

Fall/Winter

OUTDOOR HUNTING GUIDE



SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO

GASCONADE
COUNTY

Republican

OCTOBER 28, 2020

Young hunters harvest 15,608 deer during early youth portion of 2021 hunt



JILL PRITCHARD
MISSOURI DEPT. OF CONSERVATION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Preliminary data from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) shows that young hunters ages 6 through 15 harvested 15,608 deer during Missouri’s early youth portion of the 2021 deer hunting season, Oct. 30-31. Top counties were Osage with youth hunters harvesting 359 deer, Franklin with 329, and Howell with 310. Youth hunters harvested 15,854 deer during last year’s early youth portion.

View additional harvest numbers for the 2021 early youth portion at Telecheck Harvest Numbers (mo.gov).

“Weather can have a big impact on harvest totals during our shorter season portions,” said

MDC Cervid Program Supervisor Jason Isabelle. “Thankfully, the rain we experienced across much of the state late last week moved out just in time for our youth hunters to have some great conditions over the weekend.”

Missouri’s deer archery season continues through Nov. 12 and resumes Nov. 24 through Jan. 15, 2022. The November portion of firearms deer season runs Nov. 13-23 followed by the late youth portion Nov. 26-28. The antlerless portion of firearms deer season runs Dec. 4-12 followed by the alternative methods portion Dec. 25 through Jan. 4, 2022.

Read more information on deer hunting from MDC’s 2021 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklet, available where hunting permits are sold and online at <https://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zyy>.

PRELIMINARY DATA shows youth hunters harvested 15,608 deer during the early youth deer season Oct. 30-31. Pictured is William Kramme, 8 of Owensville who harvested this buck on Sunday, Oct. 31, near Mt. Sterling. He is the son of Matt and Erin Kramme, of Owensville.



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Department of Conservation reminds deer hunters to get harvested deer sampled for CWD

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — With deer hunting in Missouri opening in the coming weeks, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) wants hunters to know key information about chronic wasting disease (CWD). MDC will be holding mandatory CWD sampling during opening weekend of firearms season and voluntary CWD sampling all season for hunters who harvest deer in MDC CWD Management Zone counties.

CWD is a deadly, infectious disease in deer and other members of the deer family (cervids) that eventually kills all animals it infects. There is no vaccine or cure. CWD is spread from deer to deer and through the environment. CWD was first detected in Missouri's free-ranging deer population in 2012 and has since been found in 18 counties. The disease remains relatively rare in the state, being detected in 206 deer out of more than 152,300 tested by MDC since 2012. MDC is working hard to keep it that way, and hunters play a critical role in helping MDC manage the disease by having their deer tested and following the carcass-movement restrictions. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/cwd.

CWD Management Zone

MDC designates counties within 10 miles of where a positive case of CWD has been found as part of its CWD Management Zone. The CWD Management Zone counties are: Adair, Barry, Camden, Cedar, Chariton, Christian, Clark, Crawford, Franklin, Gasconade, Hickory, Howell, Jefferson, Knox, Laclede, Linn, Macon, McDonald, Mercer, Oregon, Ozark, Perry, Polk, Pulaski, Putnam, St. Charles, St. Clair, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Stone, Sullivan, Taney, Warren, and Washington. Camden, Laclede, McDonald, and Pulaski counties were added to the CWD Management Zone

this year.

Related CWD regulations prohibit the placement of feed or minerals for deer in counties of the CWD Management Zone. For exceptions, see the 2021 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklet, available where permits are sold and online at mdc.mo.gov/about-us/about-regulations/fall-deer-turkey-hunting-regulations-information.

Voluntary CWD Sampling All Season Statewide

MDC will again offer statewide voluntary CWD sampling and testing of harvested deer during the entire deer season at select locations throughout the state. Locations include select MDC offices during regular business hours, cooperating taxidermists and meat processors (hours vary), and self-service freezers where hunters can leave deer heads for sampling and testing.

Hunters can get their CWD test results for free online at mdc.mo.gov/cwdResults. Results are usually available within three weeks or less from the time of sampling. Find locations and more information online at mdc.mo.gov/cwd or by contacting an MDC regional office at mdc.mo.gov/contact-engage/regional-mdc-offices.

Mandatory CWD Sampling Nov. 13 and 14

Hunters who harvest deer in any counties in the CWD Management Zone during opening weekend of the November portion of firearms deer season (Nov. 13 and 14) are required to take their harvested deer or the head on the day of harvest to one of MDC's numerous CWD mandatory sampling stations located throughout the zone. Sampling and test results are free.

Hunters must present their deer to

a CWD mandatory sampling station within the county of harvest, with a few exceptions. Deer that will end up being delivered to a licensed meat processor or taxidermist within 48 hours, or deer heads that will be left at the MDC CWD mandatory sampling station for disposal after sampling, may be transported to a sampling station in any county.

Find CWD mandatory sampling station locations online at mdc.mo.gov/cwd or from MDC's 2021 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklet.

CWD sampling takes only a few minutes and consists of MDC staff cutting an incision across the throat of harvested deer to remove lymph nodes for testing. Tissue samples are sent to an independent lab for testing. Hunters will be given a card with information on getting free test results for their deer after samples are processed. Hunters can get their CWD test results for free online at mdc.mo.gov/cwdResults. Results are usually available within three weeks or less from the time of sampling.

Hunters presenting bucks bound for taxidermy should inform MDC staff. Staff will complete paperwork and inform the hunters about participating taxidermists taking CWD tissue samples. The cape may also be removed from the animal prior to being taken to a sampling station.

Before arriving at a CWD mandatory sampling station:

- Field dress and Telecheck deer.
- Bring the carcass or just the head.
- Capes may be removed in preparation for taxidermy.
- Position deer in vehicles with head and neck easily accessible.
- Be sure the person who harvested the deer is present.
- Have the hunter's conservation ID

number ready.

- Be prepared to find the location of harvest on a map.
- If using a paper permit, have it detached from the deer for easy access.
- If using the MO Hunting app, have permit and Telecheck information available.

Mandatory CWD sampling dramatically increases the number of tissue samples MDC can collect in a brief period of time. The increased number of samples gives MDC scientists a much better understanding of the distribution and prevalence of the disease — where it is and how many deer may have it. It can also help find new cases in new areas.

Opening weekend of the firearms deer season is the most popular two hunting days for most deer hunters. Hunters take about a third of the state's total annual deer harvest during those two days. Focusing on this key weekend gives MDC the best opportunity to collect the most tissue samples during a very concentrated time period.

Carcass Movement Restrictions

Hunters must follow carcass-movement restrictions for deer harvested in a CWD Management Zone county and when bringing parts of harvested deer and other cervids into Missouri from another state.

For hunters who harvest deer in Missouri from a CWD Management Zone county:

Deer must be Telechecked before any parts of the carcass may be transported out of the county of harvest.

Whole carcasses and heads may only be transported out of the county of harvest if delivered to a licensed meat processor,

See **CWD** page 4B

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Missouri hunters took 12 black bears during first season

JOE JEREK
MISSOURI DEPT. OF CONSERVATION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reports that Missouri hunters harvested 12 black bears during the state's inaugural bear-hunting season, which ran Oct. 18–27. More than 6,330 hunters applied for 400 permits for the season with the maximum total harvest for the season being 40 bears.

“This was an incredibly successful first bear hunting season for Missouri given that we have a highly regulated season, that bears in the state are widely distributed throughout some pretty rugged wilderness, and that many hunters had never hunted bears before,” said MDC State Furbearer and Black Bear Biologist Laura Conlee. “A harvest of 12 bears in our first season is testament to the hunters. Bear hunting is an extremely challenging endeavor, especially under the framework that we established. This was a new experience for many hunters, and they put in the work to be successful and take advantage of this new hunting opportunity.”

Conlee added that MDC took a conservative approach in developing its bear-hunting regulations.

“Our highly regulated and limited season included a sustainable maximum harvest of 40 bears, which is about 5% of our total bear population,” Conlee said. “We also prohibited baiting and the use of dogs, limited hunting to 10 days, and restricted the number of hunters who could participate. With any new season, it is difficult to predict hunter success, so we took a conservative approach to limiting the number of hunters and length of the hunting season. This was to ensure we didn't over-harvest the bear population in any one zone.”

Bear hunting in Missouri is limited to Missouri residents and restricted to three designated areas of southern Missouri called Bear Management Zones (BMZ). Each permit issued is for a specific BMZ and hunting is limited to public or private property within the BMZ. Permit and harvest quotas for the 2021 bear season were:

BMZ 1: Permit quota of 200 with a harvest quota of 20 bears.

BMZ 2: Permit quota of 150 with a harvest quota of 15 bears.

BMZ 3: Permit quota of 50 with a harvest quota of 5 bears.

The more than 6,330 hunters who applied during May to hunt a specific BMZ paid a \$10 application fee. The 400 hunters selected for permits through a random drawing of all applicants then paid a permit fee of \$25.

Among those selected for permits, Kelsie Wikoff of Hume harvested a 268-pound boar (male bear) in Zone 1. She said she had spent 48 hours in a tree stand over three days since the season began Oct. 18 and harvested the bear Oct. 21.

Including Wikoff's harvest, black bears harvested during the first season were from the following BMZs:

BMZ 1: Nine (9) bears harvested.

BMZ 2: Three (3) bears harvested.

BMZ 3: Zero (0) bears harvested.

According to the Wildlife Code of Missouri, the harvest limit is one bear per permit. Only lone black bears may be taken. Hunters may not take bears that are known to be in the presence of other bears, including female black bears with cubs. Bears may not be disturbed, pushed, harassed, or taken from a den. Bear hunters must wear hunter orange, make reasonable efforts to retrieve shot bears, and may not leave or abandon commonly edible portions. Learn more about bear hunting in Missouri at mdc.mo.gov/bearhunting.

Black bears were historically abundant throughout the forested areas of Missouri prior to European settlement but were nearly eliminated by unregulated killing in the late 1800s, as well as from habitat loss when Ozark forests were logged. Over the last 50 years, bear numbers and range in Missouri have grown to around 800 black bears with most found south of the Missouri River and primarily south of Interstate 44. Missouri bear range is expanding. Bear numbers in Missouri are increasing each year by approximately 9 percent and are expected to double in less than 10 years. As bear numbers continue to increase, MDC will use a highly regulated hunting season as an essential part of population management. MDC's 2020-2030 Black Bear Management Plan will guide bear management in Missouri for the next decade. Learn more about black bears in Missouri and MDC management efforts at mdc.mo.gov/bears.



CONGRATULATIONS TO Kelsie Wikoff of Hume on her harvest of this 268-pound boar (male bear) in Zone 1 during Missouri's first bear-hunting season.

Tree-stand safety

Every year many hunters go to the field with anticipation on harvesting that big buck they have been watching for months. With all the excitement involved in pre-season preparation, many hunters forget to wear their tree stand safety harness come opening day. This can be a major problem in the event of a fall. Tree stands provide many advantages when it comes to hunting, but they also carry a high-risk factor. Falling

from 20 ft up in the air is the equivalent of being in a 30-mph car crash. I would also encourage hunters who hunt from tree stands to inspect all their tree stand equipment (straps, stirrups, welds...etc.) for defects or excessive wear. These failure points are often the cause of tree stand falls. Be safe this season and wear your tree stand harness. Bag that big buck and not a hospital bill.

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After harvest procedure reminder

BY CHAD GRAY
OSAGE COUNTY CONSERVATION AGENT

Congratulations! You have harvested your deer...now what to do with it. Regulation requires a deer permit to be notched immediately after harvesting your deer. If you are using traditional paper permits printed at home tear or cut a small notch on the day and month of harvest. If using the new MOHunt application on your cell phone you will tap the permit you wish to notch. In the lower center portion of your screen, you will see the word "notch" in a green in color bubble. Tap notch. Then you have successfully notched your permit.

The final action that a hunter needs to take is tele-checking your animal. This is a very crucial part to the harvesting process. This action allows us to determine how many deer are being harvested and gives us crucial data to manage the deer herd of Missouri. We cannot do it without you, the hunter. Tele-checking your animal must take place by 10 pm on the day of harvest. If using traditional permits, you may utilize the phone number on your permit or go online to www.mdc.mo.gov and search how to tele-check your animal. If using the new MOHunt application, you can immediately tele-check your animal if you choose to do so. After notching, you will notice the word tele-check in the same location that notch was previously. Click on tele-check. The screen will prompt you through the tele-check process. You will receive a confirmation number at the end of the tele-check process. You have now completed the harvest reporting process and no other reporting is required. I wish a safe and enjoyable deer season for all this year! Good Luck!

CWD • from page 4B

taxidermist, or to an approved CWD sampling station within 48 hours of exiting the county of harvest. On Nov. 13-14, deer must be taken on the day of harvest to a CWD mandatory sampling station.

The following carcass parts may be moved outside of the county of harvest without restriction:

Meat that is cut and wrapped or that has been boned out.

Quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached.

Hides from which all excess tissue has been removed.

Antlers or antlers attached to skull plates or skulls cleaned of all muscle and brain tissue.

Finished taxidermy products.

For hunters bringing harvested deer and other cervids into Missouri from another state:

Hunters may no longer transport whole cervid carcasses into the state.

Heads from cervids with the cape attached and no more than six inches of neck attached may

be brought into Missouri only if they are delivered to a licensed taxidermist within 48 hours of entering Missouri.

There is no longer a requirement that cervid carcass parts coming into the state be reported to the MDC carcass transport hotline.

The following cervid parts can be transported into Missouri without restriction:

Meat that is cut and wrapped or that has been boned out.

Quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached.

Hides from which all excess tissue has been removed.

Antlers or antlers attached to skull plates or skulls cleaned of all muscle and brain tissue.

Upper canine teeth.

Finished taxidermy products.

Share the Harvest

MDC encourages deer hunters to share their harvest. Missouri's Share the Harvest program helps deer hunters donate venison to those in need. To participate, take harvested deer to an approved

meat processor and let the processor know how much venison is to be donated. Deer harvested within the CWD Management Zone may only be donated to approved processors in the Share the Harvest CWD Testing Program. Deer harvested outside of the CWD Management Zone may be donated to any Share the Harvest processor. Learn more online at mdc.mo.gov/share or from MDC's 2021 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklet.

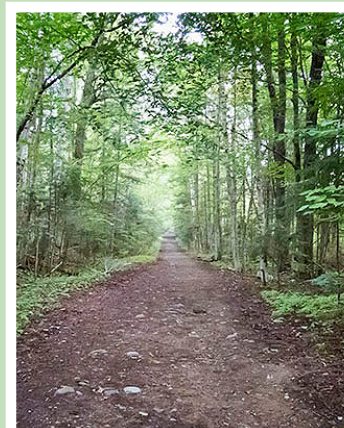
More Information

Get more information on CWD regulations and other CWD information online at mdc.mo.gov/cwd or from MDC's 2021 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklet, available where permits are sold and online at mdc.mo.gov/about-us/about-regulations/fall-deer-turkey-hunting-regulations-information.

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MDC Hunter Education Skills Session

Missouri's Department of Conservation (MDC) hosted an Oct. 26 Hunter Education Skills Session in partnership with Owensville Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) at Memorial Park. Thirty students successfully completed hands-on practice and the examination. Instructors included Conservation Agent Jason Eikermann (above), Education Section Chief Kyle Lairmore and volunteers Jerry Lairmore and Daniel Lenauer. Lenauer (left) a 13-year MDC volunteer reviews bolt action and hinge action guns with a small break-out group. Lairmore (photo opposite page) is shown demonstrating a lever-action rifle. MDC's Hunter Education program provides a foundation in hunting safety and ethics while instilling responsibility, and improving skills and knowledge.

PHOTOS BY DAVE MARNER





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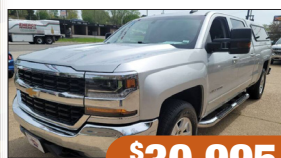
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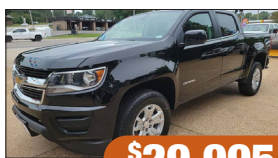
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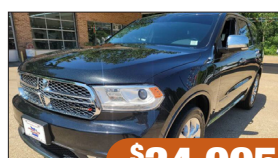
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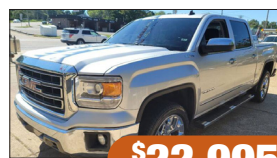
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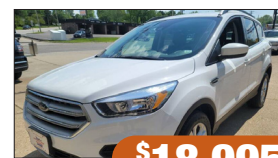
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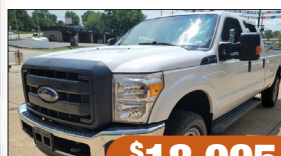
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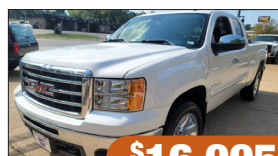
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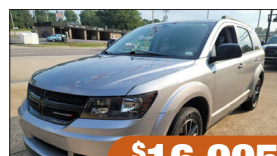
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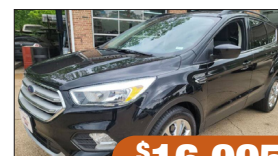
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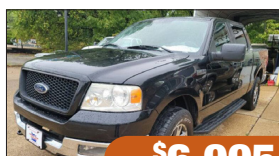
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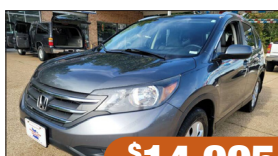
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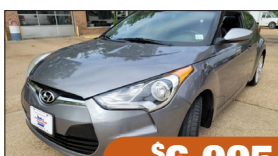
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OUTDOORS IN THE OZARKS

The Canada Goose — in Canada

When I was in Northwest Ontario in October, I stayed about ten days, and besides fishing by myself, I spent some time with Tinker Helseth's son-in-law Dallas Mosbeck, who, like Tinker, is a bush pilot and Lake of the Woods hunting and fishing guide. One morning I got up at 4:30 and went goose hunting with him only about an hour north of the Canada border and an hour south of Nestor Falls.

I have hunted geese for many years in Manitoba crop fields, but that country is a different world altogether. Most of northwest Ontario is heavy forest, but in the south part of that province there are quite a few fields interspersed amongst the expanse of trees and lakes, where permanent pasture and a few cropfields are found. And with them, lots of geese.

To hunt Canada geese there, Dallas purchased blinds that lie flat on the ground, well camouflaged, with decoys



by **LARRY DABLEMONT**

all around them. I figure with those two blinds and likely two- dozen of the most realistic goose decoys I have ever seen, he likely has 500 dollars or so invested in goose hunting.

But it was a morning to remember, as every ten minutes or so a flock of 10 to 20 geese came gliding in over us, honking away, sometimes only 15 or 20 feet above us. Let me say right here that those coffin-like blinds are much better for sleeping than they are for shooting out of. I napped a little in the warm summer-like sunshine.

I also missed my share of easy shots because the geese can get the heck out of there in a hurry when you fling the lid on that blind open. But the limit is five geese and in three hours and twenty shells, which today cost about a dollar and a quarter apiece, Dallas and I brought down 8 geese that morning and it was a hunt to remember.

But he and I saw something amazing that morning when a young mallard flew past and from out of nowhere a peregrine falcon nailed him from above and drove him into the ground. There was high grass there and somehow the falcon lost the duck in the grass. He soared around diving and sweeping over the area, and eventually winged away. An hour later I walked over to see if the duck was dead

and could not find him. But suddenly, from underneath a green clump of high pasture grass, the young drake, not even close to having his winter plumage sprang to flight as if he hadn't been hurt.

I'd like to think he will soar over my decoys here on some Ozarks water, in full winter color, and I will have him for dinner, just like that peregrine falcon meant to do. The way I was shooting in Canada he might cost me two or three shells.

I ate one of those geese last week... grilled breasts cut into small steaks with bacon, green peppers and onions on long wooden skewers... unbelievably good for supper. And let me assure you, if I didn't like geese for supper I would never raise a gun barrel again to bring one down.

I will only write one more column about my October trip to Canada, next week, writing about hunting ruffed grouse. But there was so much more from that stretch of time. My great grandfather was a French trapper from Ontario, and my great grandmother a Cree Indian woman. Maybe that's why it draws me like it does. I love the place, so few people and so few problems. And because I love using a camera, I got some great photos of the wildlife, fish, birds and wild country. I have put many of those photos on my website, www.larrydablemontoutdoors.blogspot.com A

See **Goose** page 11B

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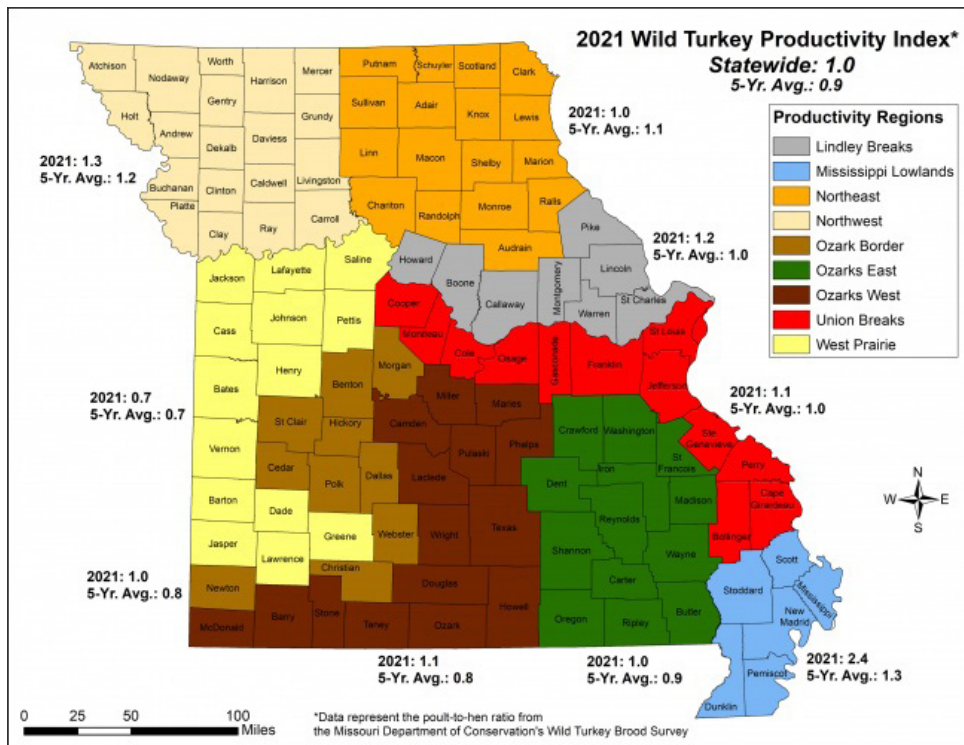
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THIS MAP shows an index (poult-to-hen ratio or PHR) of Missouri's wild turkey production by Turkey Productivity Region (TPR). TRPs are counties grouped by similar land cover composition. Data were obtained during MDC's 2021 wild turkey brood survey and are compared to the previous five-year average (2016-2020). Missouri Department of Conservation photo.

MDC brood survey shows improvement in turkey production compared to five-year average

JILL PRITCHARD
MISSOURI DEPT. OF CONSERVATION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — According to the Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) annual wild turkey brood survey for 2021, average turkey production statewide was similar to production at the statewide scale in 2020, but better than statewide production from 2016-2019.

MDC's statewide poult-to-hen ratio (PHR)—an index for turkey production—this year was 1.0, which was the same as the 2020 PHR but 11-percent greater than the average production observed during the previous five years (2016-2020). However, when comparing the statewide PHR to the average turkey production observed over the last 10 and 20-years, production in 2021 was below the long-term average.

Regionally, production was relatively consistent in 2021, with almost every Turkey Productivity Region (TPR) ending up with a PHR within the range of 1.0 to 1.3. The exceptions were the West Prairie Region, where the 0.7 PHR fell below the statewide average, and the Mississippi Lowlands Region, where the 2.4 PHR far exceeded the statewide average.

Compared to last year, production in the Ozark Border and Ozarks West Regions increased by 43-percent and 57-percent, respectively. The Lindley Breaks Region also saw a nine-percent increase in production, but the most significant improvement was in the Mississippi Lowlands Region where the PHR increased 118-percent from 2020.

"Because turkey abundance is relatively low in the Mississippi Lowlands compared to other parts of the state, we usually receive the fewest observations from this region during the brood survey," says MDC Wild Turkey Biologist Reina Tyl. "Since the production index is calculated from a smaller number of observations, it's not uncommon to see large annual fluctuations in the Mississippi Lowlands' poult-to-hen ratio."

Unfortunately, several regions—Northeast, Northwest, and Union Breaks—saw slight

See **Turkey production** page 11B

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MDC and A.T Still University ask Missouri deer hunters to send ticks for research study

JOE JEREK
MISSOURI DEPT. OF CONSERVATION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – With deer hunting under way in Missouri, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and A.T. Still University in Kirksville are asking deer hunters to save ticks they find on harvested deer and mail them to the University. The ticks will be used for a scientific research study to help better understand the statewide distribution of tick species and the human pathogens they carry.



“During this time of year, we are asking the many Missouri deer hunters around the state to send us ticks they find on their harvested animals,” said MDC Ecological Health Unit Science Supervisor Matt Combes. “The University needs more samples – especially of deer ticks, also called blacklegged ticks, which are commonly found on deer this time of year.”

Ticks are large mites that drink the blood of humans and other mammals. Ticks can also carry and spread pathogens that cause illnesses in people. Missouri is home to three common species of ticks that bite humans: lone star tick, American dog tick, and deer tick (blacklegged tick). Deer ticks are the

TICKS, SUCH as this adult female deer tick (black-legged tick), drink the blood of mammals and can cause illnesses in people. MDC and A.T. Still University are asking Missouri deer hunters to save ticks they find and send them to the University of scientific research to learn more about ticks and pathogens they may carry. Photo by Scott Bauer for the Agricultural Research Service, the research agency of the United State Department of Agriculture.

primary transmitters of a bacterial infection called Lyme disease. Adult ticks are about a quarter-inch long and grow to nearly double that when engorged with blood. Learn more about ticks from the MDC online Field Guide at nature.mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/field-guide/ticks.

MDC and A.T. Still University are partnering on a two-year research study to determine the presence of tick species throughout Missouri as well as the pathogens they may harbor. The study began in April and concludes in September 2022. During that time, MDC and the University are asking Missourians mail ticks to A.T. Still University to be identified by species and life stage and tested for four species of bacterial pathogens.

To help with the research efforts, people are asked to place live ticks in a plastic zip-top bag with a piece of damp paper towel or moist cotton ball, then fold the bag and place it inside another plastic zip-top bag with a completed sample-submission form. The sample-submission form is available for printing from the University website at www.atsu.edu/missouri-ticks-and-tick-borne-pathogen-surveillance-research.

People are then asked to place the bag

and completed sample-submission form in an envelope and mail it to: A.T. Still University, ATTENTION: Deb Hudman -- Dept. of Microbiology & Immunology, 800 W. Jefferson St., Kirksville MO 63501.

University Senior Research Associate Deb Hudman noted the research is not intended to provide clinical diagnosis of any illness someone may have, and study information should not be interpreted as a substitute for medical testing or consultation with a physician.

“The resulting research data will be used to determine at the county level what tick species and bacterial pathogens are present for the state of Missouri. This much-needed data will be shared with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services,” said Hudman. “This data will also help guide outreach and education efforts about ticks in Missouri to help increase knowledge of tick-borne illnesses and precautions people should take when working or recreating in the outdoors.”

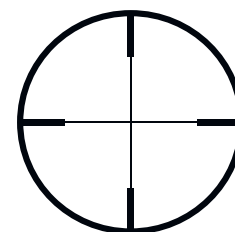
She added that distribution maps are

provided and updated weekly on the A.T. Still University website at www.atsu.edu/missouri-ticks-and-tick-borne-pathogen-surveillance-research so people can actively follow the progress of the study over the next two years.

Combes added there is a pressing need to increase tick surveillance in Missouri, develop statewide distribution maps of tick species and tick-borne pathogens, and educate the public on reducing their risk of contracting a tick-borne illness based on that data. In addition, this research study could also help determine previously unknown or invasive tick species that are present in Missouri.

“There are tick-borne human pathogens in the state of Missouri and yet there is no comprehensive map of where tick species occur, or of the human pathogens those ticks are carrying,” Combes said. “According to the CDC, Missouri is considered a gap state for knowledge of tick-borne diseases. Many people -- in Missouri and nationwide -- lack a good understanding of tick-borne illnesses common to their area.”

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GASCONADE COUNTY
Republican

Turkey production • from page 9B

downturns in production this year after experiencing increases in productivity during 2020. The Ozarks East and West Prairie Regions saw similar PHRs this year as in 2020.

How the poult-to-hen ratio is determined

Since 1959, MDC has conducted an annual wild turkey brood survey where MDC staff and citizen volunteers record the number of hens and recently hatched turkeys, which are called poults, they see during June, July, and August. These observations are then tallied to determine the success of the hatch, which is most often reported as a poult-to-hen ratio, or simply the average number of poults per hen observed during the survey. Tyl explained that the poult-to-hen ratio is a good measure of nesting success and poult survival.

“Each year, thousands of citizens participate in the survey, and we are grateful for their contribution,” Tyl said. “This year during the three-month survey, participants reported sightings of more than 75,000 turkeys, which is a testament to the large number of dedicated volunteers that take time to record and submit their observations.”

What drives long-term trends in turkey production

“Since MDC has been collecting information about turkey hatches for over 60 years, we have been able to monitor long-term trends in production,” explained Tyl. “The last few decades of brood survey data indicate that PHRs have been declining, and the statewide PHR has been at or below 1.0 for the last six years.”

Tyl added a lot has changed over the last several decades that could be contributing to the declining trend in productivity.

“There have been broad-scale losses of quality nesting and brood-rearing habitat, changing spring weather patterns, increasing populations of some nest and poult predators, and declining insect abundance—a critical food source for young poults,” she said.

MDC and University of Missouri launch turkey research project

MDC partnered with the University of Missouri to launch a cooperative research project last year to determine how these different factors are affecting wild turkey nest success and poult survival.

“The project also aims to identify the main causes of poult mortality and determine how brood-rearing habitat selection, and the quality of those habitats, affects poult survival,” Tyl noted. “The information gathered from this study will inform management of wild turkeys and turkey habitat in Missouri.”

To participate in the annual wild turkey brood survey, email MDC’s Wild Turkey Management Program at wildturkeymgmt@mdc.mo.gov with “Wild Turkey Brood Survey” as the subject of the email. Include complete name and mailing address.

For a more detailed report outlining the results of the 2021 Missouri Wild Turkey Brood Survey, and to read reports from previous years, visit the Turkey Reports webpage at <https://mdc.mo.gov/hunting-trapping/species/turkey/turkey-reports>.

Goose • from page 8B

pair of trumpeter swans put on a show for me. Take a look at their antics in my photos.

I have written before about the lateness of the four seasons now as compared to what I saw in the sixties, as a boy. I wonder why biologists do not recognize this and change hunting seasons because of it. Maybe they aren’t old enough, or have not spent enough time outdoors. Most of them grew up in cities today and are way to young to know what happened before they were born. Duck seasons should begin here in the Midwest 10 days to two weeks later, and to have successful mating, turkey seasons should be delayed by at least 10 days. Dove season now is just too early, as there are still young doves in nests the first of September. That did not happen 40 or 50 years ago. Waterfowl seasons are being delayed a little, changed in past years, as a result of what federal biologists who study their migration habits have taken note of.

Yesterday I heard a television station announce the Conservation Department

people declared the weekend the peak of the fall color season! I just shook my head in disbelief. The news media believes anything those people tell them. Here on Lightning Ridge, the foliage is at least 85 percent green. If some extreme weather changes do not take place, the peak of the fall colors in my area may not even be next weekend. But for the media, made up of folks who live in cities and seldom get into the woods, if some state conservation agency tells you something about the outdoors, you consider it the gospel. Never question... never disagree!

On Saturday, Nov. 6, I am going to be at an outdoor and tackle show in Mt. Home, Arkansas at the Ramada inn, going on from 8:00 until noon. There are tables available for anyone selling outdoor gear. To reserve a table, call Jerry McCoy at 870-450-9238. If you can get there, come by and see me and I will give you the fall magazines free. Normally they are \$6 each. I will also have all 11 of my outdoor books there for sale for \$10 each.

Firearm Safety

With fall firearms season approaching, now is an ideal time to spend some time with your hunting weapons at the rifle range getting reacquainted with them.

Now is also the appropriate time to stress firearm safety and range etiquette. When handling firearms always remember the

10 Commandments of Gun Safety:

1. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
2. Firearms should be unloaded when not in use.
3. Don't rely on your guns "safety". Treat every gun as though it can fire at any time, regardless of pressure on the trigger.
4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.
5. Always use correct ammunition.
6. If your gun fails to fire when the trigger is pulled, handle with care.
7. Always wear eye and ear protection when shooting.
8. Be sure the barrel is clear of obstructions before shooting.
9. Don't alter or modify your gun. Have it serviced regularly by a qualified gunsmith.
10. Learn the mechanical and handling characteristics of the firearm you are using before going afield with it. Not all guns are the same.

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MDC Outdoor Spotlight: 5 long hikes in central Missouri

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) encourages Missourians to discover nature this fall by seeking out remote trail hiking experiences on conservation areas in central Missouri.

Traversing longer trails on foot, forces us to slow down; to observe and appreciate elements of the natural world on a more intimate level. While bicycling, horse riding, or even a car ride can take us to remote places of natural beauty, hiking forces us to engage with the very ground on which we walk. Small, quiet interactions of tiny pollinators feeding from the fall's final flowers, field crickets rustling beneath dry grasses, or the silent flight of a watchful owl, all become harder to miss. And the splendor of trees changing color and dropping leaves, turns forests into wooded wonderlands.

Autumn offers opportunities to engage with the natural world during a season of change. Finding a remote nature trail can provide a powerful reminder of how we're all connected to these natural communities and seasonal cycles.

Many conservation areas are in remote settings, and most have no potable water onsite. Before hitting the trail, remember to make a plan, tell someone where you're going and when you'll return, and pack water, food, and any other provisions you'll need for your time on the trail.

MDC's free MO Outdoors App for mobile devices provides a convenient way to carry digital maps and other information, even outside of cellphone service range. Always pack a paper map and compass, too, as a failsafe.

Always check hunting season dates before hiking during the fall. If hiking during an open firearms season, wear hunter orange clothing to ensure you're seen and identifiable as a human hiker.

"There are so many great trails on

conservation areas, it's easy to find the experience you're looking for," said MDC Recreational Use Specialist, A.J. Campbell.

Many conservation areas in central Missouri offer excellent trails for long nature hikes this fall, just a short drive from home. Some areas feature more than ten miles of designated paths, and many of these areas offer multiple loops, allowing hikers to customize their experience. Learn more about these, and other hiking opportunities at nature.mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/places.

Canaan Conservation Area

Located west of Owensville in Gasconade County, this area offers 10 miles of multi-use trail, with three distinct loops. The natural-surface trail takes hikers, bikers, and horseback riders through forests, glades, woodlands, and prairies, and along Clear Fork and Sulphur Branch creeks. The trail is open year-round for hiking, but closed to bikes and horses during firearms hunting seasons for deer and turkey. Camping is allowed only in designated campsites near the area's parking lots, available year-round on a first-come, first-served basis.

Davisdale Conservation Area

Located between Rocheport and Boonville in Howard County, this area offers 18 miles of service roads. These paths are mowed periodically during summer months, but users should expect to walk through shaggy grass if paths have not been mowed recently. Service roads are open year-round to hiking and form several distinct loops through woodlands, prairies, and river hill forests, including many long, scenic views. Camping is allowed only in designated campsites near the area's parking lots, available year-round on a first-come, first-served basis.

Rudolf Bennett Conservation Area

Located south of Moberly in Howard

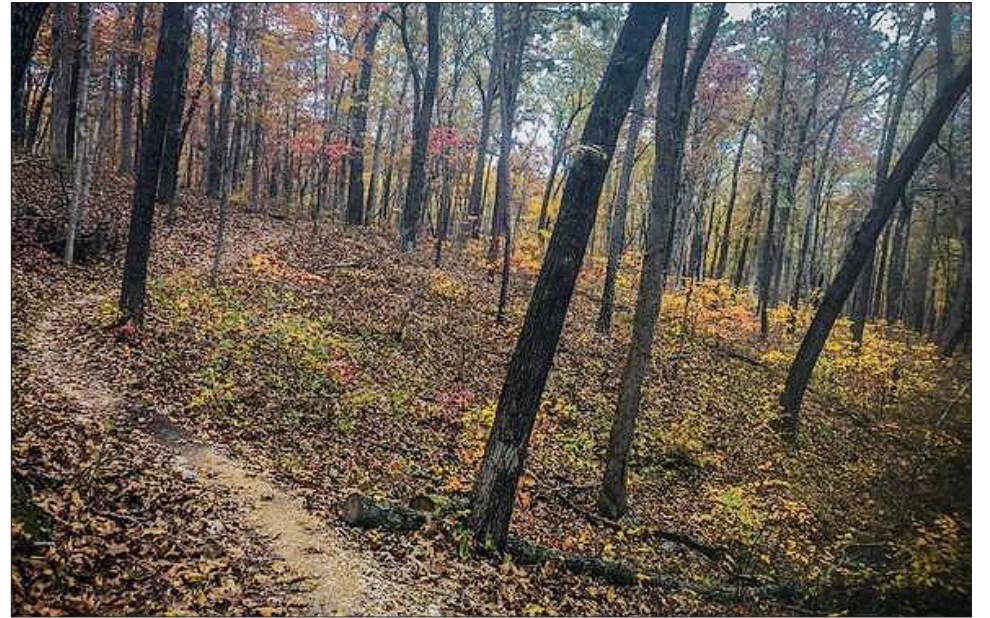


PHOTO COURTESY OF MDC

LONG TRAIL hikes in autumn offer a unique way to connect with the natural world. Find a hiking opportunity at a conservation area new to you to discover nature in Missouri this fall.

and Randolph counties, this area offers 13 miles of multi-use trail, with three distinct loops. The chat-surface trail takes hikers, bikers, and horseback riders through forests and woodlands, and near the area's 48-acre lake. The trail is open year-round for hiking, but closed to bikes and horses during firearms hunting seasons for deer and turkey. Primitive hike-in camping is allowed, and individual campsites with gravel parking pads are also available year-round on a first-come, first-served basis.

Scrivner Road Creek Conservation Area

Located south of Russellville in Cole County, this area offers 8.5 miles of multi-use trail with four distinct loops. The natural-surface trail takes hikers and horseback riders through prairies and woods, and offers long, scenic views. The trail is open year-round for hiking, but closed to bikes and horses during firearms hunting seasons for deer and

turkey. A separate 1-mile path, periodically mowed, loops around the 9-acre Winegar Lake. Camping is allowed only in designated campsites near the area's parking lots, available year-round on a first-come, first-served basis.

Three Creeks Conservation Area

Located south of Columbia in Boone County, this area offers 8.5 miles of hiking and multi-use trail. The Turkey Creek interpretive trail is a 3-mile hiking-only trail with 1- and 2-mile cutoffs. It takes hikers along Turkey Creek and many beautiful bluffs. The remaining 5.5 miles of trail, open year-round, takes hikers, bikers, and horseback riders through forests surrounding Bass, Turkey, and Bonne Femme creeks. These trails feature several creek crossings, so hikers should plan to walk through water, especially during wetter times of the year. Primitive hike-in camping is allowed, except during firearms hunting seasons for deer and turkey.

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Area youth bag deer during youth hunt

Beau Harvey (above), 10, shot a doe when hunting with his dad on the family farm in Gasconade County. He is the son of Devon Harvey and Stephanie Jorgensen. **Lane Meyer** (below), 10, downed this buck Sat., Oct. 30, the first day of the annual youth hunting season. He is the son of Clayton and Julie Meyer. See pages 1B and 15B in this section and page 17 in the regular paper for more youth deer hunt photos. To submit your photos of youth deer hunters please email news@wardpub.com. Please include child's name, age, address, parent's names and address, doe or buck, number of points, if this is first deer, date killed, location killed, and phone number (for reference, not to be included in story).

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MDC proposes changes to fishing regulations for paddlefish

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.—The Missouri Conservation Commission gave initial approval during its Aug. 27 open meeting in Jefferson City to several proposed regulation changes to the Wildlife Code of Missouri by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) for paddlefish, related fishing methods, and commercial fishing.

Snagging Definition

A regulation change establishes a definition of snagging, which is currently undefined in the Wildlife Code of Missouri. Snagging is a popular method for taking fish, such as paddlefish, that do not go after baited hooks because they “filter feed” on tiny crustaceans and insects by swimming through the water with their large mouths open. Snagging uses a heavy-duty fishing

pole with a large, three-pronged hook on a line to snag a fish along its body as it swims.

The MDC definition of snagging is: Hooking or attempting to hook a fish in a part of the body other than the mouth or jaw by means of a pole, line, and hook. Snagging is characterized by a repeated drawing or jerking motion of the pole, line, and hook or by trolling with an unbaited hook rather than enticement by bait or lure.

Statewide Minimum Length

A proposed regulation amendment establishes a statewide minimum length limit of 32 inches for sport/recreational taking of paddlefish, up from the current minimum length of 24 inches for most areas of the state. The existing minimum length limit of 34 inches will remain in effect for Lake of the Ozarks, Table Rock Lake, Truman Lake, and their tributaries. All paddlefish under the legal minimum length must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.

Paddlefish can grow to a length of about seven feet and weigh 100 pounds or more. According to MDC, the increased length limit will allow female paddlefish to reach sexual maturity before they can be harvested. This will help make paddlefish waters more sustainable for natural reproduction, and result in larger fish available for harvest.

15 More Days to Season

Another proposed regulation amendment adds 15 days to the fall/winter snagging, snaring, or grabbing season for taking fish -- except paddlefish -- by extending the season end from Jan. 31 to Feb. 15. It also prohibits snagging for all species of fish on Table Rock Lake after taking the daily limit of two paddlefish.

The paddlefish snagging season for the state’s major paddlefish snagging waters -- Lake of the Ozarks, Truman Lake, and Table Rock Lake -- and most other waters in the state remains March 15 through April 30. The paddlefish season for the Mississippi River remains March 15 through May 15 with a fall season of Sept. 15 through Dec. 15.

According to MDC, the proposed amendment extending the fall snagging, snaring, or grabbing season provides additional opportunities for anglers. It also aligns the snagging, snaring, or grabbing season with the season allowing some fish to be taken by gig or atlatl.

Commercial Fishing Season

A proposed amendment establishes a commercial paddlefish fishing season of Nov. 1 through April 15 on the Mississippi River to limit the commercial harvest of paddlefish only during cooler water temperatures. It also sets a minimum length limit of 32 inches for taking paddlefish on the Mississippi River.

According to MDC, the primary justification for the season is to prevent mortality of paddlefish. Paddlefish captured in nets during warm-water temperatures (late April through October) are more likely to perish, causing waste of fish that would have otherwise been harvested and the unnecessary death of paddlefish under legal length. The establishment of the paddlefish commercial season will also better align Missouri regulations with those of other states along the Mississippi River.

MDC asked for public comments on the proposed regulation changes this spring. Of the 260 people who provided comments, there was strong support for all proposed paddlefish regulations.

The next step in the rulemaking process is for MDC to have a public comment period during October. MDC invites public comments during October online at <https://mdc.mo.gov/about-regulations/wildlife-code-missouri/proposed-regulation-changes>. Comments received will be considered and final proposals will go to the Commission for further action at its Dec. 10 meeting. If enacted, the changes will become effective Feb. 28, 2022.

Learn more about paddlefish and related fishing regulations from MDC online at mdc.mo.gov/fishing/species/paddlefish.

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Local siblings harvest deer on family farm

Katie Lumsden (above), 13, downed her first deer, a 6-pointer, Saturday, Oct 30, the first day of the annual youth hunt. Her brother, **Andrew Lumsden** (below), 15, bagged his first buck, an 8-pointer, Sunday, Oct. 31, (Halloween). Both killed their deer while hunting on a family farm west of Owensville. They are the children of Taylor and Kathleen Lumsden. See pages 1B and 13B in this section and page 17 in the regular paper for more youth deer hunt photos. To submit your photos of youth deer hunters please email news@wardpub.com. Please include child's name, age, address, parent's names and address, doe or buck, number of points, if this is first deer, date killed, location killed, and phone number (for reference, not to be included in story).

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

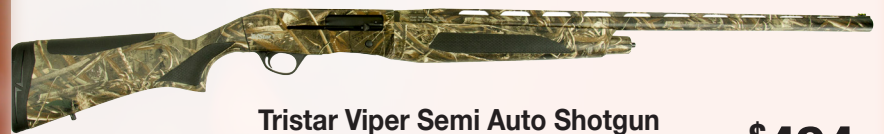


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