Jesse Maestas, GA; David Yancy, KY; Robert Kennon, LA; Kevin Lamp, MD; Ashleigh McCullough, MO; Kamen Campbell, MS; Colleen Olfenbittel, NC; Jay Cantrell, SC.

**Discussion Items:** See meeting agenda, state reports, and officer elections.

**Cervid Working Group Recommendation for Chair:** Charlie Killmaster, GA (Chair); William McKinley, MS (Co-Chair)

**Issue Items Submitted to the Wildlife Resource Committee for Consideration:** None

**Meeting Adjourned:** July 23, 2025 4:45 PM CT

**Report Submitted by:** Blaise Korzekwa, TX (Chair)

# SEAFWA Cervid Working Group Meeting Agenda

July 21-24, 2025

[Buckhorn Creek Ranch](#)

4520 FM 541

McCoy, TX 78113

## Monday, July 21

3:00 PM – onward

Arrival

5:00 PM

Social & Supper

## Tuesday, July 22

7:00 AM

Breakfast

8:00 AM

Welcome and Introductions

8:15 AM

DMAP/MLDP Presentation & Discussion

9:45 AM

Break

10:00 AM

New World Screwworm

12:00 PM

Lunch

1:00 PM

Evolving CWD Management

2:30 PM

Break

2:45 PM

CWD Communication

3:45 PM

Density Estimation Techniques

6:00 PM

Supper

7:00 PM

Social

## Wednesday, July 23

7:00 AM

Breakfast

8:00 AM

State Reports (10-15 minutes each)

10:15 AM

Break

10:30 AM

State Reports (10-15 minutes each)

12:00 PM

Lunch

1:00 PM

State Reports (10-15 minutes each)

3:00 PM

Break

3:15 PM

General Discussion (elect Chair and Co-Chair)

6:00 PM

Supper

7:00 PM

Social

## Thursday, July 24

7:00 AM – onward

Breakfast & Depart

# **Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Cervid Working Group Officer Elections**

**Action Taken On:** July 23, 2025 4:15 PM CT

**Action Item Number One:** Elect Chair

Jason Isabelle (MO) nominated Charlie Killmaster (GA) as Chair. April Pope (NC) seconded. Motion passed and Charlie Killmaster was elected as Chair.

**Action Item Number Two:** Elect Co-Chair

Dallas Barber (OK) nominated William McKinley (MS) as Co-Chair. Adam Edge (TN) seconded. Motion passed and William McKinley was elected as Co-Chair.

**Other Business:**

North Carolina offered to host the SEAFWA CWG meeting in 2026.

Tennessee offered to host the SEAFWA CWG meeting in 2027.

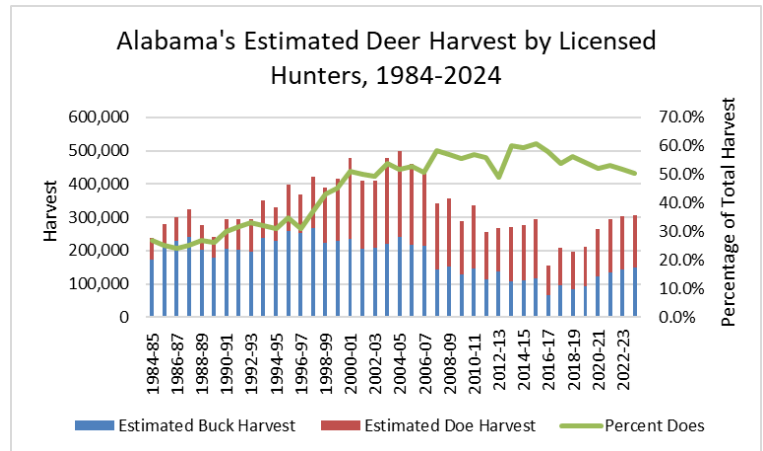


Alabama Deer Program Report  
Courtenay Conring  
Assistant Chief



## I. Harvest/Population Trends

- Alabama hunters reported harvesting **205,913** deer through Game Check during the 2024-2025 hunting season.
- The 2024-25 harvest consisted of **54.7% bucks** and **45.3% does**.
- Game Check reports were up **1.8%** from the 2023-24 season.
- Game Check compliance for 2023-2024 was estimated at **64.3%**. Compliance has not been estimated for 2024-2025.
- 2023-24 harvest estimates generated by the hunter phone survey were:
  - 314,496** total deer harvested (**49.7% bucks, 50.3% does**).
  - Up **1.8%** from 2022-23 season.
  - Up **18.7%** from 10-year average.
  - 2024-2025 hunter phone survey is in progress.



## II. Research

### *Monitoring Alabama White-tailed Deer Populations to Inform Future Decision Making*

Working with researchers at Alabama Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and Auburn University to develop a modeling, monitoring, and decision analysis framework to inform our understanding of status and trends in WTD abundance and herd composition / population structure and for informing WTD harvest-management decision making at both larger (zone-level) and property-level (e.g., WMA). Information gained from this project will be incorporated into our Statewide Deer Management Plan's decision support tools, with future phases incorporating impacts of CWD.

## III. Regulation Changes/Updates

### *Nuisance – Deer Depredation Permits and Unantlered Hunting Bag Limits*

There has been increased questioning and pressure with Alabama's legislature, Conservation Advisory Board, and some ag producers regarding issuance of Deer Depredation Permits (DDP). From 2021-2024, all Wildlife Section Districts have had stable to increasing trends of DDP issued and deer permitted to take under the DDP. According to the Alabama Hunter Harvest Annual Reports, statewide harvest has also increased from ~301,000 to 314,000 during the same three-year time frame. In the management zones where depredation data and harvest estimates suggest that deer density is stable or increasing, the daily bag limit of two deer per day remains the same, but hunters can now choose to take one unantlered deer and one antlered deer per day, or two unantlered deer per day. This shift in bag limit structure allows the opportunity for hunters to be a more impactful management option for the ag producers while also increasing hunter satisfaction. Additionally, allowing the harvest of an extra antlerless deer per day could lead to an increase in chronic wasting disease (CWD) sampling opportunity and improve surveillance efforts.

### *Changes to Game Breeder's License State Statute (HB509)*

Amendments were made to Section 9-11-30, Code of Alabama 1975, to include disease-related language. See Disease Issues/Updates section for details.

## IV. Disease Issues / Updates- Olivia Sciandra, Wildlife Health Program Coordinator

- Chronic Wasting Disease New Detection Updates*
  - During the 2024-2025 season, there was a novel detection of CWD in Colbert County, resulting in the previous CWD management zone (CMZ) expanding to include Franklin County. The CMZ high risk zone now encompasses all of Lauderdale, Colbert, and the northwest corner of Franklin County (north of US-24 and west of US-43). The CMZ





**Alabama Deer Program Report**  
**Courtenay Conring**  
**Assistant Chief**



buffer zone is the remainder of Franklin County. After the initial detection in Colbert County, the increased surveillance around the initial CWD-positive yielded no additional detections to date.

- **CWD Regulation/Statute Changes**

- After the inclusion of Franklin County to the CMZ, there was an update to the 220-2-.167 regulation which allowed feeding/baiting in Franklin County for the remainder of the 24-25 season. In the 25-26 season, feeding and baiting will be suspended in Franklin County. We are working to update the 220-2-.167 regulation so that new counties added to the CMZ mid-season will be allowed to feed and bait for the remainder of that season with the suspension of these activities being initiated in the following season.
- HB509 passed during the 2025 legislative session. Our department will adopt rules in consultation with the State Veterinarian on or before March 1, 2026, to allow for the transfer of cervids from a licensee within a designated disease management zone to another licensee outside of a designated disease management zone under the following circumstances including, but not limited to, that the transferring licensee complies with all postmortem testing programs and:
  - Double fencing of pens and other standards for pens are followed
  - A USDA certified live test for CWD is used
  - Scientifically accepted genomic testing values are satisfied
  - Or any other test approved by the USDA and recommended by the State Veterinarian is used.
- Additionally, the passage of HB509 will result in the change to Alabama's CWD Strategic Surveillance and Response Plan which previously required the postmortem testing of 10% of a licensee's herd if a CWD-positive wild detection occurred within 10-miles of a game breeder facility. ADCNR now does not have the ability to require the killing of a cervid due to disease unless:
  - The specific disease has been detected in another cervid possessed by the licensee
  - OR the cervid has been transferred to the licensee from another licensee and is epidemiologically linked to a diseased cervid possessed by the transferring licensee.

- **CWD Sampling**

- 2024-2025 Statewide Surveillance
  - 3,170 white-tailed deer sampled statewide (2,891 hunter harvest, 236 roadkill, 26 symptomatic, and 17 "other").
  - 1,312 does, 1,857 bucks (1 of unknown sex)
  - 2,540 adults, 524 yearlings, and 106 fawns
  - In the CMZ, 1,134 deer were sampled
    - 687 of these samples (61%) were obtained during the three mandatory CWD weekends (one each in November, December, and January).

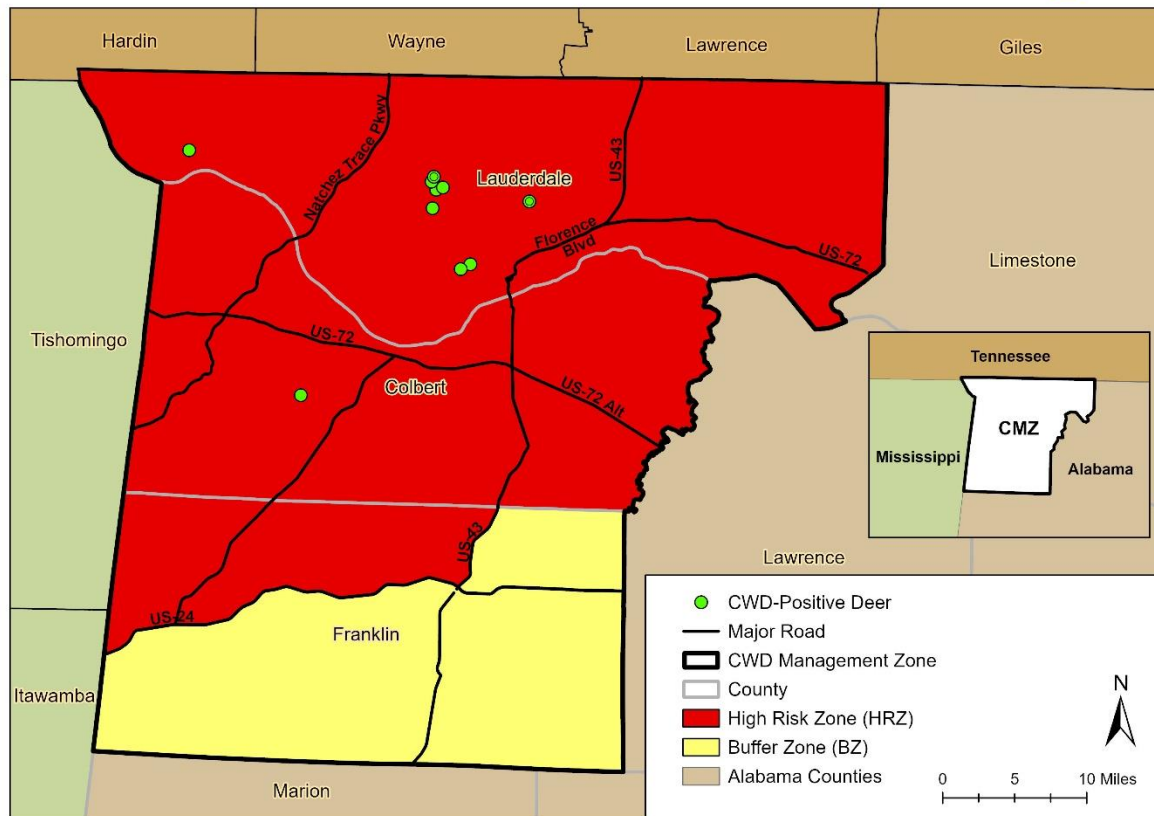
	Year of Harvest Date					Total
County	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Lauderdale	1	1	3	5	1	<b>11</b>
Colbert	0	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Franklin	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>



Alabama Deer Program Report  
Courtenay Conring  
Assistant Chief



Chronic Wasting Disease Management Zone (CMZ)



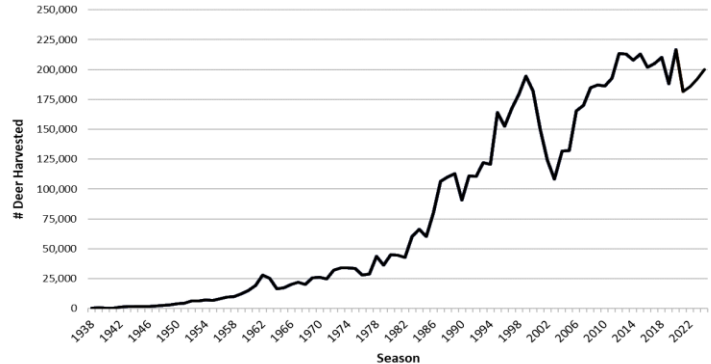


# 2024-25 Arkansas Deer Program Report

Ralph Meeker- Deer Program Coordinator  
Jeremy Brown- DMAP Program Coordinator

## I. Harvest/ Population Trends

- AR hunters reported harvesting 200,258\* deer during the 2024-25 hunting season. This represents a 4.1% increase from the 2023-24 season.
- The 2024-25 harvest consisted of:
  - 48.7% antlered bucks (97,436)
  - 6.1% button bucks (12,258)
  - 45.2% does (90,564)



## II. Research

### *Population-level impacts of chronic wasting disease on Arkansas's white-tailed deer*

This study is being conducted by the University of Georgia. The primary objectives of the study were to estimate the current abundance of white-tailed deer in the CWD management zone; examine survival and recruitment of white-tailed deer in the CWD management zone and to compare these parameters between CWD positive and presumed negative individuals; examine movement and home range size of white-tailed deer within the CWD management zone and to compare these between CWD positive and presumed negative individuals; calculate infection rates of CWD in white-tailed deer by age class and sex; calculate mortality rates and determine causes of mortality for CWD positive and presumed negative white-tailed deer; and lastly to use the above data to populate a model that will examine current and future population trends in the presence of CWD to help inform future management decisions. Field work has been completed, and CWD model is currently being developed.

### *Effects of Supplemental Feeding on White-tailed Deer in Arkansas*

This four-year study will investigate population and biometric effects of providing supplemental feed to free-ranging white-tailed deer. Fecal analysis, DNA metabarcoding, hunter observation data, deer density collections, physical body metrics, and blood samples will be compared across three study sites with varying levels of habitat management practices and use of supplemental feed to determine if and to what extent supplemental feed has.

### *Effects of Fire on Environmental CWD Prion Loads*

This study will be conducted in conjunction with Dr. Mark Zabel and Colorado State University. The goals of this study are to model prescribed burning in the laboratory using controlled incineration of experimentally contaminated feces and plants and use paired-pool RT- QUIC and/or PMCA to systematically sample and test feces and plant samples from prion-contaminated areas in Arkansas for CWD prions before and after controlled burning in order to assess any changes in CWD prion load status.

## III. Hot Topics

### *Regulations*

Cervid urine ban will be lifted starting for the 2025-26 deer season. An exception to the baiting/feeding code to allow the use of supplemental protein feed in the CWD Management Zone for Level III DMAP clubs will be allowed starting for the 2026-27 deer season. Much discussion has occurred to allow the reinstatement of the 3-Point Rule within the CWD Management Zone. Work is currently underway to revisit all public land deer regulations (~143 areas) with the goal of regulation simplification.

### *National Deer Association (NDA) Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) biologists*

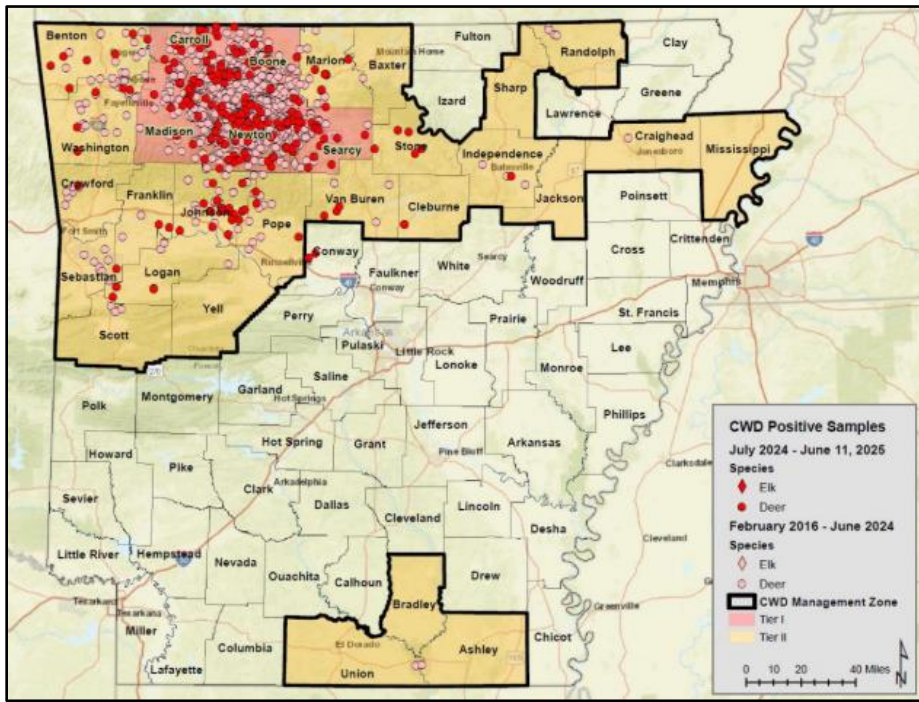
The AGFC created a new division in the spring of 2023 called the Private Lands Habitat Division. Within this division, the DMAP Program Coordinator (Jeremy Brown) will now supervise eight, limited-term NDA biologists in the field in order to administer the DMAP program statewide.

### *Update of the Strategic Deer Plan*

Work is currently underway to revise the agency's strategic deer plan. The updated plan will be a six-year plan (2026-2031) and will now also include a disease section and public lands section.

## IV. Disease Issues / Updates

### *Chronic Wasting Disease*



# ARKANSAS CWD UPDATE

July 2025

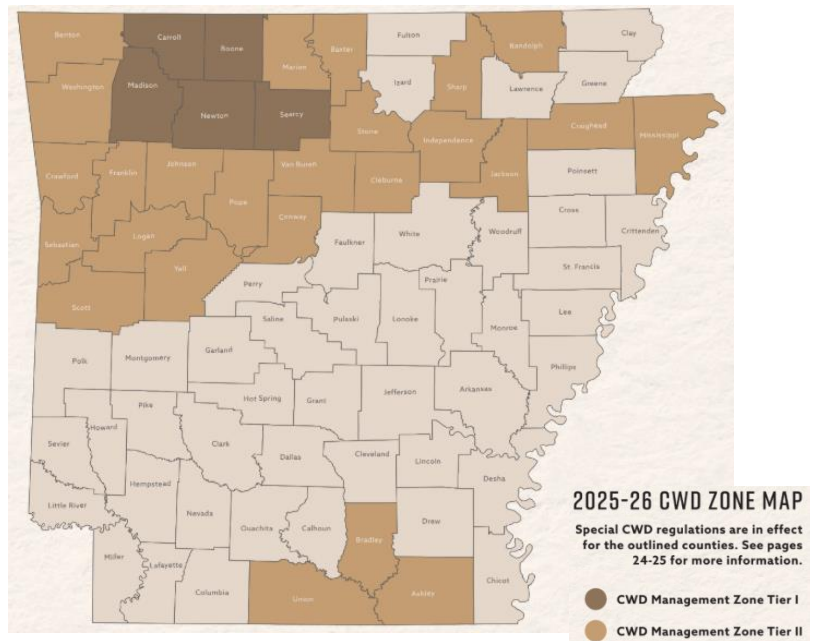


## CWD Surveillance Results from July 2015 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Table 1. FY 2025 and total CWD positive samples in Arkansas by county.

County	CWD+ Deer FY2025	CWD+ Elk FY2025	Total CWD+ FY16-FY25
Baxter	1		1
Benton	5		22
Boone	19		306
Carroll	40		221
Cleburne	2		2
Conway	2		2
Craighead			1
Crawford	1		7
Franklin	4		7
Independence	1		4
Johnson	21		56
Logan	3		11
Madison	25		168
Marion	7		19
Newton	72	1	970
Pope	3		16
Randolph			6
Scott			4
Searcy	23	2	146
Sebastian	1		9
Stone	5		5
Union			2
Van Buren	3		7
Washington	8		44
Total	246	3	2036

Figure 1. Tier-based carcass movement regulation map.



## Most notable findings and CWD developments:

- A total of 8,453 samples were tested this sampling season resulting in 249 CWD positive detections (3 elk and 246 WTD).
- CWD now detected in Baxter, Cleburne, Conway, and Stone County. A total of 30 counties now in CWD Management Zone.
- Urine ban to be lifted starting for the 2025-26 deer season.
- Supplemental feeding to be allowed within the CWD Management Zone for DMAP Level III clubs.
- 5-yr CWD population impact study wrapping up. UGA finishing CWD model.
- New research: Impact of prescribed fire on environmental CWD prion loads- Dr. Mark Zabel (CSU)
- AGFC CWD Management and Response Plan (2026-31) updated and approved

Table 2. Total of samples collected/positive samples detected by species: Arkansas FY16-FY25

Species	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	F25	Total (FY16-25)
Elk	78 / 2	81 / 7	86 / 5	82 / 5	61 / 8	47 / 9	33 / 9	31 / 4	27 / 3	601 / 57
WTD	3,550 / 114	6,271 / 147	7,412 / 241	6,622 / 222	7,816 / 261	8,343 / 200	8,759 / 208	8,648 / 238	8,426 / 246	67,504 / 1,979
Exotic			2 / 0	2 / 0	1 / 0	0 / 0	12 / 0	6 / 0	0 / 0	29 / 0
Total	3,628 / 116	6,352 / 154	7,500 / 246	6,706 / 227	7,878 / 269	8,390 / 209	8,804 / 217	8,691 / 242	8,691 / 242	68,134 / 2,036

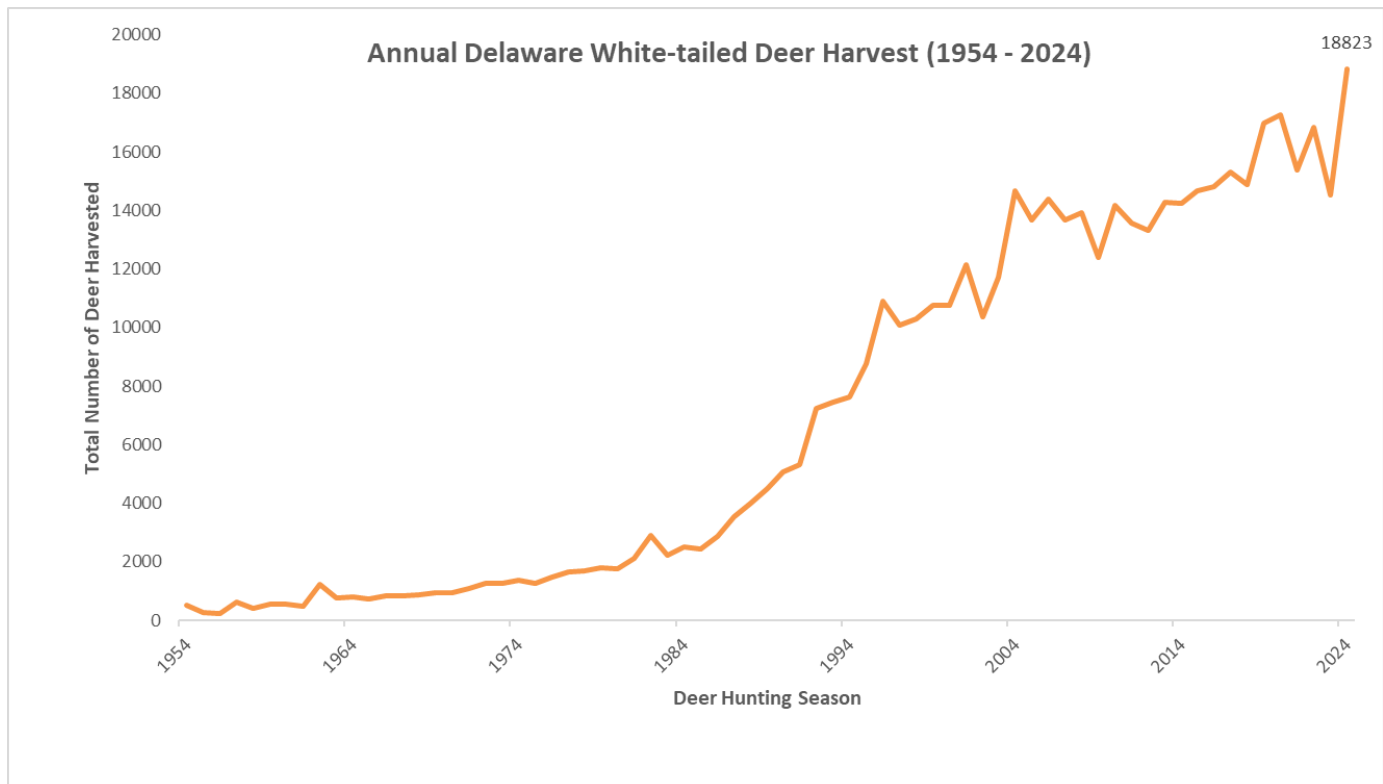
# Delaware Deer Program Report

By: Sam Millman



## I. Harvest / Population Trends

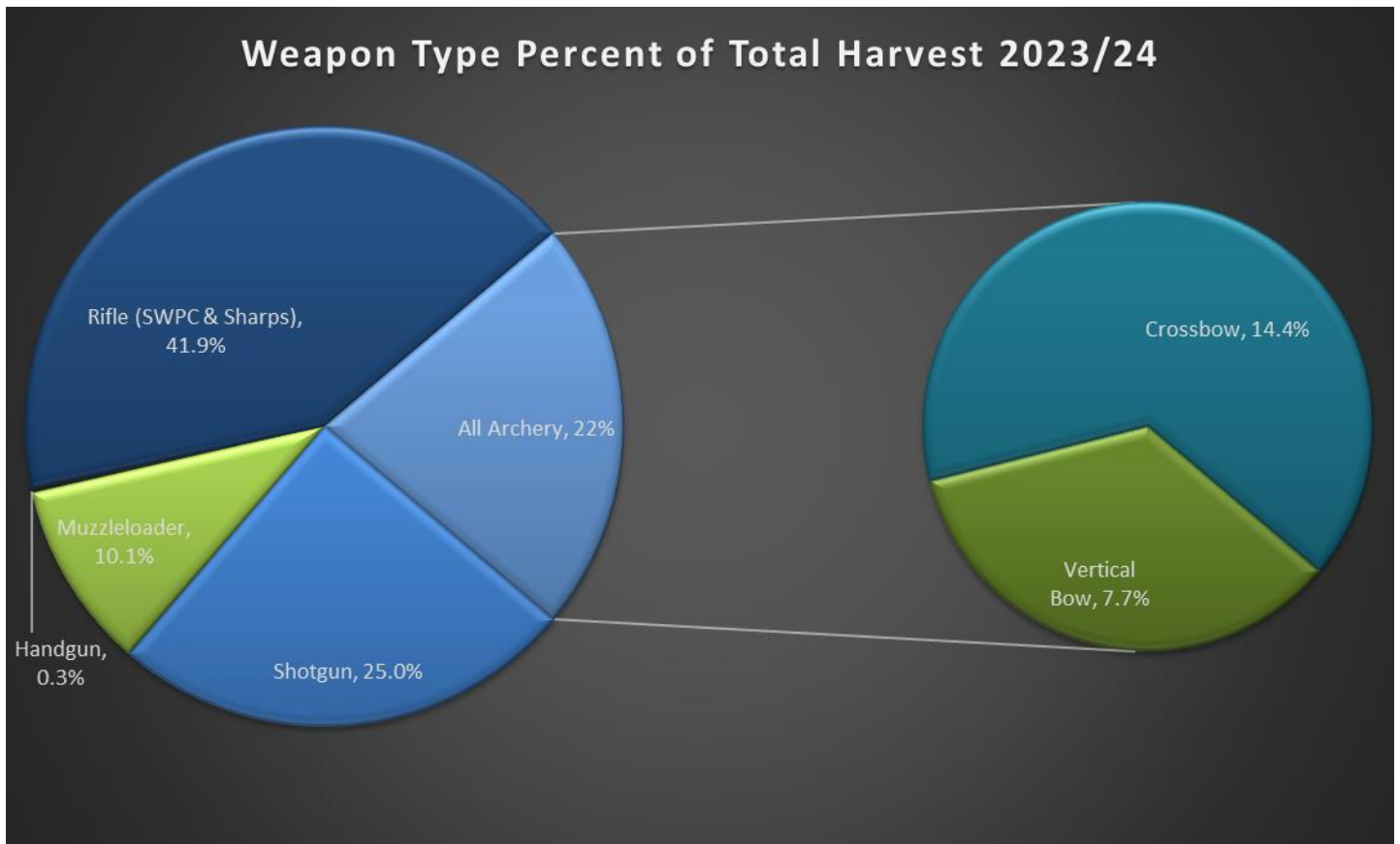
- During the 2024–25 season, Delaware experienced a 29% increase in the statewide white-tailed deer harvest compared to the 2023–24 season. Hunters reported a total harvest of 18,823 deer (Figure 1), which includes both recreational and crop damage permits.
- Zone 11, part of Delaware’s Wildlife Management Zone system (Figure 3), recorded the second-highest deer harvest with 1,567 deer.
- Firearms remain the most commonly used method for deer harvest in Delaware, accounting for 80% of all reported harvests. Among firearm users, straight-walled pistol caliber rifles continue to be the preferred choice (Figure 2). Archery methods accounted for 22% of the total harvest, with 64% of those archery hunters using a crossbow.
- Delaware continues to promote the harvest of antlerless deer as an essential tool for managing deer populations and reducing agricultural damage. Antlerless deer comprised 72.8% of the total harvest statewide (Figure 3).



**Figure 1** Annual Delaware white-tailed deer harvest chart. This chart shows the annual harvest in Delaware from 1954 through 2024.



Delaware Deer Program Report  
By: Sam Millman



**Figure 2** Harvest by weapon type pie chart. Archery is further divided into a second pie chart.

**Delaware Deer Program Report**  
**By: Sam Millman**

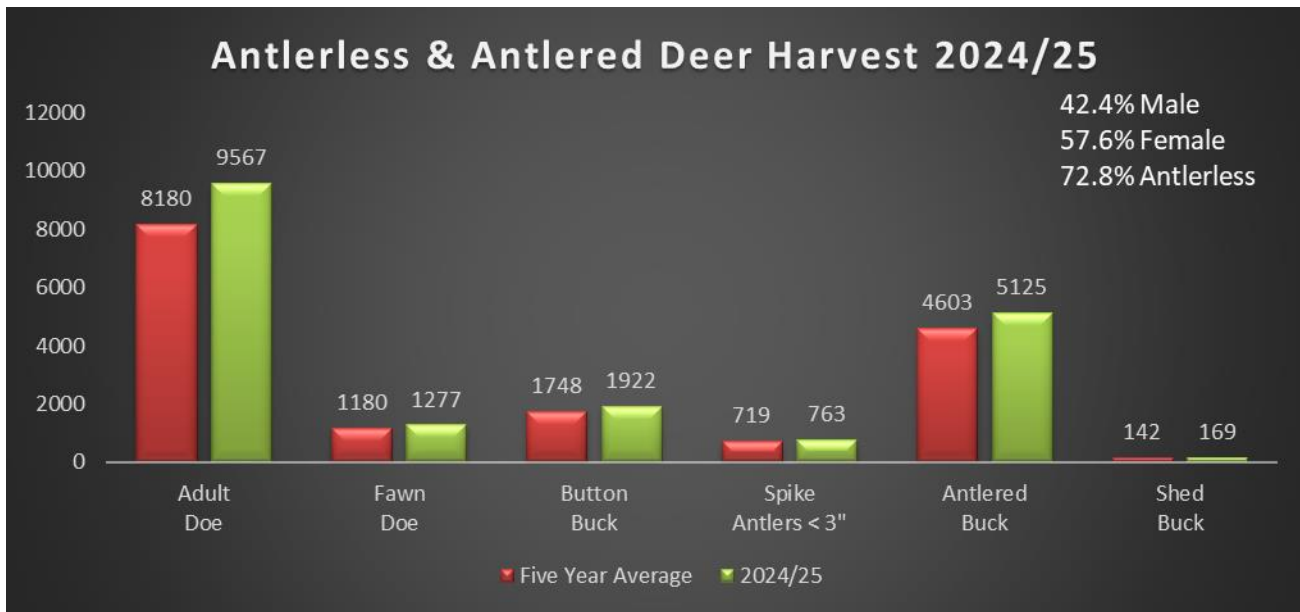


Figure 3 Comparison of antlered and antlerless white-tailed deer harvest in Delaware during the 2024–25 season to the five-year average. Antlerless deer accounted for 72.8% of the total harvest, with adult does making up the largest portion. Antlered buck harvest

## II. Research

- No projects from UD.
- The population survey is in the collection phase.
  - IR roadside surveys completed for New Castle County

## III. Hot Topics

- Extreme crop damage continuation
- Restructuring of deer damage program with the addition of new tools for measuring damage.
- .400 straight-walled pistol caliber addition.
- Introduction of the use of RTQuIC as a tool for CWD surveillance
- CWD surveillance restructuring.

## IV. Disease Issues / Updates

### *Chronic Wasting Disease*

- 2024/25 Delaware CWD surveillance was successful and with no detection of CWD in any of the three counties.

### *CWD Surveillance*

- Teaming with DelDOT for roadkill samples.
- Updating the sample collection system. No more paper unless needed as backup.
  - Survey123
  - Barcoding
  - SOP4CWD compatible



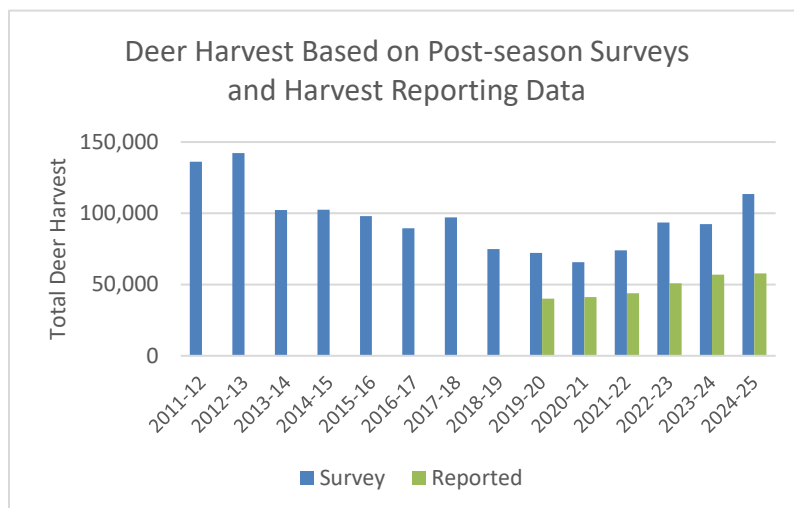
## Florida Deer Program Report

By: Cory Morea and Becky Peters



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

- According to the harvest reporting system, 57,772 deer were harvested statewide in the 2024-25 season.
  - 38,904 antlered males, 1,915 antlerless males and 16,953 females
- This was slightly higher than the 2023-24 season with 56,934 deer harvested statewide.
  - 38,557 antlered males, 2,054 antlerless males and 16,323 females
- The post-season telephone survey estimated a higher harvest, 113,629 deer statewide.
  - 77,006 males and 36,623 females
- This was higher than the 2023-24 season with an estimated 92,496 deer statewide.
  - 60,622 males and 31,828 females



### II. Research

#### North Florida Deer Study

Field work continued on both study sites of the North Florida Deer Study (2020-present). At the original field site, 18 females and 3 male adult deer were captured and radio collared in winter 2024-2025 for a total of 82 deer collared to date. Fifteen of the females were fitted with VITs for a fawn survival study of which 12 resulted in successful fawn capture (3 VITs expelled prematurely). Fifteen fawns were captured and collared (avg. litter size 1.25). To date, 9 fawns have died, with predation as the leading cause of mortality. On both study sites, camera grids (3 grids, 40 cameras each) ran continuously throughout the year. Field work at the second study site concluded in May 2025, but the PhD student overseeing this portion of the project continues to monitor deer survival, process camera data and make efforts to better understand the human dimensions of dog hunting.

### III. Hot Topics

#### Antlerless Harvest

- In Feb. 2024, the Commission approved changes to antlerless harvest regulations in order to provide increased harvest opportunities and to decrease negative impacts caused by deer. Beginning in the 2025-26 season, the number of antlerless days on private lands will increase in 9 of 12 Deer Management Units (DMUs) across the state. In addition, the antlerless deer bag limit for DMU D2 will increase from 2 to 3 antlerless deer, as part of a person's statewide annual bag limit of 5 deer.

#### Crop Damage

- Rising concerns from farmers and producers over crop damage caused by deer prompted changes in Deer Depredation Permit protocols. These changes include allowing permittees with known deer damage issues to apply for and utilize permits up to 60 days prior to planting, whereas previously they could not utilize permits until deer damage was occurring. Additionally, the application and renewal process were streamlined to expedite receipt of permits and tags.

#### 10-year Deer Management Plan

- Continuing the process of updating the plan for 2026-2036.

### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

#### Chronic Wasting Disease

- Florida's first CWD positive deer was confirmed in Holmes County on June 13, 2023. The 4.5-year-old road-killed doe was located SR79 6 miles south of the Alabama border and was sampled as part of routine surveillance activities
- Special regulations for the CWD Management Zone continued in FY 2024-25
  - Prohibition of exporting whole cervid carcasses and high-risk carcass parts from the CWD Management Zone
  - Prohibition of baiting or feeding deer within the CWD Management Zone outside of the hunting season





## Florida Deer Program Report

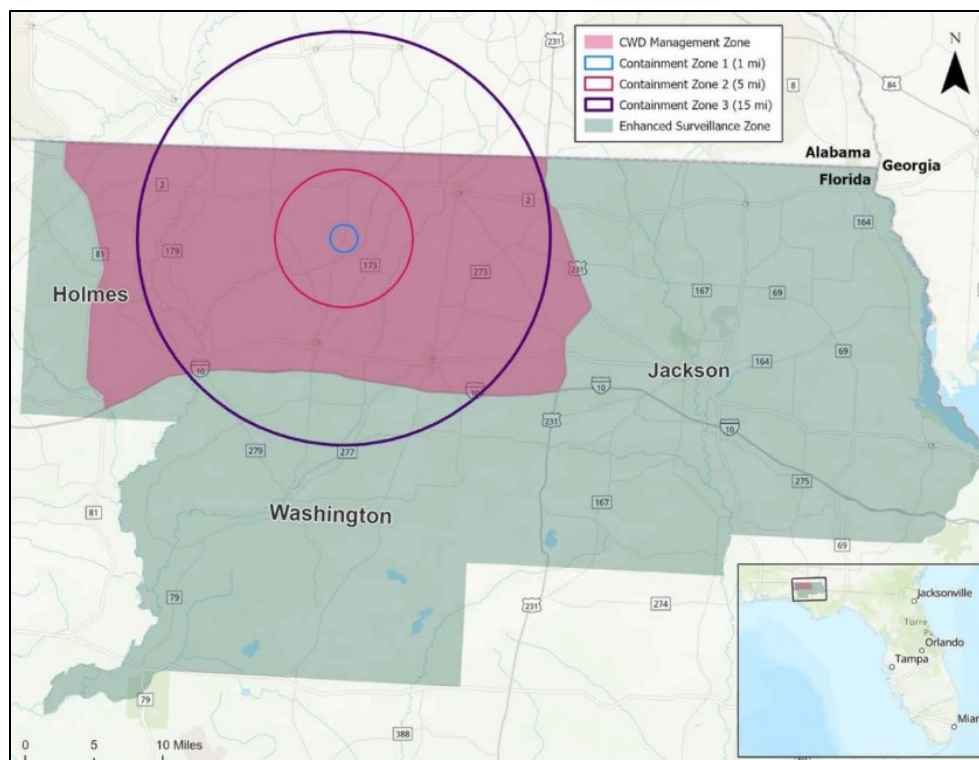
By: Cory Morea and Becky Peters



- Prohibition of rehabilitating or releasing injured/orphaned deer originating within the CWD Management Zone
- Allowance of the take of antlerless deer in DMU D2 throughout the entirety deer season and take up to 3 antlerless deer on private land as part of a person's statewide annual bag limit of 5 deer
- During FY 2024-25, 3,711 samples were tested statewide
  - Of these 966 were from the Enhanced Surveillance Zone and 197 were from the CWD Management Zone
  - Sampling quotas met in 53 of 67 counties (79%) and 90% of sampling quota met in 55 counties (82%)
  - Sampling quotas met in 1 of 3 counties in the Enhanced Surveillance Zone
    - Holmes county: 68%
    - Jackson county: 191%
    - Washington county: 61%
  - Zero additional deer tested positive for CWD.
    - Only 1 CWD positive deer to date

Sample type	2023-24	2024-25
Check station	121 (3%)	0 (0%)
Dropbox	226 (6%)	167 (5%)
Field staff	2259 (64%)	1583 (43%)
Processor/Taxidermist	905 (26%)	1959 (53%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,512</b>	<b>3,711</b>

- CWD sampling efforts the upcoming surveillance year (FY 2025-26) will include:
  - Same regulations in place as in the 2024-25 season
  - Continuing to increase participation of taxidermists and processors in our cooperator program
    - Currently have 56 taxidermists and processors enrolled throughout the state
    - Cooperators receive \$20 per head or \$30 per sample (lymph nodes)
  - Several adjustments to county testing quotas
    - Quota increases in counties in the western panhandle
    - Quota increases in Hamilton, Madison, and Columbia counties, due to its proximity to the CWD detection in Georgia

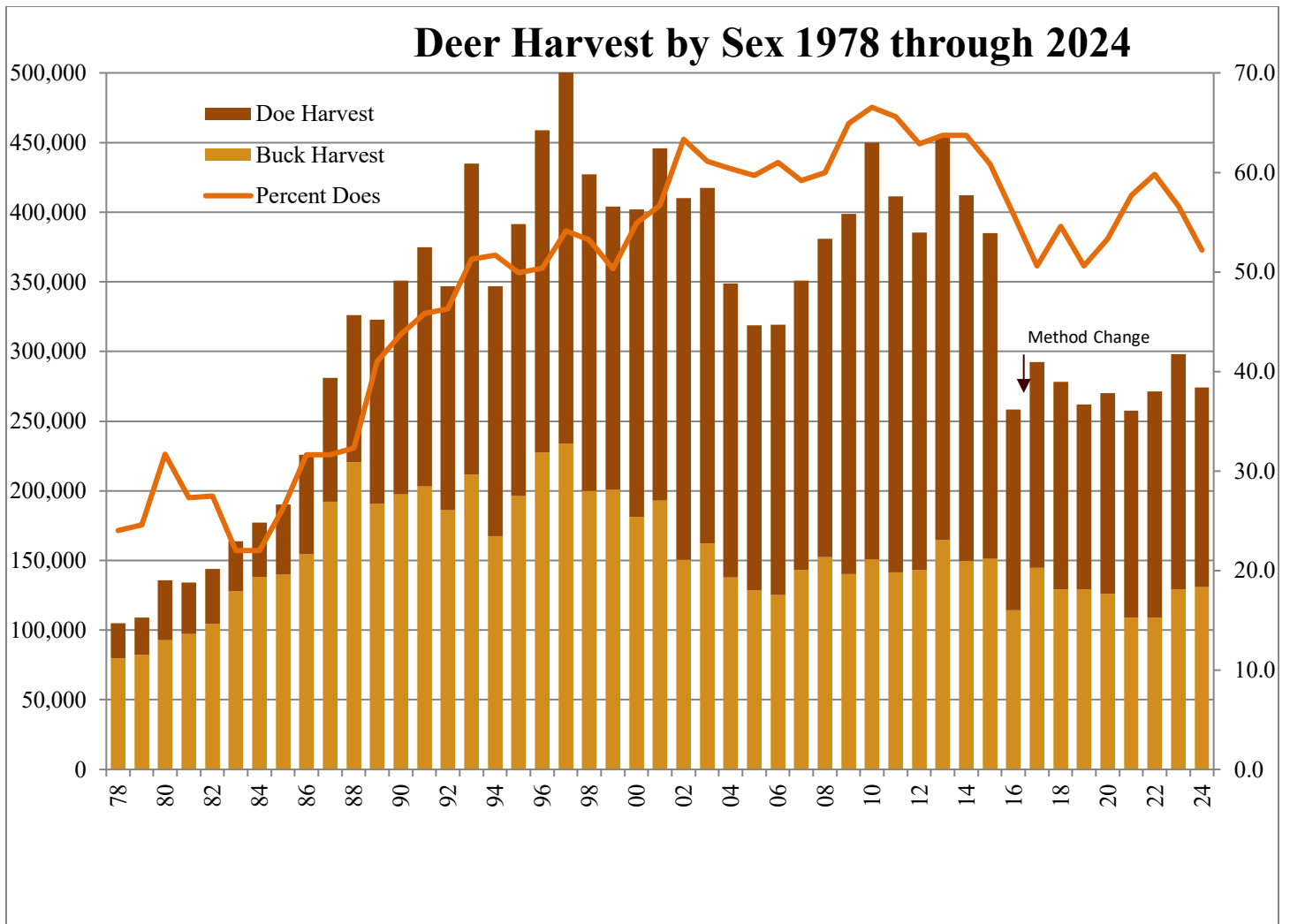


Georgia Deer Program Report  
By: Charlie Killmaster



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

Georgia's deer harvest was 274,134 made up of 130,933 bucks and 143,201 does. Harvest has been very stable over the last few years. Hurricane Helene slowed harvest early on and may have had lasting effects in some areas, but the statewide harvest was within normal range by the end of the season.



### II. Research

Our primary research focus is a human dimensions project designed to identify barriers and or incentives for CWD management actions, namely targeted removals and feeding/baiting. We are testing messaging approaches and developing an education campaign to modify behavior, then assessing any changes in behavior following the campaign.

### III. Hot Topics

First discovery of CWD and agricultural damage have dominated the year. As a result of crop damage complaints, our legislature allocated \$500k towards expansion of the Hunters for the Hungry program. We added an antlerless only firearms weekend during our typical archery season to drive deer donation to processors during a typically slow time.

Georgia Deer Program Report  
By: Charlie Killmaster



#### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

Georgia's first CWD positive was detected in January 2025 right along the Lanier/Berrien county line in a 2.5 year old hunter-killed buck during routine surveillance. A second positive was later found during targeted removals in the immediate vicinity in a 4.5 year-old buck. Since the first case we have collected 13 additional samples within a 1-mile radius and an additional 13 samples in the CWD management counties. We're continuing to collect samples through crop damage permits through the summer. We are in the process of establishing numerous self-serve freezers for samples as well as working with most local taxidermists and processors.

##### Key Points

- Sampling in the CWD management area is completely voluntary
- We are offering free CWD testing statewide, but samples from the CWD counties will be tested first, results may take months for other counties
- We implemented a statewide deer carcass disposal rule, legal methods include leaving on the property of kill, take it to a taxidermist/processor, landfill, burial, or any other method consistent with livestock disposal
- No intrastate carcass transport restrictions
- No feeding or baiting bans in the CWD counties, just BMPs
- Targeted removals by permitting landowners and hunters, no DNR personnel
- Exploring incentives for removing positive deer to maintain participation
- Exploring offering/encouraging free DMAP on properties in the immediate area



# Kentucky Deer Program Report

By: Joe McDermott, David Yancy, & Tommy Apostolopoulos



## I. Current Harvest

The 2024-25 deer season saw 149,868 total deer reported harvested across Kentucky. This was the second highest harvest on record. The season's harvest also saw the highest antlered buck harvest on record with 78,568 bucks. The 2024-25 harvest exceeded the 10-year average by over 6,000 deer.

Weapon	Harvest	Percentage
Firearm	107,392	72%
Muzzle-loader	11,764	8%
Archery	16,662	11%
Crossbow	14,020	9%

License Type	Purchased	Harvest	Percentage
Statewide Deer Permit*	176,334	113,685	76%
Landowner Tag	N/A	24,323	16%
Senior/Disabled License**	119,004	10,174	7%
Deer Damage Control Tag	5,095	1,150	1%

\*Includes youth and bundle packages | \*\*Deer permit included

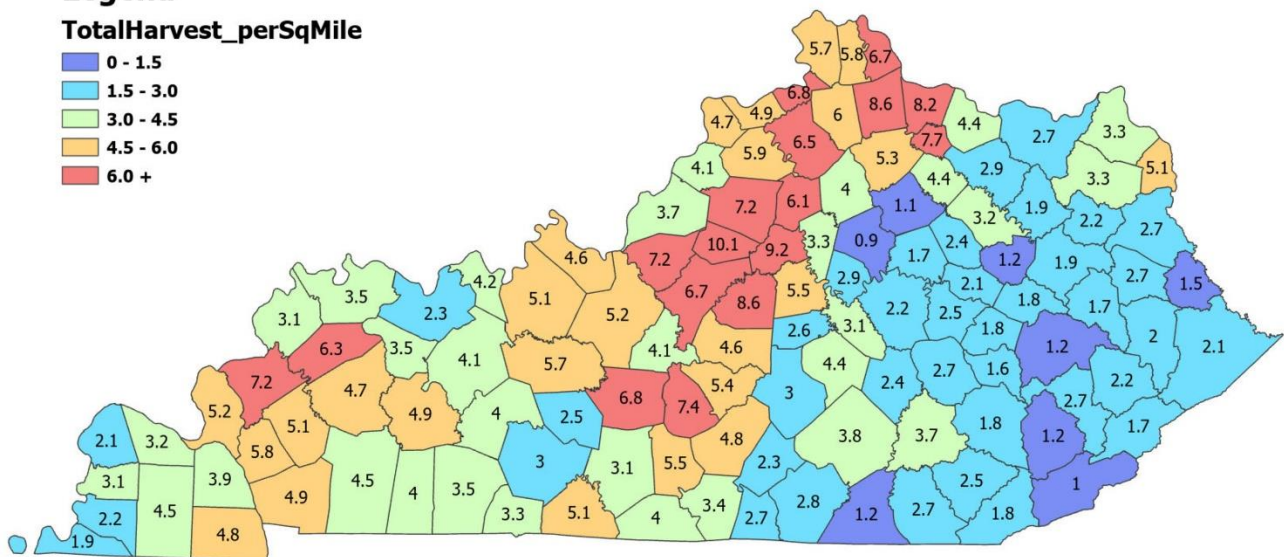
Sex Category	Harvest	Percentage
Antlered Male ≥2.5yo	61,182	41%
Antlered Male 1.5yo	17,386	11%
Male Fawn	7,503	5%
<b>Total Male</b>	<b>86,071</b>	<b>57.4%</b>
<b>Total Female</b>	<b>63,797</b>	<b>42.6%</b>

## 2024 Total Harvest by Square Mile of Habitat

### Legend

#### TotalHarvest\_perSqMile

- 0 - 1.5
- 1.5 - 3.0
- 3.0 - 4.5
- 4.5 - 6.0
- 6.0 +



0 15 30 60 90 120 Miles

1:2,500,000

KDFWR  
Deer Program  
March 25, 2025





Kentucky Deer Program Report  
By: Joe McDermott, David Yancy, & Tommy Apostolopoulos

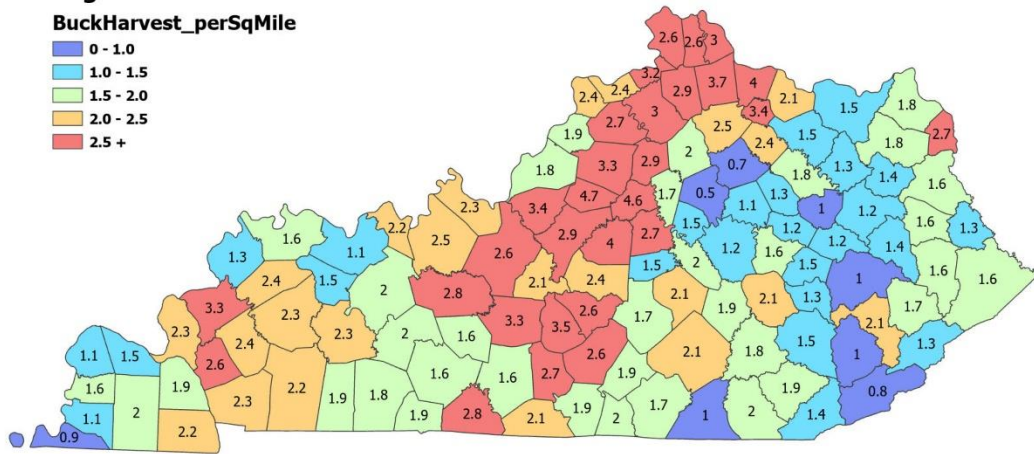


## 2024 Buck Harvest by Square Mile of Habitat

### Legend

#### BuckHarvest\_perSqMile

- 0 - 1.0
- 1.0 - 1.5
- 1.5 - 2.0
- 2.0 - 2.5
- 2.5 +



0 15 30 60 90 120 Miles  
1:2,500,000

KDFWR  
Deer Program  
March 25, 2025

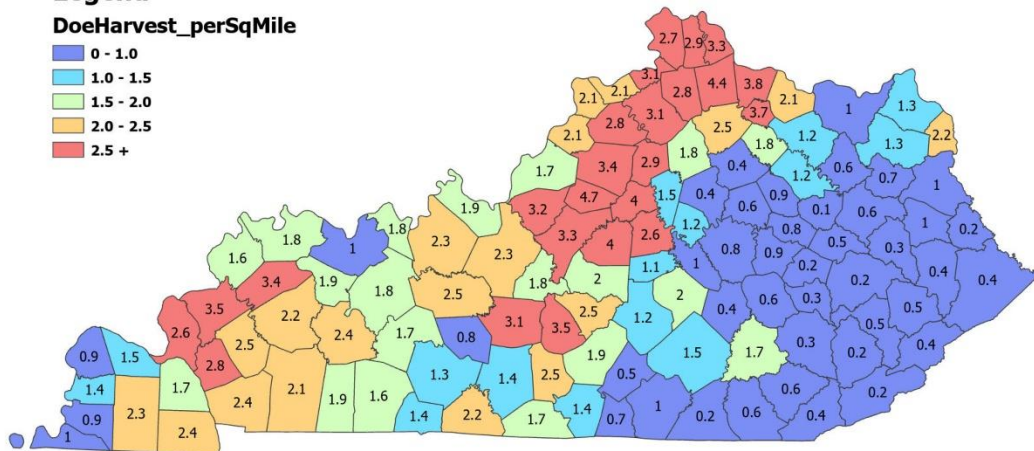


## 2024 Doe Harvest by Square Mile of Habitat

### Legend

#### DoeHarvest\_perSqMile

- 0 - 1.0
- 1.0 - 1.5
- 1.5 - 2.0
- 2.0 - 2.5
- 2.5 +



0 15 30 60 90 120 Miles  
1:2,500,000

KDFWR  
Deer Program  
March 25, 2025



# Kentucky Deer Program Report

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## II. License and Season Information

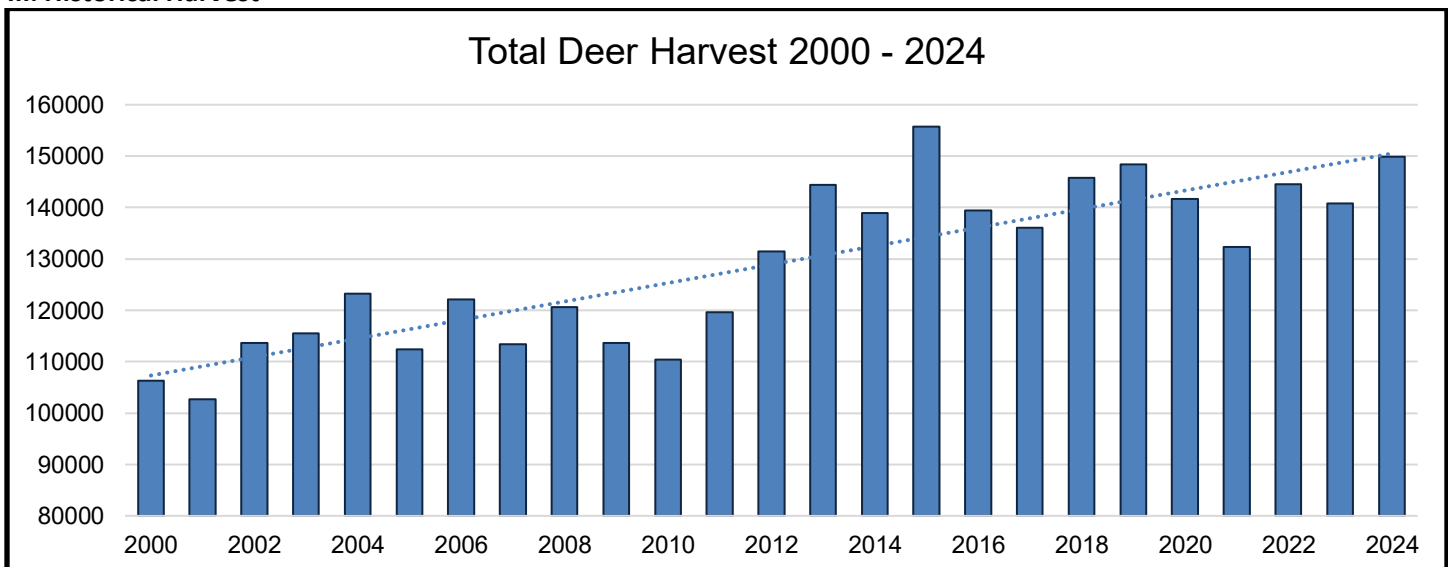
Type	License / Permit	Resident Price	Nonresident Price
Licenses	Annual Hunting	\$27	\$160
	Annual Youth Hunting	\$6	\$10
Combos <i>(includes hunting license and deer permit)</i>	Annual Combo Hunting/Fishing	\$42	N/A
	Senior/Disabled Sportsman's	\$12	N/A
	Sportsman's	\$95	N/A
	Youth Sportsman's	\$30	N/A
Permits	Statewide Deer Permit (4 deer)	\$35	\$235
	Youth Deer Permit (4 deer)	\$10	\$15
	Additional Deer Permit (2 deer)	\$15	

License Exempt:

- 1) Youth younger than 12
- 2) Resident owners of farmlands, their spouses and dependent children hunting upon their own farmlands.
- 3) Tenants, their spouses and dependent children hunting on farmlands where they reside and work.
- 4) Kentucky residents on military leave of more than three days.
- 5) Members of the U.S. Armed Forces based in Kentucky and hunting on Kentucky National Guard properties.

	Early Season	Late Season
Archery	Sept. 7, 2024 – Jan. 20, 2025	
Youth/Senior Crossbow		
Crossbow	Sept. 21, 2023 – Jan. 20, 2025	
Youth-only Gun	Oct. 12 – 13, 2024	
Early Antlerless Firearm	September 27-28, 2025 <span style="color: red;">(CWD Surveillance Zone Counties Only)</span>	
Muzzle-loader	Oct. 19 – 20, 2024	Dec. 14 – 22, 2024
Modern Gun	Nov. 9 – 24, 2024	
Free Youth Gun Weekend	Dec. 28 – 29, 2024	

## III. Historical Harvest

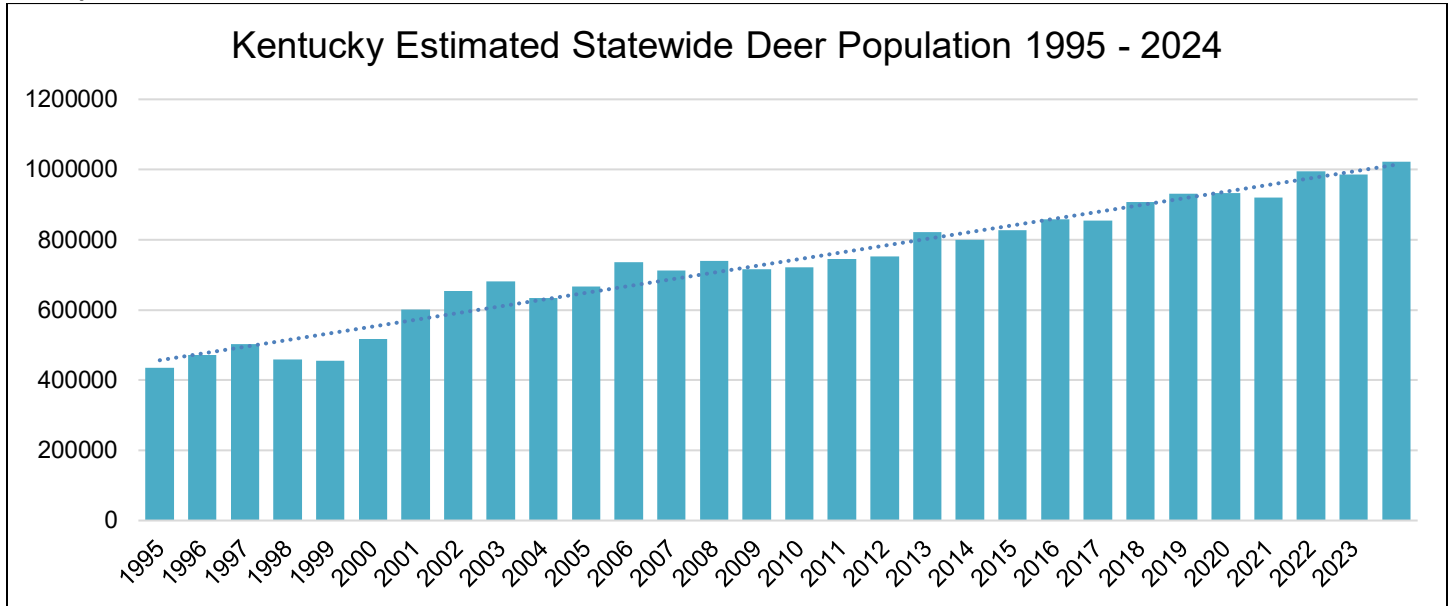


# Kentucky Deer Program Report

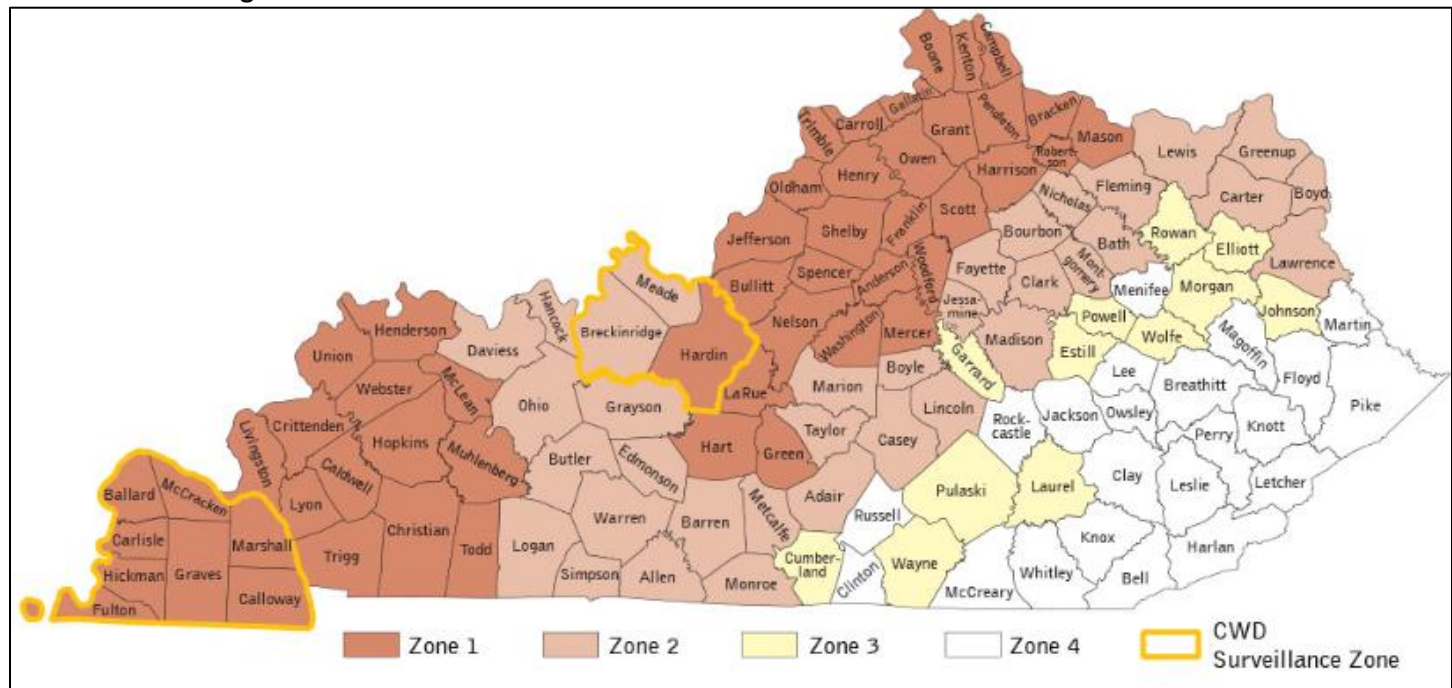
By: Joe McDermott, David Yancy, & Tommy Apostolopoulos



## IV. Population Trends



## V. 2024 Deer Management Units:



### Deer Bag Limits

Limit to 1 antlered deer statewide, regardless of zone or method.

<b>Zone 1</b>	Unlimited number of antlerless deer may be harvested.
<b>Zone 2</b>	No more than 4 deer may be harvested.
<b>Zone 3</b>	No more than 4 deer may be harvested. Antlerless harvest by firearm limited to 1.
<b>Zone 4</b>	No more than 2 deer. Only 1 may be antlerless and cannot be harvested during Modern Gun, Early Muzzle-loader, or the first six days of Late Muzzle-loader seasons.

**Kentucky Deer Program Report**  
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## VI. Regulation/legislation Changes

- Three central Kentucky counties were added to the CWD Surveillance Zone in response to a positive animal detected in a captive facility.
- Three western Kentucky counties added to CWD Surveillance Zone in response to an Indiana wild CWD detection <2 miles from KY border. Effective for 2025-26 season.
- Early Antlerless Firearm Weekend September 27-28 in CWD Surveillance Zone counties (2025 Commissioner Authority). Effective for 2025-26 season.
- Baiting in CWD Surveillance Zone counties reinstated (2025 Commissioner Authority). Effective for 2025-26 season.

## VII. Urban/Special Hunts

[Quota deer hunts](#) are held on 16 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), five state parks, and Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area. Additionally, there are quota deer hunts for mobility-impaired hunters at three sites across Kentucky. Each hunt costs \$3 to apply and a certain number are drawn for each hunt. Preference point incentives are offered for harvested antlerless deer on four WMAs with overabundant deer herds for hunt draws the following year.

No urban hunts currently.

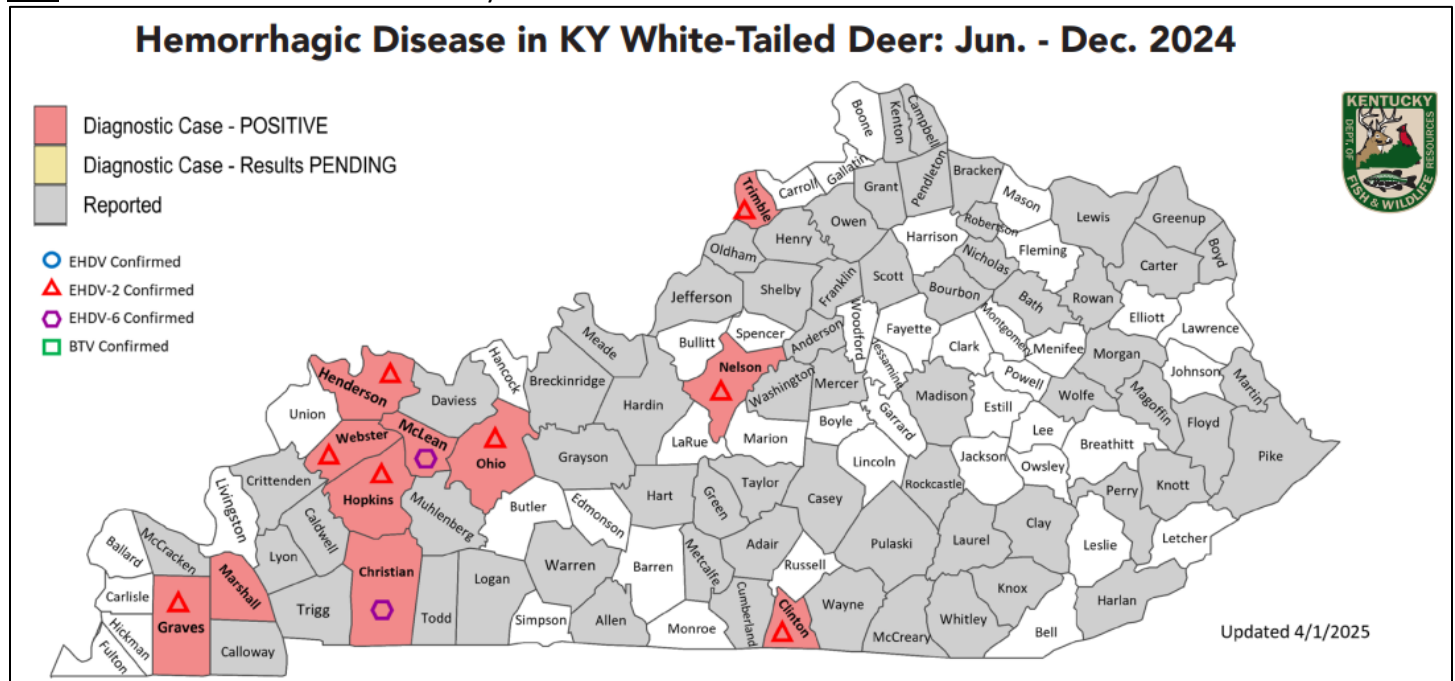
## VIII. Deer Management Assistance/Crop Damage

No DMAP in Kentucky and no changes to Crop Damage Program. Three avenues to mitigate crop damage from deer:

- [KRS 150.170](#): Landowners, their spouses or dependent children, or their designee who must be approved, may hunt and trap any wildlife causing damage to their lands or personal property without a hunting or trapping license and may do so during periods other than the open season.
- [Deer Control Tags](#): Additional antlerless deer tags issued for crop damage mitigation. To be used within the confines of hunting season. (~3600 issued per year, ~30% use)
- [Deer Damage Permits](#): Either sex tags issued for crop damage mitigation. To be used out-of-season with any weapon. (~600 issued per year, ~50% use)

## IX. Disease Issues / Updates

EHD: Estimated 2024 statewide mortality: 101-500 animals. HD confirmed in 11 of 120 counties.





**Kentucky Deer Program Report**  
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CWD:

A detection within 8 miles of the Kentucky border in September 2021 prompted the activation of KDFWR's CWD Response Plan. In December 2023, KDFWR detected the first positive case just outside the existing zone in Ballard County. In October 2024, KDFWR was notified of a captive positive case in Breckinridge County, over 100 miles from the nearest positive detection. Three counties were added to the CWD Surveillance Zone in October 2024 (Breckinridge, Meade, Hardin).

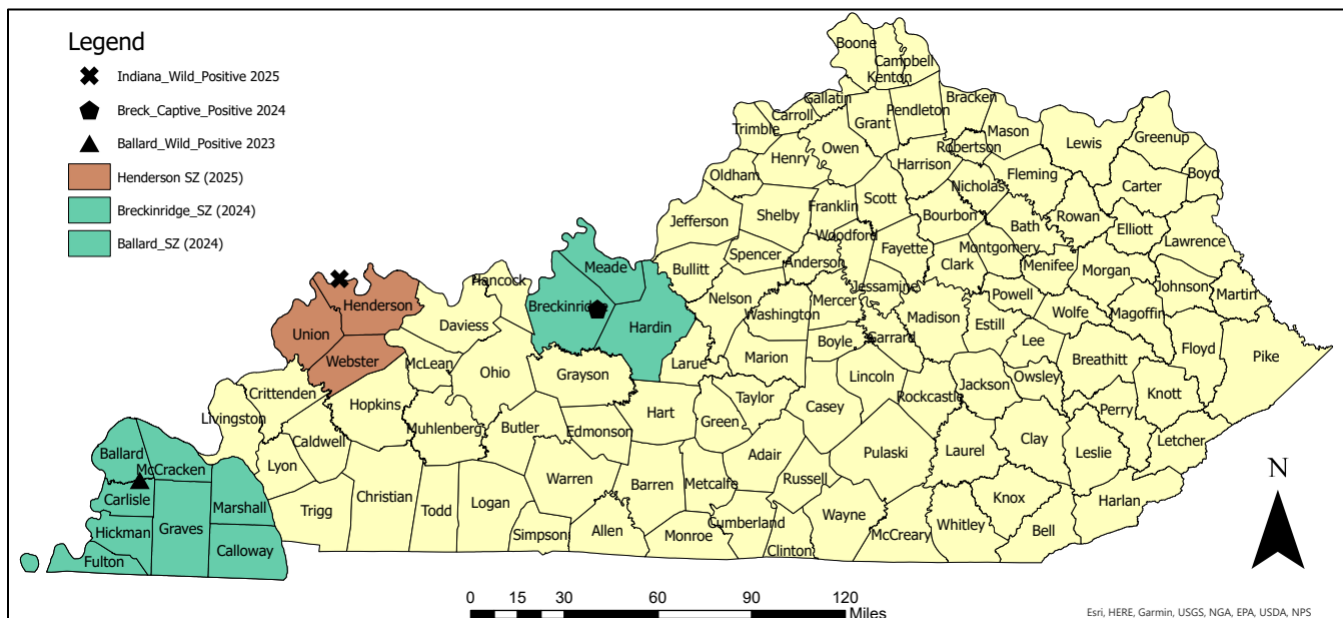
In early 2025, Indiana detected its first positive CWD case in a wild buck less than 2 miles from Kentucky's border. In response, three more counties, Henderson, Webster, and Union, were added to the CWD Surveillance Zone for the 2025-26 season.

The following measures were implemented in September 2021 and continued through 2024, now added to Breckinridge, Meade, and Hardin counties (joined CWD Surveillance Zone in October 2024):

- A CWD Surveillance Zone was created to include all deer management units within 15 miles of captive detection (map below)
- No baiting or wildlife feeding (grain, feed, mineral, salt)
- Carcass importation from other states prohibited
- Carcass transportation out of the Surveillance Zone prohibited
- The rehabilitation of deer or any other cervid in the surveillance zone is prohibited
- Mandatory Deer CWD Check Stations during modern gun season (all western CWD Surveillance Zone counties)
- Voluntary Deer CWD Check Stations during modern gun season (Breckinridge, Hardin, Meade counties)

All of the above measures remained in place during the 2024 season. Mandatory checking of deer in the 11 western CWD Surveillance Zone counties yielded 3,471 samples and satisfied quotas. No deer tested positive during the 2024-25 sampling year and the estimated prevalence is currently 0.5% in the 10 mile buffer surrounding the index case.

Mandatory checking of deer was omitted in Breckinridge, Meade, and Hardin counties in favor of utilizing existing taxidermy and processing infrastructure in the zone. This method yielded 1,012 samples and satisfied county-wide quotas. The facility is to be depopulated on July 9, 2025. No wild detections in the area during the 2024-25 sampling year.



# Kentucky Deer Program Report

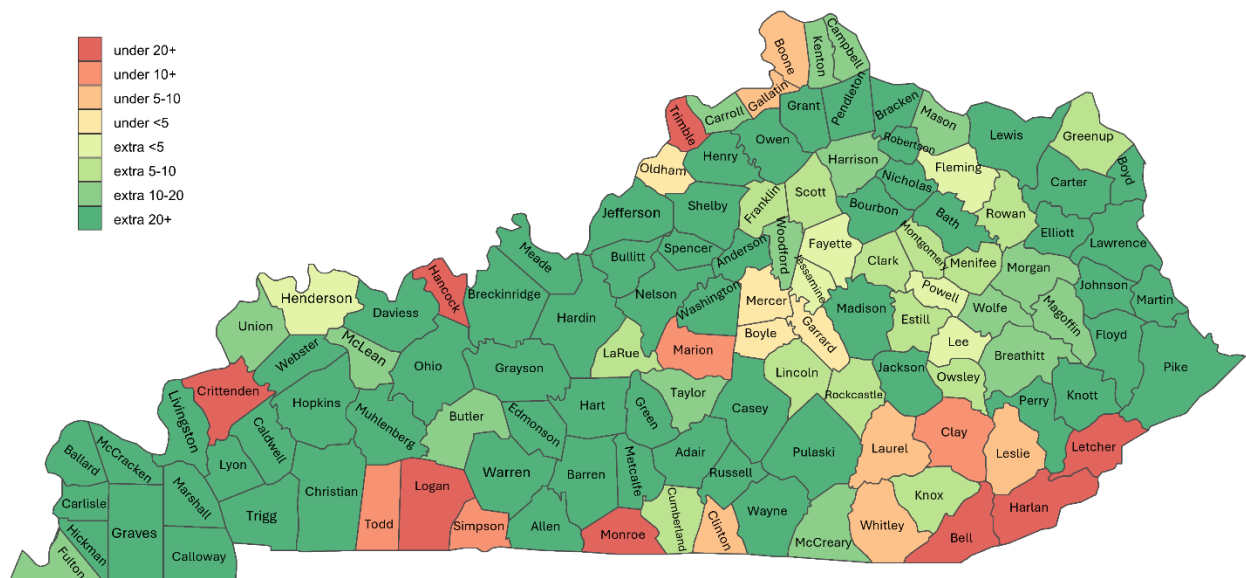
By: Joe McDermott, David Yancy, & Tommy Apostolopoulos



Area	Submitted to Lab	Not Detected	Detected
2024 West KY Surveillance Zone	3,471	3,471	0
2024 Central KY Surveillance Zone	1,012	1,012	0
Outside 2024 SZ	4,721	4,721	0
<b>Statewide Totals</b>	<b>9,204</b>	<b>9,204</b>	<b>0</b>

## 24-25 CWD Sampling Quota Progress - FINAL

Updated: 3/17/2025



### X. Research

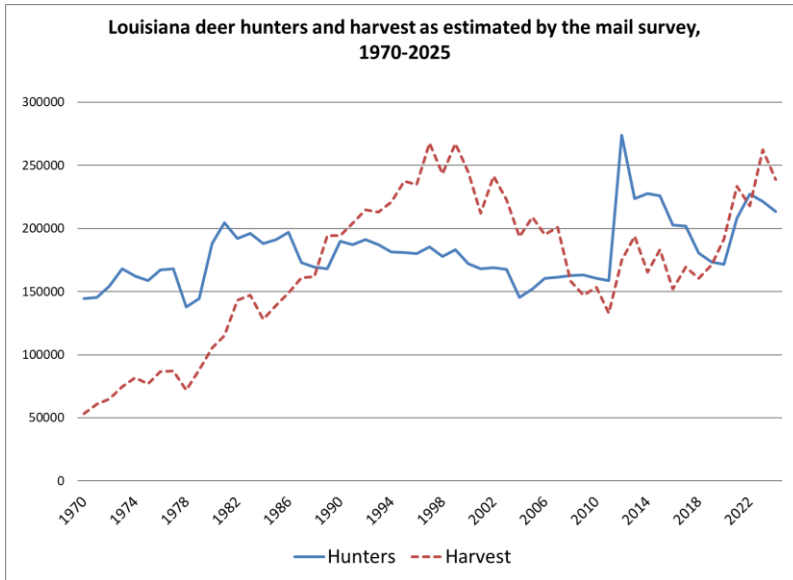
#### “Deer dispersal in an agriculture-dominated landscape in western Kentucky.”

Kentucky’s CWD Response and Management Plan utilizes two buffers, a 10- and 30-mile radius, to help focus CWD management and surveillance efforts. Beyond delineating the boundaries of our CWD Surveillance Zone, these buffers were designed to “capture”/ contain deer that disperse away from the core area and ensure sampling strategies and goals are adequate. However, deer dispersal rates and distances are largely tied to forest composition; deer disperse further and at higher rates in fragmented landscapes, and shorter distances where forests are more contiguous/ abundant. Kentucky’s CWD Management Zone is located in a highly fragmented area that is dominated by row crop agriculture production. As such, it is possible that our CWD containment buffers may not be adequate in detecting the disease as deer disperse beyond the boundaries of our Surveillance Zone. KDFWR, in collaboration with University of Kentucky researchers, aim to capture and radio-collar up to 80 juvenile deer (i.e., 6 – 7 months old) inside the CWD Management Zone to monitor spring and fall dispersal events of yearling deer, which is the age at which most deer disperse. Other anticipated benefits include auxiliary data collection including but not limited to cause-specific mortality rates, travel/ disease corridors, and habitat selection to support population modeling efforts.



## 2025 Louisiana Deer Program Report

By: Johnathan Bordelon & Brad Kennon



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

- The 2024-25 reported deer harvest was 143,527 compared to the hunter harvest survey estimate of 239,000 deer. The trends are complimentary between the two estimates. Both are near record highs in harvest.
- The sharp increase in deer hunter numbers (2012) was influenced by the inclusion of senior hunting license holders. The estimated number of hunters has been stable over the past 4 seasons following a sharp increase in 2020. There were an estimated 213,500 deer hunters in Louisiana last season. Hunters spent approximately 5 million days afield in pursuit of deer.
- Louisiana hunters reported a record harvest in many parishes while portions of the state are reporting significant declines in harvest. In general,

the declines can be contributed to changes in hydrology, forest management tied to changing timber markets, and loss of viable hardwood pulpwood options in portions of the state.

### II. Research

CWD Scrape Surveillance: Mississippi State University.

MS River Deer Telemetry Project: University of Georgia. Deer telemetry research within the current CWD Control Area. Areas not protected by the Mississippi River levee system are included in the study. GPS collared deer, ante-mortem CWD testing, helicopter capture, 5 year telemetry project, projected initiated fall of 2023, 37 deer collared year one, 56 deer collared year two, year three (2026) will include the final year of collar deployments, with two additional years of monitoring and analysis.

Research – TSE test: Dr. Frank Bastian, neuropathologist received a patent on a live test for diagnosis of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy in Animals and Humans.

### III. Hot Topics

Chronic Wasting Disease Detection and Mitigation: CWD mitigation is a hot topic, CWD has been detected outside of the existing CWD Control Area. The update will be covered in more detail in part IV (below) of the report.

Deer Area 4 (DMU) limit changed from 3 to 4 deer, not to exceed 2 antlered or two antlerless deer. Objectives include increasing the percentage of antlerless deer in the bag. The statewide bag limit for deer in Louisiana is 6.

Deer hunters 65 years and older may use any weapon during primitive firearm season for deer.

### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

#### Chronic Wasting Disease

LDWF collected 2,602 CWD samples statewide in 2024-25 (21,113 since 2002). A total of 40 CWD detections have been confirmed in 2 parishes. In response to the January 2022 detection of CWD in Louisiana, LDWF created a CWD Control Area where mitigation measures included cervid carcass import restrictions and prohibited baiting/feeding of deer. Boundaries include major roadways and waterways at a minimum of 25 miles from a known detection. The first



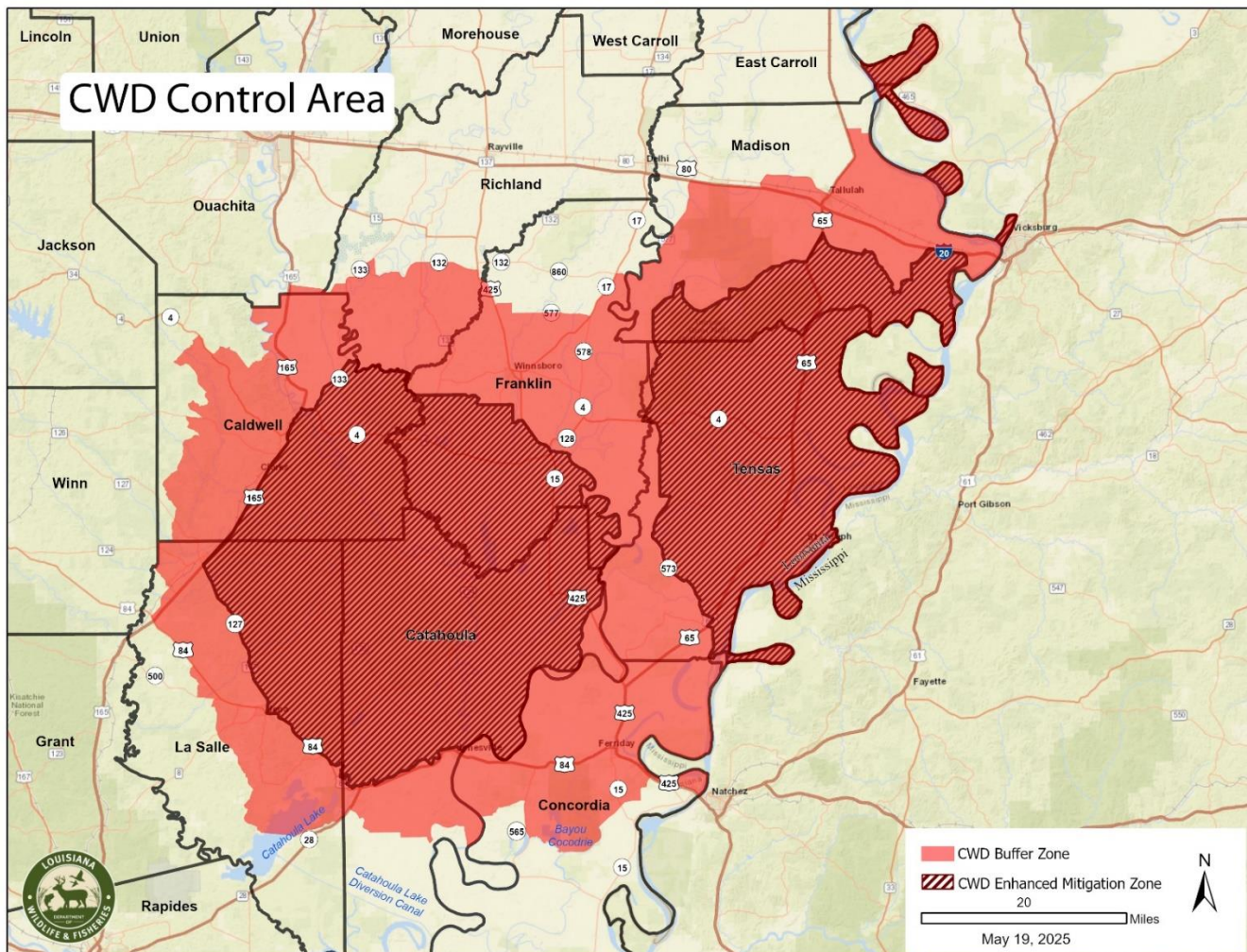


## 2025 Louisiana Deer Program Report

By: Johnathan Bordelon & Brad Kennon

detection of CWD outside of the existing CWD Control Area was confirmed after the 2024-25 deer season. The hunter voluntarily submitted the sample from the non-symptomatic deer through an area deer processor. In response to the detection, a Declaration of Emergency was enacted to include parts of 7 parishes. Similar to past control area delineations, roads and waterways 25 miles or more from the detection were used as boundaries. Since that time, a Notice of Intent has been proposed that will replace the Declaration of Emergency. The Notice of Intent does deviate from the previous control area regulations. An area referred to as the Enhanced Mitigation Zone (map below) within the CWD Control Area prohibits baiting and supplemental feeding. The Enhanced Mitigation Zone utilizes roads and waterways 15 miles or more from a confirmed CWD positive deer. The area outward from the Enhanced Mitigation Zone to the outer edge of the CWD Control Area is referred to as the CWD Buffer Zone. Exceptions for baiting are provided with stipulations on the manner in which it may be practiced. Deer carcass restrictions are in place for the entire CWD Control Area. Community based meetings are planned for late July. Final Rule is anticipated in advance of the 2025 deer season. In addition, CWD drop-off coolers will be added to the newly impacted areas. LDWF will increase the number of drop-off cooler sites from 13 to 16 in response to the new area of detection.

CWD has been detected in 4 captive pens in 4 parishes. All pens have been quarantined by the Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry. Trace-outs investigations are pending in additional parishes. No pens have been depopulated at this time.



## **Maryland Deer Program Report 2025**

Kevin Lamp, Carson Coriell, Lindsey O'Brien, Jonathan Trudeau

### **1) Harvest/Population Trends**

- a) The estimated statewide deer harvest for 2024-2025 was 84,201 - an increase of 15.9% from the previous year. Antlered deer accounted for 40.7% of the total harvest. This estimate includes both White-tailed and Sika deer (Figure 1; Tables 1 and 3).
- b) The statewide deer population for the season was estimated at 266,205, representing a roughly 5% increase from last year (Figure 2).
- c) During the 2024-2025 season, 1,967 Deer Management Permits (DMPs) were issued, resulting in the harvest of 11,501 deer. These harvests are not included in the graphs at the end of this document.

### **2) Research**

- a) Since January 2024, the University of Maryland has been capturing, radiocollaring, testing, and monitoring white-tailed deer across urban areas in the Maryland-Washington D.C. region. This ongoing project focuses on the potential transmission of diseases between deer and humans in high-interaction urban environments, with particular attention to SARS-CoV-2, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), and other pathogens.
- b) Since fall 2023, MD-DNR has partnered with the University of Delaware to study sika deer calf survival. The project also gathers data on hind (female) survival and movement. Fieldwork is in its final year, with results expected within the next year.

### **3) Regulation Changes/Updates**

- a) During the 2024-2025 hunting season, MD-DNR implemented changes to antlerless deer firearm season length in the western region (Region A). The antlerless firearm season length increased from 3 days to 8 days. The statewide bag limit is still two antlerless deer and only 1 antlerless deer can be taken in any weapon season.
- b) For the 2025–2026 hunting season, MD-DNR has launched a new online license system. MD Outdoors replaces COMPASS for purchasing licenses, checking in game, and accessing other DNR services.
- c) The non-resident sika stamp increased 700% from \$25 to \$200.
  - i) Non-resident sika stamp sales dropped by 27.4% from the previous season.
- d) Hunters may dispatch a wounded deer after legal shooting hours with artificial lights, but only on the same evening the animal was wounded.
  - i) Hunters must call Natural Resources Police prior to pursuing a wounded deer after legal shooting hours as well as once their pursuit is finished.

- e) MD-DNR is developing a new regulation that would allow the use of drones or unmanned aircraft solely to aid in the recovery of a wounded deer.

#### **4) Disease Issues/Updates**

##### Chronic Wasting Disease

- a) During the 2024-2025 season, staff collected 1,312 CWD samples from 11 counties for testing. Surveillance was expanded to three additional counties after detections in two new counties during the 2023 season.
  - i) Within the past year, CWD was detected in 62 deer across five counties: Allegany (34), Frederick (7), Howard (1)\*, Montgomery (3), and Washington (17).
    - (1) *Howard County is a new detection and will be added to the CWD Management Area (Figure 3).*
- b) Statewide sampling is planned for the upcoming season, the first since 2022.
- c) Since 2002, MD-DNR has tested 15,706 deer for CWD through random surveillance. Prior to that, from 1999 to 2001, only deer showing neurological symptoms were tested. Maryland confirmed its first case of CWD in November 2010, from a hunter-harvested deer in Allegany County. To date, 285 infected deer have been identified in the state.
  - i) To date, CWD cases have been documented as follows: 179 in Allegany, 83 in Washington, 15 in Frederick, 5 in Montgomery, and 1 each in Carroll, Baltimore, and Howard.

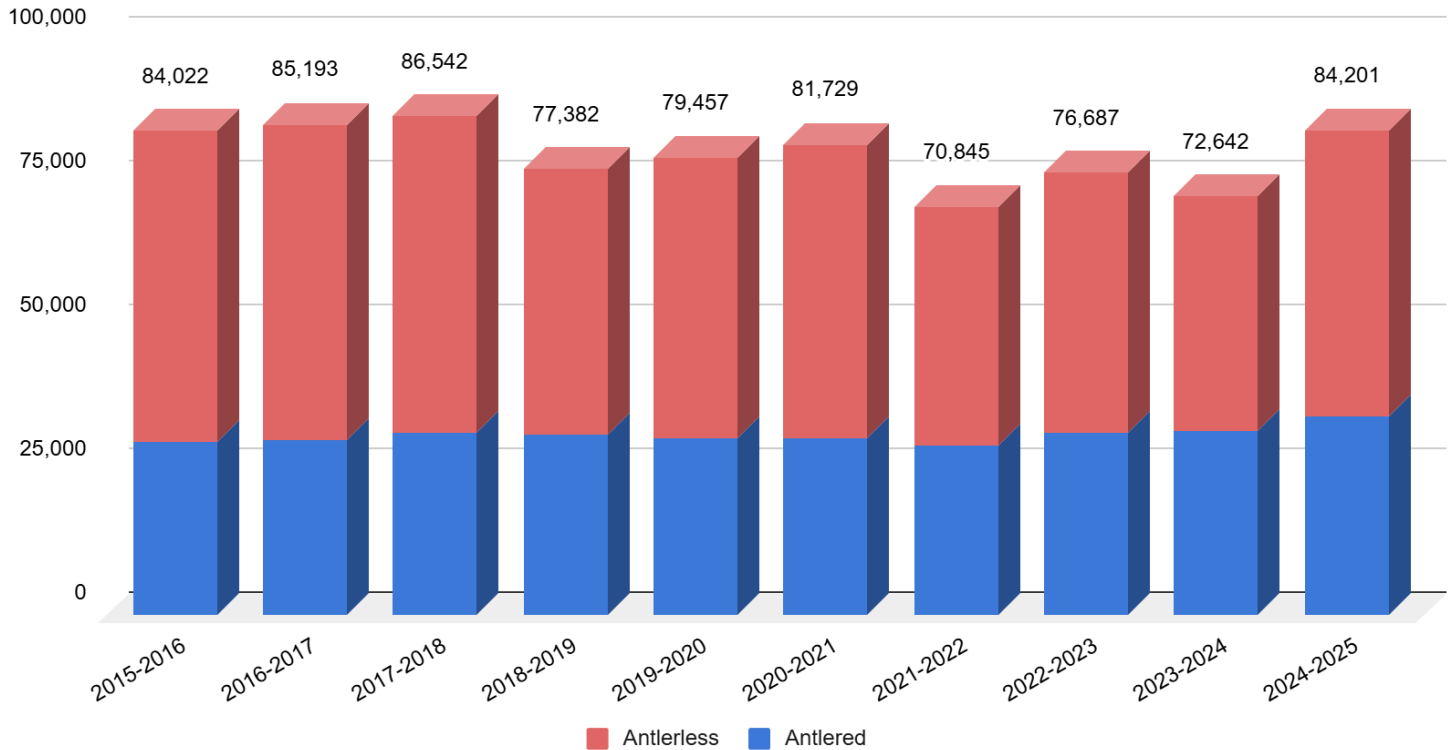
##### Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease

- d) During 2024, Maryland experienced a moderate outbreak of EHD. There were 173 reports from 65 different locations throughout the state. Most reports came from Caroline, Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties (Figure 4).

# FIGURES

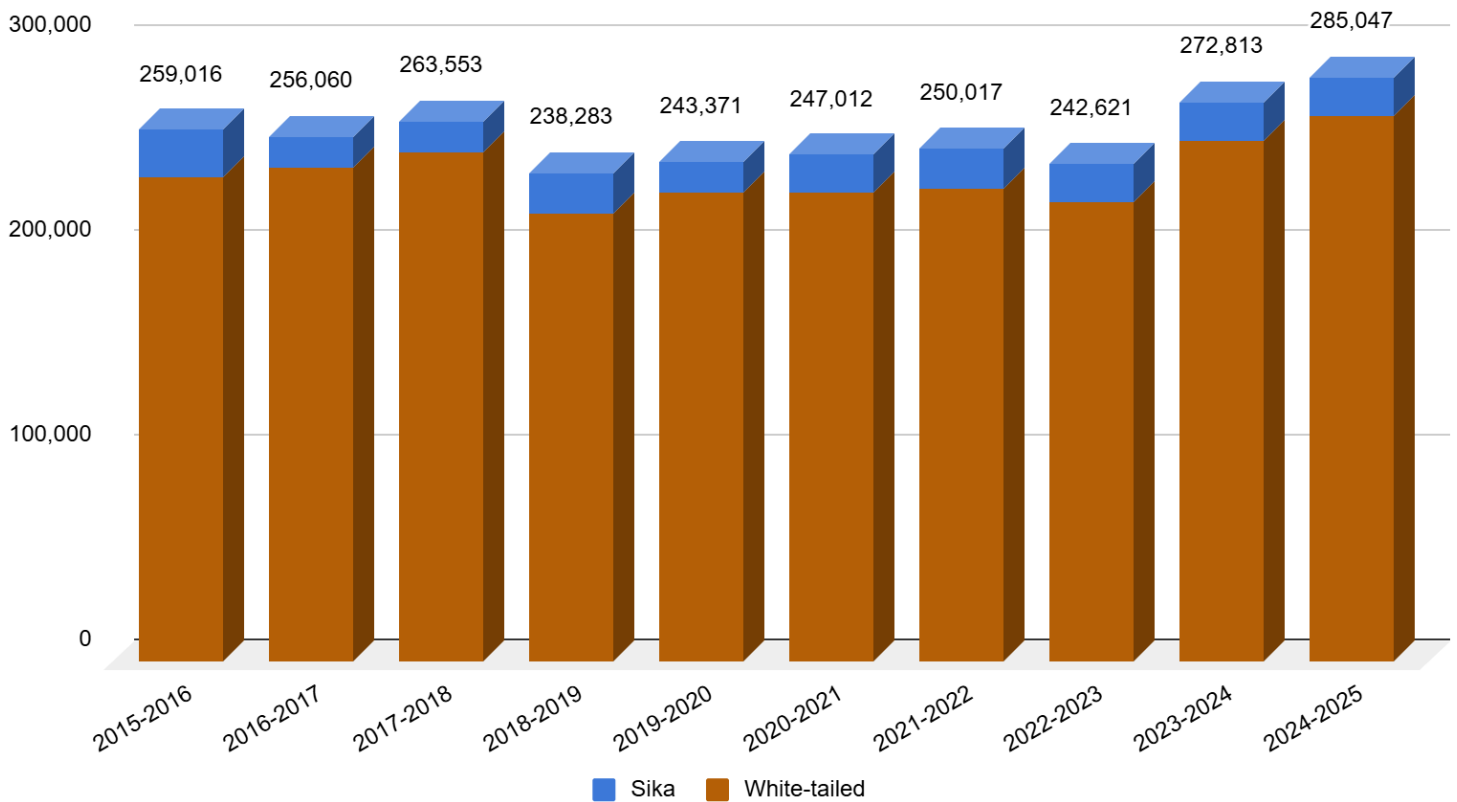
## Maryland Statewide Deer Harvest

White-Tailed & Sika



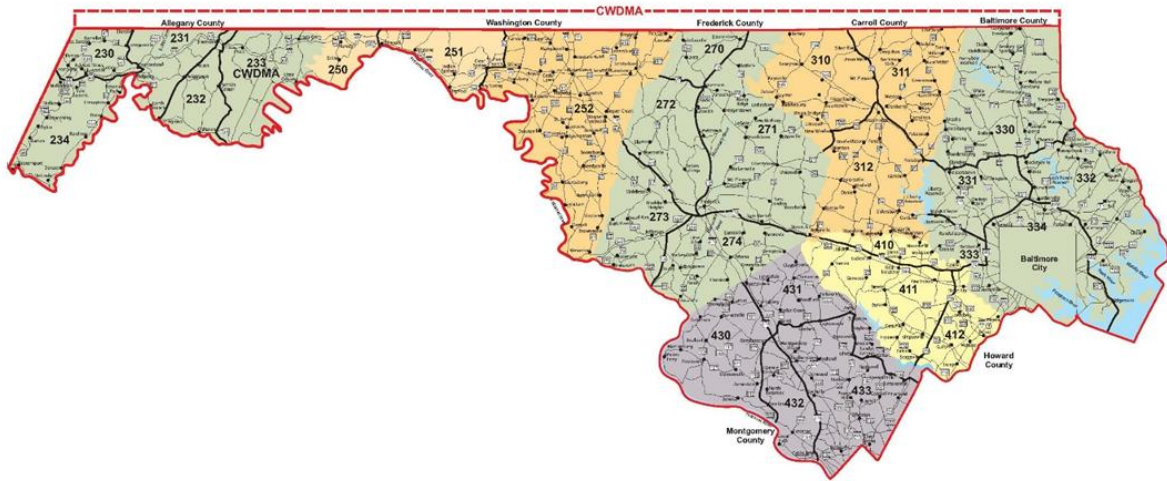
**Figure 1.** Maryland statewide deer harvest totals over the past 10 years, including both white-tailed and sika deer.

## Maryland Deer Population Trend

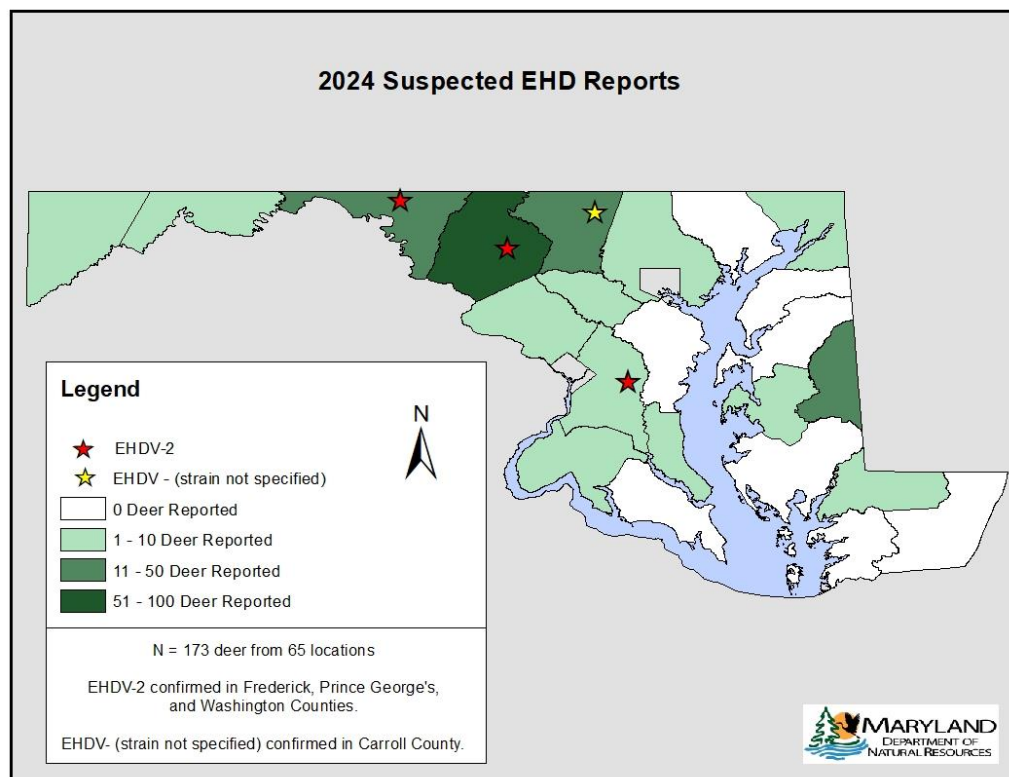


**Figure 2.** Maryland statewide deer population estimates over the past 10 years, combining white-tailed and sika deer totals. The current estimates include 266,205 white-tailed deer (+5% from the previous year) and 18,842 sika deer (–2% from the previous year).



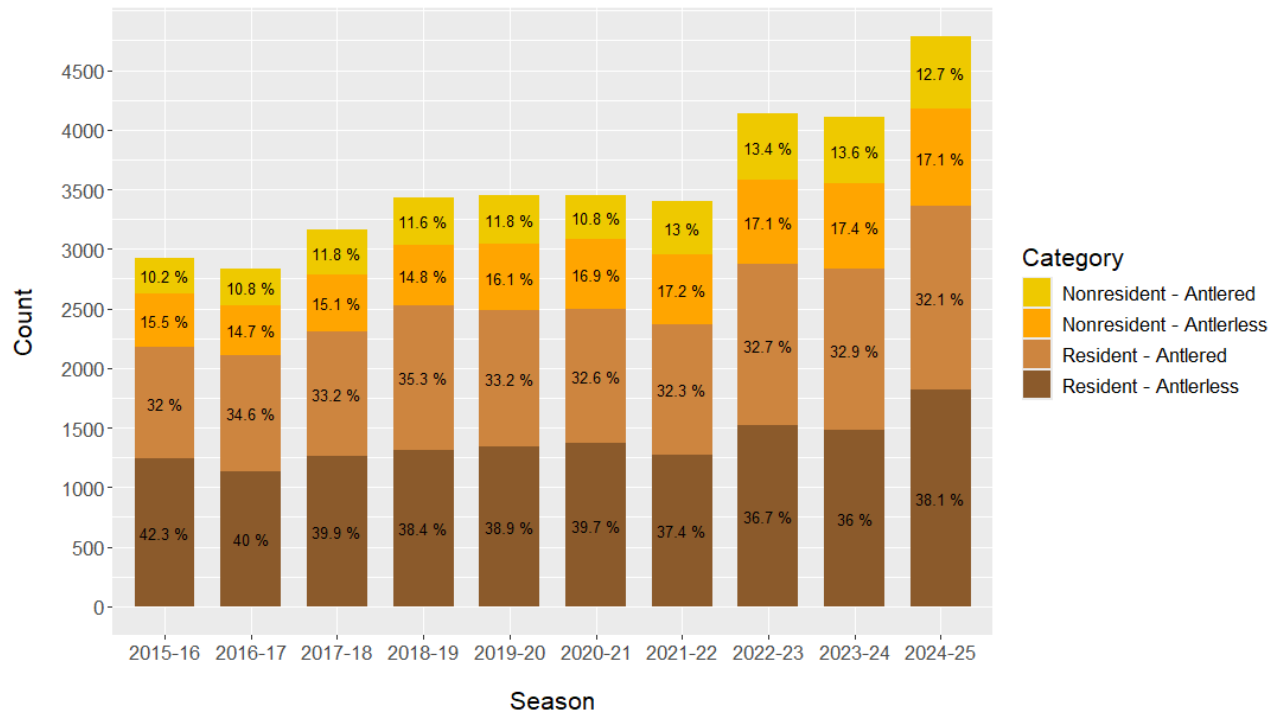


**Figure 3.** Maryland's 2024-2025 Chronic Wasting Disease Management Area (CWDMA). Howard County is included as the newest addition for the 2025–2026 season.



**Figure 4.** Maryland's 2024 Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease reporting. Most reports came from Caroline, Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties. EHDV-2 was confirmed in Frederick, Prince George's, and Washington counties.

Annual Sika Deer Harvest by Residents and Nonresidents, Antlered and Antlerless



**Figure 5.** Annual sika deer harvest by resident and nonresident hunters following the 2024–25 stamp fee increase.

# TABLES

**Table 1.** Harvest by weapon type

<u>Season</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>Change</u>
Overall,	72,642 <sup>1</sup>	84,201 <sup>1</sup>	+16%
Modern firearm	35,927	41,650	+16%
Muzzleloader	11,926	13,656	+15%
Archery	24,789	28,895	+17%

<sup>1</sup>Includes 4,106 sika deer in the 2023-24 season and 4,782 in the 2024-25 season

**Table 2.** Changes in license sales

<u>License sales</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>%Change</u>
Apprentice Hunting License	3,198	4,012	+26%
Free Public Hunting Permit	29,422	31,405	+7%
Full Season Hunting	101,038	99,387	-2%
Grand Total	133,658	134,804	0.86%

**Table 3.** Deer harvest totals by season type, with percent differences from the previous season rounded to the nearest whole number. Totals include both white-tailed and sika deer.

Maryland Reported Deer Harvest for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 Hunting Seasons									
County	Antlered			Antlerless			Total		
	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Allegany	1,824	1,868	2%	1,128	1,544	40%	2,952	3,412	16%
Anne Arundel	750	898	20%	974	1,371	41%	1,724	2,269	32%
Baltimore	1,899	2,109	11%	2,651	3,130	18%	4,550	5,239	15%
Calvert	584	658	13%	817	1,062	30%	1,401	1,720	23%
Caroline									
whitetail	910	878	-4%	1,666	2,262	36%	2,576	3,140	22%
sika	0	2	*	1	2	*	1	4	*
Carroll	2,470	2,368	-4%	3,259	3,620	11%	5,729	5,988	5%
Cecil	1,177	1,325	13%	1,844	2,260	23%	3,021	3,585	19%
Charles	1,050	1,356	29%	1,383	2,012	46%	2,433	3,368	38%
Dorchester									
whitetail	739	637	-14%	1,138	1,278	12%	1,877	1,915	2%
sika	1,678	1,840	10%	1,965	2,319	18%	3,643	4,159	14%
Frederick	2,943	3,012	2%	3,606	3,857	7%	6,549	6,869	5%
Garrett	3,152	3,238	8%	1,956	2,375	21%	5,108	5,613	10%
Harford	1,147	1,386	21%	1,923	2,414	26%	3,070	3,800	24%
Howard	795	852	7%	1,259	1,329	6%	2,054	2,181	6%
Kent	1,200	1,220	2%	1,673	2,284	37%	2,873	3,504	22%
Montgomery	1,316	1,379	5%	2,046	2,085	2%	3,362	3,464	3%
Prince George's	649	755	16%	778	1,051	35%	1,427	1,806	27%
Queen Anne's	1,028	1,212	18%	1,789	2,554	43%	2,817	3,766	34%
Saint Mary's	869	1,003	15%	1,116	1,470	32%	1,985	2,473	25%
Somerset									
whitetail	632	730	16%	1,058	1,373	30%	1,690	2,103	24%
sika	18	26	44%	15	11	-27%	33	37	12%
Talbot	719	745	4%	1,209	1,557	29%	1,928	2,302	19%
Washington	2,273	2,477	9%	2,145	2,589	21%	4,418	5,066	15%
Wicomico									
whitetail	921	945	3%	1,494	1,832	23%	2,415	2,777	15%
sika	167	222	33%	161	227	41%	328	449	37%
Worcester									
whitetail	978	1,097	12%	1,599	1,962	23%	2,577	3,059	19%
sika	49	53	8%	52	80	54%	101	133	32%
Total	31,937	34,291	7%	40,705	49,910	23%	72,642	84,201	16%

\*Small sample size



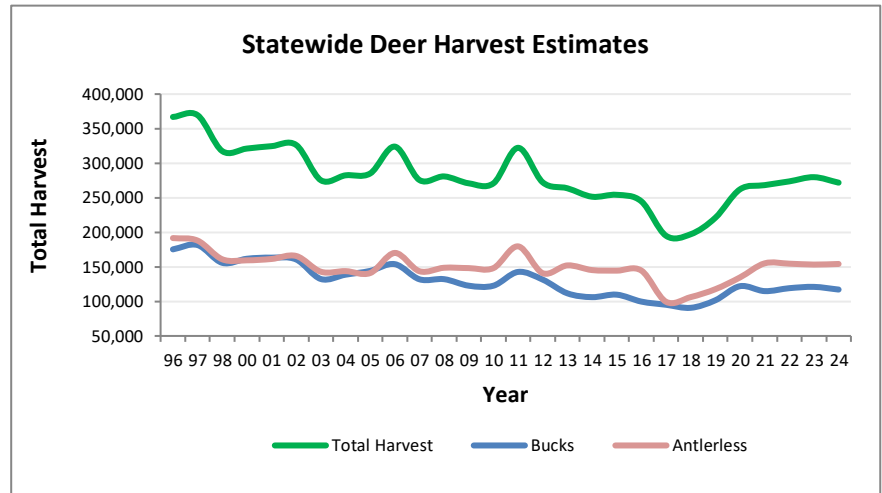
## 2025 Mississippi Deer Program Report

### Kamen Campbell



#### I. Harvest / Population Trends

- MS hunters reported harvesting 271,836 deer during the 2024-2025 hunting season, a 3% decrease from the previous season.
- Average harvest declined from 1.6 to 1.5 deer per hunter for the 2024-2025 season.
- 2024-2025 showed a 3% increase in deer hunters at 180,636 hunters
- 86% of Mississippi hunters hunted deer in the 2024-2025 season. The next highest was turkey, at 32%.
- Year three of velvet season had 325 bucks reported. Down from 350 last season.



#### II. Research

Research projects include:

- 1) Deer Home Ranges in CWD Management Zones
- 2) Assessing White-Tailed Deer Populations in Relation to Chronic Wasting Disease and Long-Duration Floods
- 3) Prion contamination at feeding sites with RT-QulC
- 4) Environmental CWD sampling via RT-QulC
- 5) Economic Impacts of CWD in North Mississippi and SW Tennessee – just published.
- 6) Deer-Pig interactions as a source of CWD transmission – just published; beginning a second phase.
- 7) Economic survey on importance of deer and deer hunting in MS.

#### III. Hot Topics

- 1) Commission update.
- 2) Animal control permits have come under scrutiny from all sides. We currently pair a biologist with Law enforcement to survey damage for all permit renewal requests. Working with MSU Ag Extension to develop a better protocol for issuing permits by evaluating if damage is severe enough to cause yield loss.
- 3) Regional Deer Seminars in conjunction with MSU Deer Lab – “Back to the basics”

#### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

##### *Hemorrhagic Disease*

The occurrence of HD during the 2024-2025 hunting season was moderate, with several reports in North MS.

##### *Chronic Wasting Disease*

Mississippi has detected 445 CWD positive deer in 16 counties. In the 2024-2025 season, CWD was detected in 128 deer in 11 counties. One of these counties was a first detection.

Mississippi detected the first and second CWD+ captive deer in 2023-2024. Two different facilities in different counties. One of these is now participating in a budding research project.



# 2025 Mississippi Deer Program Report Kamen Campbell



## CWD Positives in order of First Detections in County

County	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	All Years
Issaquena	1	1					1		3
Pontotoc		1							1
Marshall		7	9	4	15	28	38	28	129
Benton		7	26	23	31	40	54	54	235
Panola		1						1	2
Tallahatchie		1							1
Tippah				1	1	1	3	6	12
Alcorn				1	2	1	4	3	11
Warren					2	2	3	4	11
Tunica						1			1
Harrison							1		1
Desoto							2	2	4
Lafayette							1		1
Tishomingo							1	3	4
Claiborne							1	2	3
Tate							1	1	2
Tunica								1	1
<b>Total Positives</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>445</b>
<b>Bucks/Does</b>	<b>1 B</b>	<b>11B/7D</b>	<b>29B/6D</b>	<b>23B/6D</b>	<b>43B/8D</b>	<b>59B/14D</b>	<b>96B/14D</b>	<b>107B/19D</b>	
<b>Total Samples</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>8,024</b>	<b>8,514</b>	<b>7,312</b>	<b>7,106</b>	<b>7,915</b>	<b>9,002</b>	<b>10,753</b>	
<b>Benton Co. Prevalence</b>		<b>5.7%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	
<b>Statewide Prevalence</b>		<b>0.2%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	



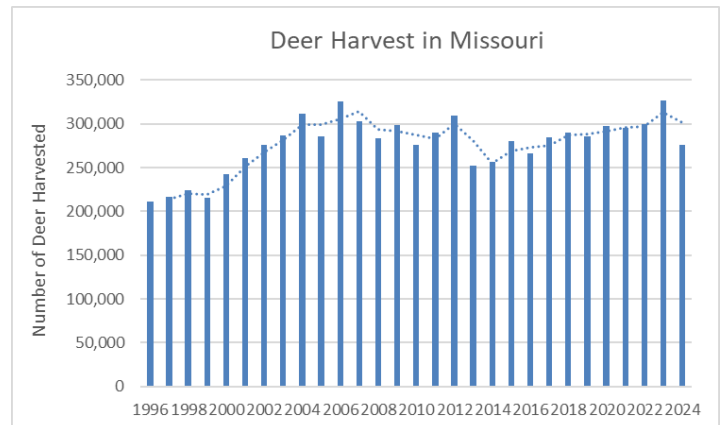
# Missouri Deer Program Report

## By: MDC Cervid Program Staff



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

- The 2024 deer season harvest was 275,656, which was 15% lower than the previous year's record harvest and 8% lower than the previous five-year-average.
- The harvest total consisted of 47% antlered bucks, 45% does, and 9% button bucks.
- Antlered buck harvest (129,323) was 13% below the 2023 total; doe harvest was 123,273 (18% below the 2023 total); 23,779 button bucks were harvested (-18% from the 2023 total).
- Archery season harvest (56,516) was 1% higher than in 2023 and was the fifth highest on record; proportion of the archery season harvest taken using crossbows has increased from 30% in 2016 (first year allowed) to 50% in 2024.
- Significant harvest decline attributed to a shift in timing of primary firearms season, mild conditions during much of the fall, and a bumper acorn crop.



### II. Research

#### *Modeling the Effects and Risks of Common Harvest Strategies to Promote Effective Management of CWD*

A collaborative project between MDC and the University of MT to evaluate the effects of targeted removal on CWD prevalence rates, identify trigger-points to guide targeted removal efforts, and identify alternative harvest strategies to manage CWD when targeted removal is no longer a viable localized CWD management tool.

#### *Using a CWD Systems Model to Evaluate CWD Management Strategies in Missouri*

Collaborative project with USGS National Wildlife Health Center, Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, and Ventana Systems, Inc. Research project will involve using a CWD Systems Model to map and model the complex relationships among ecological, epidemiological, social, and political processes affecting CWD in Missouri. Ultimately, the model will evaluate various management strategies to help guide future CWD management efforts in Missouri.

### III. Hot Topics

#### *Distribution of Chronic Wasting Disease*

During the past three years, there have been 22 new CWD+ counties in Missouri, which has resulted in 44 counties being added to the CWD Management Zone. During 2025, 82 of the state's 114 counties are in the CWD Management Zone. See *Disease Issues/Updates* section of this report for additional information.

#### *White-tailed Deer Management Plan Revision*

MDC revised its 10-year White-tailed Deer Management Plan (Plan). The five draft Plan goals include deer population management, hunting and recreation, deer health and disease, education, communication, and public engagement, and research. Some of the challenges addressed in the Plan include the spread of CWD, declining hunter numbers, and changing hunter preferences.

#### *CWD Communication Plan*

MDC is in the process of working with DJ Case & Associates to develop a CWD Communication Plan.

#### *CWD Hunter Harvest Initiative (CWD HHI)*

Last year, MDC piloted its CWD HHI in four CWD Core Areas. Hunters in these CWD Core Areas worked towards a harvest goal during deer season; if the goal was reached, targeted removal did not occur that winter. One of the four areas reached their harvest goal, and another area nearly reached the goal. MDC is expanding this effort in select CWD Core Areas this fall.

### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

#### *Chronic Wasting Disease*

- During the 2024-2025 CWD surveillance year, more than 36,000 free-ranging deer were sampled for CWD.
- Over 4,700 deer were removed during targeted removal efforts in CWD Core Areas (within 1-2 sq. mi of CWD detections).
- 243 CWD+ deer were detected during the 2024-2025 CWD surveillance year.





## Missouri Deer Program Report By: MDC Cervid Program Staff



- 171 CWD+ deer were hunter-harvested and 70 were removed during post-season targeted removal.
- First CWD detections in 7 counties (Audrain, Callaway, Lewis, Marion, Miller, Morgan, Texas).
- 12 counties added to the CWD Management Zone (Callaway, Cape Girardeau, Daviess, Harrison, Henry, Marion, Miller, Moniteau, Morgan, Ralls, St. Louis, Texas).
- Antler-point restriction was rescinded in 9 counties (Callaway, Daviess, Harrison, Henry, Marion, Miller, Moniteau, Morgan, Ralls).
- Since 2012, 806 free-ranging CWD+ deer have been detected in Missouri in 46 counties (Figure 1).
- For upcoming CWD surveillance year:
  - Conduct mandatory sampling in 35 of the 82 counties in the CWD Management Zone during opening weekend of the November portion of firearms deer season.
  - Statewide CWD sample collection by participating taxidermists and meat processors.
  - Continue targeted removal in CWD Core Areas (January 16 – March 15).
  - CWD Hunter Harvest Initiative being expanded to 19 CWD Core Areas.

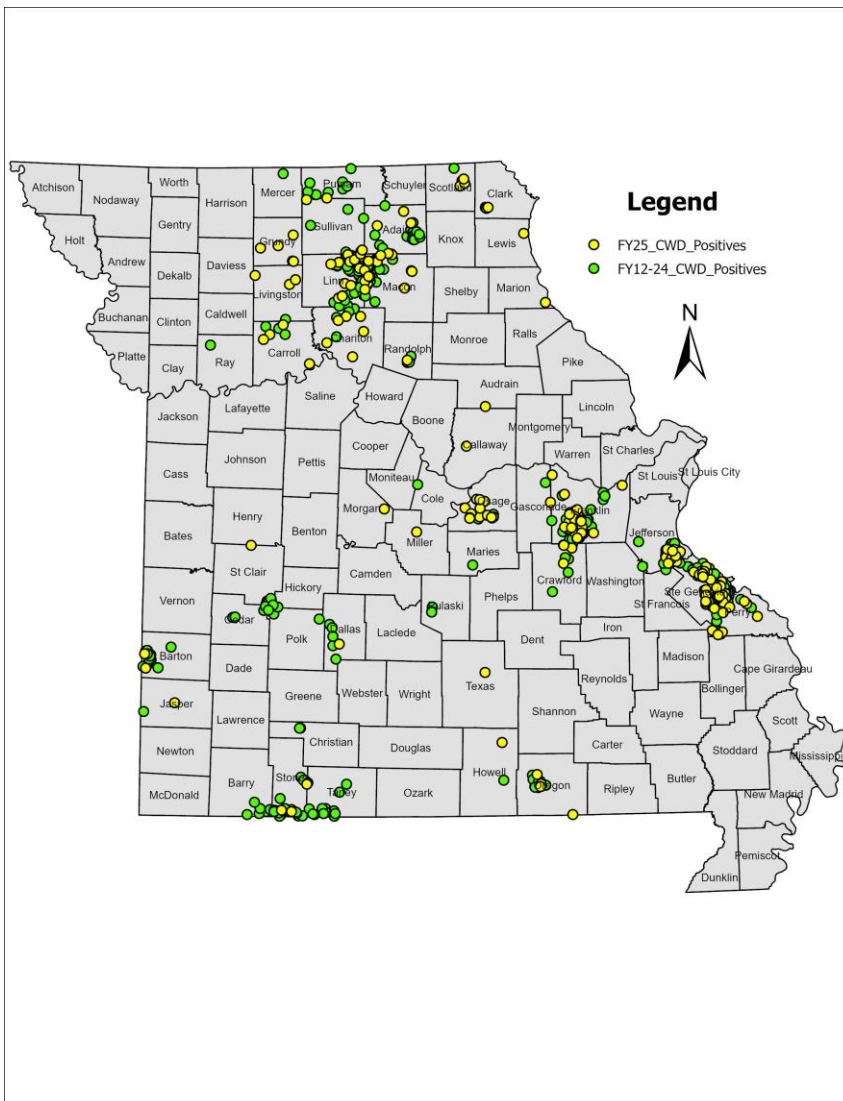


Figure 1. CWD+ detections in white-tailed deer in Missouri, 2011-2025 (as of July 16, 2025).





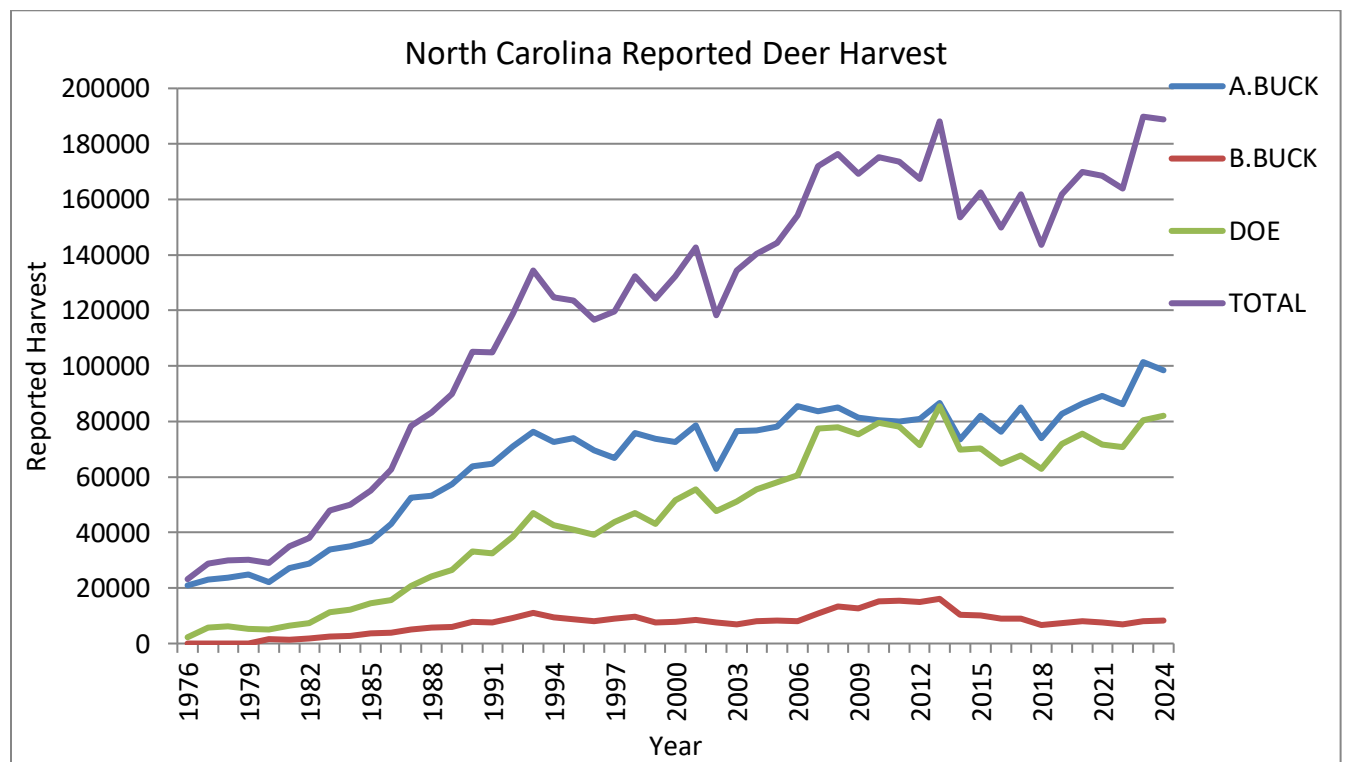
## North Carolina Deer Program Report

By: April Boggs Pope, [april.pope@ncwildlife.gov](mailto:april.pope@ncwildlife.gov)



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

- NC hunters reported harvesting 188,800 deer during the 2024-2025 hunting season, which was the second highest harvest on record. Population estimate is ~1.1 million.
- The 2024-2025 total statewide harvest was 8.5% higher than the 3-year average.
- The 2024-2025 harvest consisted of 52.2% antlered bucks, 4.3% button bucks, and 43.5% does.
- The 2024-2025 antlered buck harvest was:
  - Above the past 3-year average by 12.0%, 6.9%, 3.6%, 6.1%, and 8.3% in the Western, Northwestern, Central, Northeastern, and Southeastern zones respectively.
- The 2024-2025 antlerless deer harvest was:
  - Above the 3-year average by 21.3%, 12.1%, 8.1%, 9.3%, and 10.7% in the Western, Northwestern, Central, Northeastern, and Southeastern zones respectively.



### II. Research

#### Urban Deer Ecology Study

The NCWRC is collaborating with NC State University, NC Museum of Natural Sciences, USGS NC Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, and US Forest Service Southern Research Station to study deer ecology, populations, and public perceptions of deer across an urban to rural continuum in Durham County NC. Fieldwork is finished, with a total of 247 adult deer and 112 neonates captured. Collars were scheduled to drop off in April 2025, though 30 of the adult collars failed to break off and 22 stopped transmitting. Manuscripts in progress for neonate and fawn survival, home range and resource selection, movement and diel activity patterns, harvest susceptibility, birth site selection, predicting human risk perceptions associated with white-tailed deer disease, how hunters and non-hunters view barriers to permitting hunting access in an urban county, landowners' decision to permit hunting access, and integrating fecal DNA and telemetry to estimate animal densities in anthropogenic landscapes.

Completed theses:

<https://catalog.lib.ncsu.edu/catalog/NC5981730>

<https://catalog.lib.ncsu.edu/catalog/NC6108369>



## North Carolina Deer Program Report

By: April Boggs Pope, [april.pope@ncwildlife.gov](mailto:april.pope@ncwildlife.gov)



### *Wildlife Feeding & Baiting in North Carolina: A Social Research Study*

- An estimated 215,734 deer hunters put out food for deer, which is 92% of all deer hunters.
- 79% of deer hunters that put out food for deer reported baiting deer, either for hunting or wildlife viewing or photography.
- Deer hunters are primarily putting out shelled corn (94%).
- Over \$51 million is spent annually by deer hunters on food for deer, with an economic impact of \$69 million.
- 93,089 deer hunters put out minerals or salt licks annually, with a total of 279,267 sites present across the state.
- Deer hunters are spending \$9.9 million on minerals and salt licks annually, with an economic impact of \$9.4 million.
- Food is being put out by deer hunters primarily during one or more months of the hunting season (September-December).
- 64% of deer hunters that put out food for deer sometimes hunt deer with the use of food, while 28% always hunt deer with the use of food.
- 64% of deer hunters that put food out do so on private property they own, and 40% put food out on private property they lease or rent.

### *Genetics*

We have been in the process of collecting genetic samples from deer from every county in NC. Still working on finishing up sampling and analyzing the samples.

### *Mississippi State University Scrape Study*

We have been collaborating with Mississippi State University on their study looking for prions in scrapes. We submitted ~500 scrape samples this year, including samples from both CWD Surveillance Areas.

### *Hunter Perspectives on Chronic Wasting Disease in NC*

<https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/resolver/1840.20/40986>

### *The influence of social norms on hunters' decision to test deer for chronic wasting disease*

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10871209.2025.2477020>

## III. Regulation Changes/Updates

### *Proposed Rule Changes*

- Establish CWD Management Area counties (Cumberland, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin counties) and deer seasons. Shift the timing of blackpowder and gun seasons to open one week earlier in Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin counties. The opening date for archery season would not be changed, but archery is shortened by one week since blackpowder season will open earlier.
- Establish a two-day early season (Velvet Season) for antlered buck-only on all lands (public and private) on the weekend of the 4th Saturday in August in all CWD Management Area counties. All lawful weapons would be allowed. The normal 2-buck season limit would apply plus any CWD MAP tags that have been issued to individuals.
- Change the carcass transportation rules to emphasize disposal, requiring non-edible portions to be disposed of in a lined landfill, buried under specific conditions, or left on the ground within the county of origin.
- Remove the CWD Management Area counties from the Deer Rule. Increases Either-Sex season on private lands in six Western Season counties (Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Madison, Mitchell, Yancey), and increase Either-Sex season on private lands in three Northwestern Season counties (Cleveland, Polk, Rutherford).

### *AgDMAP*

<https://www.ncwildlife.gov/wildlife-habitat/private-lands-management/deer-cooperator-programs>



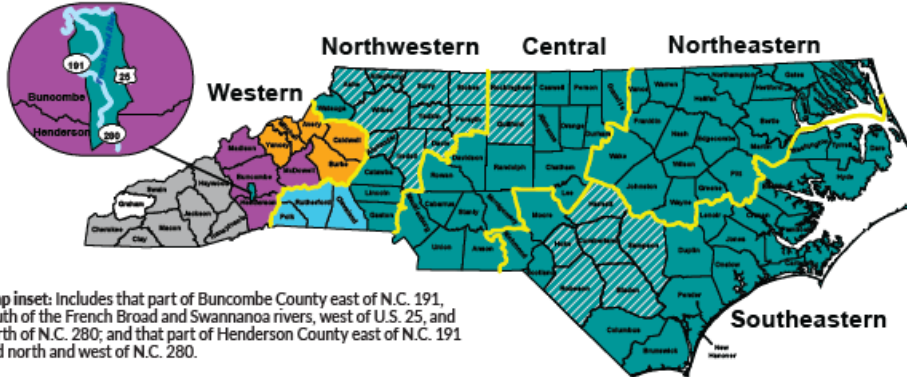
# North Carolina Deer Program Report

By: April Boggs Pope, april.pope@ncwildlife.gov



## Deer Zone Map

Crosshatching indicates CWD Surveillance Areas. Refer to page 67 for more information, and applicable special regulations.









Map inset: Includes that part of Buncombe County east of N.C. 191, south of the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers, west of U.S. 25, and north of N.C. 280; and that part of Henderson County east of N.C. 191 and north and west of N.C. 280.

## ANTLERED DEER SEASONS

ZONE	ARCHERY	BLACKPOWDER	GUN
Western	Sept. 13 – Nov. 14, 2025	Nov. 15 – Nov. 28, 2025	Nov. 29, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026
Northwestern	Sept. 13 – Nov. 7, 2025	Nov. 8 – Nov. 21, 2025	Nov. 22, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026
Central	Sept. 13 – Oct. 31, 2025	Nov. 1 – Nov. 14, 2025	Nov. 15, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026
Northeastern	Sept. 13 – Oct. 3, 2025	Oct. 4 – Oct. 17, 2025	Oct. 18, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026
Southeastern	Sept. 13 – Oct. 3, 2025	Oct. 4 – Oct. 17, 2025	Oct. 18, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026

## ANTLERLESS DEER SEASONS

SEASON	ARCHERY	BLACKPOWDER	GUN
	All open days of applicable antlered archery season	All open days of applicable antlered blackpowder season	All open days of applicable antlered gun season
	All open days of applicable antlered archery season	All open days of applicable antlered blackpowder season	Nov. 22 – Dec. 20, 2025
	All open days of applicable antlered archery season	All open days of applicable antlered blackpowder season	Nov. 29 – Dec. 13, 2025
	All open days of applicable antlered archery season	All open days of applicable antlered blackpowder season	Nov. 29 – Dec. 6, 2025
	All open days of applicable antlered archery season	Nov. 22 – Nov. 28, 2025	Nov. 29, 2025
	All open days of applicable antlered archery season	Nov. 22, 2025	None

## IV. Disease Issues / Updates

### Hemorrhagic Disease

- 47 cases were suspected in North Carolina in 2024 based on diagnostic criteria with 7 confirmed (EHDV and EHDV-2).

### Chronic Wasting Disease

- 23,795 deer tested statewide in 2024-2025
- Payments were made for samples from Cervid Health Cooperators (\$10 for head submissions and \$20 for retropharyngeal lymph nodes).
- Added a 300 sample cap for CHCs (exemptions allowed in some cases) to allow for more accurate budgeting
- CWD was not detected in any new counties this year
- Trying out ELISA testing during 2025-2026 season and no mandatory testing
- Other regulations will remain the same as last year (see below)
- Overall, 10 new cases were detected
- 34 CWD positives, 5 primary (positive) counties
  - Cumberland Co. 8
  - Stokes Co. 2
  - Surry Co. 14
  - Wilkes Co. 1
  - Yadkin Co. 8
  - Undetermined 1



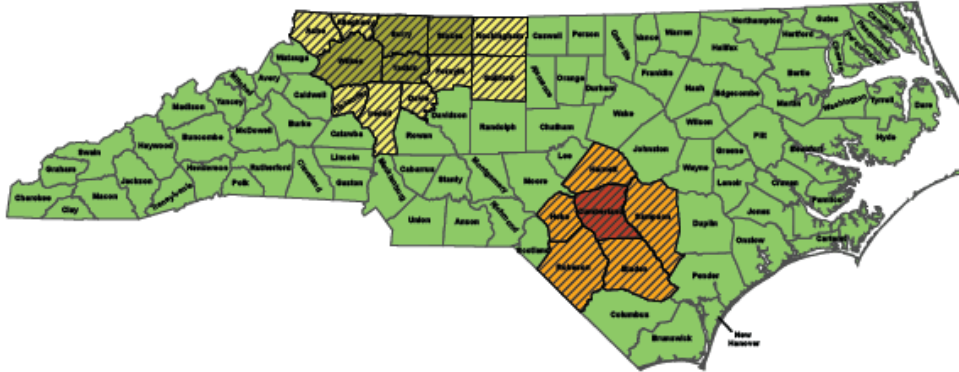
# North Carolina Deer Program Report

By: April Boggs Pope, [april.pope@ncwildlife.gov](mailto:april.pope@ncwildlife.gov)








## Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance Areas and Special Regulations

Please refer to [ncwildlife.gov/cwd](https://ncwildlife.gov/cwd) for the most current CWD testing locations, interactive maps, and regulations.



Two Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance Areas are defined for the 2025–2026 hunting season. Each surveillance area contains a Primary Surveillance Area of counties in which CWD has been confirmed, and a Secondary Surveillance Area of other nearby counties.

	SURVEILLANCE AREA 1	SURVEILLANCE AREA 2	CARCASS TRANSPORT RESTRICTIONS
Primary Surveillance Areas	 Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, Yadkin No Mandatory Testing	 Cumberland No Mandatory Testing	Carcasses and carcass parts may not be transported out of the county of harvest, except to a contiguous Primary Surveillance Area county and except for the deboned, caped, cleaned, or taxidermy parts described below.
Secondary Surveillance Areas	 Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Iredell, Rockingham No Mandatory Testing	 Bladen, Harnett, Hoke, Robeson, Sampson No Mandatory Testing	Carcasses and carcass parts may not be transported out of the county of harvest, except to a contiguous Primary or Secondary Surveillance Area county and except for the deboned, caped, cleaned, or taxidermy parts described below.
Non-surveillance Area	 All counties not listed above No Mandatory Testing		Carcass and carcass parts may be transported statewide, including into or through Surveillance Areas.

### Carcass Transport Restrictions

The transportation of a deer carcass or carcass parts out of a primary or secondary surveillance area is prohibited except for the following, or as otherwise permitted by the Wildlife Commission:

- Meat that has been boned out such that no pieces or fragments of bone remain
- Caped hides with no part of the skull or spinal column attached
- Antlers, antlers attached to cleaned skull plates, or skulls free from meat or brain tissue
- Cleaned lower jawbones with teeth or cleaned teeth
- Finished taxidermy products and tanned hides

### Voluntary Testing

Voluntary [sampling](#) is available across the state in CWD surveillance areas and non-surveillance areas. Samples may be submitted to a Commission-staffed facility, to a Cervid Health Cooperator, or deposited in a Commission CWD Testing Drop-off Station. Updated information on locations for submitting samples will be available by September 1, 2025 at [ncwildlife.gov/cwd](https://ncwildlife.gov/cwd).

Please be aware that the NCWRC cooperates with numerous taxidermists and deer processors across North Carolina for routine surveillance for Chronic Wasting Disease. If you use these services your deer may be tested for CWD without your knowledge, but the NCWRC will inform you of the test results.

### Fawn Rehabilitation

Fawn rehabilitation within CWD Surveillance Areas is prohibited. Fawns may not be transported out of these Surveillance Areas and cannot be accepted by fawn rehabilitators.

### Wildlife Feeding and Baiting

The placement of minerals or salt to purposely congregate wildlife is prohibited in CWD Surveillance Areas. The placement of bait, food, or food products to purposefully congregate wildlife is prohibited from January 2 – August 31 in CWD Surveillance Areas, except for:

- Bird feeders
- Hunting in urban archery seasons in participating municipalities
- Other activities specifically permitted by the Wildlife Commission

### Attractants and Scents

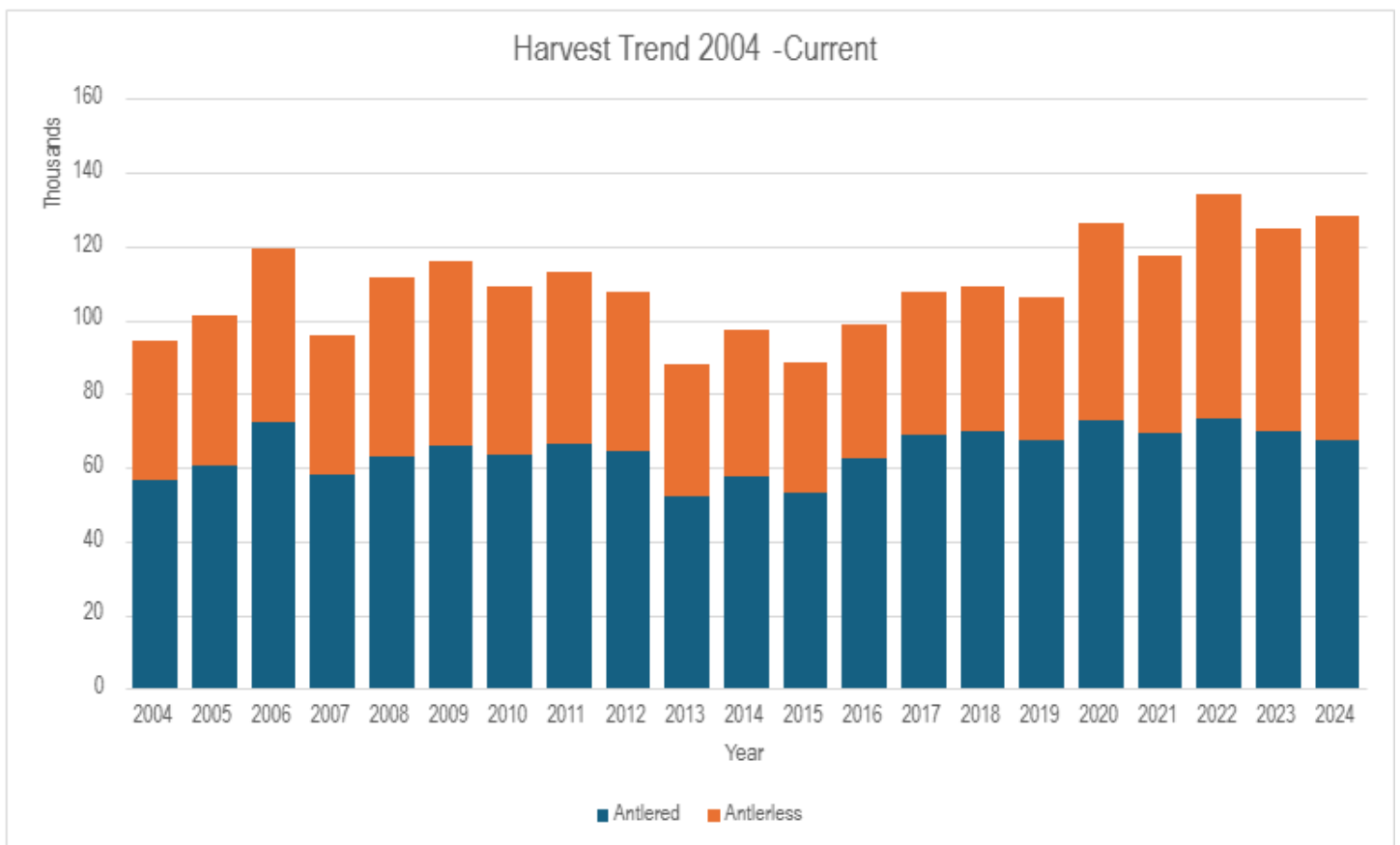
In addition to the statewide regulations defining legal use of attractants and scents, found on page 55, the possession or use of products containing natural substances collected by a hunter from a legally harvested cervid in North Carolina is prohibited in CWD Surveillance Areas.



## Oklahoma Deer Program Report 2024 Dallas Barber

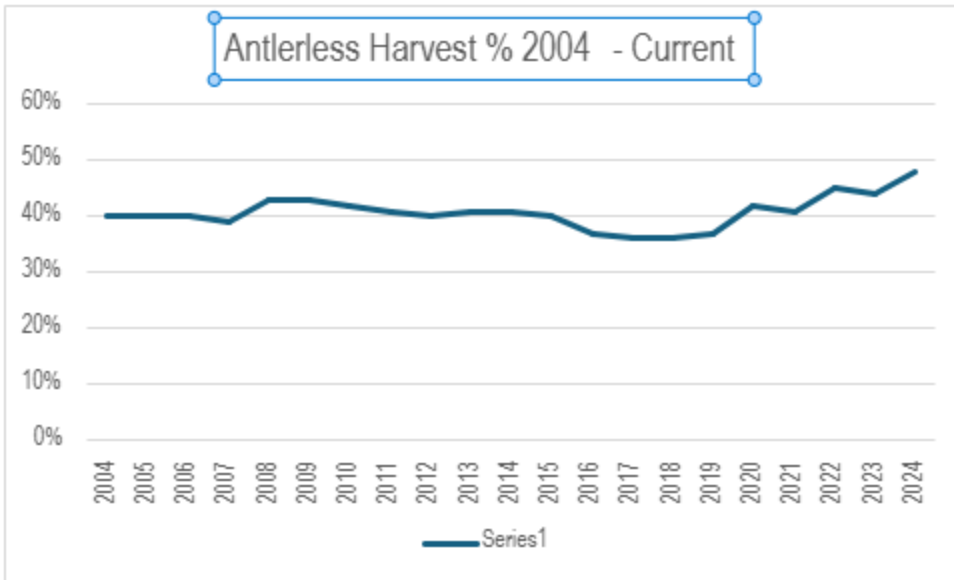
### I. Harvest/Population Trends

- 2024-25 season resulted in 128,375 deer being harvested.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> all time harvest total
- record antlerless harvest (48%)
- 70/77 counties recorded atleast 40% antlerless make up.





**Oklahoma Deer Program Report 2024**  
**Dallas Barber**







## Oklahoma Deer Program Report 2024 Dallas Barber

### II. Research

*Currently in the middle of a mule deer collar project. Showing heavy metal poisoning mortality in fawns*





## Oklahoma Deer Program Report 2024 Dallas Barber

### III. Regulation Changes/Updates

*First year of NR license price increase saw less NR licenses sold, but same amount of revenue compared to years past. Win/win.*

### IV. Disease Issues/Updates

#### *CWD Regulation Changes*

- *Legislation passed to remove regulations pertaining to out of state carcass movement restrictions*
- *Kept intrastate carcass movement from out of SSA's*

#### *CWD Sampling*

-127 samples

10% of tx co harvest

6% of cim co harvest

<1% of Woodward co harvest

-Continuing to provide voluntary sampling freezers within SSA's

-also requiring all depredation permit holders to sample

-genomic sampling for cwd 'resistant' deer is ongoing, over half way to goal of 1,000 samples by end of 25-26 hunting season.



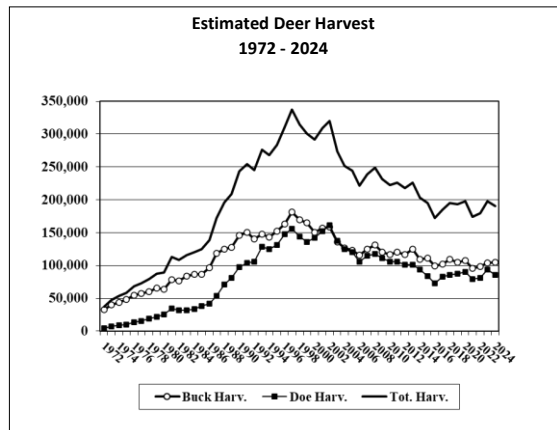
## South Carolina Deer Program Report

By: Charles Ruth & Jay Cantrell



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

- During the 2024 deer season the noncompliance corrected reported deer harvest included 105,076 bucks and 85,631 does for a total statewide harvest of 190,707 deer.
- The 2024 harvest estimate represents a 4 percent decrease from 2023 (198,171) and is 40 percent below the record harvest established in 2002 (319,902).
- After many years of rapidly increasing from the 1970's to the mid-1990's, the deer population in South Carolina exhibited relative stability between 1995 and 2002. Between 2003 and 2015, however, the population trended down with the overall reduction in harvest likely attributable to several factors, including habitat change, two decades of aggressive antlerless harvest, and the complete colonization of the state by coyotes and their impact on fawn survival. Harvest figures since 2015 have generally been stable to slightly increasing and have tended to be between 175,000 and 200,000 deer annually.



### II. Research

#### *Invasive mammal effects on white-tailed deer*

This cooperative project between SCDNR and the US Forest Service, Southern Research Station at Savannah River Site began in July of 2024. Under the direction of Dr. John Kilgo, the study seeks to better understand the effects, both singularly and cumulatively, of wild pigs and coyotes on deer and other ecosystem processes. To disentangle the relative effects of each, we are using large (100 acres) low-fence enclosures. One will selectively exclude coyotes but not wild pigs, one will exclude wild pigs but not coyotes, and one will exclude both species. An unfenced control plot will exclude neither. Within the area where the enclosures are located, we will capture, GPS-collar, and outfit with VIT's 30 female deer and we will capture and GPS-collar 10 coyotes and 10 wild pigs. Questions that can be addressed with this experimental framework include the following. Do deer perceive areas free of coyotes as refugia and preferentially give birth and raise fawns in such areas? Do deer alter behavior (e.g., habitat and forage use, reduced vigilance, nursing visits to fawns throughout the night rather than primarily day) where predation risk is eliminated? Do wild pigs degrade habitat conditions sufficiently to affect deer space use, condition, and reproductive potential? Do wild pigs so degrade habitat conditions for deer that the benefits of refugia from coyotes are offset? Does the presence or absence of pigs affect antipredator behavior response of deer to coyotes? Do the effects of coyotes and/or wild pigs on deer behavior affect plant community composition and structure? Do coyotes and/or wild pigs affect populations of other taxa, including small mammals, rabbits, songbirds, wild turkeys? This project will continue through 2027.

### III. Hot Topics

Electronic harvest reporting for deer began during the 2024 season and went extremely well. Noncompliance with reporting is estimated in two ways. First, participants in a postseason online survey who indicated that they harvested deer were asked how many of the deer they harvested were reported. Second, by cross-referencing the reporting data with the responses an estimate was obtained of the percentage of individuals who said they reported but did not. Combining these estimates yielded a noncompliance rate of approximately 10 percent. Obviously, this noncompliance rate is extraordinarily low and is clearly a result of hunters being required to report by midnight of the day of harvest or prior to leaving the deer at a meat processor. Hunters are required to provide the processor with the harvest report confirmation number and the processor is required to record and maintain the confirmation number until the processed meat is received by the hunter or their representative.

The Deer Depredation Program continues to be an issue in South Carolina.

### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

#### *Hemorrhagic Disease*

Several cases were submitted to SCWDS for diagnostics with no EHDV detected. Surveillance indicated that disease activity may have been present in 6 or more counties affecting small numbers of deer.

#### *Chronic Wasting Disease*

In 2023 CWD surveillance in SC shifted to an effort employing taxidermists to collect samples from adult males. This approach is based SCDNR's project with Cornell University to develop a CWD risk assessment and surveillance strategy. In 2024 1,351 samples were collected with no detections. This level of sampling met the statewide point goal, but goals were not met in all counties. Based on the 2024 effort steps will be taken to fill voids in county level point goals henceforth. There is continued emphasis on targeted surveillance of clinical animals, as well as any illegally possessed or imported deer. All deer hunters in South Carolina receive physical deer tags by mail which provides a platform for messaging related to the CWD carcass importation and commercial urine ban regulations that are in place.



# 2024–25 Tennessee Deer Program Report

By: Adam Edge



## I. Harvest / Population Trends

- 167,980 deer harvests reported statewide.
- Highest reported harvest in over a decade.
- 91,205 (54%) antlered deer harvests reported.
- 76,772 (46%) antlerless deer harvests reported.
- 3 reported harvests of unknown sex.

## II. Research / Special Projects

### *Annual Harvest and Effort Survey*

The University of Tennessee conducted an annual harvest and effort survey for TWRA during

the 2019–2023 seasons. During that time, the reported harvest rate ranged from 71–78% and the total number of estimated deer hunters increased 24.7%. However, we believe there is uncertainty around this increase due to a change in the license purchase structure during this time, which may have influenced sampling methodology. Licenses were historically valid throughout designated season dates, but this was changed to be valid 365 days from purchase date. Beginning with the 2024 season, TWRA began conducting the survey in-house using a similar framework. Estimates from this past season include a 68% reporting rate and 248,116 deer hunters in TN.

### *Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) Framework*

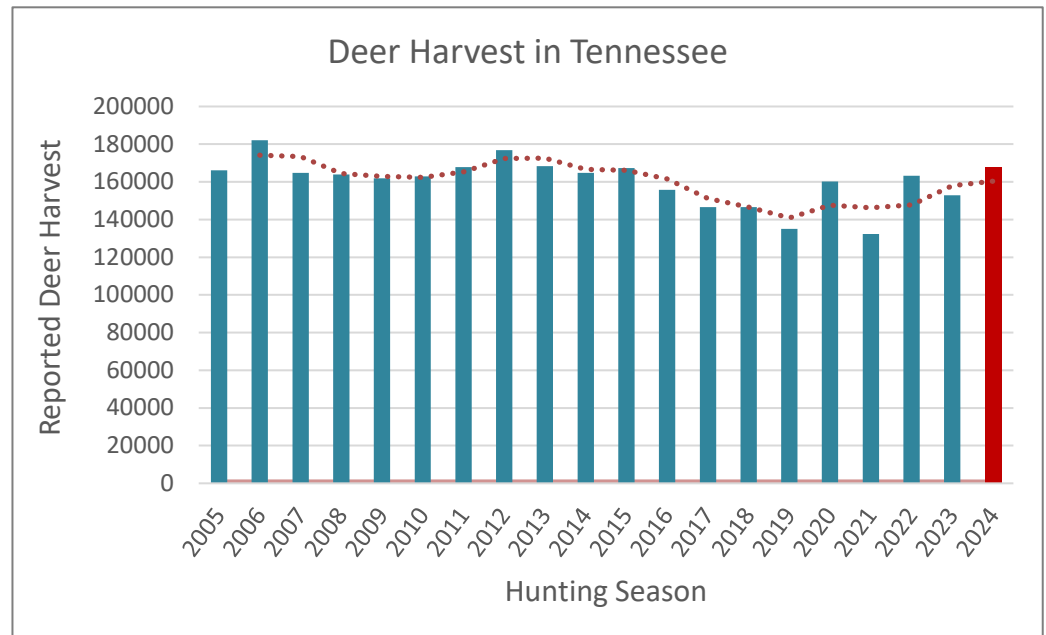
The newly delineated Deer Management Units (DMU) and AHM framework are now in place. Dr. Allison Keever with Tennessee Tech University is currently developing a Shiny App for TWRA that will allow us to enter updated population parameters on an annual basis to dictate the following season's deer bag limit regulations. Population parameters (e.g., deer abundance and fawn:doe ratios) are estimated using an integrated population model (IPM) based on harvest data at the DMU scale. Next consideration is to incorporate observational data (e.g., density estimations) into the IPM to further validate estimates.

### *Deer Density Estimation in CWD-Affected Area*

Completed a 5-year monitoring project (2021–2025) to estimate deer densities within the CWD Management Zone by outsourcing thermal aerial surveys. Surveyed 13 sites (36 mi<sup>2</sup> each) representing the CWD core and periphery. There were no significant changes in densities observed on any of the 13 sites. However, the four CWD core sites showed a slightly negative trend. Any disease effects on population dynamics may still be occurring at a scale too small to be captured by the surveys. Due to budget constraints, TWRA did not renew this contract and will look to monitor deer densities in a more cost-effective manner.

### *Fire as a Tool for Remediation of Prion-contaminated Landscapes*

TWRA partnered with University of Minnesota to investigate the potential of prescribed fire as a remediation tool for prion-contaminated soils through a highly controlled laboratory study. Strong evidence has shown that prion seeding activity may be remediated through surface burning. Prescribed fire reduced prion seeding activity in the upper soil layers. Remediation efficacy is likely affected by soil texture, burn duration, and max temperature achieved. Preliminary results suggest more porous soils (e.g., sand) are remediated more readily than more heterogeneous soils as prion seeding activity was reduced to lower depths. Next steps are to test under natural environmental conditions.



### III. Hot Topics

#### Agency Funding

The TWRA Commission recently approved a new license rule to change the structure (replacing weapon-specific with species-specific licenses) and increase costs to account for inflation and increasing operation costs. TWRA has not increased hunting license costs in over a decade. However, the TN General Assembly expressed great concern over the new rule, so the Director made the difficult decision to withdraw the rule package. Further conversation led to several congress members verbally committing to finding a long-term funding strategy.

#### Baiting Bill

The TN General Assembly passed a bill that mandates TWRA to develop a rule allowing a private lands baiting permit to go into effect during the 2026–27 season. TWRA retains the authority to control baiting privileges in areas of disease concern (e.g., CWD+ counties). Baiting permits will be \$50 for a resident and \$100 for a non-resident hunter.

#### Straight-wall Cartridge Proposal

A coordinated effort was made this year to push for the use of straight-wall cartridges during the muzzleloader season. TN's muzzleloader season is fairly unique in that it occurs for two consecutive weeks in mid-November, a prime period of hunting for much of the state. The Agency presented prior public input that showed a lack of support due to degradation of the traditional muzzleloader season, increasing complexity of regulations, and the fact that straight-wall cartridges are already allowed during the gun season. The Commission did not approve the measure. This proposal is sure to be brought up again in the future.

#### Buck Age-of-Harvest Continues to Increase

In 2015, the statewide antlered bag limit was changed from 3 to 2 in TN. Following this change the age-of-harvest structure has changed to a larger proportion of older age-class bucks being harvested. There has also been an overall cultural shift towards the harvesting of older age class bucks and/or trophy animals in recent times. However, trends suggest the antlered bag limit reduction also contributed to hunters being more selective about their buck harvest.

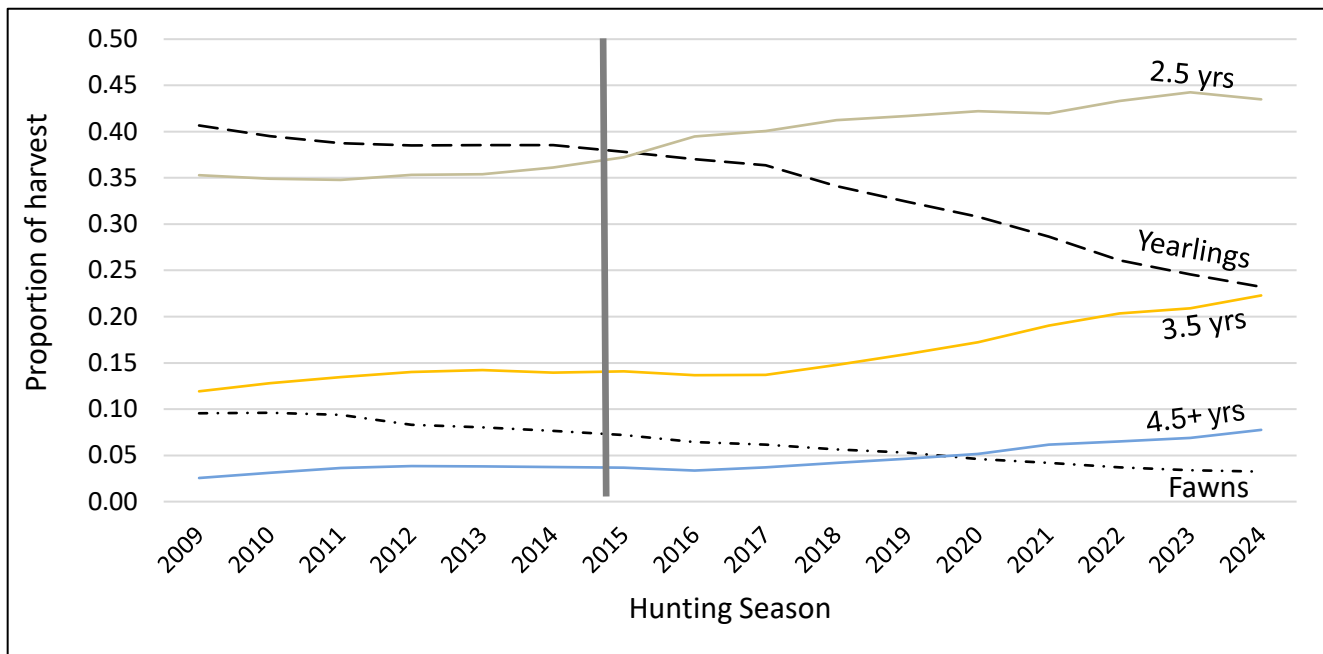


Figure shows the proportional buck age-of-harvest during 2009–2024 in Tennessee using 5-year running averages. The statewide buck bag limit was changed from 3 to 2 in 2015. Age data was collected across the state at check stations.



### Rolling Back CWD Incentives

To reduce long-term costs within the CWD budget, TWRA has begun to scale back some of the CWD incentive programs that were not deemed to be cost-effective or necessary.

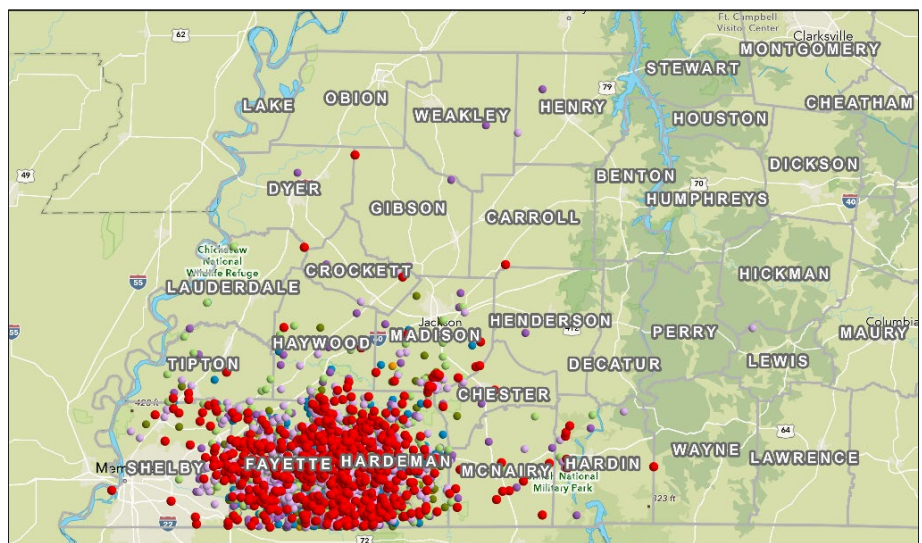
- Previously, any resident hunter who harvested two or more CWD-positive deer would be given an Annual Sportsman license for the next hunting season, which could also be gifted to another resident. Only ~90 Sportsman licenses were gifted annually. This incentive was omitted.
- Payments made to processors/taxidermists for CWD samples were reduced 50% in the CWD Management Zone, as we typically receive more samples than statistically necessary within our CWD area. Therefore, it did not seem essential to continue paying for additional samples unnecessarily.
- Hunters are still able to receive free service testing as well as a \$75 processing voucher if their harvested deer tests positive. The cost reduction goal was not to penalize the hunters.

## IV. Disease Issues / Updates

### Chronic Wasting Disease

#### Surveillance 2024-25 (FY25)

- ~757 positive deer detections.
- Since CWD discovery in Dec 2018, a total of 4,278 deer have tested positive.
- ~14,984 WTD samples collected statewide.
- The total number of CWD-positive counties is up to 18
- Carroll County was the only new county added. The county was already within the CWD Management Zone.
- Surveillance targets achieved in 91/95 counties.
- CWD not detected in elk.



CWD+ detections in white-tailed deer in Tennessee, 2018–2025 (as of July 2025).

#### Future Surveillance 2025-26 (FY26)

- Surveillance quotas determined using a risk-based model developed by Cornell University Wildlife Health Lab.
- Increased surveillance will occur in eastern counties in response to additional CWD detections in NC and VA.
- Reduced surveillance points required in CWD endemic area of Fayette and Hardeman Counties.
- Lack of accountability regarding captive cervid operations continues to be an issue. TN Dept of Agriculture has most authority and not all facilities are required to report. Poor compliance with CWD-testing requirements.

#### Targeted Removal

- Targeted removal efforts began Winter '21
- Removals conducted by USDA Wildlife Services and TWRA.
- Efforts are focused along the periphery of CWD core area.
- Over 5 years, a total of 467 deer have been removed.
- No sampled deer have tested positive for CWD.
- The program has not been effective overall.
- Landowner permission remains the primary barrier

Table 1: Deer sampled during targeted removal efforts.

Deer			
Year	removed	CWD+	Counties
2021	96	0	4
2022	86	0	4
2023	120	0	7
2024	86	0	3
2025	79	0	3

#### Strategic Efforts

- Maintain consistent season lengths with the rest of the state to simplify regulations and appease hunters.
- Discussion to change messaging for targeted removal by incorporating herd health checks.





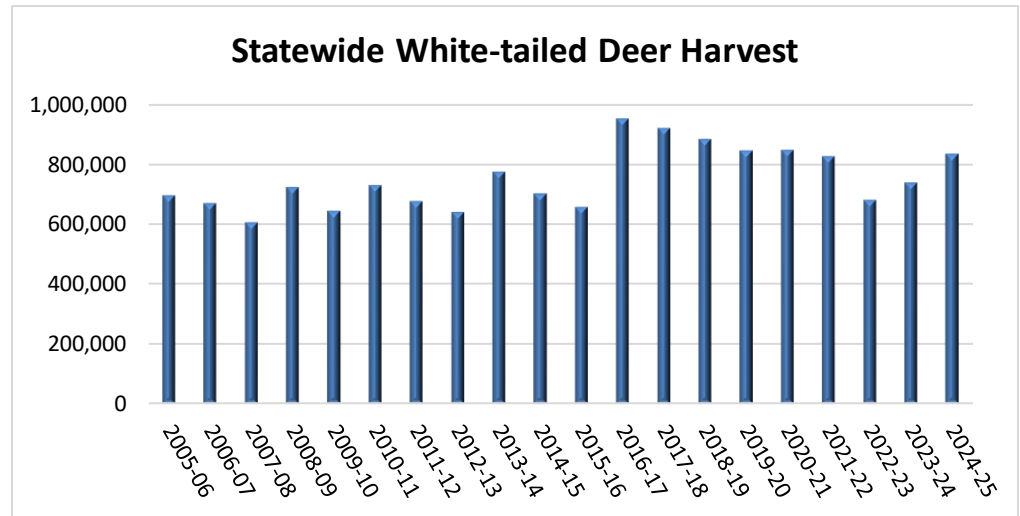
## Texas Deer Program Report 2025

Blaise Korzekwa



### I. Harvest/Population Trends

- 2024-25 estimated statewide white-tailed deer harvest was 837,010, up 13% from 2023-24. Bucks represented 51% of harvest and does 49%.
- 2024 statewide white-tailed deer population estimate was 5,015,119 based on current estimates from each monitored deer management unit.
- 2024-25 Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) enrolled 11,221 management units on 29,427,199 acres.
  - TPWD issued 349,533 white-tailed deer MLDP tags in 2024. (135,835 bucks & 213,698 antlerless).
  - MLDP participants harvested 179,719 white-tailed deer (51.4% of recommended harvest).



### II. Research

#### *Northwest Panhandle and Hueco Mountains CWD Capture Study*

Northwest Panhandle collars – 39 mule deer, 41 white-tailed deer, 24 elk; Hueco Mountains – 50 mule deer

Purpose of study is to quantify movement and survival parameters, as well as create a model based on site-specific parameters to understand the dynamics of CWD and determine potential management actions. All animals were CWD ante-mortem not detected at the time of capture. Additional collars will be deployed on white-tailed deer in the CWD-positive area of Medina/Uvalde Counties to study the South-Central portion of Texas.

### III. Regulation Changes/Updates

#### *CWD Regulation Changes*

In January 2025, the TPW Commission adopted a comprehensive CWD rules package that included:

- Removal of all CWD Zones
- Modified carcass disposal rules
- Double fencing requirements for new deer breeder facilities
- Fence inspection requirements
- Released breeder deer must retain visible ID
- Proximity rules apply to deer breeders and Deer Management Permit (DMP) holders within proximity to a free-ranging CWD detection
- CWD positive deer breeder facilities must either sign a herd plan within 6 months of detection or agree to depopulate the breeding facility

#### *Managed Lands Deer Program Update*

The MLDP enrollment fee generates approximately \$1.5 million in annual revenue. When leveraged with PR, the department was able to hire 22 additional district biologists in areas with high MLDP enrollment. The reduced staff workload has continued to allow more opportunities for property visits and provide technical guidance to landowners. The increase in additional staff created the need to restructure the department's wildlife regions, which have now increased to five regions and 11 districts.



## Texas Deer Program Report 2025

Blaise Korzekwa



### IV. Disease Issues/Updates

#### *Chronic Wasting Disease New Detection Updates*

Since August 2024, CWD has been detected in an additional 125 individuals, bringing the total to 1,109 CWD detections in Texas. Table 1 below shows the county, type, and number of detections since 2012.

#### *Development of Public-Facing CWD Dashboard*

Staff have developed an interactive CWD dashboard that will become available to the public in August. Users will be able to view historical CWD sampling efforts based on a 3-mile grid system, which was used to protect landowner privacy of not-detected CWD test results. Users will also be able to view exact locations of CWD detections based on the type of detection (breeder deer, breeder deer release site, or free range). Various CWD metrics such as DMU goals, number of samples collected, and number of positive cases through time will also be available in a chart format.

#### *CWD Sampling*

- 2024-2025 Statewide Surveillance
  - 13,270 samples collected in 2024-25 season (9,573 hunter-harvested samples, 3,426 roadkill samples, 271 other)
  - 12,567 samples from white-tailed deer, 366 from mule deer, 29 from elk, and 308 from exotic species
  - Females represented 42.8% and males 55.9% of total samples. 1.3% of samples had unknown sex.
- Several CWD Zones transitioned from mandatory to voluntary sampling in the recent 2024-25 season. Total statewide samples still exceeded the department's goal of 8,390 samples, but decreased approximately 12% from the prior season.
- Department staff have collected approximately 154,000 CWD samples since 2002, with most of those samples collected since 2015.

#### *New World Screwworm*

The recent detections of NWS in Mexico have caused much concern for the department, as well as hunters and landowners in Texas. The most recent confirmed detection of NWS is approximately 370 miles south of the Texas/Mexico border. At the direction of the Governor, TPWD and Texas Animal Health Commission have established a joint NWS response team that consists of agency personnel, NGOs, landowners, and other constituents. Department staff from multiple divisions continue to receive training on how to detect NWS and are currently working on various management options.



Texas Deer Program Report 2025  
Blaise Korzekwa



CWD Positive Samples by County and Calendar Year (January 1 - December 31)

County	Susceptible Species	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Bexar	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Brooks	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Brown	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Cherokee	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Coleman	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Dallam	Elk - FR	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
	MD - FR	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	9	0	14
	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Duval	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Edwards	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
El Paso	MD - FR	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	2	4	4	6	2	6	4	33
Frio	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	64	13	84
Gillespie	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	13	4	21
Gonzales	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	10
Hamilton	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hartley	MD - FR	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	6	1	0	13	2	6	0	33
	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	7
Hudspeth	MD - FR	6	0	1	1	4	1	1	0	4	2	1	0	1	1	23
Hunt	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	49	95	276	0	426
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	1	13
Kaufman	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	0	6
Kerr	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	WTD - RP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Kimble	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	2	12	3	27
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Lavaca	WTD - BP	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Limestone	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	0	9
Lubbock	MD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Mason	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Matagorda	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Medina	Elk - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	4	1	10
	Red Deer - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	5
	WTD - BP	0	0	0	4	15	13	0	4	0	17	0	1	5	0	59
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	3	0	3	0	4	1	17
	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	3	1	5	1	2	0	17
Oldham	MD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Real	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Roberts	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sutton	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	11	2	15
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Trinity	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
Uvalde	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	2	8	45	15	1	29	71	0	0	0	171
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	1	3	0	5	0	1	0	17
Val Verde	WTD - FR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Washington	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Zavala	WTD - BP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	17	9	36
	WTD - BRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
Total		6	0	1	8	32	31	61	34	35	65	170	154	466	46	1109

BP = Breeder Pen; BRS = Breeder Release Site; FR = Free Range; RP = Research Pen; WTD = White-tailed Deer; MD = Mule Deer

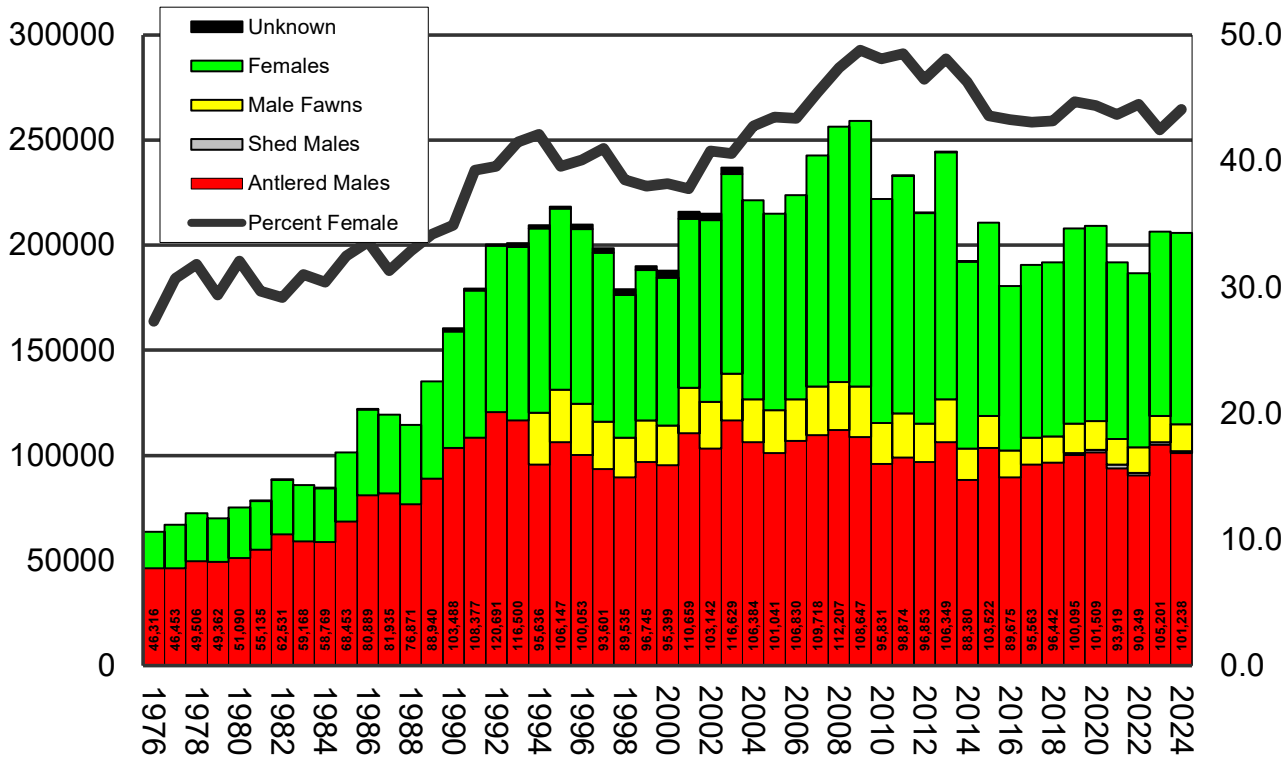
## Virginia Deer Program Report

Justin Folks, Deer Project Leader and Katie Martin, Deer-Bear-Turkey Biologist



### I. Harvest / Population Trends

During the 2024–25 deer hunting season, hunters reported harvesting 205,759 deer in Virginia, down just 0.4% from the 206,586 deer taken during the same time frame the previous season. This year's total included 101,238 antlered bucks, 665 bucks that had shed their antlers, 13,019 button bucks, and 90,837 does (44.1%).



### II. Research

None. We're broke.

### III. Hot Topics

Citizen wanting to import a reindeer for Christmas display, etc. Got Governor's office involved. Reindeer defined as wildlife some places, livestock in others. Tricky spot for us to be in.

### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

#### Chronic Wasting Disease

##### • 2024 Surveillance

- Sampled and have results from 8,801 deer from our 4 DMAs, statewide taxidermy samples, and late season samples (February-March).
- 109 positive detections (most in a single year to date, surpassing last year's record of 71). 79 from DMA1.
- No new detections in recently-established DMA4 in SW VA
- 1 new detection in a DMA county (but previously no positives): Roanoke—clinical 6 YO buck
- Sampling methods included:
  - Mandatory Sample Day: 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of General Firearms Season in select DMA counties
  - Voluntary Refrigerator Drop-Offs in all DMA counties and at DWR Regional Offices
  - Cooperating Processors in all DMAs (paid \$5/head)
  - Cooperating Taxidermists (all DMAs and statewide), Paid \$15/correct sample + data card
  - Managed hunts, sharpshooting (kill permits within cities/towns), road kill (limited)

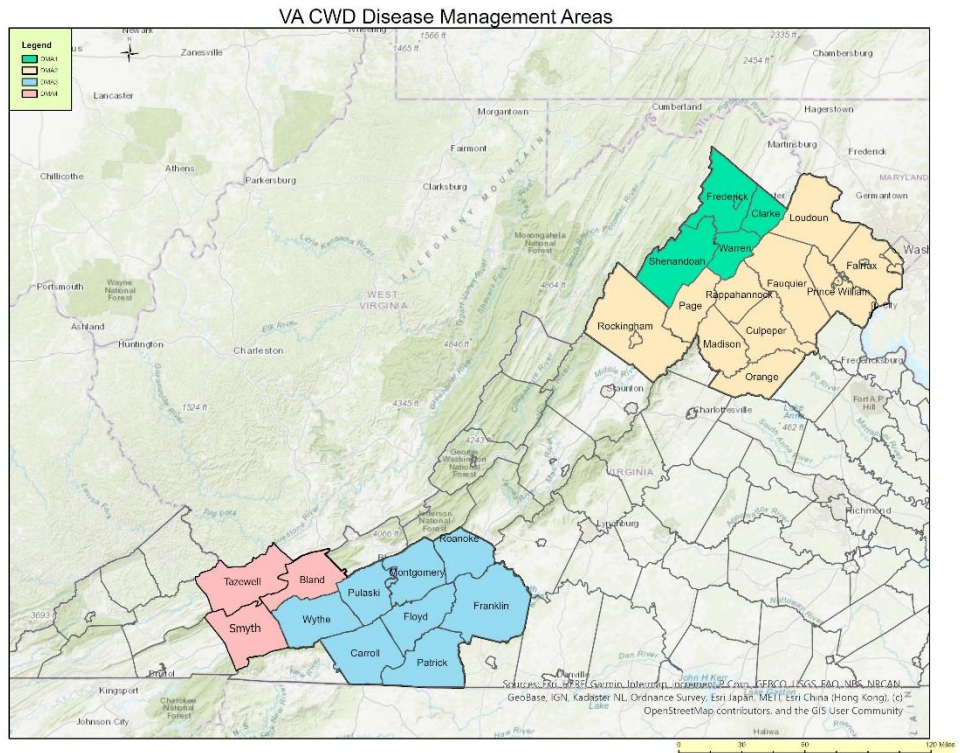
# Virginia Deer Program Report

Justin Folks, Deer Project Leader and Katie Martin, Deer-Bear-Turkey Biologist



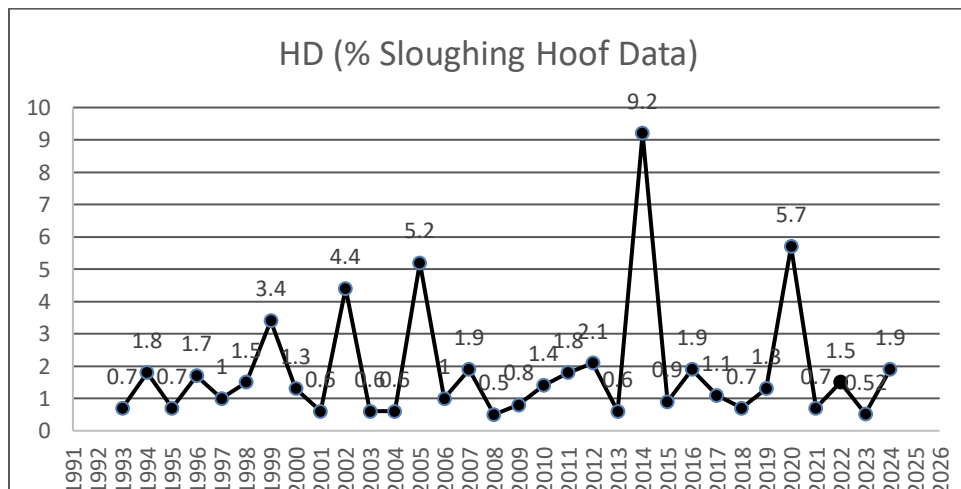
- **Changes for 2025 Season**
  - Adding Rockingham to DMA2 in response to nearby positives in WV

- **Management Strategies**
  - Most DMA counties currently have an early (September) and late (January-March) antlerless only deer firearms season
  - Most DMA counties are EAB
  - Restricted transport of high-risk carcass parts
  - Year-round cervid feeding bans in counties within 25 miles of a CWD positive
  - Replacement tags for positive animals (antlerless only)



## Hemorrhagic Disease

2024 was a relatively quiet year for HD in VA. DMAP hoof data showed a 1.9% apparent prevalence of chronic HD statewide. We experienced a handful of acute HD outbreaks west of the Blue Ridge Mountains (WBR) where HD activity is typically rare, but the region experienced a significant drought in late summer.



Percent of deer harvested by DMAP cooperators with splitting/sloughing hooves (statewide).



# West Virginia Deer Program Report

By: Brett Skelly



## I. Harvest / Population Trends

Season	2023	2024	Change 2023-24	2019-23 Avg.	2024 Diff from Avg.
Overall	109,246	111,646	2.2	107,854	3.5
Archery	30,287	32,240	6.4	30,986	4.0
Modern Firearm	73,828	74,492	0.9	71,739	3.8
Muzzleloader	4,521	4,173	-7.7	4,465	-6.5

Note: Archery season harvest includes deer taken with bow and crossbow with no hunter use restrictions for crossbow.

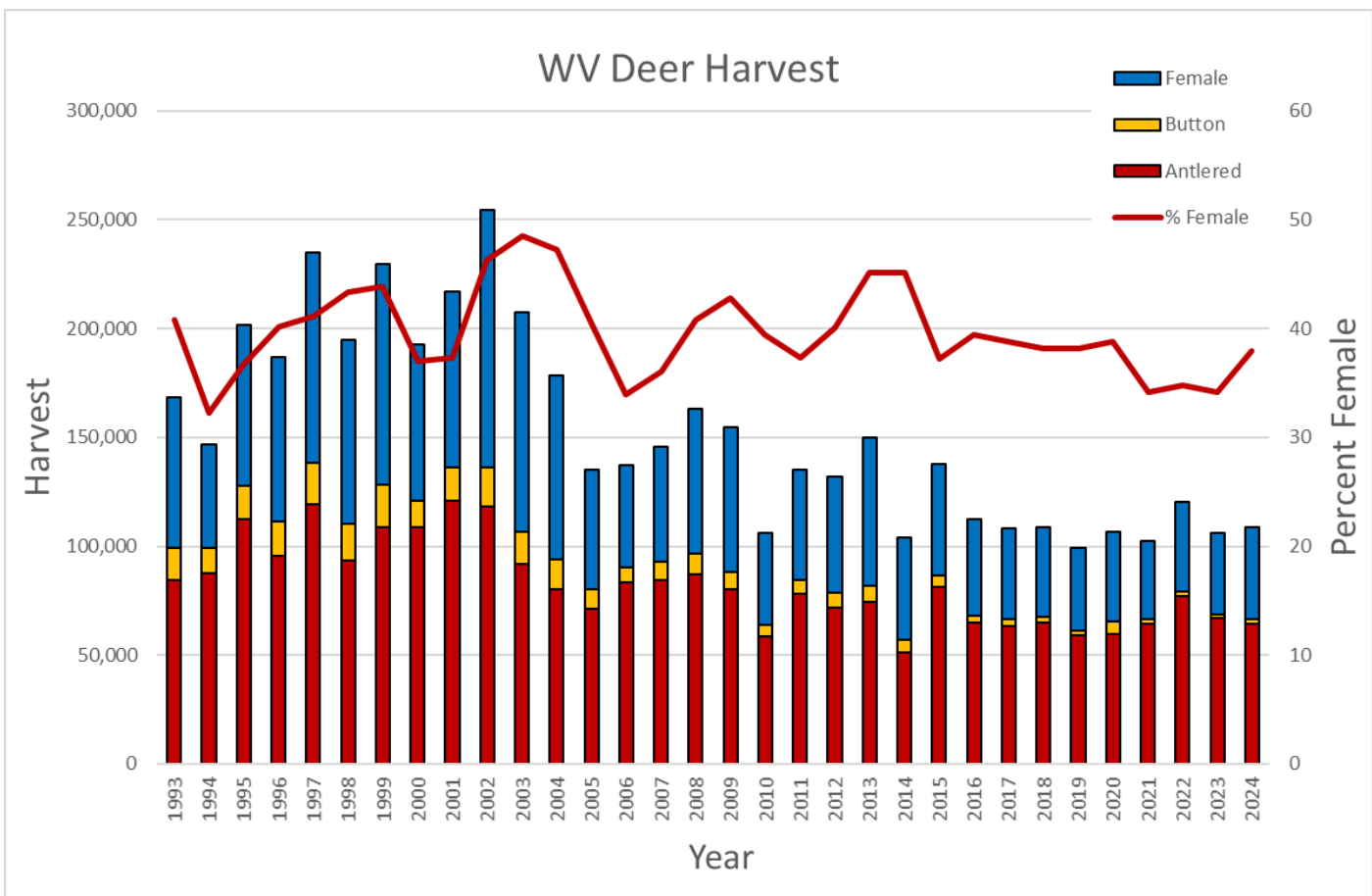


Figure 1. Statewide recorded deer harvest from 1993 – 2024 by deer type and percent female. Although statewide percent female was 37% in 2024, the percent female harvest in management units varied from 22% to 49% which reflects antlerless harvest frameworks designed to grow, reduce, or stabilize the deer population on a county basis.

## II. Research

### *Survival, Cause-specific Mortality, Resource Selection and Movement of White-tailed Deer in West Virginia*

This study has three study areas across the state, including one in a CWD detected County. There are two Ph.D. students, one at West Virginia University (WVU) and one at the University of Georgia, and one Masters student at WVU. A total of 350 deer were captured between the three winter capture seasons, 97 in 2021, 145 in 2022, and 108 in 2023. To-date there are 42 deer alive with GPS collars. The project has recorded 211 mortalities with hunter harvest (n = 83), vehicle collisions (n = 28), and predation (n = 26) being the top causes. In Hampshire County, 21 GPS collared deer have died of clinical Chronic Wasting Disease.





## West Virginia Deer Program Report By: Brett Skelly



*Comparison of two surveillance techniques for the efficient detection of CWD among free-ranging cervids in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia.*

This project is going to evaluate the effectiveness of different surveillance sampling methods for the detection of CWD in both known detected and non-detected counties. It will compare roadkill surveillance and taxidermy sampling methods. This work is partially funded through a cooperative agreement with USDA for the control and prevention of CWD in wild cervids. This work is ongoing.

*Climate Influenced Disease Expansion of Hemorrhagic Disease: West Virginia as a case study*

Evaluation of Hemorrhagic Disease (HD) outbreaks across West Virginia from 1981 – 2019. This work is part of a collaboration with Drs. Mark Ruder and David Stallknecht, Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, University of Georgia, Sonja Christensen, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Michigan State University, and WVDNR personnel. This work is ongoing.

### III. Hot Topics

- The impacts of electronic game checking on harvest data collection and ability to examine deer carcasses
- Presence of Chronic Wasting Disease located in eastern panhandle portion of the state.
- Natural Resources Commission passing to reduce the statewide antlered bag limit from 3 to 2 to take effect in 2024. With the exception for counties with CWD and for Senior Lifetime license holders the antlered buck bag limit will remain at 3.
- WV Department of Agriculture regulation of captive cervid facilities encountering enforcement challenges

### IV. Disease Issues / Updates

#### *Chronic Wasting Disease*

As of July 1, 2025, the abnormal prion associated with CWD has been detected in a total of 841 free-range deer in West Virginia. Statewide, samples from over 23,000 deer have been tested since 2002 and 703 deer from Hampshire County, 34 deer from Hardy County, 50 deer from Berkeley County, 22 deer from Mineral County, and 21 deer from Morgan County are the only animals found thus far to have the abnormal protein associated with CWD. In 2024, the first deer outside of the CWD containment area was CWD detected in a captive cervid facility. This was the third positive captive cervid facility in the state with the other two being in Hampshire and Hardy counties both inside the CWD containment area. In the spring of 2025 WVDNR personnel collected additional samples within 2-miles of the captive facility but did not detect the disease in the free-ranging population.

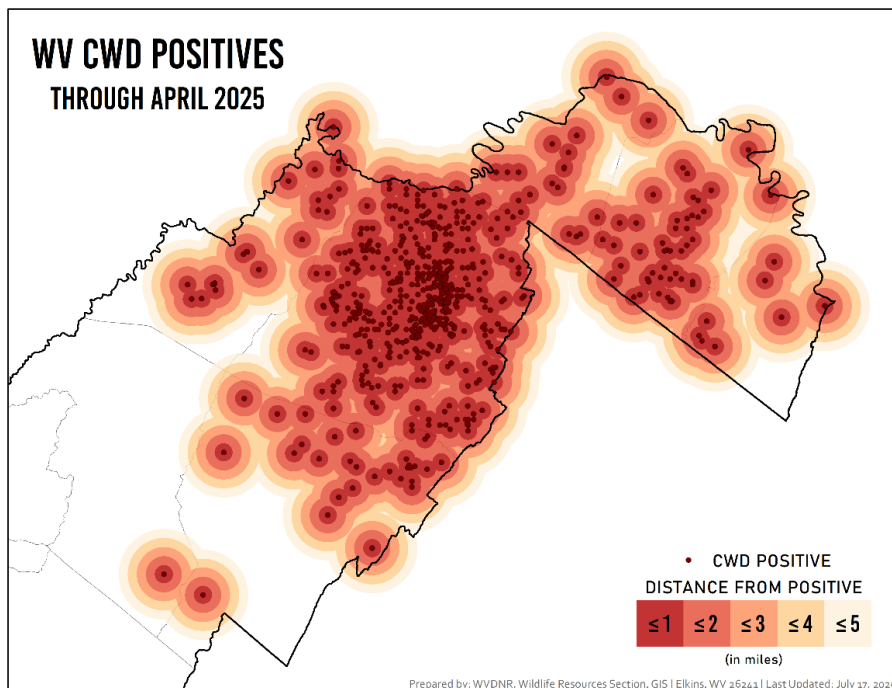


Figure 2. All detected CWD positive deer from 2005 to present.