

2025 Connecticut Deer Program Summary



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Introduction

This booklet is the 46th in a series since the passage of the White-tailed Deer Management Act of 1974, reporting on the status of the white-tailed deer resource in Connecticut. It summarizes white-tailed deer information for 2025, including changes in deer management regulations, harvest statistics, research activities, and population dynamics of Connecticut's deer population. Connecticut's Deer Management Program goals are: 1) to maintain the population at levels compatible with available habitat and land uses, and 2) to allow for a sustained yield of deer for use by Connecticut hunters. The program has mainly focused on stabilizing or reducing deer population growth for the best long-term interest of the deer resource, native plant and animal communities, and the public, while increasing populations in a few areas. Regulated deer hunting has proven to be an ecologically sound, socially beneficial, and fiscally responsible method of managing deer populations. Deer Program efforts have focused on increasing harvest of antlerless deer, coordinating controlled hunts for overabundant deer herds, assisting communities and large landowners with deer management issues, and research and management of deer populations.

Deer Management Zones (DMZs) were established (Figure 1A) and evolved (Figure 1B) because deer populations vary across the state. Management strategies in each zone vary depending on population status. Data from hunter surveys, regulated deer harvests, and total deer mortality have been recorded and evaluated by DMZs to better manage the statewide deer population. Pursuant to the goal of maintaining populations at levels compatible with available habitat and land uses, aggressive management strategies have been implemented in areas with high deer densities.

- The replacement antlerless tag program was initiated in 1995, allowing hunters in DMZ 11 to harvest additional antlerless deer with the goal of increasing the doe harvest during the firearms season, and in 1998 during the archery season in DMZs 11 and 12.
- In 2003, hunting over bait was permitted in DMZs 11 and 12 during all seasons on private land. The use of bait in areas where hunter access to private land is limited increases hunter opportunity and success.
- Starting in 2005, hunters could earn a free either-sex tag (earn-a-buck; EAB) after harvesting 3 antlerless deer during the same season.
- In 2009, hunters were issued 1 additional antlerless tag in DMZ 7 and an additional 2 antlerless tags in DMZs 11 and 12 with their shotgun/rifle and muzzleloader permits.
- In 2010, hunters were allowed to use crossbows in January in DMZs 11 and 12.
- In 2013, crossbows were expanded for use during the entire archery season on state and private land in all DMZs.
- In October 2015, archery hunters were allowed to hunt on Sundays on private land in DMZs where deer were considered overpopulated, which included all DMZs except 2, 3, and 4A.
- In 2018, archers were allowed to hunt on Sundays on private land in all DMZs.
- In 2025, hunting on Sundays was permitted on all private land in all DMZs during all seasons.

In developed areas where firearms hunting is not feasible, DEEP encourages the use of bowhunting as a management tool. Communities experiencing deer overpopulation problems may choose to initiate controlled hunts or, under special conditions, may be eligible to implement sharp-shooting programs.

Pursuant to the goal of allowing for a sustained yield of deer by Connecticut hunters, in other areas of the state where long-term declines in the population appeared to be occurring, a restriction on the use of antlerless tags during the firearms seasons was needed. In 2002, deer populations appeared to be stable in the southern portion, but not in the northern portion of DMZ 4. Following the 2002 season, DMZ 4 was split into two zones (4A and 4B) (Figure 1B), allowing each zone to maintain different management objectives. In DMZ 4A (northern portion), the restriction on the use of antlerless tags was retained, while the use of antlerless tags was again allowed in DMZ 4B (southern portion). A similar low population density was observed in a couple of towns in DMZ 1, which were then shifted into DMZ 2 (2002), also forcing a restriction on the use of the antlerless tag during the firearms season (2016). Until a clear increasing trend begins to occur in those zones, the restriction remains in place.

Hunter Notes

Information on dates and locations of hunter education courses can be obtained by calling the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Wildlife Division at 860-424-3011 or on the [DEEP website](#). Licenses and permits to fish, hunt, and trap in Connecticut can be purchased at licensing vendors or online by going to [Connecticut's Online Outdoor Licensing System](#).

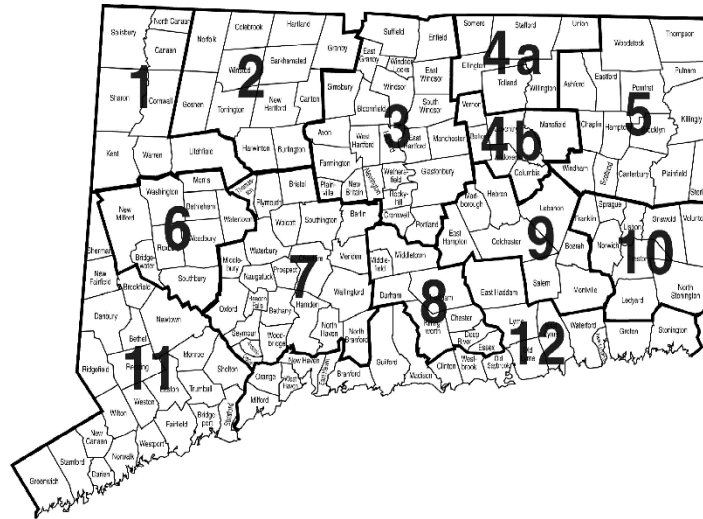
In June 2025, the Connecticut State Senate passed HB 7231, which allows firearms hunting on private land on Sundays, except within 40 yards of a blue-blazed or federally designated hiking trail. The bill prohibits the hunting of migratory birds on Sundays.

Figure 1. Connecticut's deer management zones, (Map A) 1996, (Map B) 2025.

Map A. 1996



Map B. 2025



Epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) is one of the most important infectious diseases affecting white-tailed deer and spreads by a bite from an infected midge. ([Additional information on EHD can be found on the DEEP website.](#)) In 2017, a concerned hunter reported finding several dead deer along a small body of water adjacent to the Connecticut River in Portland. Three fresh carcasses from DMZ 3 were submitted to the lab and tested positive for EHD. Based on reports along the river from Cromwell to Old Lyme, it is believed over 70 deer may have died due to infections that year. No infected animals were reported in 2018 or 2019. In 2020, one fresh carcass was collected and tested positive for EHD in Ridgefield, with approximately 20 or more found in the surrounding areas near water bodies, indicating they may have died from EHD. Hunters were asked on the 2020 deer hunter survey “if they had observed any dead deer that appeared to die of unknown causes or observed dead deer in or around a water body”. Based on responses, an additional 20 deer may have died from EHD. Therefore, the total number of deer that died in 2020 was probably closer to 80. In summer 2021, two separate deer that appeared unhealthy were euthanized, necropsied, and tested for EHD, but EHD was not detected in either animal. Although no additional public reports indicating an EHD outbreak had occurred, hunters were asked on the 2021 deer hunter survey “if they had observed any dead deer that appeared to die of unknown causes or observed dead deer in or around a water body”. Hunters reported a few observations of deer in DMZs 6, 7, and 11 where, if EHD did occur, Connecticut was fortunate it was not a major outbreak.

In 2022, severe drought conditions prompted EHD reports early, with many being along the Housatonic River. By the end of the summer, more than 80 reports had been made, and it was confirmed in 4 different zones (DMZ 1, 2, 10, and 12). Based on responses to the deer hunter survey, upwards of 200 deer may have died from EHD in 2022.

In 2023, wet spring/summer conditions kept EHD at bay, with few reports of sick deer and no confirmations of EHD.

In 2024, a wet spring delayed the arrival of EHD, which showed up in a few deer by the end of the summer and was confirmed in deer in DMZ 3, 7, and 8. One deer found in Lisbon that displayed similar symptoms of EHD was confirmed to have Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and one deer from Waterbury was confirmed to have rabies.

In 2025, dry summer conditions were expected to spur an outbreak of EHD. However, no cases were confirmed in the state, although one case of rabies was confirmed in Waterford.

Although EHD is a concern, chronic wasting disease (CWD) is even more of a concern and hunters can do their part to minimize spread. Since the beginning of CWD collection efforts in 2003, nearly 10,000 samples have been tested with no detections, including deer collected in 2025. **Regulations remain in place prohibiting hunters from transporting into Connecticut any deer or elk carcasses or part thereof from any state/ Canadian Province where CWD has been documented (meat/cleaned skull caps only). CWD has been positively documented in 37 states and 5 Canadian Provinces.** Beginning in 2020, the use of natural deer urine products was prohibited, particularly for the purposes of taking or attempting to take or attract deer, or for the surveillance or scouting of deer. Chronic wasting disease can spread through exposure to infected deer urine. These regulations help safeguard Connecticut's native deer population against unnecessary risk of CWD entering the state and the negative long-term impact it would have. Specific wording of the regulation and an updated list of states where CWD has been documented can be found on the [DEEP website](#).

During 2025, the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) continued sampling and testing deer for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID) as part of a larger nationwide surveillance effort. In addition to collecting CWD samples, the DEEP assisted USDA with collecting SARS samples. Of 133 samples, 6 positive detections were found in 4 of Connecticut's 8 counties. Detections occurred in nearly all eastern U.S. states (excluding AL, NH, RI, and FL).

The CT DEEP Wildlife Division expects to be collecting deer heads to test for CWD during the 2026 hunting season. Those interested in donating deer heads from harvested deer should contact Andrew LaBonte (Andrew.LaBonte@ct.gov) or Madison Henrie Fisher (Madison.HenrieFisher@ct.gov) for more information.

Permit Allocation

To successfully manage Connecticut's deer population growth rate, the Wildlife Division provides opportunities for hunters to purchase multiple deer permits with varying numbers of tags. Permit issuance increased consistently from 1975 to 1992 and remained relatively stable from 1992 to 2009, but has been declining over the past 15 years (Figure 2). Since implementation of the online license system and an increase in fees, permit issuance declined 9% (2009-2011) from the previous 3-year average of 61,859 (2006-2008). Deer permit issuance in 2014 declined nearly 1,000 permits from 2013 and declined another 2,327 permits in 2015. Permit issuance in 2016 was similar to permit issuance levels in 1989. Issuance has declined every year, except in 2020 when there was a slight increase, likely attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and the presence of snow during the muzzleloader season. Permit issuance declined in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 (Figure 2). Permit issuance increased slightly in 2025. Archery permit issuance increased to a record high of 17,029 in 2017 but declined slightly in 2018 and 2019. It increased again in 2020, likely a result of the pandemic, but then decreased in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 with a slight increase again in 2025 (Table 1). In 2025, issuance for state land shotgun (4.9%) and landowner (4.7%) permits had the greatest one-year increase (excluding revolver) (Table 1). Overall in 2025, shotgun/rifle hunters purchased the largest percentage of permits (38.2%), followed by archery hunters (35.6%), muzzleloader hunters (17.5%), and landowners (8.7%). Sixty-three percent of firearms deer permits were issued for use on private land and the remaining 37% were issued for state-managed lands (Table 1). During the sixteenth year of authorizing the use of revolvers for deer hunting, 777 hunters took advantage of this opportunity, a decrease from the previous year (2024; 806).

Figure 2. Total deer permit issuance and total deer harvest in Connecticut, 1975-2025.

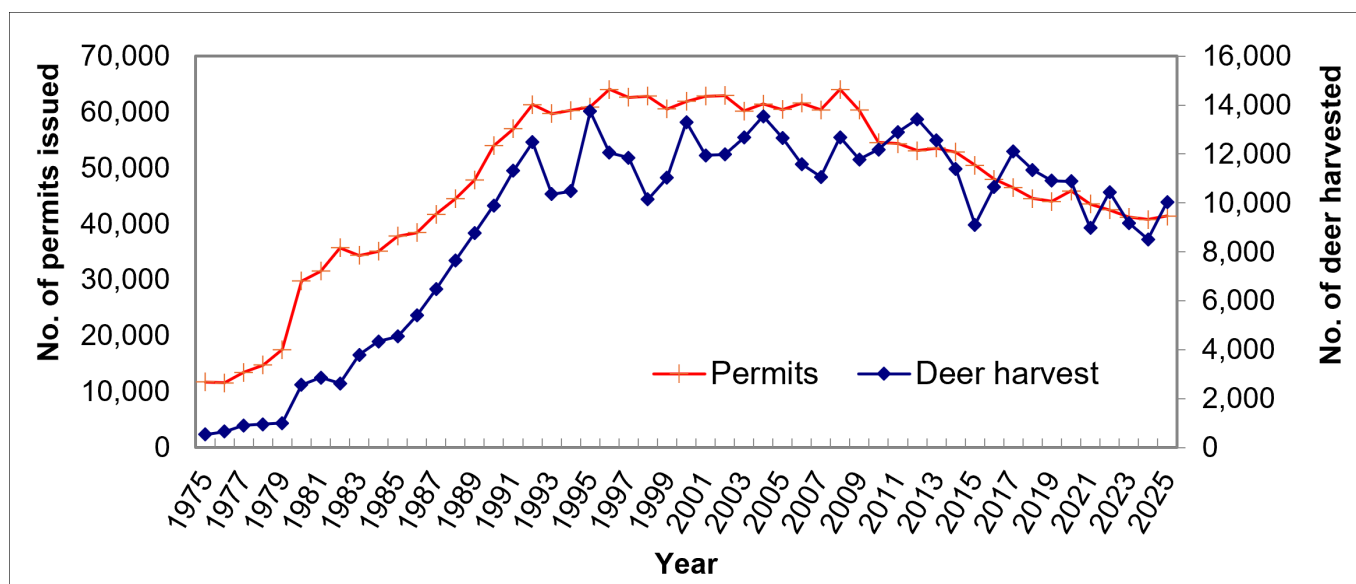


Table 1. Deer hunting permits issued in Connecticut for all regulated hunting seasons, 2022-2025.

Season	Permits 2022	Permits 2023	Permits 2024	Permits 2025	3-year Average Permits 2022- 2024	% of Total 2025	% Change 2024 to 2025	% Change 3-year Avg.to 2025
Archery	15,493	14,819	14,666	14,746	14,993	35.6%	0.5%	-1.6%
Muzzleloader State Land	2,887	2,800	2,709	2,670	2,797	6.4%	-1.4%	-4.5%
Muzzleloader Private Land	4,794	4,656	4,441	4,567	4,630	11.0%	2.8%	-1.4%
Muzzleloader Subtotal	7,681	7,456	7,150	7,237	7,429	17.5%	1.2%	-2.6%
Shotgun/Rifle State Land*	5,698	5,656	5,666	5,903	5,673	14.4%	4.9%	4.8%
Shotgun/Rifle Private Land	10,199	9,894	9,547	9,890	9,880	23.9%	3.6%	0.1%
Shotgun/Rifle Subtotal	15,897	15,550	15,213	15,793	15,553	38.2%	4.1%	1.8%
Revolver ^A	906	848	806	777	853	1.9%	-3.6%	-8.9%
Landowner	3,445	3,394	3,433	3,596	3,424	8.7%	4.7%	5.0%
Total	42,516	41,219	40,462	41,415	41,399	100.0%	2.4%	0.0%

* A and B season combined and includes controlled hunt permits.

^A Not included in total permits.

State Land No-Lottery, Lottery, and Controlled Hunt Permits

Over the years, permit issuance was less than the permit quota established for state-managed lands, and many were re-designated as no-lottery areas. New areas, areas of special distinction, and those still in high demand remain in the Deer Lottery. Lottery permits were allocated at a maximum rate of 1 permit per 20 acres. In 2025, the total number of lottery hunt areas was 13, and all but 3 deer hunting lottery areas (51, 60, and 68) reached 100% permit issuance (Table 2). In 2025, 622 hunters were selected to hunt during the state land lottery and controlled hunt seasons through the state-administered Deer Lottery Program. Hunters who are not selected in the Deer Lottery still have many opportunities to hunt no-lottery areas. Hunters should look at the different weapon types available for use on state properties, the size, and harvest levels in the different state land areas when selecting an area to hunt (Appendix 2).

Table 2. Deer Lottery selection results by Deer Hunting Lottery Area, including over the counter sales, 2025.

Deer Hunting Lottery Area	% Hunting Slots Filled
26 (Trout Brook Valley State Park)	100
28 (Naugatuck SF -Quillinan Reservoir)	100
51 (Yale-Meyers Forest) ^A	63
52 (Bristol Water Company)	100
56 (Centennial Watershed State Forest)	100
58 (MDC ^B Nepaug - Valentine)	100
60 (Tankerhoosen WMA ^C)	95
62 (Aldo Leopold WMA ^C)	100
63 (Mohawk-Ziegler State Forest)	100
64 (MDC ^B Barkhamsted East Block)	100
66 (MDC ^B Nepaug Sweetheart Mt. Block)	100
67 (MDC ^B Barkhamsted West Block)	100
68 (Bishop Swamp ^C)	69

^A A season only ^B Metropolitan District Commission ^C Wildlife Management Area

Regulated Deer Harvest

Regulated hunting is an effective and cost-efficient method for maintaining deer populations at acceptable densities. Over the past 50 years, the trend in deer harvested has been similar to the trend in permits issued (Figure 2). During the 2025 hunting season, 10,027 deer were legally harvested and reported (Table 3; Figure 2). This represents a 17.8% increase from the 2024 harvest. Harvest varied considerably by season and town (Appendix 1). Excluding the landowner season, over half (54%) of the deer taken during the 2025 hunting season were harvested by bowhunters. Since crossbows became legal during the January archery season (2009/2010), record bow harvests have been recorded. Although the archery harvest declined in the past 5 years from 2021 to 2025 (Table 3), the archery harvest has exceeded the shotgun/rifle harvest for 14 years (Figure 3).

During the 2025 season, 69% (3,322 total – 2,823 private, 499 state) of the total archery harvest was taken during the early archery season (September 15 to November 18); 19% (898 total – 863 private, 35 state) was taken during the 3-week shotgun/rifle season (open in all zones on private land and state land bowhunting-only areas); 9% (438 total – 407 private, 31 state) was taken during the muzzleloader season (December 10 to December 31); and 3% (170) was taken during the January season open in DMZs 11 and 12 on private land only (January 1-31, 2026). Harvest with crossbows during the January season has remained high (68%-2023; 67%-2024; 62%-2025; 76%-2026) compared to when it was first legalized in 2010 (33%). Crossbow harvest during the regular season has remained high (60%-2023; 59%-2024, 63%-2025) compared to when it was first legalized statewide in 2013 (28%). Based on the number of deer harvested and reported by bowhunters, 1 of 3 (30%) successful hunters harvested 2 or more deer during the regular archery season. State lands open to archery hunting remain a valuable resource to Connecticut deer hunters (Appendix 2).

In 2025, 1,552 deer were harvested during the first 4 days of the shotgun/rifle season (includes junior hunting days), a 33% increase from 2024 (1,167). The reported shotgun/rifle harvest was 3,539 deer in 2025, a 29% increase from 2024 (2,750). In 2025, the landowner harvest was 1,099, a 27% increase from 2024 (864). Better weather conditions during the firearms hunting season, along with fewer acorns, may have led to an increase in the shotgun/rifle and landowner harvests in 2025.

Archery and shotgun/rifle seasons accounted for 48.1% and 35.3% of all deer taken in 2025, while landowner and muzzleloader hunters accounted for 11% and 5.6% of all deer taken (Table 3). The increase in the 2025 deer harvest may be partially due to a slight increase in permit sales, better weather conditions during the firearms hunting season, and fewer acorns.

A Junior Deer Hunter Training Day was established in 2003 for youth hunters. The training period increased to 2 days in 2009 and then expanded to a full week in 2014. Youth hunters continue to take advantage of these special training days. The recent 3-year average harvest for Junior Deer Hunter Training Days is 35 deer (Table 3).

Table 3. Deer harvested during Connecticut's regulated hunting seasons, 2024-2025.

Season	Harvest 2024	Harvest 2025	3-year Average Harvest (2022- 2024	% of Total 2025	% Change from 2024 to 2025	% Change 3-year Average to 2025
Archery State Land	565	565	577	5.6%	0.0%	-2.1%
Archery Private Land	3,684	4,093	3,829	40.8%	11.1%	6.9%
Crossbow ^A	2,520	2,948	2,630	29.4%	17.0%	12.1%
Archery January ^B	130	170	161	1.7%	30.8%	5.8%
Crossbow	81	129	106	1.3%	59.3%	21.3%
Archery Subtotal	4,379	4,828	4,567	48.1%	10.3%	5.7%
Muzzleloader State Land	88	94	95	0.9%	6.8%	-1.1%
Muzzleloader Private Land	433	467	520	4.7%	7.9%	-10.1%
Muzzleloader Subtotal	521	561	615	5.6%	7.7%	-8.7%
Shotgun/Rifle State Land	509	593	571	5.9%	16.5%	3.9%
Shotgun/Rifle Private Land	2,241	2,946	2,670	29.4%	31.5%	10.3%
Shotgun/Rifle Revolver ^C	8	6	9	0.1%	-25.0%	-35.7%
Shotgun/Rifle Muzzleloader ^C	29	39	26	0.4%	34.5%	48.1%
Youth Hunting Days ^C	38	38	35	0.4%	0.0%	7.5%
Shotgun/Rifle Subtotal	2,750	3,539	3,241	35.3%	28.7%	9.2%
Landowner	864	1,099	957	11.0%	27.2%	14.9%
Total	8,514	10,027	9,380	100.0%	17.8%	6.9%

^A Included as part of private land archery total.

^B Refers to the January following harvest year listed.

^C Included as part of private land shotgun/rifle total.

Hunter Success

Hunter success rate was estimated by dividing total deer harvest by total permit issuance and multiplying by 100 (Table 4). Success rates may fluctuate annually, depending on weather conditions, timing of rain and snowstorms, fall acorn crops, and deer herd size. Archery season success rates fluctuated between 24.3% and 27.6% from 2004 to 2008. Archery success exceeded 35% from 2010 through 2014 (35.2% in 2010; 38.0% in 2011; 37.7% in 2012; 38.3% in 2013; and 35.7% in 2014) but declined during the 2015 (26.9%) and 2016 (31.3%) hunting seasons. In 2017, archery success reached nearly 35% (34.7%), declined slightly in 2018 (31.3%), and increased again in 2019 (34.9%) and 2020 (34.1%). However, success rates in 2021 decreased for all hunting seasons, including archery (28.1%), compared to 2020, with the exception of the state land shotgun season. Success increased for all seasons in 2022, decreased for all seasons in 2023, and decreased for nearly all seasons in 2024. In 2025, success rates increased for all seasons with archery hunters having the highest annual success rate (32.7%), followed by landowner hunters (30.6%), and private land shotgun/rifle hunters (29.8%) (Table 4). Success rate for the combined muzzleloader seasons was 7.8%. Lower success rates are expected because the muzzleloader season occurs after the shotgun/rifle deer hunting seasons. Hunter success in 2025 was higher than 2024 and the 3-year average for almost all seasons (Table 4).

Figure 3. Total deer harvest during the firearms and archery seasons in Connecticut, 1990-2025.

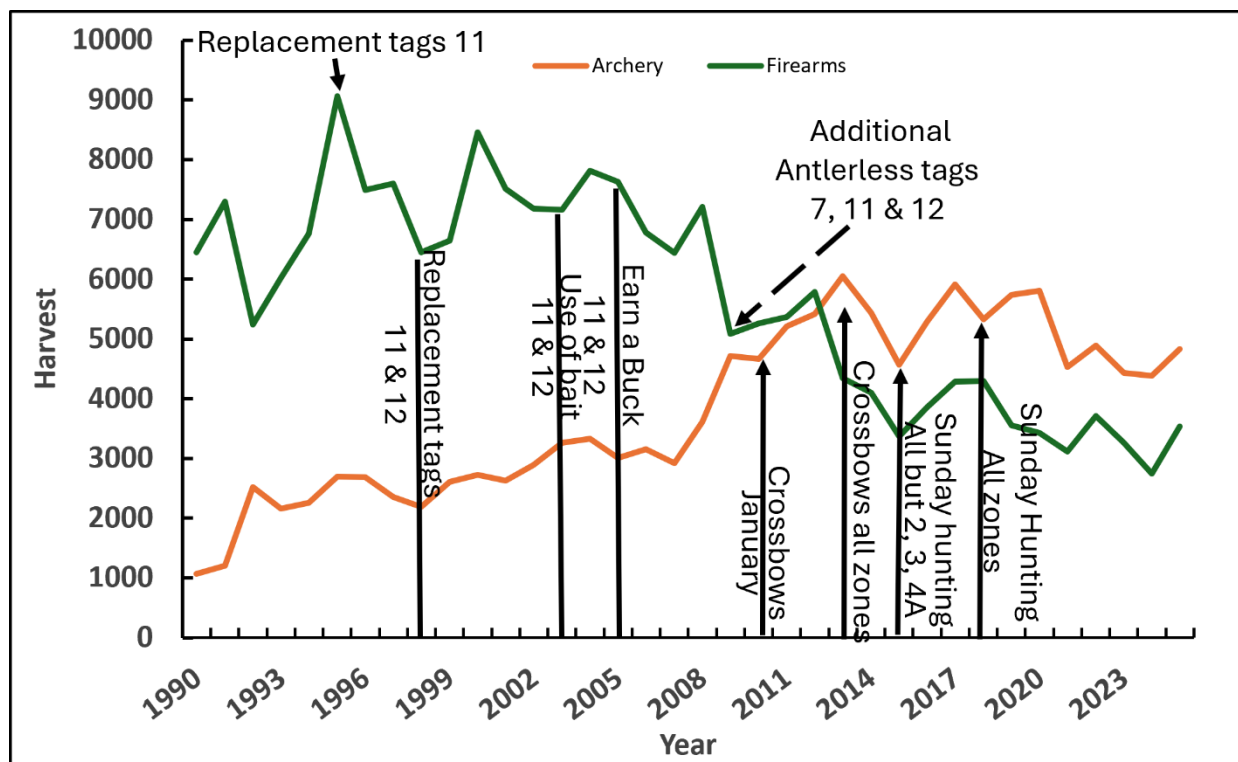


Table 4. Deer hunter success rates (%) in Connecticut, 2022-2025.

Season	2022	2024	2024	2025	3-year Avg. Success Rate (2022-2024)	Difference from 2024	Difference from 3-year Avg.
Archery Combined ¹	31.6%	29.9%	30.2%	32.7%	30.6%	8.3%	7.0%
Muzzleloader State Land	4.3%	2.6%	3.2%	3.5%	3.4%	9.4%	4.0%
Muzzleloader Private Land	13.0%	10.7%	9.8%	10.2%	7.8%	4.1%	30.8%
Muzzleloader Combined	9.7%	7.7%	7.3%	7.8%	8.2%	6.8%	-5.3%
Shotgun/Rifle State Land	10.7 %	10.5%	9.0%	10.0%	10.1%	11.1%	-0.7%
Shotgun/Rifle Private Land	30.4%	26.9%	23.5%	29.8%	26.9%	26.8%	10.6%
Shotgun/Rifle Combined	23.3%	20.9%	18.1%	22.3%	20.8%	23.2%	7.4%
Landowner	31.8%	26.7%	25.2%	30.6%	27.9%	21.4%	9.7%
Average ²	24.6%	22.2%	21.0%	24.2%	22.6%	15.2%	7.1%

¹ Data available only for state and private land combined.

² Average is based on total number of deer harvested/total number of permits issued.

Harvest on state land lottery/controlled hunt areas varied considerably by area, with 20 areas exceeding 10 deer harvested/mi² in 2025 (Appendix 2) similar to the 22 areas in 2024. Controlled hunts, which occur on large pieces of privately-owned land, play an important role in deer management with the harvest opportunities they provide. A few examples of harvest and success rates are provided below.

Yale Forest (Controlled Hunt Area 51): Yale Forest is a 7,700-acre forest located in Eastford and Ashford. The forest is owned and managed by Yale University for research, education, and forest products. Controlled hunts have been implemented on the property since 1984 in an effort to reduce deer impacts on forest regeneration. During the 2025 controlled hunt, 23 deer were harvested for a 16% success rate.

Bristol Water Company (BWC; Controlled Hunt Area 52): In 1994, BWC contacted the Wildlife Division and expressed interest in opening 4,500 acres for deer management. In 1995, the Wildlife Division conducted a winter aerial deer survey on BWC lands. After survey results were summarized, BWC requested to participate in the controlled hunt program for the 1996, 1997, and 1998 deer seasons to reduce the local deer population. After 3 years of successfully implementing a deer management program on BWC land, BWC asked to continue participating in the program. During the 2025 controlled hunt, Sunday hunting was permitted and 15 deer were harvested for a 20% success rate.

Centennial Watershed State Forest (formerly known as Bridgeport Hydraulic Company; Controlled Hunt Area 56): The Hemlock Tract has been open to hunting since 1996. In 2005, an additional 1,765 acres were opened to hunting (3,474 total acres). During the 2025 controlled hunt, 33 deer were harvested for a 22% success rate.

MDC Nepaug Reservoir (Controlled Hunt Areas 58 and 59): In 2007, MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) contacted the Wildlife Division and expressed concern about the impacts of deer on forest regeneration at their Valentine (Area 58, 1,075 acres) and Pine Hill (Area 59, 325 acres) forest blocks. A browse survey indicated that over 95% of forest regeneration was browsed by deer. In 2008, MDC worked with the Wildlife Division to develop a deer management plan for the two forest blocks. In 2009, both Valentine and Pine Hill were opened to hunting for the early archery and shotgun/rifle seasons. During 2025, Area 58 was open to shotgun hunting only, where 13 deer were harvested for a 33% success rate.

MDC Barkhamsted Reservoir (Controlled Hunt Areas 64 and 67): In 2014, MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) contacted the Wildlife Division and expressed concern about impacts of deer on forest regeneration at Barkhamsted Reservoir. This resulted in the establishment of two controlled deer hunts, one in 2016 on the east side (Area 64 – 4,282 acres) and a second in 2017 on the west side (Area 67 – 3,700 acres). To document the impacts of deer on forest regeneration and health, deer exclosures were constructed at 4 different sites. The vegetation has been monitored annually since 2016. During the past 4 years, research has shown that oak seedlings within the fence are healthier and twice the height of the unfenced oaks, primarily due to protection from deer browsing. Although deer continue to impact forest regeneration, the reduction in deer numbers has improved the health of the MDC forests. During the 2025 controlled hunt, 11 deer were harvested for a 14% success rate.

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority: Bowhunting for deer is allowed each year on 3,233 acres in North Branford, 154 acres in Seymour and Ansonia, 420 acres in Prospect, and 520 acres in Bethany. In 2023, 54 deer were harvested; in 2024, 40 deer were harvested; and in 2025, 27 deer were harvested for a 15% success rate.

Zonal Activity

Current population status and long-term trends are analyzed for each DMZ. This approach facilitates the assessment and management of regional deer populations. Annual deer harvest is one of many variables monitored by the Wildlife Division to assess changes in Connecticut's deer population over time for each DMZ. However, without information on hunter distribution and effort by zones, the potential usefulness of these data is limited. To gain insight into hunter distribution and success rates by zone, deer hunters are annually sent an online Deer Hunter Survey to complete. For the 2025 survey, a total of 4,577 hunters responded for a 38% response rate (calculated for hunters who received and opened the email).

Shotgun/Rifle Season

Deer hunters were asked on the hunter survey, "In what zone do you do most of your shotgun/rifle hunting?" The percent of hunters in each DMZ was multiplied by total number of deer permits issued in 2025 to estimate total number of hunters by zone. Total number of hunters and total private land shotgun/rifle deer harvest for each zone were used to estimate deer hunter success rates for each zone (Table 5). In general, higher hunter success rates suggest higher deer density. Of the 13 management zones, most firearms hunting (44%) occurred in 4 zones (1, 2, 5, and 9). Highest private land deer harvests were reported for DMZs 5, 9, 10, and 12. DMZ 4B had the highest deer harvest per square mile (1.7), while DMZ 8 had the greatest density of hunters per square mile (4.1). Hunter success rate was highest in DMZ 4B (46%), while success in zones 2, 4A, and 8 was the lowest (12%, 17%, and 24%). The trend in hunter success rates by zone has varied over the past 3 years (Table 6). Although hunter success has been variable due to the abundance of acorns and weather conditions, many DMZs have continued to produce relatively high hunter success rates over the past 3 years (Table 6).

Table 5. Zonal hunter numbers, harvest, and success rates for private land during the 2025 shotgun/rifle season.

Zone	Zone Hunted Privat Land ^A Shotgun/Rifle	% of Hunters Answered Question ^A	Estimated # of Private Land Shotgun/Rifle Hunters	Harvest	Area (sq. miles)	Deer Harvest/sq. mile	Hunters/sq. mile	% Success Rate
1	190	8.6	850	213	344.59	0.6	2.5	25%
2	246	11.1	1101	132	410.69	0.3	2.7	12%
3	133	6.0	595	207	273.33	0.8	2.2	35%
4A	140	6.3	627	109	213.5	0.5	2.9	17%
4B	99	4.5	443	205	120.66	1.7	3.7	46%
5	341	15.4	1,526	584	445.94	1.3	3.4	38%
6	107	4.8	479	165	260.03	0.6	1.8	34%
7	154	7.0	689	217	373.08	0.6	1.8	31%
8	154	7.0	689	163	169.11	1.0	4.1	24%
9	190	8.6	850	290	279.39	1.0	3.0	34%
10	167	7.6	747	275	244.36	1.1	3.1	37%
11	126	5.7	564	145	291.53	0.5	1.9	26%
12	163	7.4	729	241	358.39	0.7	2.0	33%
Total	2,210	100.0	9,890	2,946	3,785	0.8	2.6	30%

^A Based on hunter survey question asking hunters which zone they primarily shotgun/rifle hunt in.

Table 6. Zonal comparisons in private land shotgun/rifle harvest, hunter distributions, and success rates, 2023-2025.

Zone	Area (sq. miles)	Deer Harvest/Sq. Mile			Hunters/Sq. Mile			Hunter Success Rate (%)		
		2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
1	344.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	2.1	2.4	2.5	34	25	25
2	410.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	2.7	2.3	2.7	13	13	12
3	273.3	0.7	0.5	0.8	2.3	2.4	2.2	28	22	35
4A	213.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	2.9	2.9	2.9	15	16	17
4B	120.7	1.4	1.4	1.7	3.9	3.7	3.7	36	38	46
5	445.9	1.1	0.9	1.3	3.4	3.1	3.4	33	29	38
6	260.0	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.8	1.7	1.8	40	29	34
7	373.1	0.5	0.4	0.6	1.9	1.6	1.8	29	25	31
8	169.1	0.7	0.5	1.0	4.6	4.6	4.1	15	11	24
9	279.4	0.9	0.7	1.0	3.1	3.3	3.0	29	22	34
10	244.4	0.9	0.8	1.1	3.0	2.5	3.1	31	33	37
11	291.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	2.2	2.2	1.9	24	19	26
12	358.4	0.6	0.5	0.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	31	29	33
Total	3,785	0.7	0.6	0.8	2.6	2.5	2.6	27	23	30

Archery Season

Deer hunters were asked on the hunter survey, "In what zone do you do most of your archery hunting?" The percent of hunters in each DMZ was multiplied by total number of archery permits issued in 2025 to estimate total number of hunters by zone. Bowhunter success rates in 2025 were highest in zones 4B, 5, and 11, and lowest in zones 1, 2, and 4A. Success rates over the past few years have stayed similar for most zones (Table 7).

Since online and telephone reporting began in 2009, keeping track of harvest reports has been simplified and it is much easier to keep track of how many deer each hunter reports harvesting. Harvest per successful hunter in 2025 was lowest in DMZs 1, 2, and 8 (1.19 and 1.23) and highest in DMZs 4B and 11 (1.42 and 1.59) (Table 7). The percent of hunters who killed more than 2 deer during the archery season was lowest in DMZs 3 and 6 (2.7% and 2.4%) and highest in

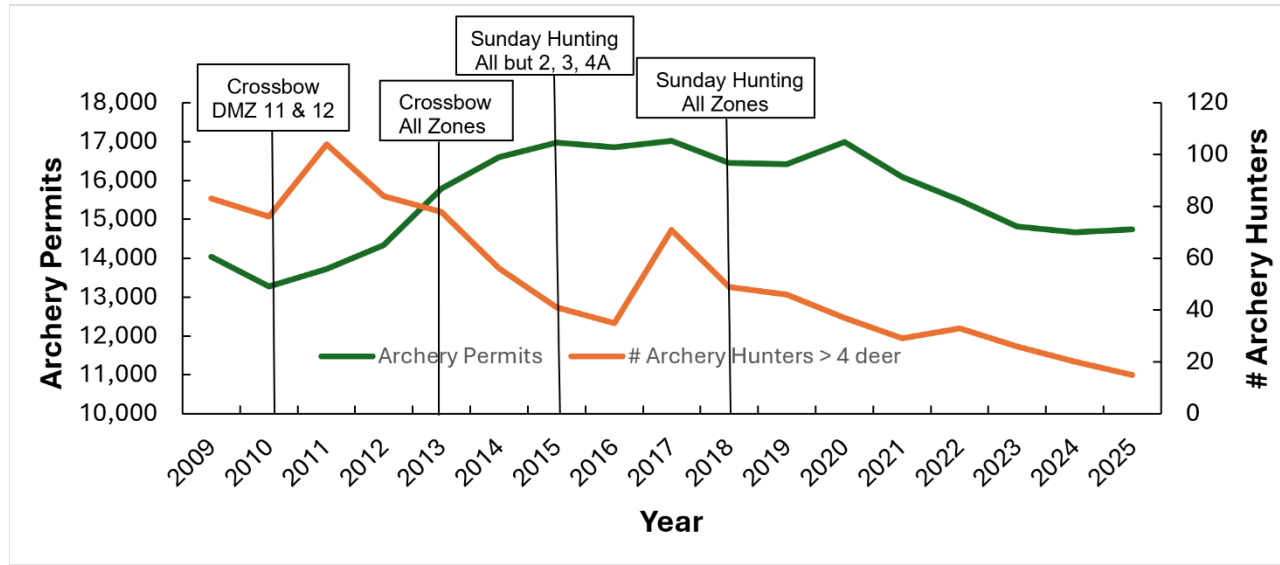
DMZs 4B and 11 (9.7% and 11.0%) (Table 7). Overall, average harvest per hunter has declined slightly over the years ranging from 1.6/1.7 (2009-2013) to 1.4/1.5 (2014-2025). The number of hunters harvesting more than 4 deer (allowed with the use of replacement tags) during the archery season has continued to decline over the past 16 years, which is most likely due to stabilizing populations in target areas and less likely due to changes in permit sales (Figure 4).

Table 7. Zonal comparisons of archery season success rates, harvest/hunter, and percent of hunters killing more than 2 deer, 2022-2025.

Zones	Archery ^A	% of hunters answered question ^A	Estimated # of archery hunters ^A	Harvest 2025	Hunter success rate %				Deer harvested/ successful hunter 2025	% of hunters killing more than 2 deer
					2022	2023	2024	2025		
1	125	5.8%	851	217	23.0	26.6	25.0	25.5	1.24	4.6
2	174	8.0%	1,185	188	16.8	16.1	15.9	15.9	1.19	3.2
3	152	7.0%	1,035	326	28.5	28.9	29.0	31.5	1.23	2.7
4A	115	5.3%	783	200	23.1	26.5	24.0	25.5	1.27	4.5
4B	99	4.6%	674	234	38.9	36.1	33.1	34.7	1.42	9.7
5	216	10.0%	1,471	630	36.3	35.6	38.6	42.8	1.39	7.1
6	101	4.7%	688	208	26.2	35.1	31.0	30.2	1.27	2.4
7	240	11.1%	1,635	492	32.4	30.2	31.9	30.1	1.26	4.1
8	117	5.4%	797	200	25.6	21.3	25.0	25.1	1.23	4.3
9	138	6.4%	940	304	29.1	25.2	28.0	32.3	1.28	4.6
10	125	5.8%	851	286	32.9	32.6	32.1	33.6	1.31	3.7
11	358	16.5%	2,438	898	33.1	30.5	28.8	36.8	1.59	11.0
12	205	9.5%	1,396	490	38.3	29.4	29.1	35.1	1.33	5.7
Total	2,165	100	14,746	4,673	30.3	28.8	29.0	31.7	1.34	5.9

^A Based on hunter survey question asking hunters which zone they primarily “archery” hunt in.

Figure 4. Archery permits and total number of archery hunters harvesting more than 4 deer, 2009-2025.



Archery Observations, Harvest, and Effort

To obtain additional information beneficial to zonal deer management, successful archery hunters were asked “How many hours they hunted and how many fawns, does, and bucks they observed on the day they harvested their deer.” Observation rates were measured based on number of deer observed per hour of hunting. Fawn recruitment (number of

fawns added to fall population) also is an important variable used to understand changes in population growth and deer herd dynamics. Fawn recruitment was measured as number of fawns observed per doe. The most representative samples of fawn to doe ratios are those collected at the start of the hunting season (September 15 – October 15) when fawns are easily identifiable, and hunter harvest would have the least impact on observations. Another means of assessing zonal population changes is looking at the number of deer harvested per hour hunted. Number of deer observed per hour, number of fawns observed per doe, and number of deer harvested per hour varied across years and by zone (Table 8). Observation rates of bucks, does, and fawns were similar to previous years, as was the percent of each class harvested (Table 9). In general, fawns are harvested at a lower rate than they are observed, compared to bucks which are harvested at a greater rate than they are observed (Table 9), which is obvious as many hunters desire to harvest mature animals, especially mature bucks. Hunters are also asked “In the zone you spend the majority of your time hunting, how would you describe the number of fawns compared to last year?” Half of hunters said it was the same (49%), a quarter said it was less (24%), 15% said there were far less, while 11% said there were more. Responses tend to align with the overall slight decline in fawn/doe (F:D) ratios reported from 2024 to 2025 (Table 8).

Table 8. Observation rates (deer seen/hour; D/hr), number of fawns per doe (F:D), and number of deer harvested per hour (H/hr) collected at the time harvest was summarized for the first month of the archery season (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15) by deer management zone (DMZ) in Connecticut, 2023-2025.

DMZ	2023				2024				2025				Δ^3	Δ^3	Δ^3
	<i>n</i>	D/hr ¹	F:D	H/hr ²	<i>n</i>	D/hr ¹	F:D	H/hr ²	<i>n</i>	D/hr ¹	F:D	H/hr ²	D/hr ¹	F:D ⁴	H/hr
1	54	1.38	0.48	0.36	42	0.84	0.44	0.37	62	1.62	0.39	0.35	-0.78	0.05	0.02
2	48	1.19	0.32	0.40	31	1.06	0.53	0.40	39	0.96	0.43	0.42	0.10	0.11	-0.02
3	79	1.28	0.52	0.36	69	0.93	0.32	0.41	82	1.09	0.67	0.40	-0.16	-0.35	0.01
4A	56	1.31	0.44	0.39	49	1.08	0.44	0.34	48	0.95	0.39	0.41	0.13	0.05	-0.07
4B	67	1.41	0.50	0.36	55	1.23	0.64	0.40	86	1.36	0.61	0.37	-0.13	0.03	0.03
5	186	1.14	0.51	0.33	196	1.05	0.44	0.40	231	1.13	0.54	0.40	-0.08	-0.10	0.00
6	54	1.23	0.38	0.34	43	1.06	0.77	0.36	44	1.06	0.19	0.40	0.00	0.58	-0.04
7	126	1.09	0.59	0.32	116	1.15	0.50	0.41	134	1.16	0.55	0.37	-0.01	-0.05	0.04
8	56	1.12	0.42	0.33	57	1.12	0.62	0.38	64	1.22	0.34	0.38	-0.10	0.28	0.00
9	59	1.51	0.52	0.37	70	1.41	0.53	0.44	77	1.30	0.44	0.37	0.11	0.09	0.07
10	63	1.71	0.63	0.35	72	1.28	0.48	0.42	86	0.94	0.36	0.39	0.34	0.12	0.03
11	144	1.47	0.55	0.34	142	1.52	0.68	0.39	189	1.18	0.60	0.35	0.34	0.08	0.04
12	111	1.09	0.52	0.38	115	1.14	0.49	0.40	138	1.31	0.58	0.39	-0.17	-0.09	0.01
Total	1,103	1.27	0.51	0.35	42	0.84	0.44	0.37	1,280	1.19	0.50	0.38	-0.35	-0.06	-0.01

¹ Deer observed per hour hunted and ² Deer harvested per hour hunted, both based on successful hunters. ³ Change from 2024 to 2025.

Table 9. Hunter observations and harvest ratios reported during the first month of the archery season (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15) in Connecticut, 2021-2025.

Age-sex	Observation %					Harvest %				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Bucks	23%	24%	25%	25%	26%	42%	43%	43%	45%	47%
Does	51%	50%	50%	50%	49%	48%	47%	47%	46%	44%
Fawns	26%	26%	25%	25%	25%	10%	10%	10%	9%	9%

Weekend Archery Hunting

Prior to 2015, archery hunting was only allowed on Saturdays during weekends. Beginning in 2015, archery hunting was permitted on private land on Sundays in all zones except 2, 3, and 4A, and then in all zones in 2018. The two-day weekend harvest remains to be a critical part of the archery harvest (Table 10).

Table 10. Weekend harvest (Sept. 15-December 31) on private land during the archery season in Connecticut, 2014-2025.

Year	2014 ¹	2015 ²	2016 ²	2017 ²	2018 ³	2019 ³	2020 ³	2021 ³	2022 ³	2023 ³	2024 ³	2025 ³
Percent Harvest	29%	37%	37%	37%	40%	44%	37%	38%	34%	36%	41%	36%

¹ Hunting permitted on Saturday only during weekends.

² Hunting permitted on Saturday and Sundays in all zones except 2, 3, and 4A.

³ Hunting permitted on Saturday and Sundays in all zones.

Overall Private Land Deer Harvest

The 2025 private land deer harvest was highest for DMZs 5, 11, and 12 (Table 11). Zonal harvest levels have fluctuated in most zones over the past 11 years and likely reflect differences in weather conditions, snow cover, acorn abundance, and deer densities (Table 11). Highest total deer harvest had been reported in DMZ 11 for a number of years, likely a result of deer abundance, availability of replacement deer tags, use of bait, and increased access to land for hunting. However, in the past several years, harvest in DMZ 5 has exceeded that of DMZ 11. Total private land deer harvest increased 15.9% from 2024 to 2025.

Table 11. Private land deer harvest for all seasons (excluding landowner) in each of Connecticut's deer management zones, 2015-2025.

Zone	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1	472	573	551	609	545	585	485	446	469	432	432
2	273	294	365	326	313	360	335	326	313	285	297
3	426	516	566	520	493	626	529	558	492	464	536
4A	228	295	330	319	335	263	226	279	290	255	275
4B	357	452	488	471	431	462	351	456	393	361	441
5	902	1,062	1,244	1,251	1,197	1,072	924	1,262	1,049	1,003	1,206
6	416	488	528	503	483	534	433	432	434	340	392
7	743	838	880	806	897	911	723	785	729	629	710
8	342	368	423	408	418	358	295	323	271	273	341
9	511	580	701	697	623	563	460	628	483	469	585
10	433	471	606	558	528	493	428	561	476	461	560
11	1,321	1,538	1,666	1,440	1,148	1,329	922	989	865	901	1,012
12	781	916	1,212	1,116	956	786	619	830	561	615	734
Total	7,205	8,391	9,560	9,024	8,367	8,342	6,730	7,875	6,825	6,488	7,521
% Change	-16.9%	16.5%	13.9%	-5.6%	-7.3%	-<1.0%	-19.0%	17.0%	-13.3%	-4.9%	15.9%

Weekend Firearms Hunting

Prior to 2025, firearms hunting was only allowed on Saturdays during weekends and percent of deer harvested ranged from 21-26%. Beginning in 2025, firearms hunting was permitted on private land on Sundays in all zones. The two-day weekend harvest was 28% in 2025 and will continue to be monitored for changes (Table 12).

Table 12. Weekend harvest on private land during the firearms season (Private Land Shotgun/Rifle and Muzzleloader) in Connecticut, 2025.

	2019 ¹	2020 ¹	2021 ¹	2022 ¹	2023 ¹	2024 ¹	2025 ²
Percent Harvest	26%	21%	24%	23%	23%	26%	28%

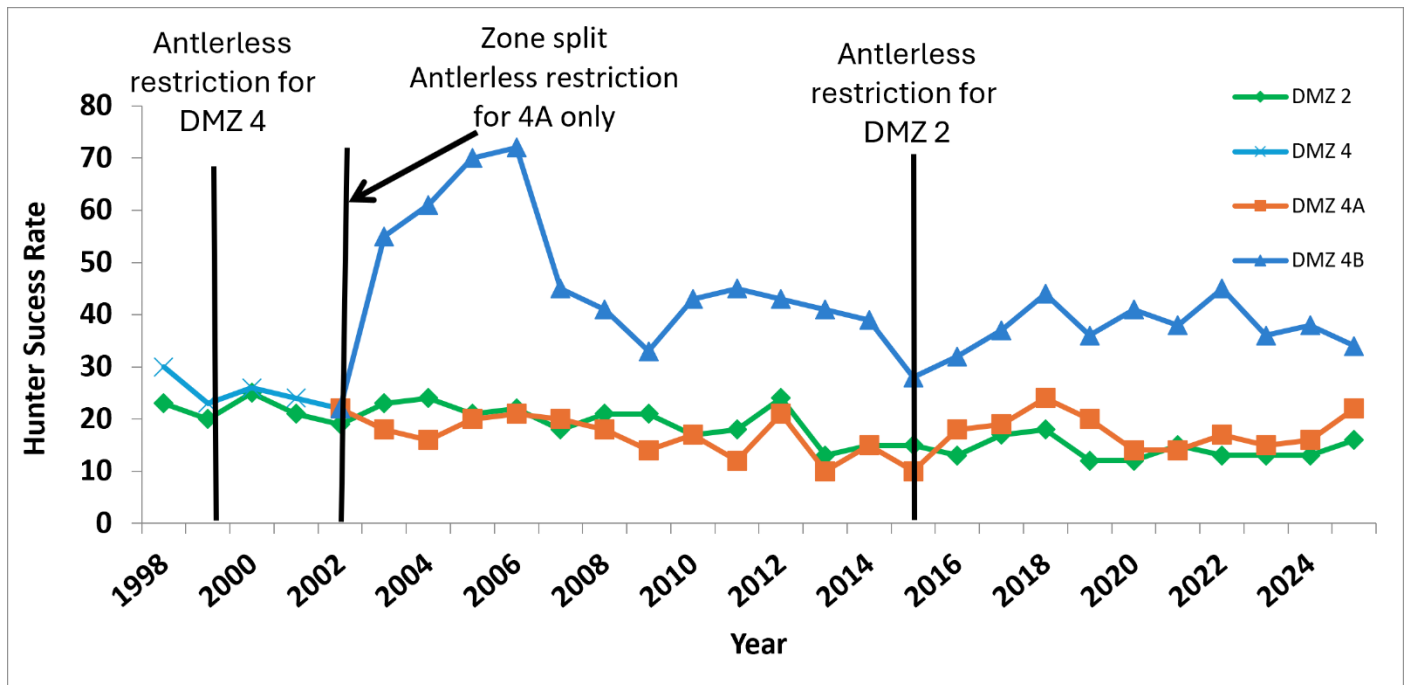
¹ Hunting permitted on Saturday only during weekends.

² Hunting permitted on Saturday and Sundays in all zones.

Long-term Zonal Changes

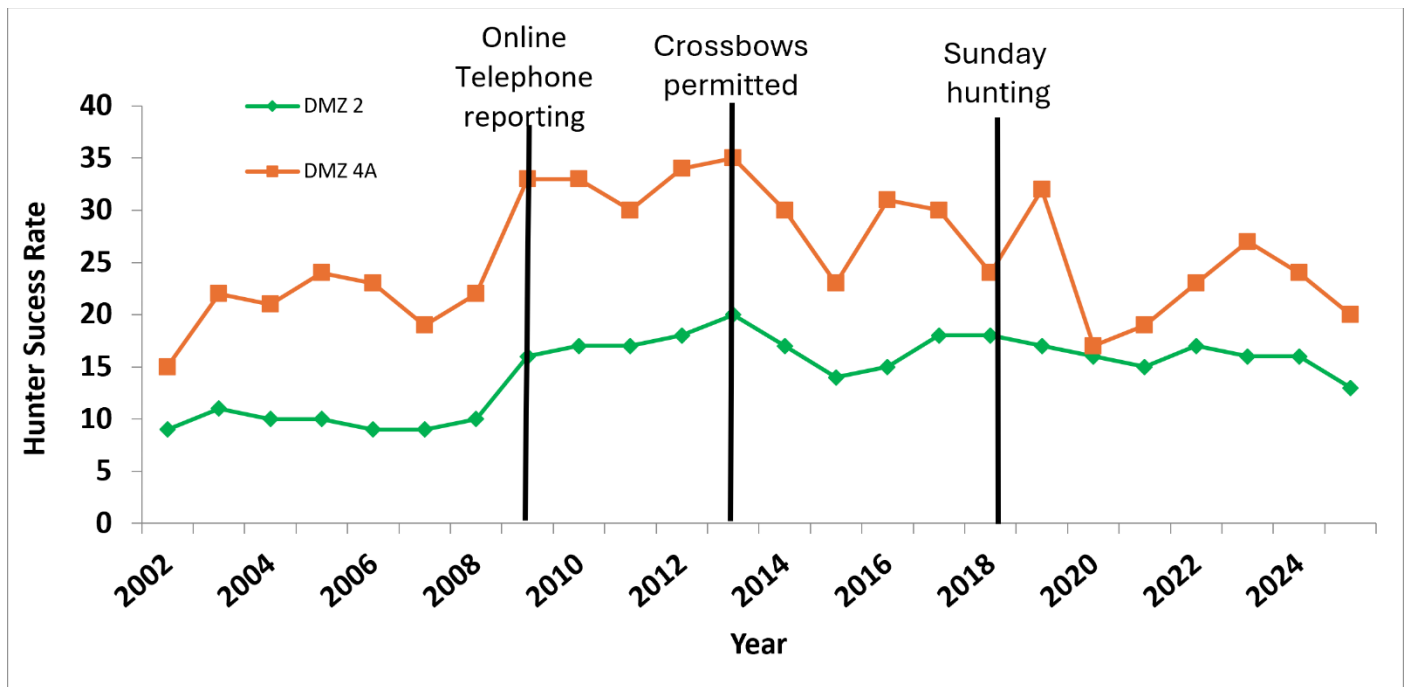
Most zones have not required any changes over time; however, others have required more management efforts. In DMZ 4, a decreasing trend prompted harvest restrictions on female deer in this zone in 1999. During the shotgun/rifle and muzzleloader seasons, the antlerless-only tag on 2-tag permits was not valid in DMZ 4. In 2002, deer populations appeared to be stable in the southern portion, but not in the northern portion of DMZ 4. Following the 2002 season, DMZ 4 was split into two zones (4A and 4B), allowing each zone to maintain different management objectives. In DMZ 4A (northern portion), the restriction on the use of antlerless tags was retained, while the use of antlerless tags was again allowed in DMZ 4B (southern portion). These changes increased private land shotgun/rifle hunter success in DMZ 4B but have yet to change hunter success in DMZ 4A (Figure 5). Similarly, increasing predator populations (mainly black bear and bobcat) in DMZ 2 have impacted the deer population, resulting in persistently low private land shotgun/rifle hunter success (Figure 5). This situation prompted harvest restrictions on the harvest of female deer beginning in 2016. During shotgun/rifle and muzzleloader seasons, the antlerless-only tag on 2-tag permits was not valid. With little evidence of change in hunter success over the past few years, other restrictions may be considered in the future.

Figure 5. Private land shotgun/rifle hunter success in deer management zones 2, 4A, and 4B, 1998-2025.



Archery hunter success in DMZ 2 has changed little over time (Figure 6), with DMZs 2 and 4A being the lowest in the state when looking at it on a zonal basis (Table 7). What appears to be an increase in DMZs 2 and 4A in 2009 is an artifact of the change in reporting requirements from kill report cards to the current online/telephone reporting system (Figure 6). The decrease in success seen in DMZs 2 and 4A in 2015 (Figure 6) was due to it being a year with the highest acorn abundance. It is unclear about the decline in success in DMZ 4A in 2020 and 2021. In addition to deer abundance, acorn abundance and weather can have a large impact on hunter success.

Figure 6. Archery hunter success in deer management zones 2 and 4A, 2002-2025.



Replacement Tags

In addition to the initial permits that come with tags in areas with substantial deer problems, a replacement tag system was developed to increase the harvest of female deer. This system is currently in place in DMZs 11 and 12. Since 1998, when archery hunters first had access to replacement tags in DMZ 11, the buck harvest remained relatively stable, while the antlerless harvest in that zone increased nearly 5 times (from 200 to almost 1,000 deer annually and is now below 400) (Figure 7). The buck harvest has steadily increased over the years with the addition of the earn-a-buck program in 2005. The number of deer vehicle accidents in DMZ 11 has shown a steady decline starting a few years after the program began, an indication that management efforts were having an impact (Figure 7). The ratio of female deer harvested in DMZ 11 increased from 0.9 females per male (1994-1997) to 1.3 females per male (2001-2009), with the past 3 years now averaging around 0.63 females per male (Figure 8).

Over the past 5 years (2021-2025), 39 archery hunters have killed more than 4 deer in 1 of 5 years, 10 have killed more than 4 deer in 2 of 5 years, 6 have killed more than 4 deer in 3 of 5 years, 5 hunters have killed more than 4 deer in 4 of 5 years, and 5 archery hunters have killed more than 4 deer all 5 years for a total of 65 different hunters. There has been a declining use of the replacement tags as the population has started to decline and fewer and fewer hunters are taking advantage of the opportunity to use tags.

Figure 7. Comparison of trends in deer-vehicle accidents and the antlered and antlerless deer harvests during the archery deer season in deer management zone 11, 1995-2025.

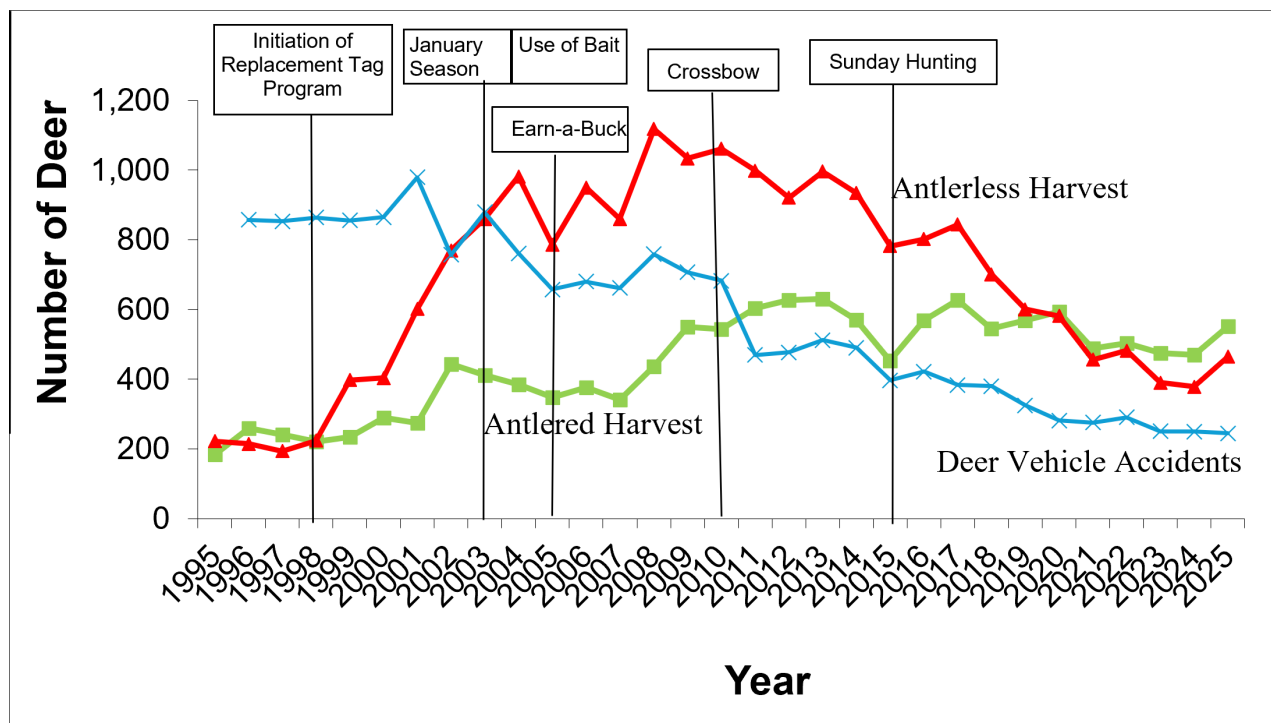
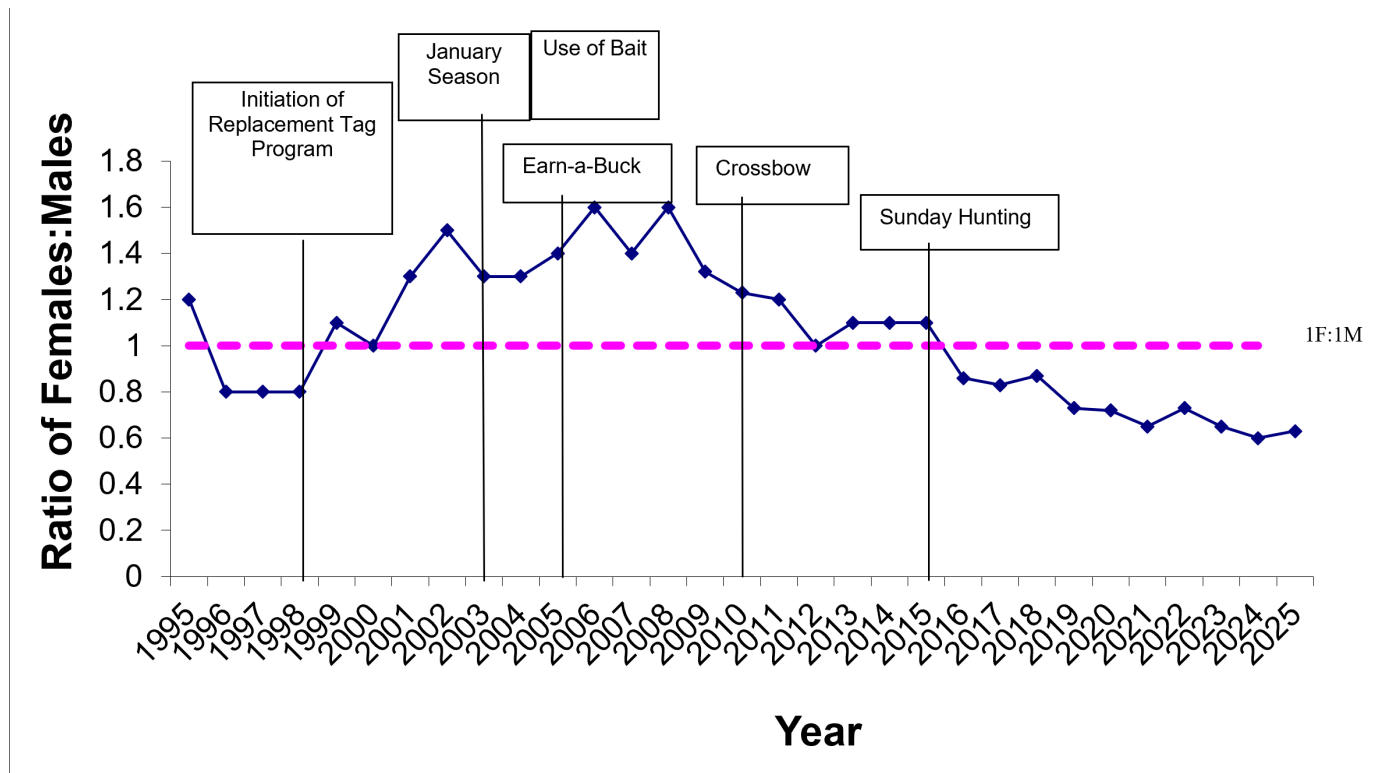


Figure 8. Changes in sex ratios of harvested deer from deer management zone 11 after implementing various management strategies during the archery season, 1995-2025.



Deer Harvest Sex Ratios

Removal of female deer is the most efficient means of stabilizing deer population growth. To facilitate stabilization, the Wildlife Division developed permits that encourage the harvest of female deer. All 2-tag permits (firearms) come with 1 antlerless-only and 1 either-sex deer tag. In 2009, this was increased to 1 either-sex and 2 antlerless deer for hunters in DMZ 7 and 1 either-sex and 3 antlerless deer for hunters in DMZs 11 and 12. Although button bucks are included in the antlerless harvest, this system promotes the removal of female deer (Table 13). In zones 2 and 4A, the antlerless-only tag was NOT valid, reducing the bag limit to 1 deer per hunter during the private land firearms season. Overall, deer harvest sex ratios have been similar the past 3 years (Table 14). In 2025, 41% (4,041) of the total regulated deer harvest (excluding crop damage harvest) was comprised of antlerless deer. A significant proportion of the harvest included females, which contributes to population control efforts (Appendix 3).

Table 13. Sex ratios (male:female) and antlered to antlerless ratios of deer harvested during the regular hunting season and through crop damage in 2025.

	Muzzleloader	Shotgun/Rifle	Archery	Landowner	Crop Damage	Total
Male:Female	1.2:1	2.6:1	1.7:1	2.7:1	0.9:1	1.9:1
Antlered:Antlerless	0.7:1	1.7:1	1.3:1	2.1:1	0.7:1	1.4:1

Table 14. Sex ratios (male:female) of deer harvested during Connecticut's regulated hunting seasons, 2023-2025.

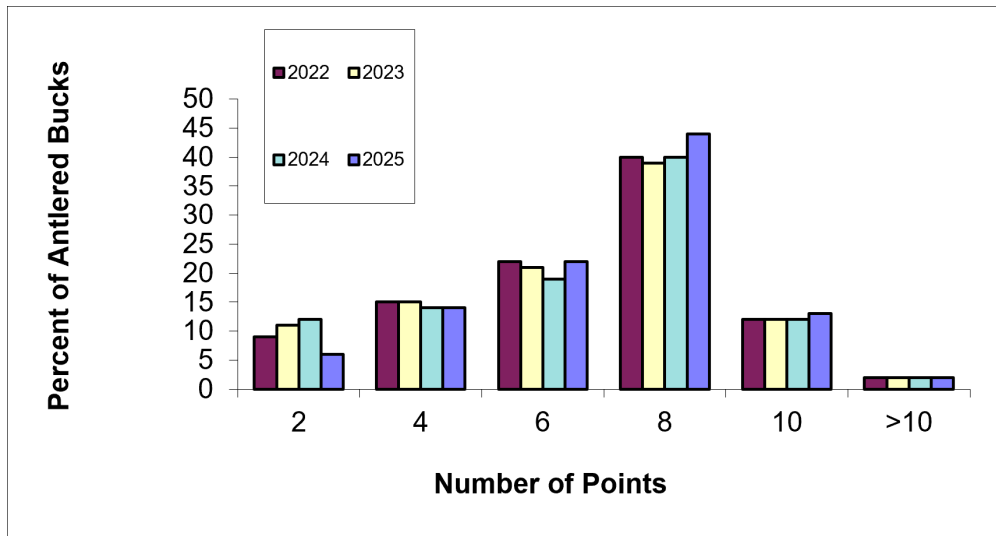
2024		2025		Males per Female			3-year Average
Males	Females	Males	Females	2023	2024	2025	(2022-2024)
5,476	3,038	6,626	3,473	1.9:1	1.8:1	1.7:1	1.8:1

Antler Points and Yearling Fraction

Deer age, nutritional status, and genetics affect the number of antler points on bucks. The yearling fraction of the antlered buck harvest is a common measure of hunting pressure. Intensively hunted herds have yearling fractions of about 70%, while lightly hunted herds have fractions of about 30%. Few yearlings (less than 6%) have 7 or more points and few adults (less than 12%) have less than 5 points, based on the known aged samples in Connecticut. Using antlered bucks with less than 5 points (yearling) and those with 7 or more points (adults) is one way of estimating the yearling fraction of the antlered buck harvest.

The statewide yearling male fraction based on antler points during the shotgun/rifle season was 40% in 2012, 44% in 2013, 45% in 2014, 42% in 2015, 36% in 2016, 39% in 2017, 39% in 2018, 36% in 2019, 34% in 2020, 33% in 2021, 34% in 2022, 34% in 2023, 26% in 2024, and 25% in 2025. Of all antlered bucks harvested (1 or 2 points, 3 or 4 points, 5 or 6 points, 7 or 8 points, 9 or 10 points, or greater than 10 points), 8-pointers were the most frequent point category (Figure 9). The number of points on antlered bucks has remained relatively consistent over the past 4 years (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Number of antler points on bucks collected by the telecheck/online reporting system during the shotgun/rifle hunting season in Connecticut, 2022-2025.



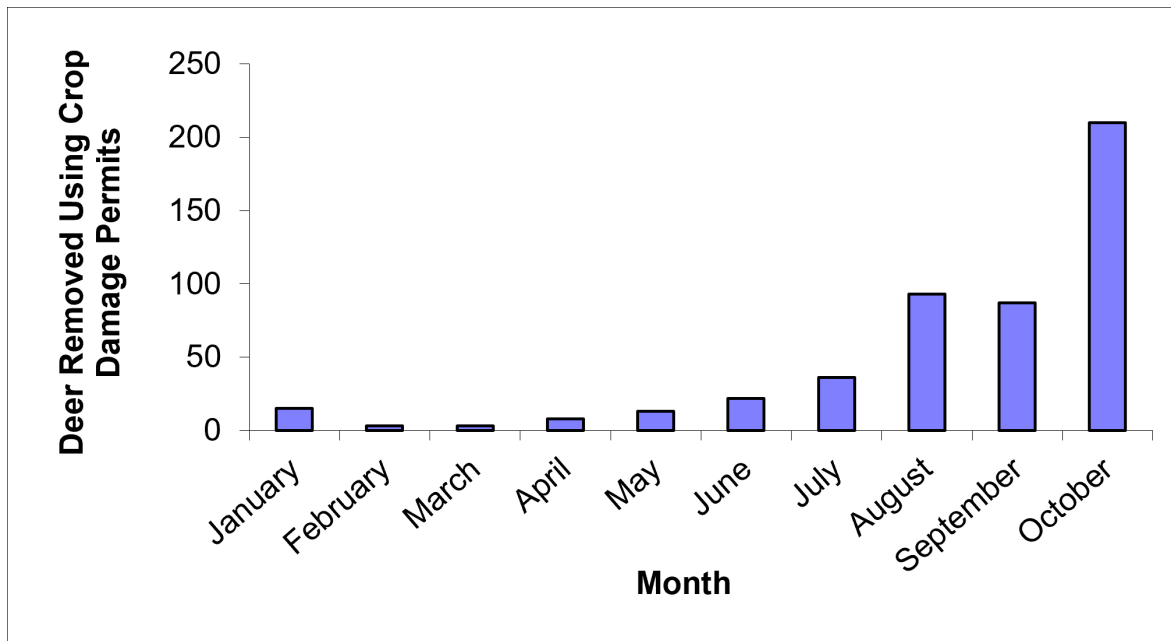
Non-hunting Deer Mortality

Non-hunting deer mortality, particularly deer-vehicle accidents (DVA/roadkills) and crop damage, represent a significant percentage of annual deer losses in Connecticut. Deer-vehicle accident data provide important information relative to cultural carrying capacity, population modeling, and, to a lesser extent, deer density and herd sex ratios. In an urban-suburban state like Connecticut, measures of land-use conflicts, such as DVAs, are an important source of data for the formulation of management policies and recommendations.

Based on a 2-year study (2000-2001), for every 1 deer killed by a vehicle and reported to the Wildlife Division via a wildlife kill incident report (WKIR), 5 additional deer were killed by vehicles and not reported. Wildlife kill incident reports have been filled out by local and state police and submitted to the Connecticut DEEP to document DVAs for decades. However, in 2016, regulatory changes occurred (26-57-1) that no longer required completion of WKIRs for transportation and disposal of deer carcasses by highway departments and, essentially, the only time one was required is if someone wanted to take the deer into personal possession (26-57-2). Alternatively, state and local law enforcement officers are required to complete a motor vehicle crash report within 5 days for the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) when a motor vehicle accident occurs, and damages are estimated to exceed \$1,000. One of the options to select as a “primary cause of the accident” is “deer”. The Connecticut Transportation Institute then enters those reports into an electronic database, and reports can be accessed electronically. Due to the more recent limitations of WKIRs, we now use the DOT crash data as it appears to be more representative. In 2025, 1,521 non-hunting deer mortalities were reported (Appendix 4). Of those, 1,031 were reported as DVAs. Non-hunting mortality comprised 13.2% of the total reported deer mortality in Connecticut, including crop damage harvest (Appendix 4). The number of DVAs per square mile remain the highest in DMZs 3, 7, 11, and 12 (Appendix 5). Those areas also happen to be the most human densely populated areas in the state (2020 U.S. Census Data). However, the number of DVAs in DMZ 11 has shown a steady decline since implementation of the replacement tag program, extension of the archery season, allowing the use of bait on private land, allowing the use of crossbows, and Sunday hunting. (Figure 7).

Crop damage is an important economic concern to some commercial agricultural operations. The Wildlife Division's Deer Crop Damage Program regulates the removal of deer on agricultural properties which meet specific criteria and are experiencing deer damage to specific plant commodities. The Division also encourages agriculturists to take advantage of the regulated deer hunting season to aid in the removal of problem deer and also use other methods, such as fencing, to reduce deer damage. In 2015, the crop damage application and deer registration process were streamlined. Crop damage applications can be obtained from the [DEEP website](#) and filled out electronically. Crop damage shooters can report their removals online or by telephone. During the 2025 calendar year, 490 deer were taken with crop damage permits (Appendix 6). From 1993 to 2025, annual deer removal with crop damage permits fluctuated between 239 and 946 deer. Deer removals in DMZs 3, 7, and 10 accounted for 44% of deer removed with crop damage permits in 2025. Crop damage removals increased from May to October, with 61% of the annual removals occurring in September and October (Figure 10). This increase is typically thought to reflect increasing interest in hunting as fall approaches rather than any damage-related trend.

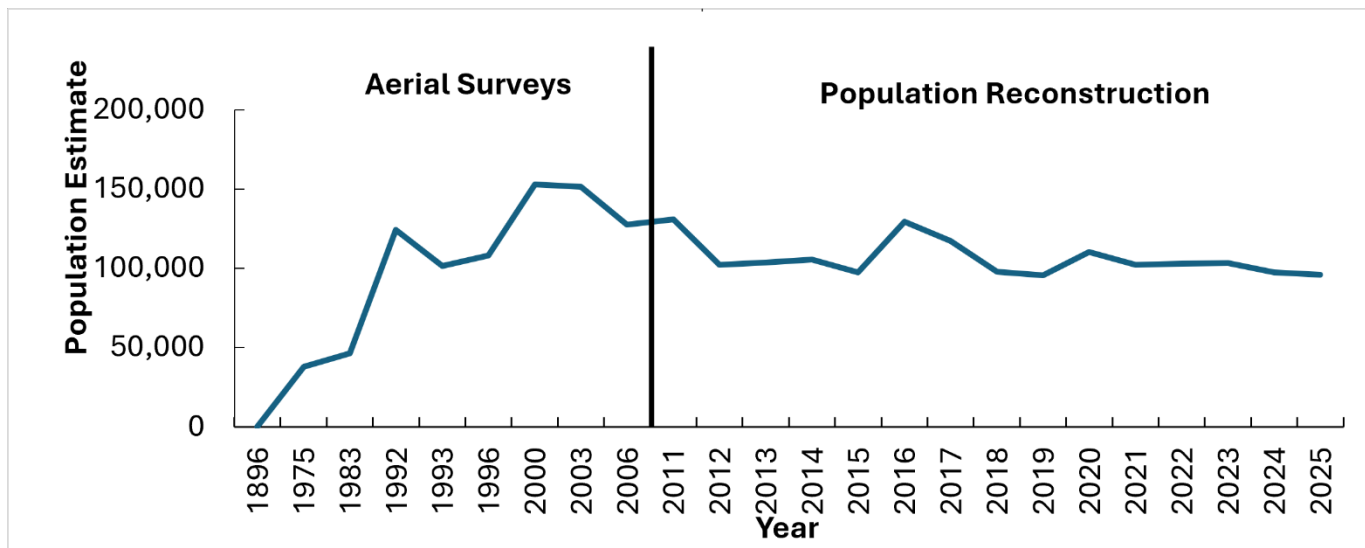
Figure 10. Crop damage deer removals by month, 2025.



Population Trends

Based on aerial deer surveys conducted between 1975 and 2006 and population reconstruction models applied between 2011-2025, a statewide deer population estimate was calculated. Using these methods, over the past 20 years the population peaked at 152,000 in the early 2000s and declined some in the later 2000s (110,000) (Figure 11). Keep in mind that both methods are only estimates. Aerial surveys are heavily impacted by forest type and snow cover, and the population reconstruction model uses variables based on reported hunter harvests and sightings of fawns, does, and bucks collected at time of harvest reporting, along with reported DVAs. A correction factor based on research has been applied to all variables.

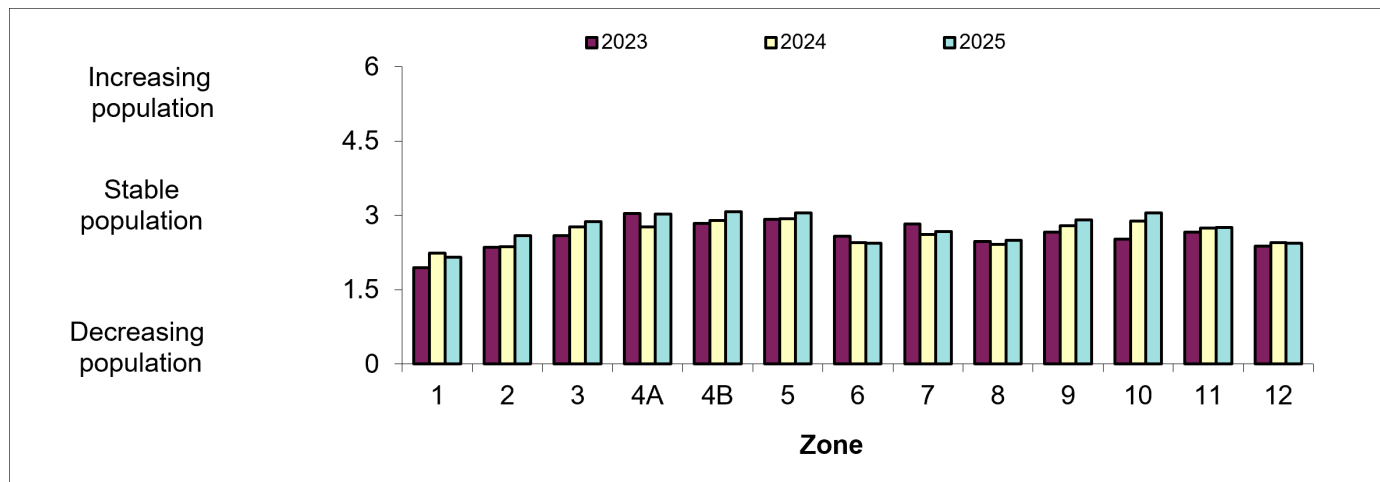
Figure 11. Statewide deer population estimates based on track count (1896), aerial surveys (1975-2006), and population reconstruction models (2011-2025) in Connecticut.



The 2025 deer hunter survey included the question, "How would you describe the status of the deer population in the zone you hunt most from last year to this year?" Hunter perceptions of deer population trends were ranked on a scale of 0 (decreasing population) to 6 (increasing population). Thirty-two percent of the hunters who responded to the survey

believed that the population was declining, 49% believed it was stable, and 19% believed it was increasing. DMZs 4B, 5, and 10 had the highest average rank (3.07, 3.05, and 3.05) (Figure 12), indicating that the population was mainly stable. In general, hunters perceived that deer populations are relatively stable or decreasing slightly in most zones over the past 3 years. Hunter perceptions seem to align with population estimates, which align with management objectives in several zones.

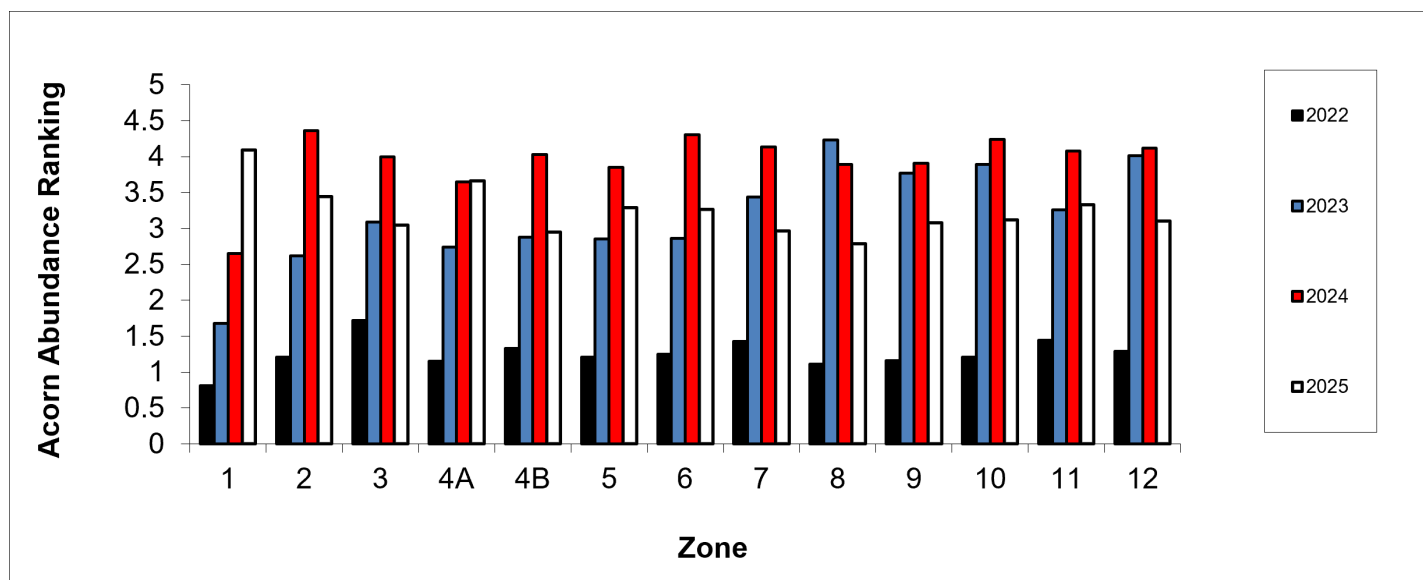
Figure 12. Perception of zonal deer population trends (average rank) by Connecticut's deer hunters, 2023-2025.



Fall Acorn Crop

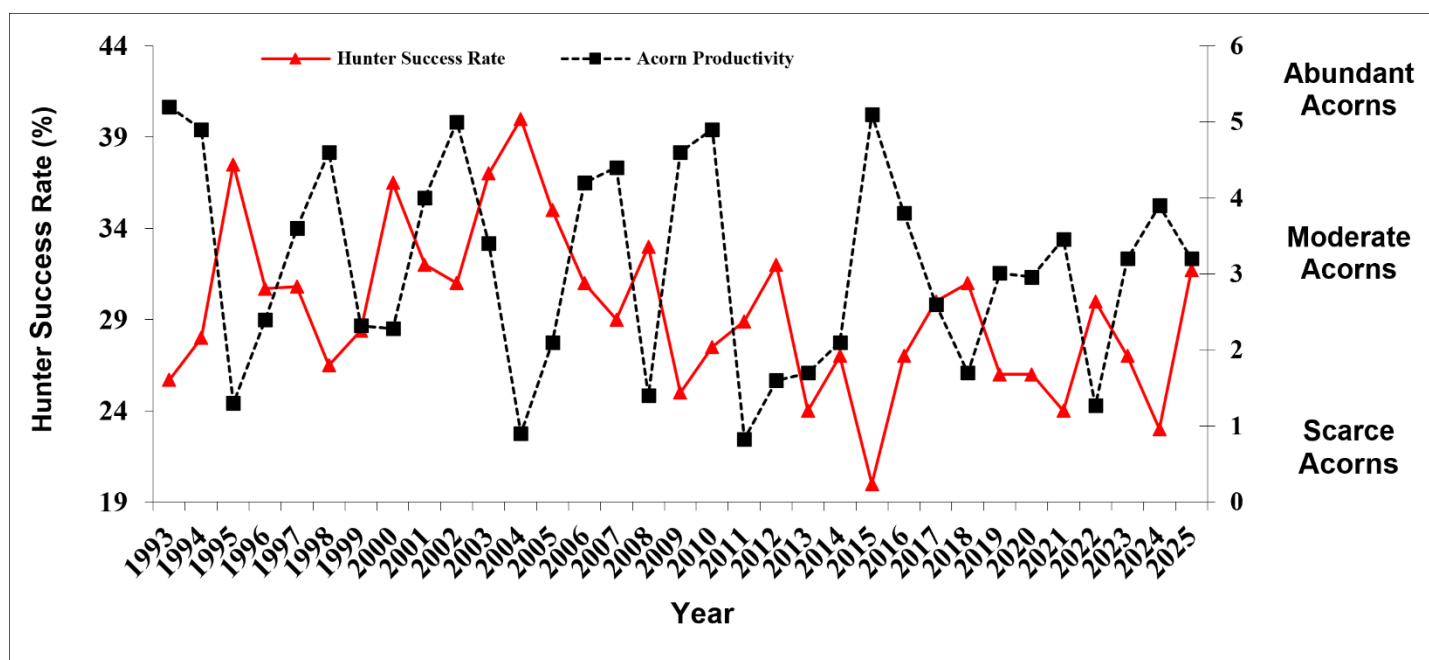
Acorns are a preferred food for white-tailed deer during fall and winter. Acorn availability influences deer movement patterns and herd health. To interpret changes in harvest rates, herd health, and herd productivity, the Deer Program has been collecting data since 1993 from hunter surveys on abundance of the fall acorn crop. Hunter perceptions of the fall acorn crop were ranked on a scale from 0 (non-existent) to 6 (abundant acorns). In 2025, 49% of the hunters who responded to the survey ranked the fall acorn crop as moderate, 14% as abundant, 31% as scarce, and 6% as non-existent. DMZs 1 and 4A had the highest average rank (4.1 and 3.7), while DMZs 4B and 8 had the lowest average ranks (3.0 and 2.8) (Figure 13). On a scale of 0-6, the average rank statewide was 3.2. Substantial damage was caused to oak trees for consecutive years by spongy moth (formerly known as gypsy moth) outbreaks (2018 and 2019) in eastern Connecticut and then in western Connecticut the following couple of years. The long-term effect on the oak trees is still unknown, although recovery is evident based on surveys over the past few years.

Figure 13. Perception of acorn crops (average rank) by Connecticut's deer hunters, 2022-2025.



The past 33 years of data on acorn abundance and deer harvest rates suggest that a correlation exists between hunter success and acorn abundance (Figure 14). In 1993, when acorns were abundant, hunter success was one of the lowest recorded, and in 2004, when acorns were scarce, the hunter success rate was the highest. During years with low acorn productivity, deer travel more to access other food sources, such as green fields, increasing their vulnerability to hunters. In 2013 and 2014, the acorn-success pattern was inconsistent and may have been influenced by warm weather during the hunting season. During the 2015 and 2016 seasons, the abundance of acorns and warm weather resulted in lower hunter success rates. This past year, the lack of acorns led to increased success rates. In 2025, decreased acorn productivity resulted in higher hunter success rates. On average, the acorn crop statewide has been moderate in most years, scarce about every 5 to 6 years, and abundant every 4 years. In local areas, extensive spongy moth damage has resulted in limited acorn productivity and severely impacted many white oak stands, resulting in large areas with nothing but standing dead oak trees. Depending on the severity of damage that occurs in the coming years, the spongy moth outbreak could have a major impact on Connecticut's forested landscape for years to come.

Figure 14. Relationship between private land shotgun/rifle hunter success rates and fall acorn productivity, 1993-2025.



Deer Hunter Expenditures, Effort, Venison Calculations, and Opinions

Deer hunting-related expenditures contribute significantly to Connecticut's economy. Deer permit sales were up in 2025, generating \$1,275,560 in revenue for the Connecticut General Fund, slightly more than in 2024 (\$1,243,091). Additionally, data collected from the annual deer hunter surveys indicated that Connecticut deer hunters spent an estimated \$6,802,857 on deer hunting-related goods and services in 2025, up slightly from \$6,317,671 spent in 2024.

In 2025, deer hunters spent a cumulative total of 432,480 days afield. Private land shotgun/rifle and state land shotgun and muzzleloader hunters used the greatest percentage of available hunting days during those seasons (32%, 28%, and 28% respectively). Private land muzzleloader hunters and landowners used the next greatest percentage of days (19% and 16%). Bowhunters used a smaller percentage of available hunting days (13%) because the archery season is much longer (inclusive of the January season) than the firearms season.

From a hunter effort standpoint, it took a greater number of days to harvest a deer during the 2025 archery season (20.2 days/deer harvested) than it did during the 2024 archery season (15.7 days/deer harvested; includes successful and unsuccessful hunters). This calculation is based on total number of days hunted divided by total number of hours hunted/day (8) divided by the harvest reported on the survey.

Hunters were asked "how satisfied they were with their Connecticut deer hunting experience in 2025". Excluding hunters who had no opinion (about 5%), 18% of hunters were moderately satisfied with their hunting experience, a third were satisfied (33%), a quarter were very satisfied (26%), and the remainder were only slightly satisfied (12%) or not satisfied

(11%). Of comments made regarding satisfaction, the most frequent comments encountered were that there are increasing hunter concerns regarding predators (36%), hunters (27%) are seeing a population decline or fewer deer, hunters (14%) are experiencing conflicts (mountain bikers, hikers, ATVs, neighbors, etc.), hunting should be allowed on Sundays (13%), and hunters (11%) have limited time to hunt or are making hunting less of a priority.

Hunters were asked “what is the primary reason why they hunt in the zones that they did”. The primary reason for archers was “it is close to home” (49%) and “they have access to private land there” (39%), while for firearms and muzzleloader hunters the primary reason was “they have access to private land there” (44% and 45%) and “it is close to home” (37% and 37%). Other reasons for archery, firearms, and muzzleloader hunters included “have access to state land there” (5%, 9%, and 8%), and “other” reasons (3%, 4%, and 5%).

Hunters were asked “How familiar are you with straight walled cartridges used for deer hunting?” Forty-six percent of hunters were not at all familiar with them, 31% were somewhat familiar with them, and 23% were very familiar with them. Hunters were also asked “Would you support the use of straight walled cartridges for deer hunting on state land?” Forty-eight percent of hunters supported them, 44% were unsure, and 8% did not support them.

Hunters had the opportunity to provide final comments when taking the deer hunter survey. Comments were grouped into specific categories and, for those that exceeded 20 responses, 54% mentioned predators (bears, bobcats, and coyotes) and the need for management; 13% requested increased opportunities to hunt Sundays on state land during archery and firearms seasons; 8% mentioned issues with access to property; 8% experienced conflicts with non-hunters (especially mountain bikers, ATVs, and dogs off leash); 8% mentioned wanting to use straight walled cartridges to hunt; and 6% wanted to have the end of shooting hours be a half hour after sunset. Many other comments were made, but at a much lower frequency.

Sightings

Hunters mentioning bears and bobcats and the need for hunting/trapping seasons are most likely due to increased sightings of bears, bobcats, and moose while hunting. Populations of these 3 species have been increasing since the early 1990s. To document this increase, hunters were asked on the hunter survey how many bears, bobcats, and moose they observe during the season in relation to how many days they spend hunting. As the number of days hunted before seeing a bear, bobcat, or moose decreases, it would indicate an increasing population (Table 15), which is a much better indicator than just total number of sightings as there is a “catch per unit effort” involved.

Table 15. Hunter sightings of bears, bobcats, and moose, 2012-2025.

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Bear Sightings^A	100	73	63	30	32	27	27	28	24	10	16	17	17	13
Bobcat Sightings^A	47	41	31	21	22	18	18	28	17	8	15	17	16	14
Moose Sightings^A	1,027	718	841	524	562	458	507	564	512	472	466	503	494	602

^A Hunter sightings are reported as days hunted/one animal observed based on annual deer hunter surveys.

Deer hunters reported personally observing 86 moose and captured an additional 142 on trail cameras in 26 towns in 2025, with sightings being reported in 110 different towns over the past 27 years. Sightings have been reported from 8 to 43 different towns each year (Figure 15). Moose were observed in Barkhamsted, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Granby, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, New Hartford, Norfolk, Salisbury, Sharon, Suffield, Stafford, Union, and Winchester for 6 of the last 10 years (Figure 15). Most of the towns where hunters report the greatest number of moose sightings occur along the Connecticut-Massachusetts border. In 2025, hunters spent roughly 602 days in the field for every moose observed, more days than in 2024 when hunters spent roughly 494 days in the field for every moose observed (Table 15). The decrease in moose sightings aligns with trends related to regional population declines due to changing climatic conditions throughout New England. Unlike bears and bobcats, moose are a northern species that face many unfavorable conditions at the southern extent of their range in Connecticut.

We also asked hunters in the 2025 survey if they had observed any sika/fallow deer, which are not native to Connecticut but have been previously allowed as exotic captive cervids at permitted game farms. Since 2003, no new captive cervids have been allowed to enter the state due to disease concerns. Reports of escaped exotic animals on the landscape and confirmation of those reports could lead to the increased potential of disease spreading among our native deer

populations. One hundred and forty-five hunters reported physically seeing 909 sika/fallow deer and 98 hunters reported seeing 1,175 sika/fallow deer on trail cameras in 101 towns across the state. There were some areas of the state where concentrations of sightings occurred (Figure 16). An ongoing follow up survey of hunters who reported seeing sika/fallow deer in 2025 indicates that many of the sightings reported on the hunter survey may have been reported in error. Preliminary findings indicate that actual sika/fallow sightings are much lower than initially reported on the hunter survey. We hope to get hunter completion rates up by the end of August so a better assessment can be made.

Figure 15. Moose sightings reported on deer hunter surveys, 1996-2025.

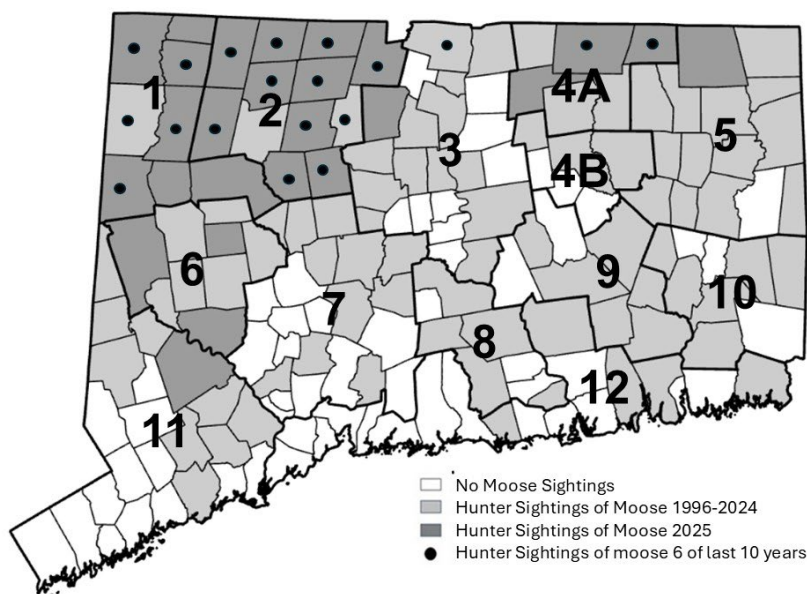
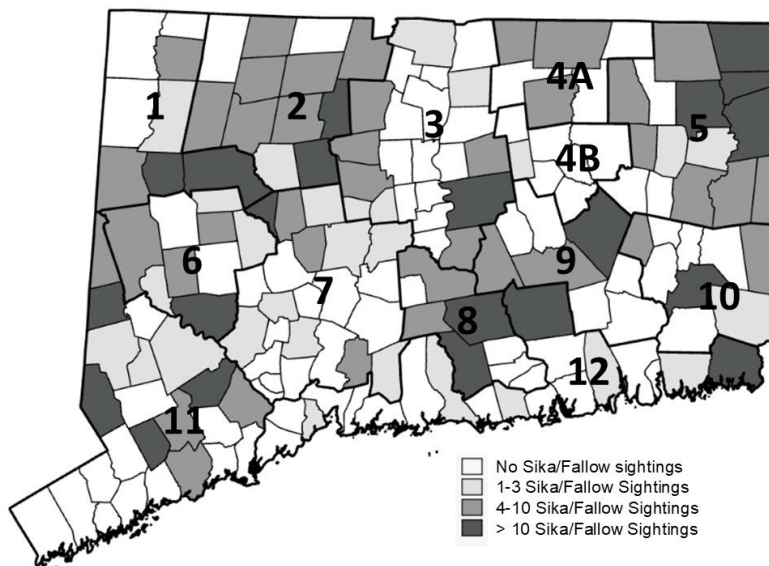


Figure 16. Sika/fallow deer sightings reported on deer hunter survey, 2025.



Conclusion

Over the past several decades, deer population size, human land-use practices, and public attitudes toward wildlife have changed considerably. Today, hunters may legally take up to 14 deer (including the January archery season on private land in DMZs 11 and 12) per year if they participate in all hunting seasons, and unlimited deer may be taken in 2 of the 13 Deer Management Zones. Historically, deer permit issuance increased consistently from 11,710 in 1975 to 61,333 in

1992. From 1992 through 2007, permit issuance remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 60,316 and 64,032. In 2008, permit issuance increased to its highest point in history. The cause for this increase is unknown but may have been attributed to the poor economy at the time. In 2009, permit issuance declined slightly, likely due to the switch to online license sales.

Since 2010, permit issuance has continued to decline annually due to changes in the deer lottery system and the ability to purchase permits at any time rather than in advance of the hunting season, and a decline in hunter numbers. Permit issuance in recent years is now at the same level as it was in 1988. Over the last 10 years, harvest in most deer management zones has been stable to declining. The increased opportunities and incentives to harvest deer in urban DMZs 11 and 12 allowed the harvest to more than double but has been declining while deer-vehicle accidents have continued to trend downward as well. Increased harvest opportunities, combined with expanding predator populations, appear to have stabilized deer populations in many areas of the state and population reconstruction models show a stable to declining population in recent years. Changes in hunter numbers will play a big part in harvest management in future years.

The Wildlife Division initiated several long-term urban deer studies in residential communities in past years. Reports summarizing findings from these studies are available to communities interested in managing deer in more developed areas of the state, such as Fairfield County. Copies of these reports can be obtained by contacting the Wildlife Division's Deer Program via email at Andrew.LaBonte@ct.gov or calling the Wildlife Division's Franklin office at 860-418-5921. The Wildlife Division will continue to provide technical assistance on deer control options to interested communities. Future management efforts will continue to focus on deer population stabilization. In areas with overabundant deer populations, landowners are encouraged to use hunting, where possible, as a management tool. A booklet on [Managing Urban Deer in Connecticut](#) is available from Wildlife Division offices or online to assist communities in developing effective deer management programs.

Mentor a New Hunter

Connecticut's deer hunters are an aging population (55-57% are 50 or more years old). Hunter numbers are starting to decline, with fewer hunters left to pass on the legacy. Without seasoned hunters passing on their skills, it will be more challenging for new hunters to gain that knowledge without first-hand experience.

Hunter Age Structure in Connecticut, 2024 and 25

Age	<20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
2024	4%	10%	16%	15%	21%	22%	12%
2025	3%	9%	15%	15%	20%	24%	13%

Connecticut designates specific days when experienced adult hunters are encouraged to take a youth hunting, helping them learn safe and effective hunting practices, develop observational skills, and gain confidence and the comfort level they need to discover a passion for hunting and the outdoors. On [Junior Hunter Training Days](#), licensed junior hunters (12 to 15 years of age) may hunt when accompanied by a licensed adult hunter 18 years of age or older. The adult mentor may not carry a firearm and must remain within physical contact in a position to provide direct supervision and instruction at all times.

Mentoring is also important for new adult hunters, so do not limit your efforts to just young people. The same skills taught to youth hunters are needed to help adults new to hunting learn the ropes. Whether it be a coworker, friend, or neighbor — either youth or adult — take the time to introduce a new hunter to a lifetime of appreciation for our natural resources through hunting.



Appendix 1. Total reported deer by town, 2025.

Town	Archery	Shotgun /Rifle	Landowner	Muzzleloader	Cropkill	DVA ¹	Total
Andover	30	24	13	3	0	0	70
Ansonia	2	3	27	0	0	2	34
Ashford	54	60	7	14	3	1	139
Avon	18	10	8	1	10	15	62
Barkhamsted	18	19	2	4	0	0	43
Beacon Falls	10	20	1	2	0	0	33
Berlin	33	30	1	5	2	20	91
Bethany	38	14	1	3	5	1	62
Bethel	29	8	19	3	0	21	80
Bethlehem	10	8	1	2	0	0	21
Bloomfield	27	10	1	1	0	28	67
Bolton	22	12	16	3	8	1	62
Bozrah	21	32	1	4	9	1	68
Branford	20	6	3	0	2	11	42
Bridgeport	3	0	34	0	0	3	40
Bridgewater	13	14	16	1	0	0	44
Bristol	4	4	2	0	0	10	20
Brookfield	45	3	2	0	0	11	61
Brooklyn	34	47	25	10	18	1	135
Burlington	20	25	3	1	0	3	52
Canaan	34	40	12	5	0	1	92
Canterbury	50	48	4	7	1	1	111
Canton	32	7	21	4	0	15	79
Chaplin	35	41	1	7	2	0	86
Cheshire	36	15	2	7	27	11	98
Chester	12	16	5	3	0	2	38
Clinton	29	3	2	0	0	10	44
Colchester	52	56	24	7	9	2	150
Colebrook	3	5	12	2	0	0	22
Columbia	26	23	1	1	0	2	53
Cornwall	28	40	6	7	0	0	81
Coventry	55	97	14	10	4	40	220
Cromwell	9	2	4	0	0	6	21
Danbury	37	9	15	2	0	36	99
Darien	57	0	4	0	0	8	69
Deep River	10	11	13	3	2	0	39
Derby	5	2	14	0	0	2	23
Durham	28	29	10	8	1	0	76
East Granby	13	13	6	1	1	0	34
East Haddam	46	72	16	12	4	0	150
East Hampton	33	44	6	5	0	0	88
East Hartford	10	5	6	0	6	10	37
East Haven	13	2	20	0	0	5	40
East Lyme	27	22	3	3	0	1	56
East Windsor	29	29	22	4	0	9	93
Eastford	31	46	5	6	0	0	88
Easton	50	18	7	1	8	12	96
Ellington	16	16	17	2	0	0	51
Enfield	34	17	6	3	0	1	61

Essex	5	2	28	1	0	1	37
Fairfield	66	5	11	0	0	4	86
Farmington	12	2	34	1	5	23	77
Franklin	27	35	10	11	4	1	88
Glastonbury	44	31	18	8	19	0	120
Goshen	24	17	10	0	0	1	52
Granby	10	20	9	1	0	10	50
Greenwich	38	0	2	0	0	8	48
Griswold	50	47	25	11	30	1	164
Groton	40	10	13	2	6	42	113
Guilford	76	27	4	7	7	24	145
Haddam	33	51	8	5	0	1	98
Hamden	13	11	1	5	24	19	73
Hampton	30	35	18	7	6	1	97
Hartford	0	0	3	0	0	5	8
Hartland	6	21	2	5	0	0	34
Harwinton	16	33	1	3	3	2	58
Hebron	33	26	7	6	0	1	73
Kent	17	26	12	4	1	0	60
Killingly	68	55	3	8	0	2	136
Killingworth	36	38	3	5	0	0	82
Lebanon	80	106	2	15	27	1	231
Ledyard	49	39	22	9	0	0	119
Lisbon	11	19	5	1	2	0	38
Litchfield	44	43	4	8	6	3	108
Lyme	21	30	5	0	0	1	57
Madison	38	10	0	3	0	5	56
Manchester	15	2	0	0	0	7	24
Mansfield	85	58	0	10	10	2	165
Marlborough	31	30	0	2	0	1	64
Meriden	14	10	0	0	0	7	31
Middlebury	13	5	0	1	0	1	20
Middlefield	22	13	0	2	8	0	45
Middletown	54	58	0	4	0	18	134
Milford	29	2	0	1	1	13	46
Monroe	44	10	0	2	0	24	80
Montville	36	25	0	4	0	6	71
Morris	19	12	0	2	0	1	34
Naugatuck	14	11	0	1	1	5	32
New Britain	2	0	0	0	0	2	4
New Canaan	45	1	0	0	0	11	57
New Fairfield	28	10	0	0	0	0	38
New Hartford	21	18	0	2	5	0	46
New Haven	0	1	0	1	0	1	3
New London	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
New Milford	57	36	0	5	4	5	107
Newington	4	1	0	0	0	17	22
Newtown	119	40	0	4	1	14	178
Norfolk	12	13	0	4	0	0	29
North Branford	30	5	0	1	0	6	42
North Canaan	10	5	0	0	0	0	15
North Haven	19	7	0	0	0	10	36

North Stonington	38	69	0	11	11	0	129
Norwalk	37	0	0	0	0	9	46
Norwich	29	26	0	3	2	38	98
Old Lyme	24	16	0	2	0	0	42
Old Saybrook	2	5	0	0	0	6	13
Orange	28	2	0	0	5	23	58
Oxford	40	16	0	5	21	1	83
Plainfield	58	43	29	5	6	3	144
Plainville	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Plymouth	26	20	8	1	0	4	59
Pomfret	41	55	22	10	0	0	128
Portland	12	21	3	3	1	0	40
Preston	33	34	15	5	7	1	95
Prospect	32	8	0	0	0	1	41
Putnam	22	23	7	3	0	6	61
Redding	60	27	1	2	0	10	100
Ridgefield	74	7	2	2	0	10	95
Rocky Hill	11	6	0	0	13	7	37
Roxbury	8	18	3	2	2	0	33
Salem	18	22	17	2	0	3	62
Salisbury	43	40	5	7	1	0	96
Scotland	18	35	12	7	0	0	72
Seymour	22	2	0	1	0	11	36
Sharon	26	43	6	3	0	1	79
Shelton	44	3	0	0	29	9	85
Sherman	46	12	2	4	0	0	64
Simsbury	12	4	0	2	0	22	40
Somers	23	18	0	1	0	0	42
South Windsor	21	16	3	4	3	1	48
Southbury	41	22	5	6	3	2	79
Southington	25	10	1	2	1	13	52
Sprague	15	20	5	2	3	0	45
Stafford	50	47	29	9	0	0	135
Stamford	40	3	0	0	0	15	58
Sterling	44	39	14	7	9	1	114
Stonington	62	31	7	7	9	32	148
Stratford	6	1	0	0	0	1	8
Suffield	34	48	9	7	4	15	117
Thomaston	14	13	3	1	0	3	34
Thompson	63	63	19	12	9	0	166
Tolland	58	22	18	5	3	3	109
Torrington	11	25	4	6	0	9	55
Trumbull	25	0	0	0	0	12	37
Union	15	24	8	3	0	0	50
Vernon	16	7	2	1	0	2	28
Voluntown	34	48	13	6	4	0	105
Wallingford	60	28	4	6	7	32	137
Warren	15	18	4	3	0	0	40
Washington	14	21	5	6	18	3	67
Waterbury	9	0	0	0	0	5	14
Waterford	52	17	8	2	0	1	80
Watertown	16	16	3	0	5	24	64

West Hartford	1	0	0	0	0	5	6
West Haven	12	0	0	0	0	5	17
Westbrook	18	9	0	3	0	1	31
Weston	30	17	0	0	0	4	51
Westport	1	0	0	0	0	20	21
Wethersfield	2	2	0	0	2	4	10
Willington	39	27	24	5	0	3	98
Wilton	81	19	1	10	7	3	121
Winchester	15	11	9	1	0	7	43
Windham	29	25	13	8	3	2	80
Windsor	12	8	1	1	1	12	35
Windsor Locks	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Wolcott	12	8	0	3	0	8	31
Woodbridge	21	5	1	4	2	5	38
Woodbury	30	21	9	4	7	1	72
Woodstock	53	83	24	6	0	0	166
Total	4,828	3,539	1,099	561	490	1,031	11,548

¹ Deer vehicle accidents (DVA) from The Connecticut Transportation Institute online database.

Appendix 2. Deer harvest on state hunting areas, including Deer Lottery Hunting Areas (DLHA), 2025

Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery Area #	No-Lottery	Code	• Hunting Permitted ▲ Designated Deer Bowhunting Only Area (▲ areas are open during shotgun and muzzleloader) ▲/• Some Sections open to Archery ONLY ○ Daily/Season Permit Required * Special Conditions - shaded lines = Harvest/mi² greater than 10	Square miles	Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery	No Lottery	Total Harvest	Harvest/mi ²
•	•	62		308	Aldo Leopold WMA	0.87	0	1	1	0	2	2.30
•	•		•	201	Algonquin SF	1.04	17	3	0	4	24	23.08
•	•		•	202	American Legion SF	1.62	0	0	0	3	3	1.85
•	•		•	272	Assekonk Swamp WMA	1.07	1	0	0	3	4	3.74
•	•		•	244	Babcock Pond WMA	2.36	3	1	0	3	7	2.97
▲				203	Barber Pond WMA	0.11	3	1	0	1	5	45.45
•	•		•	273	Barn Island WMA	1.58	2	1	0	3	6	3.80
▲/•	•		•	274	Bartlett Brook WMA	1.10	4	0	0	1	5	4.55
▲				275	Bear Hill WMA	0.57	4	0	0	0	4	7.02
▲				276	Beaver Brook SP	0.56	1	0	0	0	1	1.79
▲				309	Bennett's Pond SP	0.72	3	0	0	0	3	4.17
▲				277	Bigelow Hollow SP	0.80	0	0	0	1	1	1.25
▲	•	68		245	Bishops Swamp WMA	1.62	3	0	1	0	4	3.39
▲				337	Black Pond WMA	0.11	0	0	0	1	1	9.09
▲				204	Black Rock Lake (state and federally owned)	0.62	1	0	0	0	1	1.61
▲				205	Bloomfield Flood Control Area (Site 1)	0.51	7	0	0	0	7	13.73
		52		329	Bristol Water Company	6.75	0	0	15	0	15	2.22
▲/•	•		•	207	Camp Columbia SF	0.94	2	0	0	1	3	3.19
•	•		•	347	Candlewood Hill WMA	0.31	0	0	0	3	3	9.68
▲				208	Cedar Swamp WMA	0.43	2	0	0	0	2	4.65
•*		56		310	Centennial Watershed SF	6.77	32	0	33	0	65	9.60
•	•		•	209	Centennial Watershed SF (Canaan Block)	0.23	0	0	0	1	1	4.35
▲				311	Centennial Watershed SF (formerly Bpt. Hydr.) - Shelton	0.16	2	0	0	0	2	12.50
▲				310	Centennial Watershed SF -Monroe Parcel (Hattertown)	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲/•	•		•	246	Cockaponset SF	26.85	44	9	0	41	94	3.50
▲				313	Collis P. Huntington SP	1.61	7	0	0	4	11	6.83
▲				247	Cromwell Meadows WMA	0.79	1	0	0	0	1	1.27
▲				210	CT Light & Power (borders Newgate WMA)	0.32	1	0	0	1	2	6.25
▲				248	Durham Meadows WMA	0.80	1	0	0	0	1	1.25
▲				315	East Swamp WMA	0.10	2	0	0	0	2	20.00
▲				211	East Twin Lakes Water Access Area	0.15	1	0	0	0	1	6.67
•	•		•	249	Eightmile River WMA	0.48	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
•	•		•	250	Ellithorpe Flood Control Area	0.64	1	0	0	4	5	7.81
▲				332	Enders SF (Worthen Parcel ONLY)	0.55	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
•	•		•	278	Franklin Swamp WMA	1.07	2	1	0	3	6	5.61
▲				316	George C. Waldo SP	0.23	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery Area #	No-Lottery	Code	• Hunting Permitted ▲ Designated Deer Bowhunting Only Area (▲ areas are open during shotgun and muzzleloader) ▲/• Some Sections open to Archery ONLY ○ Daily/Season Permit Required * Special Conditions - shaded lines = Harvest/mi² greater than 10	Square miles	Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery	No Lottery	Total Harvest	Harvest/mi ²
•	•		•	213	Goshen WMA	1.51	4	0	0	4	8	5.30
▲				318	Great Swamp Flood Control Area	0.53	4	0	0	0	4	7.55
•			•	214	Hancock Brook Lake (federally owned)	1.10	0	0	0	2	2	1.82
○				280	Harkness Memorial SP ▲ (Verkade Property)	0.44	7	0	0	0	7	15.91
▲				251	Higganum Meadows WMA (off Clarkhurst Road)	0.40	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				252	Higganum Reservoir	0.23	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				215	Housatonic River WMA	0.87	2	0	0	1	3	3.45
•	•		•	216	Housatonic SF	17.63	8	7	0	25	40	2.27
•	•		•	302	James V. Spignesi WMA	0.81	0	0	0	4	4	4.94
▲				217	John Minetto SP	1.12	1	0	0	3	4	3.57
▲				281	Killingly Pond SP	0.27	1	0	0	0	1	3.70
•	•		•	253	Kollar WMA	1.40	5	2	0	2	9	6.43
•	•		•	254	Larson Lot WMA	0.38	0	0	0	2	2	5.26
▲				282	Lebanon Coop Mgmt. Area	0.33	1	0	0	0	1	3.03
▲				283	Little River Fish and Wildlife Area	0.08	1	0	0	0	1	12.50
▲				218	Mad River Dam Flood Control Area	0.70	2	0	0	0	2	2.86
▲				255	Mansfield Hollow Lake (excluding SP)	3.14	11	0	0	0	11	3.50
▲				256	Mansfield State-Leased Field Trial Area	0.37	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
•	•		•	263	Maromas Coop WMA	2.48	7	2	0	15	24	9.68
•	•		•	219	Mattatuck SF	7.02	14	0	0	8	22	3.13
•	•		•	220	MDC – Colebrook Reservoir/Hogback Dam	6.50	0	1	0	1	2	0.31
▲				221	MDC – Greenwoods Pond	0.31	2	0	0	0	2	6.45
		64		343	MDC Barkhamsted Res. -Barkhamsted Block	6.69	0	0	3	0	3	0.45
		67		346	MDC Barkhamsted Res-Hartland Block	5.78	0	0	8	0	8	1.38
•				349	MDC Lake McDonough	1.22	5	0	0	0	5	4.10
		58		330	MDC Nepaug Reservoir - Valentine/Pine Hill Block	2.32	1	0	13	0	14	6.03
▲		66		345	MDC Sweetheart Mnt. Block	0.78	4	0	0	0	4	5.13
•	•		•	339	Meadow Brook WMA	0.42	1	0	0	1	2	4.76
▲				338	Menunketesuck WMA	0.26	4	0	0	0	4	15.38
•	•		•	257	Meshomasic SF	14.22	8	3	0	22	33	2.32
▲				258	Messerschmidt Pond WMA	0.72	1	0	0	0	1	1.39
•	•		•	259	Millers Pond	0.41	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				341	Mohawk SF - Clark Pond Tract	0.19	1	0	1	0	2	10.53
•	•	63		342	Mohawk SF - Ziegler/Johnson Tract	0.51	2	0	0	0	2	3.92
•	•		•	285	Mohegan SF	1.50	4	3	0	4	11	7.33
▲				260	Mono Pond	0.45	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				222	Mount Riga SP	0.47	0	1	0	0	1	2.13
•	•		•	223	Nassahegon SF	1.30	2	0	0	4	6	4.62
▲/•	•		•	286	Natchaug SF	7.93	51	4	0	53	108	13.62

Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery Area #	No-Lottery	Code	• Hunting Permitted ▲ Designated Deer Bowhunting Only Area (▲ areas are open during shotgun and muzzleloader) ▲/• Some Sections open to Archery ONLY ○ Daily/Season Permit Required * Special Conditions - shaded lines = Harvest/mi² greater than 10	Square miles	Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery	No Lottery	Total Harvest	Harvest/mi ²
•	•		•	261	Nathan Hale SF Mgmt. Area	2.27	4	1	0	12	17	7.49
•	•		•	319	Naugatuck SF	21.15	5	6	0	17	28	1.32
▲				320	Naugatuck SF (Great Hill Block)	0.37	7	0	0	1	8	21.62
▲/•	•	28		321	Naugatuck SF* (Quillinan Reservoir Block)	0.90	4	1	3	1	9	10.00
▲/•	•		•	287	Nehantic SF	7.91	12	2	0	13	27	3.41
•	•		•	224	Nepaug SF	2.10	4	0	0	3	7	3.33
▲				225	Newgate WMA	0.70	3	0	0	0	3	4.29
•	•		•	288	Nipmuck SF	14.40	19	5	0	15	39	2.71
▲				227	Northfield Brook Lake (federally owned)	0.31	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				289	Nott Island WMA	0.13	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲/•	•		•	264	Nye Holman SF	1.20	8	2	0	3	13	10.83
▲/•	•		•	290	Pachaug SF	40.84	56	9	0	54	119	2.91
•	•		•	229	Paugnut SF	2.70	1	4	0	3	8	2.96
▲/•	•		•	322	Paugussett SF	3.04	3	0	0	9	12	3.95
•	•		•	291	Pease Brook WMA	0.33	0	0	0	1	1	3.03
•	•		•	230	Peoples SF	4.60	5	2	0	3	10	2.17
▲				292	Pomeroy SP	0.32	6	0	0	0	6	18.75
•	•		•	324	Pootatuck SF	1.72	1	0	0	3	4	2.33
•	•		•	293	Quaddick SF	0.90	7	1	0	2	10	11.11
•	•		•	294	Quinebaug WMA	0.88	7	0	0	4	11	12.50
▲				295	Quinebaug WMA (Aspinook Pond)	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				326	Quinnipiac River SP	0.53	10	0	0	0	10	18.87
•	•		•	296	Red Cedar Lake (Camp Mooween)	0.93	0	0	0	1	1	1.08
•	•		•	231	Robbins Swamp WMA	2.45	1	0	0	2	3	1.22
•	•		•	232	Roraback WMA	3.10	2	1	0	8	11	3.55
•	•		•	297	Rose Hill WMA	1.08	8	0	0	5	13	12.04
▲				298	Ross Marsh WMA	0.45	1	0	0	0	1	2.22
▲				299	Ross Pond SP	0.58	1	0	0	0	1	1.72
▲				267	Salmon River Cove and Haddam Neck	0.19	1	0	0	0	1	5.26
•	•		•	300	Salmon River SF (including Holbrook Pond)	10.90	14	4	0	24	42	3.85
▲				268	Scantic River SP	0.92	7	0	0	0	7	7.61
•	•			301	Selden Neck SP (Selden Island)	0.88	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
○				233	Sessions Woods WMA	1.20	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
•	•		•	269	Shenipsit SF	11.85	11	3	0	19	33	2.78
•	•		•	333	Silvio O. Conte NWR - Salmon River Div. (federal land)	0.41	4	0	0	3	7	17.07
▲				234	Simsbury WMA	0.57	3	0	1	0	4	7.02
•	•		•	228	Skiff Mtn. Coop WMA	1.13	1	0	0	1	2	2.78
▲/•				350	Stewart B. McKinney NWR	0.72	4	0	0	2	6	8.33
▲				235	Sucker Brook Flood Control Area	0.24	1	0	0	0	1	4.17

Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery Area #	No-Lottery	Code	• Hunting Permitted ▲ Designated Deer Bowhunting Only Area (▲ areas are open during shotgun and muzzleloader) ▲/• Some Sections open to Archery ONLY ○ Daily/Season Permit Required * Special Conditions - shaded lines = Harvest/mi² greater than 10	Square miles	Fall Archery	Muzzleloader	Lottery	No Lottery	Total Harvest	Harvest/mi ²
▲				236	Suffield WMA	0.30	0	0	1	1	2	6.67
•	•		•	303	Sugarbrook Field Trial Area	0.31	2	0	0	0	2	6.45
▲				237	Sunnybrook SP (west of Newfield Rd.)	0.69	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
•	•		•	304	Talbot WMA	0.79	4	0	0	5	9	11.39
•	•	60		334	Tankerhoosen WMA	0.78	5	1	3	0	9	11.54
▲				238	Thomaston Dam (federally owned)	1.33	6	1	0	1	8	6.02
•	•		•	239	Topsmead SF (north and west of Rte. 118)	0.28	0	0	0	1	1	3.57
○	○	26		327	Trout Brook Valley SP	0.47	1	0	1	0	2	4.26
•	•		•	240	Tunxis SF	15.88	5	3	1	13	22	1.39
•	•		•	270	Wangunk Meadows (off Rte. 17a)	1.00	1	1	0	3	5	5.00
•	•		•	305	West Thompson Dam (federal land)	1.71	4	1	0	3	8	4.68
▲				241	Whiting River Flood Control Area	0.29	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
▲				242	Wood Creek Flood Control Area	0.17	0	0	0	1	1	5.88
▲				328	Wooster Mountain SP	0.69	1	0	0	1	2	2.90
•	•		•	271	Wopowog WMA	0.73	3	0	0	5	8	10.96
•	•		•	243	Wyantenock SF	6.38	7	1	0	10	18	2.82
		51		306	Yale Forest (owned by Yale University)	12.03	0	2	23	0	25	2.08
•	•		•	307	Zemko Pond WMA	0.71	1	1	0	3	5	7.04

*Caution should be used when evaluating harvest on individual properties as errors can occur in the reporting process.

Appendix 3. Sex ratios (male:female) of deer harvested during Connecticut's regulated hunting seasons, 2023-2025.

	2023		2024		2025		3-year Average (2023-2025)		Males per Female		
Season	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	2023	2024	2025
Archery											
State Land	417	198	375	190	346	219	379	202	2.11	1.97	1.58
Private Land	2,327	1,328	2,394	1,420	2,611	1,482	2,444	1,389	1.75	1.69	1.84
Subtotal	2,744	1,526	2,769	1,610	3,035	1,793	2,823	1,592	1.80	1.72	1.80
Muzzle-loader											
State Land	44	30	56	32	48	45	49	36	1.47	1.75	1.07
Private Land	267	234	201	232	245	222	238	229	1.14	0.87	1.10
Subtotal	311	264	257	264	293	267	287	265	1.18	0.97	1.10
Shotgun/ Rifle											
State Land	468	127	356	153	445	148	423	143	3.69	2.33	3.01
Private Land	1,819	850	1,462	779	1,997	949	1,759	859	2.14	1.88	2.10
Subtotal	2,287	977	1,818	932	2,442	1,097	2,182	1,002	2.34	1.95	2.23
Landowner	671	234	632	232	813	286	705	251	2.87	2.72	2.84
Total	6,013	3,001	5,476	3,038	6,505	3,289	5,998	3,109	2.00	1.80	1.98

Appendix 4. Non-hunting deer mortality reported in Connecticut, 2013-2025.

Cause of Death	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
DVA ¹	1,323	1,266	1,009	1,083	1,141	1,074	1,022	939	934	1,024	866	898	1,031
Crop Damage	831	812	464	462	560	569	520	239	373	605	470	486	490
Total	2,154	2,078	1,473	1,545	1,701	1,643	1,542	1,178	1,307	1,629	1,336	1,384	1,521
Non-hunting: Harvest	1:5.8	1:5.5	1:6.2	1:6.9	1:7.1	1:6.9	1:7.1	1:9.2	1:6.9	1:6.4	1:6.9	1:6.2	1:6.6
% Mortality*	14.7	15.4	13.9	12.7	12.3	12.7	12.4	9.8	12.7	13.5	12.7	14.0	13.2
% of Harvest	17.2	18.2	16.2	14.5	14.1	14.5	14.1	10.8	14.6	15.6	14.5	16.3	15.2

¹ Deer Vehicle Accidents reported from Department of Transportation.

* Crop damage harvest is included under non-hunting mortality.

Appendix 5. Frequency of deer vehicle accidents in each of Connecticut's deer management zones, a 5-year comparison, 2021-2025.

Zone	2021 ¹	2022 ¹	2023 ¹	2024 ¹	2025 ¹	5-year Total	5- year Zonal %	Habitat (sq. miles)	DVAs ¹ /Sq. Mile		
									2023	2024	2025
1	3	9	5	11	5	33	0.7	344.1	0.01	0.03	0.01
2	50	54	39	34	47	224	4.7	409.85	0.10	0.08	0.11
3	225	226	189	201	190	1,031	21.7	272.1	0.69	0.74	0.70
4A	2	5	6	7	6	26	0.5	213.1	0.03	0.03	0.03
4B	21	30	36	35	47	169	3.6	120.0	0.30	0.29	0.39
5	14	22	22	24	18	100	2.1	444.9	0.05	0.05	0.04
6	23	26	33	24	36	142	3.0	259.1	0.13	0.09	0.14
7	190	202	153	165	177	887	18.7	370.9	0.41	0.44	0.48
8	8	13	15	21	22	79	1.7	167.6	0.09	0.13	0.13
9	4	4	2	5	15	30	0.6	277.8	0.01	0.02	0.05
10	21	19	21	24	41	126	2.7	243.6	0.09	0.10	0.17
11	221	244	201	218	245	1,129	23.8	290.76	0.69	0.75	0.84
12	152	170	144	129	182	777	16.3	356.4	0.40	0.36	0.51
Total	934	1,024	866	898	1,031	4,753	100.0	3,770.2	0.23	0.24	0.27

¹ Deer Vehicle Accidents reported from Department of Transportation.

Appendix 6. Deer removed using crop damage permits in Connecticut's deer management zones, 2013-2025.

Zone	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1	44	39	32	37	38	46	30	25	24	23	13	8	8
2	15	16	15	20	18	14	10	4	9	14	7	10	8
3	97	99	30	58	85	71	80	20	62	78	79	69	65
4A	16	8	10	8	3	12	19	8	6	0	2	1	3
4B	56	55	24	13	23	41	35	10	15	19	16	18	22
5	88	77	55	37	45	66	46	8	37	70	79	57	57
6	62	89	49	41	49	47	38	16	32	87	48	64	39
7	118	110	72	60	77	74	86	58	49	87	62	61	90
8	40	41	11	11	23	28	15	6	14	20	14	11	11
9	77	65	35	40	18	31	39	26	30	51	41	54	45
10	83	90	53	53	82	55	47	20	30	54	43	66	63
11	91	79	45	57	55	53	35	19	29	53	31	32	45
12	44	43	30	27	44	31	40	19	36	49	35	35	34
Total	831	812	464	462	560	569	520	239	372	605	470	486	490