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2016

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Photo © Bill Byrne

NEW FOR 2016:

- Black Bears may now be hunted throughout Massachusetts and during the Shotgun Deer Season — see page 33.
- A Youth Deer Hunt day in Massachusetts has been established for hunters aged 12 to 17 and will take place on the 4th Saturday following Labor Day, October 1, 2016 — see page 38.

HAVE A QUESTION?

Visit www.mass.gov/masswildlife, or www.facebook.com/masswildlife or e-mail us at mass.wildlife@state.ma.us



ON THE COVER

In 1866, MassWildlife got its start as a fisheries commission and has a long history of fish stocking and fisheries research. As a result of stocking operations that began around the turn of the 20th century, Largemouth Bass, like the one on the cover caught in the Connecticut River, are found statewide. The photos of a stocking truck and of employees sorting salvaged fish (both from the 1920s) show early efforts to provide recreational opportunities to the people of the Commonwealth.





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Visit the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife on-line at

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From the Director

The year 2016 marks the 150th anniversary of the Division. As we celebrate this century and a half of conservation, we take stock and note the many important resources held by the agency; over 200,000 acres of land under our care and control, a new zero-energy field headquarters building, a stable financial foundation, and a diverse and committed staff. We need to build on this foundation recognizing that the conservation and management of our wildlife resources improves the quality of life enjoyed by Massachusetts residents, and adds to the strength of our state's economy.



As an agency, we will continue to acknowledge and value the role that hunters, anglers, and trappers have played in conservation, and recognize their ongoing, absolutely crucial contributions. Hunters and anglers have served as the bedrock of conservation in Massachusetts. America's conservation legacy, which emerged from the vision of Teddy Roosevelt and others, resulted in large part from their experience as hunters and anglers. This is more valid today than ever.

Looking to the future, we intend to expand hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting opportunities; and we intend to make Hunter Education courses more accessible to a diverse and changing public.

We will continue to expand and develop our outdoor skills programs. The National Archery in the Schools Program has grown from 27 schools at the beginning of 2014 to over 70 schools statewide. Angler Education programs have been expanded and new Explore Bowhunting and Learn to Hunt Programs have been launched.

As we continue our land protection program for the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of the public, it is critical that we also increase our investment in habitat management and stewardship if we are to protect the values of the lands we have purchased. Conservation science tells us that there is a serious imbalance in the types and age structure of forests in many areas of the state, a situation that we are – and must continue – addressing. Using forestry science, we must provide leadership and influence management decisions on private and municipal land. Active management is essential if we are to protect these critical resources. Our aggressive habitat program is resulting in direct benefits to hunters and wildlife.

We will continue monitoring and managing wildlife and fish in the context of an expanding human population. We must address the abundance of some wildlife species in urban and suburban areas and identify effective management approaches – including working to allow more hunting access.

I am pleased to announce several changes that will affect the sporting community:

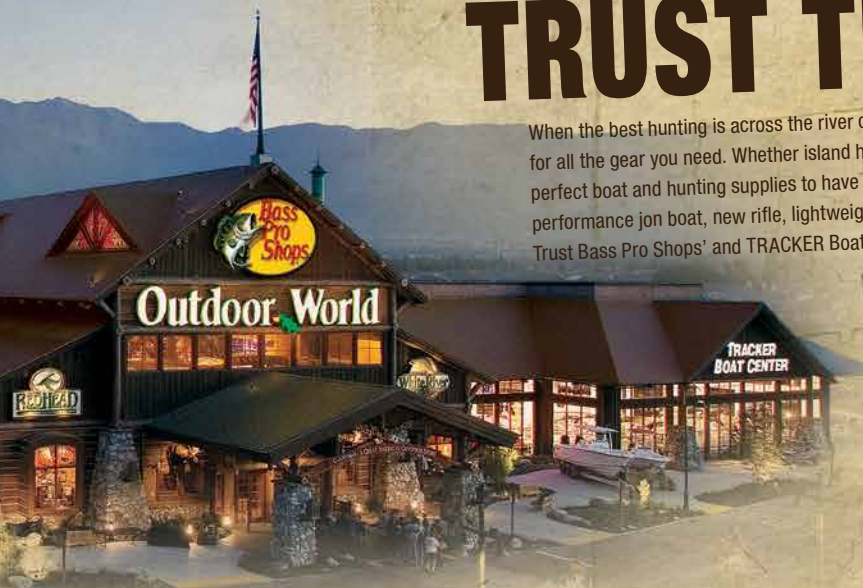
- A single-day Youth Deer Hunt season was established in 2015. Hunters between the ages of 12 and 17 now have the opportunity to harvest a deer on the 4th Saturday following Labor Day each year. This extra time afield builds a young hunter's confidence and skill. In its first year we issued 1,339 permits to youth hunters and nearly 150 deer were harvested. (See page 38)

Continued on page 4.



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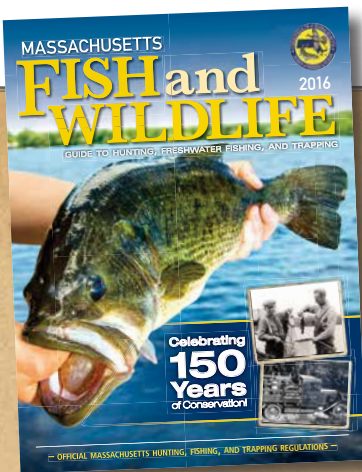
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About this Guide

This high-quality regulation guide is offered to you by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife through its unique partnership with J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC.

J.F. Griffin is an award winning publishing house that specializes in producing state fish & wildlife regulation guides. J.F. Griffin supports the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife's staff in the design, layout, and editing of the guides. They also manage the marketing and sales of advertising to appropriate businesses within the guide.

The revenue generated through ad sales significantly lowers production costs and generates savings. These savings translate into additional funds for other important wildlife and habitat programs.

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Chris Sobolowski and Dane Fay.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR (continued)

- Black Bears may now be hunted statewide as well as during the shotgun deer season. (See page 33)
- Successful hunters of any age may now use a mobile device to report a harvest (with the exception of the two-week shotgun deer season, Nov. 28 – Dec. 10, 2016) through the now-mobile-friendly *MassFishHunt* system.

While there are challenges ahead, the future looks bright, and I look forward to working with hunters, anglers, trappers, and all citizens to fulfill our public trust responsibility to the people and natural resources of the Commonwealth. I urge all to use this guide and enjoy the incredible hunting and angling opportunities available in Massachusetts.

Jack Buckley

Jack Buckley, Director



Eileen Long, Age 13, Grafton.
100 lbs. doe. Mentor: Joe Shepard.



Noah Moran, Age 13, Goshen.
189 lbs., 7 pt. buck. Mentor: Chad Moran.

Notice

This *Guide* contains a summary of the laws and regulations in place as of October 10, 2015. Any changes in law or regulation enacted after October 10 are publicized through releases to the news media, all license sales outlets, and on our website. These are not the complete laws and regulations. Laws and regulations (MGL Ch. 131 and 321 CMR) are subject to change.

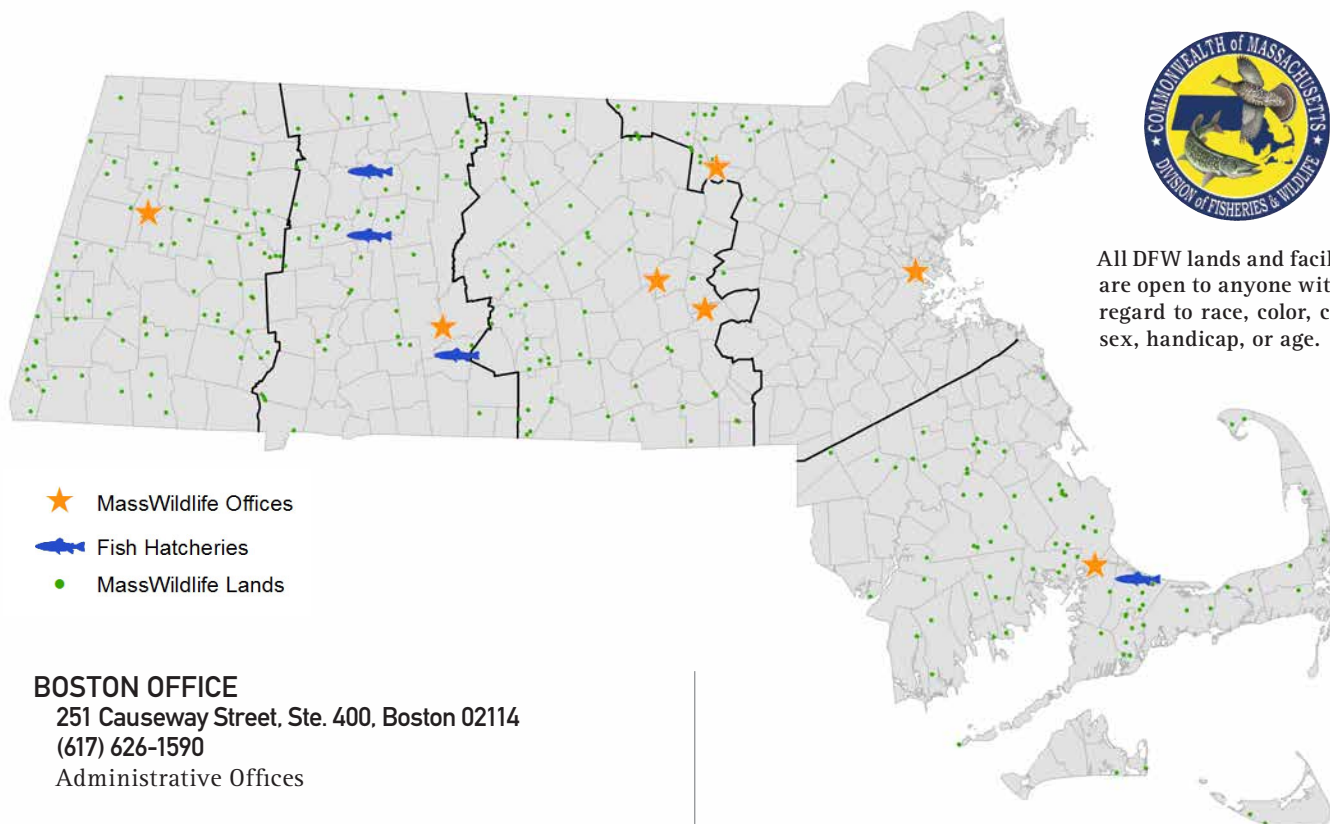
Since 1938, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sportsmen and Women, and the Fishing, Hunting, Shooting, and Boating Industries, to fund fish and wildlife conservation projects through the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program. Today, this pioneering program serves as a cost-effective model for fish and wildlife conservation by providing fishing and hunting access to those who both funded and directly benefit from the resource — the anglers and hunters. Their contributions through this “user pay, public benefit” conservation model — funded by license purchases and excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment — benefit all Massachusetts residents.



Division of Fisheries & Wildlife Directory



All DFW lands and facilities are open to anyone without regard to race, color, creed, sex, handicap, or age.



★ MassWildlife Offices

🐟 Fish Hatcheries

● MassWildlife Lands

BOSTON OFFICE

251 Causeway Street, Ste. 400, Boston 02114
(617) 626-1590

Administrative Offices

FIELD HEADQUARTERS

1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough 01581
(508) 389-6300

Administration, Realty, Fisheries, Wildlife,
Information & Education, Hunter Education, and
Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

WESTERN WILDLIFE DISTRICT

88 Old Windsor Road, Dalton 01226
(413) 684-1646

Andrew Madden, District Supervisor

CONNECTICUT VALLEY WILDLIFE DISTRICT

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(413) 323-7632

Ralph Taylor, District Supervisor

CENTRAL WILDLIFE DISTRICT

211 Temple Street, West Boylston 01583
(508) 835-3607

Bill Davis, District Supervisor

NORTHEAST WILDLIFE DISTRICT

85 Fitchburg Road, Ayer 01432
(978) 772-2145

Patricia Huckery, District Supervisor

SOUTHEAST WILDLIFE DISTRICT

195 Bournedale Road, Buzzards Bay 02532
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Jason Zimmer, District Supervisor

McLAUGHLIN FISH HATCHERY

90 East Street, Belchertown 01007
(413) 323-7671

Jim Hahn, Hatchery Supervisor

SUNDERLAND FISH HATCHERY

559 Amherst Road, Sunderland 01375
(413) 665-4680

Chuck Bell, Hatchery Supervisor

BITZER FISH HATCHERY

37 Hatchery Road, Montague 01351
(413) 367-2477

John Williams, Hatchery Supervisor

SANDWICH FISH HATCHERY

164 Rte 6A, Sandwich 02563
(508) 888-0008

Adam Davies, Hatchery Supervisor

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME OFFICE

251 Causeway Street, Ste. 400, Boston, 02114
(617) 626-1500

George Peterson Jr., Commissioner

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Boston, MA 02114

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Deputy Director
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(617) 626-1670 fax

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Inland Bureau Headquarters
Major Wilton F. Gray III,
Inland Bureau Chief
Captain Robert Forsythe,
Inland East Deputy Bureau Chief
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(508) 366-6537
(508) 366-1182 fax
183 Milk Street
Westborough, MA 01581

Captain David Loos,
Inland West Deputy Bureau Chief
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(413) 543-7963 fax
18 Lake Dr.
Indian Orchard 01151

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Vacant, Coastal Bureau Chief
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Hingham, MA 02043

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Coastal South Deputy Bureau Chief
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(508) 992-8323 fax

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Coastal North Deputy Bureau Chief
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Detective Lieutenant John Girvalakis,
Boat & Recreation Vehicle Office:
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(508) 564-4964 fax

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ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES STRIKE FORCE

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(508) 679-0060 fax

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(508) 771-2334 fax

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(413) 733-2154 fax

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SALVAGE OF DEER & MOOSE

ROAD-KILLED DEER may be kept by a Massachusetts driver or passenger of vehicle killing said deer if reported to Law Enforcement at (800) 632-8075 immediately and then tagged at a DFW or Environmental Police office within 24 hours.

ROAD-KILLED MOOSE may NOT be kept by a Massachusetts driver or passenger of the vehicle killing the moose. The disposition of any moose carcass is only at the discretion of the Environmental Police or the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. To report a road-killed moose, call the DFW at (508) 389-6300.

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Tree Stand Safety

Massachusetts hunters often rely on the unique perspective and cover provided by the platform of a treestand.

Perched above the forest floor, sportsmen and women can take in the view and apply their skills. Treestand-related accidents have increased with the rise in treestand use. Learn what you need to know to stay safe in the trees.



Years ago it was common practice for hunters to construct their own stands out of whatever scrap lumber they had on hand. But even the best of these homemade stands rot and fall apart under the combined forces of tree growth and New England weather. Fortunately, today's manufactured portable treestands offer many options to hunters. Stands endorsed by the Treestand Manufacturer's Association go through extensive testing to ensure they are properly engineered and constructed. Modern stands and climbing equipment are safer, but basic safety precautions are still required to avoid a potentially life-threatening fall:

- Follow all the manufacturer's instructions for your equipment. Each manufacturer may have a slightly different system for attaching and using a stand, so it's important to read and understand your particular model.
- Practice setting up your stand at ground level so you become familiar with your equipment well before the hunting season.
- Inspect the stand for damage or wear before each use. Any stand can break or wear out over time. Buckles can get damaged in storage, straps can be damaged by rodents, etc. Check equipment at home before you take to the field; the last thing you want to do is lug a stand into the woods only to find out that you are missing a piece or that a component has been damaged.
- Make sure the tree you select is alive, healthy, straight, and large enough to support your weight and to work properly with the stand's mounting hardware. It's important to avoid selecting a leaning or unhealthy tree even if it's in the perfect location. Remember, hunting happens in all kinds of weather conditions. Sitting in a dead tree during a gusting wind storm is not a good thing. Make sure that surrounding trees will not pose a threat; avoid locations where large, dead limbs may fall on you or your stand.
- Don't leave a stand attached for more than two weeks without adjusting the mounting hardware to account for tree growth, movement, and other factors.
- **Always use a Full Body Fall Arrest System (FBFAHS).** No treestand hunter should be without this critical piece of equipment. Just as you need to practice setting up your stand at ground level, you should also practice using your FBFAHS at ground level with a helper.
- Setting up or taking down your stand is a particularly dangerous time since you need your hands to be free. Use a lineman's belt to keep you connected to the tree at all times. The lineman's belt should attach directly to your FBFAHS and allow you freedom of movement while preventing a fall.
- If using a hang-on stand, you will need to secure a climbing device (sticks or ladder) as well. Position your climbing device and stand so that you step **down** onto the **center** of the platform when you arrive at your perch.

Summary of Hunting Season Dates

For further information regarding specific bag, possession, and season limits please visit the pages noted in the table below.

OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)

BLACK BEAR		See page 33 for bag limits
Black Bear (Big Game)	Zones 1-14	Sept. 6 – Sept. 24 Nov. 7 – Nov. 26 Nov. 28 – Dec. 10

UPLAND GAME BIRDS*		See page 34 for bag limits
Wild Turkey (Big Game)	Spring: Zones 1-13	April 25 – May 21
	Fall: Zones 1-13	Oct. 24 – Nov. 5
	Youth Hunt: Zones 1-13	April 23 (special restrictions apply**)
Crow		Jan. 1 – April 9 July 1 – April 10, 2017
Pheasant	Youth Hunt	Oct. 15 – Nov. 26 See page 47.
Quail	Zones 11-14	Oct. 15 – Nov. 26
Ruffed Grouse		Oct. 15 – Nov. 26

* Upland game bird hunting is closed during shotgun deer season. Migratory game birds (includes waterfowl, woodcock, snipe, rails): Seasons set annually. See *Migratory Game Bird Abstract* posted in the spring.

** Must have completed the youth turkey hunt program (page 47).

DEER		See page 36 for bag limits
Deer (Big Game)	Youth Deer Hunt	October 1
	Paralegic Hunt	Nov. 3 – Nov. 5
	Archery	Oct. 17 – Nov. 26
	Shotgun	Nov. 28 – Dec. 10
	Primitive Firearms	Dec. 12 – Dec. 31

RABBITS & SQUIRRELS		See page 40 for bag limits
Cottontail Rabbit	Zones 1-12	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Oct. 15 – Feb. 28, 2017
	Zones 13 and 14	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Nov. 15 – Feb. 28, 2017
Snowshoe Hare	Zones 1-4	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Oct. 15 – Feb. 28, 2017
	Zones 5-12	Jan. 1 – Feb. 5 Oct. 15 – Feb. 4, 2017
	Zones 13 and 14	Jan. 1 – Feb. 5 Nov. 16 – Feb. 4, 2017
Jackrabbit	Zone 14	Nov. 15 – Dec. 31
Gray Squirrel	Zones 1-9	Sept. 12 – Jan. 2, 2017
	Zones 10-14	Oct. 15 – Jan. 2, 2017

Rabbit, jackrabbit, hare, and squirrel hunting are closed during shotgun deer season.

FURBEARERS		See page 42 for bag limits
Bobcat	Zones 1-8	Jan. 1 – Mar. 8 Dec. 20 – Mar. 8, 2017
Coyote		Jan. 1 – Mar. 8 Oct. 15 – Mar. 8, 2017
Fox (red or gray)		Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Nov. 1 – Feb. 28, 2017
Raccoon		Jan. 1 – Jan. 30 Oct. 1 – Jan. 31, 2017
Opossum		Jan. 1 – Jan. 30 Oct. 1 – Jan. 31, 2017

All furbearer hunting seasons are closed during shotgun deer season except for coyotes.

Grrrr!

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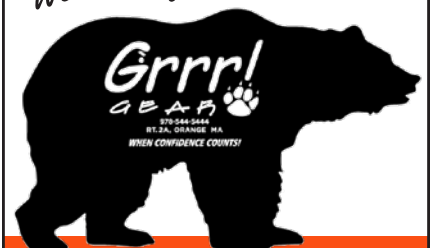


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2016 SUNRISE-SUNSET TABLE for WORCESTER, Massachusetts

Day	January		February		March		April		May		June		July		August		September		October		November		December	
	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM	Rise AM	Set PM
1	7:16	4:25	7:01	5:01	6:22	5:38	6:29	7:14	5:42	7:47	5:13	8:18	5:15	8:27	5:41	8:06	6:13	7:20	6:45	6:28	7:21	5:40	6:57	4:16
2	7:16	4:26	7:00	5:02	6:20	5:39	6:27	7:15	5:41	7:48	5:13	8:18	5:15	8:27	5:42	8:05	6:14	7:19	6:46	6:26	7:22	5:39	6:58	4:16
3	7:16	4:27	6:59	5:04	6:18	5:40	6:26	7:16	5:39	7:49	5:12	8:19	5:16	8:27	5:43	8:03	6:15	7:17	6:47	6:24	7:23	5:38	6:59	4:15
4	7:16	4:28	6:58	5:05	6:17	5:41	6:24	7:17	5:38	7:51	5:12	8:20	5:16	8:27	5:44	8:02	6:16	7:15	6:48	6:23	7:25	5:36	7:00	4:15
5	7:16	4:29	6:57	5:06	6:15	5:43	6:22	7:18	5:37	7:52	5:12	8:20	5:17	8:26	5:45	8:01	6:17	7:13	6:49	6:21	7:26	5:35	7:01	4:15
6	7:16	4:30	6:56	5:07	6:14	5:44	6:20	7:19	5:36	7:53	5:11	8:21	5:18	8:26	5:46	8:00	6:18	7:12	6:50	6:19	6:27	4:34	7:02	4:15
7	7:16	4:31	6:54	5:09	6:12	5:45	6:19	7:20	5:34	7:54	5:11	8:22	5:18	8:26	5:47	7:58	6:19	7:10	6:51	6:18	6:28	4:33	7:03	4:15
8	7:16	4:32	6:53	5:10	6:10	5:46	6:17	7:21	5:33	7:55	5:11	8:22	5:19	8:25	5:48	7:57	6:20	7:08	6:53	6:16	6:30	4:32	7:04	4:15
9	7:16	4:33	6:52	5:11	6:09	5:47	6:15	7:23	5:32	7:56	5:11	8:23	5:20	8:25	5:49	7:56	6:21	7:07	6:54	6:14	6:31	4:31	7:05	4:15
10	7:15	4:34	6:51	5:13	6:07	5:49	6:14	7:24	5:31	7:57	5:10	8:23	5:21	8:24	5:50	7:54	6:22	7:05	6:55	6:13	6:32	4:30	7:06	4:15
11	7:15	4:35	6:50	5:14	6:05	5:50	6:12	7:25	5:30	7:58	5:10	8:24	5:21	8:24	5:51	7:53	6:24	7:03	6:56	6:11	6:33	4:29	7:06	4:15
12	7:15	4:36	6:48	5:15	6:03	5:51	6:11	7:26	5:29	7:59	5:10	8:24	5:22	8:23	5:52	7:52	6:25	7:01	6:57	6:09	6:35	4:28	7:07	4:15
13	7:15	4:37	6:47	5:17	7:02	6:52	6:09	7:27	5:28	8:00	5:10	8:25	5:23	8:23	5:53	7:50	6:26	7:00	6:58	6:08	6:36	4:27	7:08	4:15
14	7:14	4:39	6:46	5:18	7:00	6:53	6:07	7:28	5:27	8:01	5:10	8:25	5:24	8:22	5:54	7:49	6:27	6:58	6:59	6:06	6:37	4:26	7:09	4:16
15	7:14	4:40	6:44	5:19	6:58	6:54	6:06	7:29	5:26	8:02	5:10	8:26	5:25	8:22	5:55	7:47	6:28	6:56	7:01	6:05	6:38	4:25	7:09	4:16
16	7:13	4:41	6:43	5:20	6:57	6:55	6:04	7:30	5:25	8:03	5:10	8:26	5:25	8:21	5:56	7:46	6:29	6:54	7:02	6:03	6:40	4:24	7:10	4:16
17	7:13	4:42	6:41	5:22	6:55	6:57	6:03	7:32	5:24	8:04	5:10	8:26	5:26	8:20	5:57	7:44	6:30	6:52	7:03	6:01	6:41	4:23	7:11	4:16
18	7:12	4:43	6:40	5:23	6:53	6:58	6:01	7:33	5:23	8:05	5:10	8:27	5:27	8:19	5:58	7:43	6:31	6:51	7:04	6:00	6:42	4:23	7:11	4:17
19	7:12	4:44	6:39	5:24	6:51	6:59	5:59	7:34	5:22	8:06	5:11	8:27	5:28	8:19	5:59	7:41	6:32	6:49	7:05	5:58	6:43	4:22	7:12	4:17
20	7:11	4:46	6:37	5:25	6:50	7:00	5:58	7:35	5:21	8:07	5:11	8:27	5:29	8:18	6:00	7:40	6:33	6:47	7:06	5:57	6:45	4:21	7:12	4:18
21	7:10	4:47	6:36	5:27	6:48	7:01	5:56	7:36	5:20	8:08	5:11	8:27	5:30	8:17	6:01	7:38	6:34	6:45	7:08	5:55	6:46	4:20	7:13	4:18
22	7:10	4:48	6:34	5:28	6:46	7:02	5:55	7:37	5:19	8:09	5:11	8:28	5:31	8:16	6:02	7:37	6:35	6:44	7:09	5:54	6:47	4:20	7:13	4:19
23	7:09	4:49	6:33	5:29	6:45	7:03	5:53	7:38	5:19	8:10	5:11	8:28	5:32	8:15	6:04	7:35	6:36	6:42	7:10	5:52	6:48	4:19	7:14	4:19
24	7:08	4:51	6:31	5:30	6:43	7:05	5:52	7:39	5:18	8:11	5:12	8:28	5:33	8:14	6:05	7:33	6:37	6:40	7:11	5:51	6:49	4:19	7:14	4:20
25	7:07	4:52	6:30	5:32	6:41	7:06	5:50	7:41	5:17	8:12	5:12	8:28	5:34	8:13	6:06	7:32	6:38	6:38	7:12	5:50	6:50	4:18	7:15	4:21
26	7:07	4:53	6:28	5:33	6:39	7:07	5:49	7:42	5:16	8:13	5:12	8:28	5:35	8:12	6:07	7:30	6:39	6:37	7:14	5:48	6:52	4:18	7:15	4:21
27	7:06	4:54	6:27	5:34	6:38	7:08	5:48	7:43	5:16	8:14	5:13	8:28	5:36	8:11	6:08	7:29	6:40	6:35	7:15	5:47	6:53	4:17	7:15	4:22
28	7:05	4:56	6:25	5:35	6:36	7:09	5:46	7:44	5:15	8:14	5:13	8:28	5:36	8:10	6:09	7:27	6:42	6:33	7:16	5:45	6:54	4:17	7:16	4:23
29	7:04	4:57	6:23	5:37	6:34	7:10	5:45	7:45	5:15	8:15	5:14	8:28	5:37	8:09	6:10	7:25	6:43	6:31	7:17	5:44	6:55	4:16	7:16	4:23
30	7:03	4:58			6:32	7:11	5:43	7:46	5:14	8:16	5:14	8:28	5:38	8:08	6:11	7:24	6:44	6:30	7:19	5:43	6:56	4:16	7:16	4:24
31	7:02	5:00			6:31	7:12			5:14	8:17			5:40	8:07	6:12	7:22			7:20	5:41			7:16	4:25

Table is EASTERN STANDARD TIME. Table has been adjusted for daylight savings time — seen in **bold**.

BOSTON subtract 3 minutes; SPRINGFIELD add 3 minutes; PITTSFIELD add 7 minutes.

Source: U. S. Naval Observatory, Astronomical Applications Department, Washington, D.C. 20392-5420

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE TO GO FISHING OR BOATING?

Public Access to the Waters of Massachusetts is a 146 page map booklet that provides information about current fishing and boating access sites. Send \$8.00 payable to the Commonwealth of MA by check to:

Office of Fishing & Boating Access
Department of Fish & Game
1 Rabbit Hill Road
Westborough, MA 01581

For more information call (508) 389-7810, or see mass.gov/fba



If the last step is too low and you are forced to step up onto the platform, or onto one side of it, the unbalanced weight may cause the platform to shift. Likewise, when leaving the stand, keep your weight centered on the platform as you step up and off of it.

- When using a hang-on or ladder stand, use the “three point method” when climbing, and always use a haul line. These two rules go together. Most accidents happen when hunters climb into or out of the stand, and this tends to be the time when many hunters get careless about staying connected to the tree. When climbing, make sure you are in contact with your climbing device(s) with three points at all times (both feet and one hand or two hands and a foot). Obviously, your hands should be free for climbing; use a haul line to transport gear up and down.
- Use a haul line to pass your equipment up or down from the stand. Firearms should be unloaded and arrows should be quivered during this time. The line should not be tied through the trigger guard of a firearm, or in such a way that the muzzle will point up toward you, or down into the dirt/snow, while it is suspended. Covering the muzzle with a glove when hauling will prevent the barrel from collecting any potential obstructions. When hauling a bow, the exposed arrow fletching should be pointed down when hauling up, and up when lowering the bow. This protects the fletching from potentially damaging bumps and snags. The broadheads are already protected by the quiver.
- Remain attached to the tree at all times. One method is to use a climbing rope. Once the stand is secured in place, attach a length of climbing rope above the platform level, and then to the base of the tree for a hang-on stand, or to the base of the ladder. The rope should be taut and placed so you won't get tangled in it during a climb, but adjacent to the ladder or climbing stick so that you can reach it in the event of a fall. Use a prusik knot on this rope (available where you buy your FBFAHS, climbing rope, or online) and

attach your tether to the climbing line via the carabineer on the prusik knot during the entire ascent/descent from the stand. The key, as always, is to remain attached at all times!

- The tether of your FBFAHS should be adjusted so that you will not hang lower than the level of your stand in the event of a fall. In other words, when you are seated in your stand, the tether of your FBFAHS should be attached to the tree strap so that there is very little slack.
- Never place your stand higher than 16 feet. The added danger of going higher than 16 feet or so isn't worth any perceived advantage. In fact, the higher you place your stand, the worse your shooting angles and opportunities become. A stand placed between 8–16 feet high retains the advantages of getting you up out of the animal's line of sight and smell, but also allows for ethical shot placement nearly anywhere within your range other than directly below the stand.

Hunting in a safe, responsible, ethical way should be paramount in the hunter's outdoor pursuits. Following these basic treestand safety rules will help ensure that you get home safely and will be able to enjoy many more hunts in the future. Those who want to learn more about treestand safety have many resources. Experienced and beginning hunters alike are encouraged to take Bowhunter Education, a (free) advanced course offered by MassWildlife's Hunter Education Program; learn more at mass.gov/dfw/huntered. Read more about treestand hunting and safety at mass.gov/dfw/treestand. And for even more, check out nbef.org (National Bowhunter Education Foundation) and tmastands.com (Treestand Manufacturer's Association).

This is an excerpt from a 2008 article, written by MassWildlife's Todd Olanyk, in Massachusetts Wildlife Magazine. MA Hunter Education Volunteer Instructor, Paul Topham, appears in the safety demonstration photos. For expanded treestand hunting and safety information visit mass.gov/dfw/treestand.

Full Body Fall Arrest Harness Systems

Modern FBFAHS gear includes different styles of full body harnesses which distribute the impact of a fall and greatly reduces the potential for injury. Their design also helps ensure that a fall victim is in an upright position, improving chance of recovery. The full body harness is the only style that we recommend today. The FAS is not a piece of equipment to take lightly. Go ahead and price shop on stands, but do not buy a cheap fall arrest device: your life does depend on it!

Hanging around after a fall for too long in even the best gear can cause suspension trauma and death, so it's important to practice suspension relief while in the harness, and recovering from the suspended position. **Do not** attempt this without a helper. When practicing, always set up so that your feet can easily reach the ground to stand if needed.

Harness Systems have an expiration date; be sure to check your equipment and replace any expired components. In addition, the FBFAHS must be discarded and replaced after a fall has occurred.



Photo © Bill Byrne

Practice suspension relief and recovery while in the harness; do not attempt this alone. Set up so your feet can easily reach the ground to stand if needed.



Photo © Bill Byrne

There should be very little slack between the Full Body Fall Arrest Harness System and the tree.



Photo © Bill Byrne

Always set your steps so that you step down onto the center of your stand platform when entering; otherwise the platform may shift under your weight. Reverse the process when exiting the stand, keeping your weight centered on the platform.

Licenses

HUNTING, FRESHWATER FISHING, & TRAPPING LICENSES

Licenses are valid from **January 1 through December 31** (except for limited term licenses). Licenses, stamps, and permits may be purchased on-line at www.mass.gov/massfishhunt. Licenses are also issued by DFW offices, some city and town clerks, and selected sporting goods retailers.

LICENSES ARE REQUIRED for all persons 15 years of age and over for hunting any bird or mammal; and/or for fishing the inland waters of Massachusetts. Hunting or Sporting licenses for anyone aged 18 years or older can be purchased **only** if the buyer has successfully completed a Basic Hunter Education course or held a hunting license anywhere in North America prior to 2007. Minors see below.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are permitted on private land that is not posted against trespass. As a courtesy, contact the landowner for permission in advance. Landowners with posted land may provide (written) permission for individuals to access their property. Written landowner permission is required to trap on posted land.

No freshwater (inland) fishing license is required on the Merrimack River seaward of the first upstream bridge (northbound traffic) of Route 495 in Haverhill. (Saltwater fishing permit required.)

A trapping license is required for persons aged 12 years and over. Please see additional information on trapping, pages 43-45.

Hunters and anglers may display a true, complete and legible image of a valid license using a mobile device. Hunters must still comply with all tagging requirements. If a tag is required, as it is for hunting deer, bear, and turkey, hunters must carry a paper copy of the tag attached to the appropriate documentation (i.e. license or permit).

MINORS (RESIDENTS & NON-RESIDENTS): 15-17 years of age must be licensed and have required stamps and permits to hunt any bird or mammal. To obtain a hunting or sporting license, a minor must have a letter of consent from a parent or guardian and **either** a Basic Hunter Education Certificate from anywhere in North America **or** a letter signed by a

parent affirming that the minor will be accompanied by a person 18 years of age or older. Minor hunting and sporting licenses can **only** be purchased from DFW offices or license vendors, a vendor must verify the minor has a consent letter and either a Basic Hunter Education Certificate or an "adult accompaniment" letter. Minors must carry their Hunter Education Certificate while hunting. If gun hunting, a Firearms Identification card (FID) is required.

Minors between 12 and 14 inclusive may hunt when accompanied by a duly licensed adult, provided that a single bag limit shall be observed and only one firearm/bow is possessed by the two. Only one minor per adult is permitted. No Firearms Identification (FID) card is needed by the minor. No person under the age of 12 may hunt.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT: To obtain a resident license, applicant must reside in Massachusetts for six consecutive months immediately prior to purchase.

NON-RESIDENTS: A valid Massachusetts non-resident license (hunting, fishing, or trapping) is required of all non-residents. A big game license (license Class H5) is required to hunt deer, bear, and wild turkey. For more information, see page 26.

Minors 12-17 may obtain a trapping license. To obtain a trapping license a minor must have a letter of consent from a parent or guardian. Minor trapping licenses can **only** be purchased from DFW offices or license vendors, **not** from a personal computer, as vendor must verify the minor has a consent letter. To trap on the land of another, a minor must have a trap registration number which requires proof of completion of a Trapper Education course from any U.S. state. See below for trap registration information.

TRAP REGISTRATION NUMBERS are required to trap on the land of another and may be obtained from the Permit Section, Boston Office (617) 626-1575 after completing a Trapper Education course from any U.S. state.

FURBUYER LICENSES

A furbuyer is any person who buys or sells raw furs. A valid Massachusetts furbuyer

license is required for any person who is receiving, buying, or bartering the raw pelts of wild animals. This includes persons handling green pelts (pelts that have not been dried or tanned) or raw pelts (pelts, including green pelts, which have been dried, fleshed or cured). A permit is not required if a skin or skins are purchased from a licensed furbuyer, hunter, or trapper for the personal use of the purchaser and not for sale.

Licenses are valid from January 1 to December 31. Furbuyers receive a reporting book in which they must record transactions of pelts received as they occur. Log books must be open to inspection by Environmental Police Officers (EPOs) or any agents of the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (DFW) at any reasonable time.

Furbuyer annual report forms from record books must be initialed by an EPO and submitted yearly to the Division **no later than April 1**.

Applications for furbuyer licenses or a listing of current furbuyers can be obtained by calling (617) 626-1575, or by writing the Boston office of the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife.

PERMITS

SPECIAL LICENSES OR PERMITS are necessary for sale, possession, importation or release of certain fish and wildlife, and for fur dealers, propagators, wildlife rehabilitators, taxidermists and/or fur buyers. Sale and importation of baitfish require separate dealer and importation permits. Apply to the DFW Boston office, Permit Section (617) 626-1575. Contact Field Headquarters at (508) 389-6300 about permits for crossbows, falconry, problem animal control, or shooting preserves.

AGRICULTURAL LANDOWNERS: If you own or lease land that is principally used for agriculture and you are domiciled on said land, then you do not need a hunting, fishing, or trapping license to hunt, fish, or trap on that land. Permits and stamps are still required.

HUNTING PERMITS: Bear, turkey, and antlerless deer permits are not transferable. They may only be used by the hunter to whom they are issued.

ANTLERLESS DEER PERMIT: Required to take an antlerless deer during archery,

Licenses

shotgun, and primitive firearms seasons in all zones. The deadline to apply for an antlerless deer permit is July 16 at any license vendor or online through the *MassFishHunt* system. Only one application per person. The application is free. Between August 1 and December 31, hunters must return to the *MassFishHunt* system (www.mass.gov/massfishhunt) to try to draw an antlerless deer permit for the zone in which they applied. Notification of whether the applicant was successful will be instant. Selection is random and the odds of drawing a permit remain the same throughout the instant award period (instant award permit issuance is NOT first-come-first-served). The odds of drawing a permit depend on the number of antlerless deer permits allocated for a given zone and the number of hunters who applied for that zone. Successful applicants will be assessed a \$5.00 fee and may print the permit immediately or at a later date. See website for information on how to purchase additional antlerless deer permits from zones where there were fewer applicants than permits allocated.

YOUTH DEER HUNT PERMIT: Youth aged 12–17 are required to obtain a free permit to hunt on the 4th Saturday following Labor Day. See page 38.

BEAR PERMIT: Required to hunt bear. Hunters may purchase this permit when purchasing their hunting/sporting license or at any time prior to the end of the third segment of the bear season through any license vendor or online computer. Fee is \$5.00.

TURKEY PERMIT: Required to hunt turkey. Hunters may purchase this permit when purchasing their hunting/sporting license or at any time prior to the end of the fall turkey season through any license vendor or online computer. Fee is \$5.00.

HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM (H.I.P.): Woodcock, rail, coot, snipe, and waterfowl hunters **must** complete a Harvest Information Program (H.I.P.) survey when they purchase their license and/or the Massachusetts waterfowl stamp through any license vendor or online computer. Once the survey is completed, that fact is printed

on the license, providing proof the survey has been completed. There is no fee.

STAMPS

ARCHERY: (\$5.10) Required to hunt deer during the archery season.

PRIMITIVE FIREARMS: (\$5.10) Required to hunt deer during the primitive firearms season.

MASSACHUSETTS WATERFOWL: (\$5.00) Required of all waterfowl hunters aged 15 and over. Stamp is not required for hunting woodcock, snipe, American coot, or rails.

FEDERAL MIGRATORY GAME BIRD STAMP: In addition to a hunting license and a Massachusetts Waterfowl Stamp, any waterfowl hunter aged 16 or older must have a Federal Migratory Bird Stamp. These stamps are available at National Wildlife Refuges, at select offices of the U.S. Postal Service, by mail from the U.S. Postal Service or from select private vendors, or on-line at www.fws.gov/duckstamps/Stamps.htm.

Federal Migratory Game Bird Stamps are available each year starting July 1 and expire on the following June 30.



All Season Cargo Protection

- Sleek, low profile design
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LOCATIONS:

477 Westbrook St., S. Portland, ME
(207) 799-7800

512 Amherst St., Nashua, NH
(603) 882-8868

1139 N. Montello St., Brockton, MA
(508) 588-1018

100 Broadway, Route 1N, Saugus, MA
(781) 233-3900

1271 Main St., Tewksbury, MA
(978) 851-9024



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Licenses

2016 LICENSE, STAMP & PERMIT FEES

CLASS	LICENSE	FEE
F1	Resident Fishing	\$27.50
F2	Resident Minor Fishing (Age 15-17)	FREE
F3	Resident Fishing (Age 65-69)	\$16.25
F4	Resident Fishing (Age 70 or over) Or paraplegic, blind, intellectually disabled*	FREE
F6	Non-resident Fishing	37.50
F7	Non-resident Fishing (3 day)	23.50
F8	Resident Fishing (3 day)	12.50
F9	Non-resident Fishing (Age 15-17)	11.50
F10	Quabbin One Day Fishing	5.00
H1	Resident Citizen Hunting	27.50
H2	Resident Citizen Hunting (Age 65-69)	16.25
H3	Resident/Non-resident Hunting, Paraplegic*	FREE
H4	Resident Alien Hunting	27.50
H5	Non-resident (adult/minor) Hunting, Big Game (Deer, Bear, Turkey, and all other game species)	99.50
H6	Non-resident (adult/minor) Hunting, Small Game (All game species except deer, bear, and turkey)	65.50
H7	Non-resident Commercial Shooting Preserve (1 day)	10.00
H8	Resident Minor Hunting (Age 15-17)	11.50
H9	Resident Commercial Shooting Preserve (1 day)	10.00
S1	Resident Citizen Sporting	45.00
S2	Resident Citizen Sporting (Age 65-69)	25.00
S3	Resident Citizen Sporting (Age 70 or over) (includes trapping)	FREE
S4	Resident/Non-Resident Paraplegic Sporting*	FREE
T1	Resident Trapping	35.50
T2	Resident Minor Trapping (Age 12-17)	11.50
T3	Resident Trapping (Age 65-69)	20.25
M/N 1	Archery Stamp	5.10
M/N 2	Waterfowl Stamp	5.00
M/N 3	Primitive Firearms Stamp	5.10
W1	Wildlands Stamp, Resident	5.00
W2	Wildlands Stamp, Non-resident	5.00
	Antlerless Deer Permit (when issued)	5.00
	Bear Permit	5.00
	Turkey Permit	5.00
	Trap Registration Number (Boston Office)	5.00
	Trap Registration Number Renewal (Boston Office)	5.00
	Non-resident Trapping Permit (Field Headquarters Office)	200.00
	Resident Furbuyer*	30.00
	Non-resident Citizen/Alien Furbuyer*	90.00

*First time applicants must contact Boston DFW office.
Restrictions apply.

NOTE: Fee for **first** resident license and all non-resident licenses includes a \$5.00 fee for the Wildlands Conservation Stamp. Fee for **second** resident license in calendar year **does not** include the \$5.00 fee for the Wildlands Conservation Stamp. City and town clerks **must** add an additional one dollar (\$1.00); other sales agents **may** add up to an additional one dollar and fifty cents (\$1.50) service fee to the price of each license sold. An additional service fee of \$1.50 per license is applied to all licenses purchased through a sales agent. The same service fee, plus an additional 3% internet handling charge on the total transaction, is applied to all online license purchases. There are no service fees or internet handling charges for licenses purchased at offices of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, where only cash or checks are accepted.

A hunting license is required of anyone practicing falconry in Massachusetts.

Buy Licenses/Permits
MassFishHunt
Check Your Game





* Design subject to change

Artwork by Ed Snyder

Land for Sportsmen

The Sportsmen's National Land Trust has created this special license plate to help conserve wildlife habitat and to guarantee hunting and fishing access in Massachusetts.*

Join us in preserving land for all outdoorsmen and future generations to come. Proudly show your support every day by purchasing the SNLT Massachusetts license plate!

For more Information go to:

www.SNLTMassachusetts.org

BOAT, ATV, & SNOWMOBILE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

(617) 626-1610 or mass.gov/ole.

SALTWATER FISHING PERMIT REQUIRED

Saltwater anglers in Massachusetts are required to purchase a state recreational saltwater fishing permit. The fee for this permit is \$10 and is the same cost for all anglers, including non-residents. Anglers younger than 16, or disabled, or who fish only on charter boats or "head boats" are exempt from this requirement. Anglers age 60 and older will need to obtain a permit, but the saltwater permit is free. The permit is available online, by mail, and in person at participating vendors and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries offices in Gloucester, Boston, and New Bedford. For more information, please visit: mass.gov/dmf/saltwaterpermits.

For a list of game check stations, visit the DFW website at www.mass.gov/dfw/checkstation. A list of furbearer check stations is on page 44.

BE SAFE, BE SEEN – GET YOUR ORANGE ON

ALL outdoor users who are in the woods during hunting seasons are encouraged to wear "hunter orange" to increase their visibility.

STOP THE SPREAD

of Nuisance Aquatic Plants and Animals

Boaters, anglers, and other lake and river users are reminded that many unwanted, invasive species can be transported and inadvertently introduced to new waters by hitchhiking undetected on your boat, trailer, motor, waders, diving equipment, and other fishing gear. Please drain your boat, motor, and live well(s); clean and decontaminate your boat, motor, trailer, ropes, and gear; and make sure your equipment is thoroughly dry before entering any body of water. This is especially important if you have been boating in western Massachusetts, New York, Vermont or Connecticut. For more information contact Massachusetts DCR Lakes and Ponds Program at (617) 626-1250 or www.mass.gov/lakesandponds.



Fishing

SPECIES	OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY CREEL	MINIMUM LENGTH ¹
TROUT²			
Lakes, ponds, major rivers ^{3, 5, 6}	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	3	—
Housatonic River ⁴	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1	20"
All other rivers and brooks	Apr. 1 – Sept. 10 Sept. 11 – Mar. 31, 2017	8 3	—
LAKE TROUT			
Wachusett Reservoir ⁶	(see note 6)	3	—
Quabbin ⁶	(see note 6)	2	18"
SALMON (Landlocked)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	2	15"
AMERICAN SHAD⁷ (Connecticut and Merrimack rivers and their tributaries)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	3	—
AMERICAN SHAD⁷ (All other waters, catch and release only)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	0	—
CHAIN PICKEREL	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5	15"
BLACK BASS (Largemouth and Smallmouth, singly or combined):	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5	12"
NORTHERN PIKE	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1	28"
TIGER MUSKIE (Muskellunge)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1	28"
WALLEYE	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5	14"
SMELT⁸	Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 May 16 – Dec. 31	—	—
ALL OTHER FRESHWATER SPECIES	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	—	—

STRIPED BASS and HERRING: For season, size, and possession limits call the **Division of Marine Fisheries** at (617) 626-1520, or visit their website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.

POSSESSION OF: Sturgeon (all species), American Brook Lamprey, Atlantic (sea-run) Salmon, Bridle Shiner, Burbot, Eastern Silvery Minnow, Lake Chub, Longnose Sucker, and Northern Redbelly Dace is illegal! **If caught, release immediately.** This means remove hook or cut line and return fish to water **immediately** — do not pose for photographs, place on a stringer, hold in a net, or delay in any way the immediate return and release of these rare fish to the water!

- Minimum length** is measured as the straight line (not curved over the body) from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail. The tips of any forked tail may be squeezed together for the final measurement.
- Trout** applies to Brook, Brown, Rainbow, and Tiger Trout (a cross between a female Brown and a male Brook Trout). From Apr. 1 to Sept. 10, no more than 8 trout (as defined) may be taken daily, and only 3 of those trout may be from lakes, ponds, or major rivers³. From Sept. 11 to Mar. 31, no more than 3 trout (as defined) may be taken daily.
- Major Rivers:** Childs, Coonamessett, Deerfield, Farmington, Green (Colrain), Green (Great Barrington), Ipswich, Jones, Mashpee, Millers, Nissitissit, North (Colrain), North (West Branch), Parker, Quaboag, Quinapoxet, Quinebaug, Seven Mile, Santuit, Scorton Creek, Shawsheen, Squannacook, Stillwater (Sterling, Princeton), Swift (East Branch), Swift (Winsor Dam to Ware River, except as posted), Tully (East and West Branches), Ware, Ware (East Branch), Westfield (all branches).
- Mainstem Housatonic only**, from the confluence of the East and West Branches to the MA-CT line, exclusive of the catch-and-release areas where no trout may be kept.
- Special Brown Trout water:** South Pond (Quacumquasit), Brookfield. Total daily creel is 3 trout but only 1 may be a Brown Trout and it must be at least 15".
- Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs:** Opening and closing dates are set by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. For Quabbin Reservoir visit www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-central/quabbin-reservoir.html or call (413) 323-7221. For Wachusett/Sudbury Reservoirs visit www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/water-res-protection/watershed-mgmt/wachusett-and-sudbury-reservoir-fishing-guide.html or call (508) 792-7806. Quabbin Reservoir and its tributary streams within the Quabbin Reservation are **closed to all fishing** except during the open season as set by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Wachusett/Sudbury/West Waushacum fishing season normally opens the first Saturday in April and closes Nov. 30, but the DCR/DWSP may alter those dates depending on ice conditions. At Wachusett Reservoir, shoreline fishing only is allowed from Gate 6 on Route 70 to Gate 36 on Route 110.

- American Shad are Catch-and-Release **ONLY** on all waters **except** the Connecticut and Merrimack rivers and their tributaries.
- Smelt** may be taken by hook and line only.

ICE FISHING

Anglers are allowed up to five hooks in the water at one time. A hook is defined as an angling device attached to the line of a tip-up or jig stick that is designed to take one fish at a time. This includes plain hooks, treble hooks, spinners, spoons, bait harnesses, jigs, or plugs. The device in question is not restricted to a single hook — lures with multiple treble hooks count as one hook in the water. Hooks can be on any combination of tip-ups or jig sticks, but no more than five hooks total.

All anglers must be able to tend their own hooks (tip-ups or jig sticks). Minors under 15 years old may have up to five hooks in the water. Adults may assist with cutting holes or removing hooks, but minors must be capable of tending tip-ups or jig sticks on their own.



BAIT

It is unlawful to take baitfish for the purpose of sale from the inland waters of the Commonwealth. Individuals trapping fish for personal use as baitfish may use only one trap.

- **Baitfish** may be taken by licensed anglers at any time for personal use by all lawful methods, including a rectangular net not exceeding 36 square feet of net area or by a hoop or circular net not exceeding 6 feet in diameter or with a fish trap with openings not exceeding one inch. Nets designed to gill fish are prohibited. The following species may be taken for personal use as bait by licensed anglers. **Only the fish species listed below may be used as bait, live or dead.**

Banded Killifish	Fallfish
Fathead Minnow	Golden Shiner
Mummichog	Pumpkinseed
Rainbow Smelt*	Yellow Perch
White Sucker	

* Smelt may be taken **only** by hook and line. Possession or use of smelt

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
FOR PERSONAL USE				
BULLFROG, GREEN FROG	July 16 - Sept. 30	12	24	none
SNAPPING TURTLE	Jan. 1 - Apr. 30 July 17 - Dec 31	2	2	12 in.*
FOR BAIT				
BULLFROG, GREEN FROG, WOOD FROG	No closed season	10	10	less than 2½ in.**

Fishing license required. Bullfrogs, green frogs, wood frogs, and pickerel frogs may be taken by hand or by hand-held dip net. Snapping turtles may be taken by hand, hand-held dip net, or gaff.

*Straight line carapace (shell) length

**Snout to vent length

as bait in inland waters other than during the smelt season is prohibited.

- **Herring:** For current regulations on the use, possession, and taking of herring contact the Division of Marine Fisheries, (617) 626-1520 or marine.fish@state.ma.us.
- **Frogs** (except leopard frogs) 2½ inches or less snout to vent may be taken by licensed anglers and used as bait; 10 daily, 10 in possession; may not be sold.

CATCH-AND-RELEASE AREAS

Artificial lures only. No bait in possession.

- **Housatonic River:** From the Rte. 20 bridge in Lee downstream to Willow Mill Dam AND from Glendale Dam downstream to the RR bridge in Great Barrington. No fishing from June 15–Aug. 31 inclusive within 100 feet of the mouths of posted tributaries: Beartown Brook; Goose Pond Brook; Hop Brook; and Mohawk Brook.



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Fishing

- **Red Brook:** From the outlet of White Island Pond to the inlet of Buttermilk Bay.
- **Nissitissit River:** From the New Hampshire border to the Prescott St. Bridge. FLY FISHING ONLY (year-round).
- **Swift River:** Winsor Dam to Rte. 9, catch-and-release FLY FISHING ONLY (year-round). Rte. 9 to Cady Lane, catch-and-release, artificial lures only (July 1–Dec. 31); fish harvest and bait allowed (Jan. 1–June 30).
- **Deerfield River:** Fife Brook Dam to Hoosac Tunnel, and the section extending from Pelham Brook to the Mohawk Campground.
- **Westfield River, East Branch:** Immediately below the Chesterfield Gorge

parking lot in Chesterfield to the gate north of the Corps of Engineers parking lot at Knightville in Huntington.

- **Millers River:** Templeton/Athol RR bridge to the first dam in Athol and from Wendell Rd. bridge in Orange to the breached dam in Erving center.
- **Quashnet River:** From the outlet of John's Pond to the sign 0.1 mile below Rte. 28.

FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES

The MA Dept. of Public Health (MDPH) has issued a statewide advisory for pregnant women, nursing mothers, women who may become pregnant, and children under 12 to refrain from consuming fish caught in freshwater due to elevated levels of mercury in fish. MDPH has also issued fish consumption advisories for the general public on selected bodies of water primarily due to PCB and mercury contamination. For more information or a list of waters with fish consumption advisories, contact MDPH, Bureau of Environmental Health, at (617) 624-5757 or www.mass.gov/dph.

INTERSTATE POND LICENSE REGULATIONS

Wallum Lake, Douglas: Fishing permitted by persons duly licensed in Massachusetts or Rhode Island. Rhode Island regulations apply.

Lake Monomonic and Robbins Pond, Winchendon; Long Pond, Tyngsboro and Dracut; Bent Pond, Warwick; Tuxbury Pond, Amesbury: Fishing permitted by persons duly licensed in Massachusetts or New Hampshire. New Hampshire regulations apply.

Colebrook Reservoir, Tolland; Perry Pond, Dudley; Muddy Pond, Southbridge; Breakneck Pond, Sturbridge; Congamond Lake, Southwick; Hamilton Reservoir, Holland: Fishing permitted by persons duly licensed in Massachusetts or Connecticut. Connecticut regulations apply to Colebrook Reservoir, Breakneck Pond, Perry Pond and Muddy Pond. Massachusetts regulations apply to Congamond Lake and Hamilton Reservoir.

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Sherman Reservoir, Rowe: Massachusetts regulations apply and MA license required in MA. Vermont regulations apply and VT license required in VT.

FISHING PROHIBITIONS

- **More than two hooks** for fishing open water or more than five hooks when ice fishing. A hook is defined as an angling device attached to a fishing line that is designed to take one fish at a time but is not limited to devices commonly called spinners, spoons, bait harnesses, jigs, or plugs.
- The taking of any fish from the inland waters of the Commonwealth for the purposes of sale.
- **Lead Sinkers, Lead Weights, and Lead Jigs Weighing Less Than an Ounce.** Any sinker or weight made from lead that weighs less than 1 ounce, and any lead jig (meaning any lead-weighted hook) that weighs less than 1 ounce, is prohibited for use in all inland waters of the Commonwealth. The term **lead sinker** shall not include any other sinkers, weights,

fishing lures or fishing tackle including, but not limited to, artificial lures, hooks, weighted flies, and lead-core or other weighted fishing lines.

- **Possession of:** Sturgeon (all species), American Brook Lamprey, Atlantic (sea-run) Salmon, Bridle Shiner, Burbot, Eastern Silvery Minnow, Lake Chub, Longnose Sucker, and Northern Redbelly Dace is illegal! If caught, release immediately. This means remove hook or cut line and return fish to water immediately – do not pose for photographs, place on a stringer, hold in a net, or delay in any way the immediate return and release of the fish to the water.
- **Releasing** fish or spawn into inland waters, except by permit.
- **Transporting** live fish (except bait for personal use) without a permit.
- **Jug, toggle, or trot line** fishing.
- **Snagging**
- **Poisons, explosives**
- **Littering** in inland waters.

SPEARS, BOW AND ARROWS

May be used to take White Suckers and Carp only. Fishing license required.

MARINE FISHERIES

Have any questions regarding saltwater fishing regulations?

Call the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries information hotline at (617) 626-1520 or visit mass.gov/marinefisheries or email marine.fish@state.ma.us



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Fishing

ANGLER'S GUIDE TO MASSACHUSETTS FISHES

More than 80 kinds of fish live in the inland waters of the Commonwealth. Pictured is a small sample of some of the most popular species commonly taken by anglers. For a more complete list, pick up a copy of our brochure *Freshwater Fishes of Massachusetts* at any DFW office.

TEMPERATURE PREFERENCES OF FISH

Temperature preferences are different for many fish. Though fish cannot always find their exact preference, they are usually found in water closest to their preferred temperature.

80	< Catfish Family
75	< Bluegill / Pumpkinseed
	< Largemouth Bass
70	< Calico Bass (Crappies)
	< Esocids (Pike/Pickereel/Muskellunge), Smallmouth Bass
65	< Perch Family (Yellow Perch/Walleye)
60	
	< Brown Trout
55	
	< Landlocked Salmon, Rainbow/Brook Trout
50	
	< Lake Trout
45	



LARGEMOUTH BASS

A warm-water gamefish found in lakes, ponds and slow moving rivers associated with weeds and structure. Typically 1–3 lbs, but can reach up to 15 lbs. Dark line along each side is a good identification mark.



BROWN TROUT

This trout thrives in heavy cover and deep pools of cold, well-oxygenated water. Typically stocked at 10–14 inches with larger specimens to 20+ inches. Many wild populations exist in small to medium-size streams.



ATLANTIC SALMON

The anadromous form of this species lives in the open ocean but ascends freshwater rivers to spawn. The landlocked form lives in deep, cold, freshwater habitats and spawns in tributaries. Anadromous form grows to 20 lbs; landlocks average 2–4 lbs. Landlocked populations occur in the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs.



SMALLMOUTH BASS

Less common than largemouths, these cool-water gamefish are found in clear, rocky habitats. Average size is 1–2 lbs, but can reach up to 8 lbs. This species often jumps spectacularly when hooked.



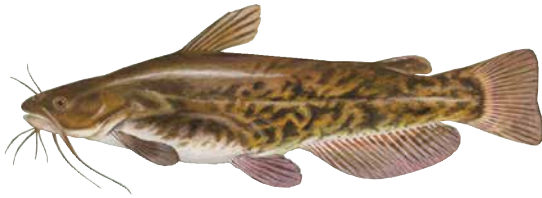
BROOK TROUT

This beautiful native char thrives in clean, cold, well-oxygenated waters. It is found in high gradient streams and coldwater beaver flowages. Wild brookies average 6–8 inches, but stocked specimens are typically 10–12 inches or larger. Considered by many to be the most beautiful fish in North America.



RAINBOW TROUT

These trout thrive in cold, well-oxygenated, fast moving water. Typical hatchery fish are 12–16 inches, with larger specimens to 20+ inches. Profusely speckled and usually has a pink line along each side.



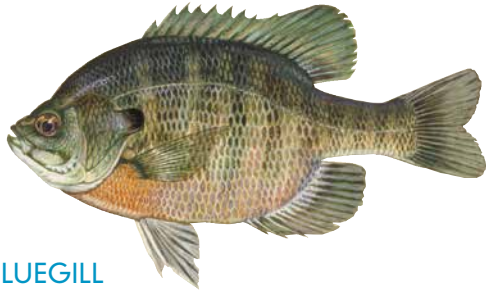
BROWN BULLHEAD

Our native "horned pout" catfish thrives in warm-water habitats associated with muddy bottoms and aquatic vegetation. Average size is 8–12 inches, but larger ones are not uncommon. Handle this fish (and all catfish) with care, as spines in the dorsal and pectoral fins can inflict painful wounds.



BOWFIN

Recently added to the Freshwater Sportfishing Award Program, Bowfin are currently limited to the major river drainages in Massachusetts. Body is tubular with a bullet-shaped head and a long, spineless dorsal fin. Most specimens are olive to brownish gray, often with a mottled pattern; males display a black spot near the upper base of the tail. Typically 2–4 pounds, but some may reach 10 pounds or more. Usually associated with shallow, muddy, fertile water, and occasionally taken through the ice.



BLUEGILL

A sunfish that prefers shallow, weedy, warm-water habitats. Typically 4–7 inches in length with larger specimens to 10 inches. Identified by the solid black flap on gill cover and a dark patch near the back, bottom edge of the dorsal fin.



CHAIN PICKEREL

A native cool-water gamefish found in shallow, vegetated areas of fairly clear lakes, ponds, and rivers. Typically 15–20 inches but larger specimens are not uncommon. Respected for its sharp teeth which can easily cut most fishing lines and inflict minor wounds.



PUMPKINSEED

A native sunfish, this pretty little "kivver" is found in weedy, warm-water habitats. Most are 4–7 inches, but can get up to 8–9 inches. Look for blue "warpaint" on the face and a red/orange-tipped gill flap.



BLACK CRAPPIE

This "calico bass" is found in weedy, warm-water habitats. It often forms schools in submerged structure, especially brush piles and fallen trees. Typically 5–12 inches, but larger specimens not uncommon.



YELLOW PERCH

A native cool-water panfish found in the vegetated areas of lakes, ponds, slow streams, and almost any open water with moderate vegetation. Typically 8–10 inches but larger fish are not uncommon. A schooling fish, it is safe to assume that if you find one, there are others in the vicinity.



Photo © Michele Hoenig

GOT LIFE JACKETS?

From September 15 to May 15 all canoe or kayak occupants **MUST WEAR** a U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device.



Fishing

FRESHWATER SPORTFISHING AWARDS PROGRAM

Awards for freshwater fish are offered in 22 categories. Each qualified entry receives a bronze pin. The largest fish in each category each year also receives a gold pin and plaque. There is also a Youth (17 and under) and Adult “Angler of the Year” award given to the person who has taken the greatest variety of “pinfish” during the year. Fish must meet minimum weight or length requirements listed below. Catch and Keep entries must be weighed on any scale certified by the State. Go to mass.gov/dfw/sportfishing-awards for a list of weigh stations and to download an affidavit. This information is also available at DFW offices.

Learn more about the Massachusetts Freshwater Sportfishing Awards Program and see a list of 2014 Gold Pin Winners at mass.gov/dfw/sportfishing-awards

FRESHWATER SPORTFISHING AWARDS PROGRAM MINIMUM WEIGHTS AND LENGTHS

SPECIES	CATCH AND KEEP (WEIGHT)		CATCH AND RELEASE LENGTH (INCHES)
	ADULT	YOUTH	
Bowfin	6 lb. 0 oz.	4 lb. 0 oz.	26
Brook Trout	2 lb. 0 oz.	1 lb. 0 oz.	16
Brown Trout	4 lb. 0 oz.	2 lb. 0 oz.	22
Bullhead	2 lb. 0 oz.	1 lb. 0 oz.	15
Carp	15 lb. 0 oz.	10 lb. 0 oz.	31
Chain Pickerel	4 lb. 8 oz.	3 lb. 0 oz.	25
Channel Catfish	6 lb. 0 oz.	5 lb. 0 oz.	25
Crappie	1 lb. 8 oz.	1 lb. 0 oz.	14
Lake Trout	7 lb. 0 oz.	5 lb. 0 oz.	30
Landlocked Salmon ¹	4 lb. 0 oz.	3 lb. 0 oz.	22
Largemouth Bass	7 lb. 0 oz.	4 lb. 0 oz.	21
Northern Pike	15 lb. 0 oz.	10 lb. 0 oz.	36
Rainbow Trout	3 lb. 0 oz.	2 lb. 0 oz.	20
Shad	5 lb. 0 oz.	3 lb. 0 oz.	22
Smallmouth Bass	4 lb. 8 oz.	3 lb. 0 oz.	20
Sunfish ²	0 lb. 12 oz.	0 lb. 8 oz.	10
Tiger Muskellunge	10 lb. 0 oz.	7 lb. 0 oz.	34
Tiger Trout	2 lb. 0 oz.	1 lb. 0 oz.	16
Walleye	4 lb. 0 oz.	2 lb. 0 oz.	24
White Catfish	4 lb. 0 oz.	2 lb. 0 oz.	19
White Perch	1 lb. 8 oz.	1 lb. 0 oz.	14
Yellow Perch	1 lb. 8 oz.	1 lb. 0 oz.	14

1 Landlocked Salmon are recognized only from Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs.

2 Sunfish category includes Redbreast Sunfish, Green Sunfish, Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, and Rock Bass.

MASSACHUSETTS FRESHWATER SPORTFISHING RECORDS

SPECIES	WEIGHT	WATER	YEAR
American Shad	11 lbs. 4 ozs.	Connecticut River	1986
Broodstock Salmon	22 lbs. 15 ozs.	Lake Mattawa, Orange	1997
Brook Trout	10 lbs. 0 ozs.	Ashfield Lake, Ashfield	2008
Brown Trout	19 lbs. 10 ozs.	Wachusett Reservoir	1966
Bullhead	6 lbs. 4 ozs.	Forest Lake, Methuen	2008
Carp	46 lbs. 5 ozs.	Quinsigamond Lake, Shrewsbury	2012
Chain Pickerel	9 lbs. 5 ozs.	Laurel Lake, Lee	1954
Channel Catfish	26 lbs. 8 ozs.	Ashfield Lake, Ashfield	1989
Crappie	4 lbs. 10 ozs.	Jake's Pond, Plymouth	1980
Lake Trout	24 lbs. 0 ozs.	Wachusett Reservoir	2004
Landlocked Salmon	10 lbs. 2 ozs.	Wachusett Reservoir	1985
Largemouth Bass	15 lbs. 8 ozs.	Sampson Pond, Carver	1975
Northern Pike	35 lbs. 0 ozs.	Quacumquasit Pond, Brookfield	1988
Rainbow Trout	13 lbs. 13 ozs.	Wachusett Reservoir	1999
Smallmouth Bass	8 lbs. 2 ozs.	Wachusett Reservoir	1991
Sunfish	2 lbs. 1 ozs.	South Athol Pond, Athol	1982
Tiger Muskellunge	27 lbs. 0 ozs.	Lake Pontoosuc, Pittsfield	2001
Tiger Trout	9 lbs. 7 ozs.	Peter's Pond, Sandwich	2004
Walleye	11 lbs. 0 ozs.	Quabbin Reservoir	1973
White Catfish	9 lbs. 3 ozs.	Baddacook Pond, Groton	1987
White Perch	3 lbs. 5 ozs.	Wachusett Reservoir	1994
Yellow Perch	2 lbs. 12 ozs.	South Watuppa Pond, Fall River	1979



CHANGES TO THE MASSACHUSETTS FRESHWATER SPORTFISHING AWARD PROGRAM

CATCH AND RELEASE CATEGORY ADDED: In response to growing interest, MassWildlife has added a catch and release component to the Freshwater Sportfishing Award Program. Fish must be measured against a standard measuring device (e.g. a ruler, measuring board, etc.), photographed, and immediately released at the site of capture. Length is to be measured from the tip of the longest jaw to the tip of the compressed tail on a flat surface as a straight line (not measured over the curve of the body). All fractions in length will be rounded up to the nearest ¼ inch mark. For more on measuring fish, go to mass.gov/dfw/sportfishing-awards.

Catch and release anglers will receive the classic bronze pin for each eligible fish submitted. Additionally, the longest of each species submitted annually will be awarded a gold pin and plaque. A Catch and Release Angler of the Year trophy will be awarded annually to the angler who submits the widest variety of eligible catch and release species.

BOWFIN ADDED: The last fish species to be added to the Sportfishing Award Program was Carp in 1979! Interest in Bowfin is increasing in the Northeast, with more states recognizing them as a gamefish. Bowfin are found in weedy backwater areas of major rivers. The Catch and Keep minimum weight is 6 pounds for adults and 4 pounds for youth. The Catch and Release minimum length is 26 inches.



Catch and release anglers: Remember to take a picture before returning the fish to the site of capture. This photograph shows the proper method for measuring and photographing a Catch and Release entry.

CATCH AND RELEASE ANGLERS: TIPS FOR MINIMIZING FISH STRESS

- The use of circle, wide gap and barbless hooks greatly reduces the chance of lethal wounding for released fish. Also, consider using single hooks instead of trebles or doubles. If fishing with artificials, flatten the hook barb with a pair of pliers or file down the barb.
- Be attentive and set the hook immediately to prevent the fish from swallowing the hook (setting the hook is not necessary with circle hooks).
- Reduce the fight time. The longer the fish fights, the higher the stress level for the fish. This is particularly important when fishing for trout in periods of warmer water temperatures. If it takes you a long time to land a fish, your drag may be set too loosely or your gear may be too light for the fish you are catching.
- Use a fine-mesh landing net to reduce the amount of time required to land a fish.
- If the hook is swallowed, do not forcefully remove it. Cut the line as close to the mouth as possible and then release the fish.
- Wet your hands before touching the fish so you don't damage the protective mucous layer on the outside of the fish.
- Don't use the gills or eyes as a handhold. Support the belly of larger fish. Bass can be safely handled by holding the lower jaw, thumb in the mouth and forefinger under the chin.
- Quickly return fish to the water. Revive a fatigued fish by supporting it in a swimming position in the water; gently move it back and forth until it can swim off.



Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Celebrates 150 Years of Conservation!

1866

Two Commissioners on Fisheries Appointed

Predecessors to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) the Commissioners were appointed to address the loss of Atlantic Salmon caused by dams and pollution. In 1869 the Commission was given authority over all fish; in 1886 the Commission was given authority over game animals.



1894

Sutton Hatchery Built; First State-owned Fish Hatchery

About 3,500 Brook Trout fry were stocked in 81 water bodies that year. Today, MassWildlife's five hatcheries annually produce over 500,000 fish, mostly 12+ inches long, which are stocked in more than 450 water bodies.

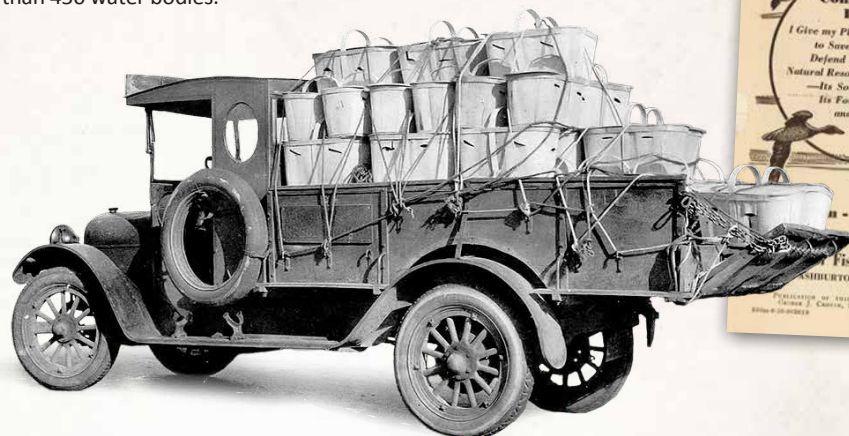
1895

Introduction of Ring-necked Pheasant for Hunting

Other game animals were propagated and distributed including mallards, Canada geese, snowshoe hare, and raccoons.

1900

First Agency-issued "Abstracts" of Fish and Game Laws



1948

Fisheries & Wildlife Board Established

The Board's mandate is to protect and manage wildlife and fish for the use and enjoyment of all citizens who hunt, fish, trap, and enjoy nature study and observation.

1950

Inception of Districts and District Managers

District offices are an integral part of MassWildlife's operations.

1949

"Massachusetts Wildlife" Begins as a Mimeographed Newsletter

In 1956, the first issue is published in magazine format.



1974

Division is renamed "Division of Fisheries & Wildlife"

1952

Pantry Brook — First State-owned Wildlife Management Area



1980

First Modern-Day Wild Turkey Hunting Season Opens

Once extirpated from MA, Wild Turkeys were reintroduced in the 1970s. Today, Wild Turkeys are the second most popular game animal in the Commonwealth.



1945

Inland Fish & Game Fund Established



Division employees sorting salvaged fish in Lowell, in May 1928.

1902

Commission Given Authority to Conduct Biological Investigations

Today, MassWildlife biologists conduct a variety of field and lab work to understand, monitor, and manage fish, wildlife, plants, and habitats in the Commonwealth.

1919

Commission on Fisheries & Game Becomes a Division

The first director William Adams touts outdoor recreation as "healthy and inspiring."

1931

Division Given Authority to Acquire Public Fishing and Shooting Grounds



1909

First Resident Hunting Registration

The first fishing license requirement followed in 1920.

1989

First Bald Eagle Nesting Since 1905

Since their reintroduction in the 1980s, Bald Eagle numbers have increased slowly but steadily.

1998

Fisheries & Wildlife Board Endorses Landscape Habitat Goals

These goals to increase Grassland, Shrubland, and Young Forest habitat types were set to benefit wildlife and guide management activities.



2014

New Zero Net Energy Field Headquarters Completed and Occupied



1983

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program Created and Funded

1990

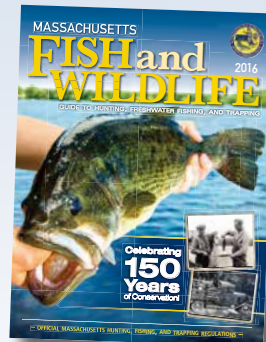
Massachusetts Endangered Species Act Enacted

2012

Inception of All-Electronic Licensing System

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Hunting

GENERAL HUNTING REGULATIONS

ACCIDENTS: All hunting-related injuries or deaths **MUST** be reported to state or local police and to the Environmental Police.

ARCHERY: Poisoned arrows, or explosive tips, or bows drawn by mechanical means, except for crossbows as permitted, are prohibited. Mechanical releases are permitted. Arrows used on deer, bear, or turkey must have well-sharpened steel broadhead blades not less than 7/8 inches in width. Expanding broadheads are legal for deer, bear, and turkey hunting. All bows, except permitted crossbows, used for hunting (recurve, long, and compound) must have a draw weight of at least 40 lbs. at 28 inches or at peak draw. No arrows may be released within 150 feet of, or across, any state or hard-surfaced highway, and hunting is prohibited within 500 feet of any dwelling or building in use, unless authorized by the owner or occupant thereof.

A firearms license (FID or LTC card) is not required for bowhunting. Archers shall not possess firearms on their person or use dogs while hunting deer. (See deer regulations on page 36.) Archers may hunt with a bow and arrow during the shotgun and primitive firearms deer seasons, but must comply with all regulations of those seasons, including the hunter orange and Primitive Firearms Stamp requirements. Crossbows may be used by certain permanently disabled persons by permit only. For regulations and an application, visit www.mass.gov/masswildlife or contact DFW at (508) 389-6300.

FEDERAL WILDLIFE LAW INFORMATION

Please note that fishing and hunting laws on federal parks, refuges, and reservations, such as those controlled by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or the National Park Service, may differ from state regulations. Contact the agency in question.



Photo © Bill Byrne

HUNTER ORANGE: No person shall hunt during the pheasant or quail season on WMAs where pheasant or quail are stocked without wearing a "hunter orange" cap or hat except while night-hunting for raccoons or opossums, or while hunting waterfowl from a blind or boat. During the period when it is legal to hunt deer with a shotgun, all hunters, except waterfowl hunters on coastal waters hunting within a blind or from a boat, must wear, in a conspicuous manner on chest, back, and head, a minimum of 500 square inches of "hunter orange" clothing or material. During the primitive firearms season, all deer hunters must comply with the 500 sq. inch hunter orange requirement.

HUNTING DOGS: May be trained at any time (except during the shotgun season for

deer) provided that only pistols or revolvers and blank cartridges are used or possessed. No sporting or hunting license is necessary. During the shotgun deer season, dogs may be used for waterfowl hunting on coastal waters only. Hunting bear or bobcat with dogs, or training dogs on those species, is prohibited.

TREE STANDS: Persons must have written permission of the landowner (on either public or private lands) to construct or use any tree stand which is fastened to a tree by nails, bolts, wire, or other fasteners that intrude through the bark into the wood of the tree, or that is fastened or erected in any manner and is emplaced for a period exceeding 30 days. This includes hang-on tree stands.

NON-RESIDENT HUNTERS:

- Must have successfully completed a Basic Hunter Education course or held a hunting license anywhere in North America prior to 2007 in order to purchase a MA hunting license. Nonresident minors (ages 15–17), see **MINORS**, page 12.
- Must have a valid Massachusetts non-resident hunting license in order to hunt.
- Must obtain the same stamps and permits as residents. Permit and stamp fees are the same for residents and non-residents. Non-resident migratory game bird hunters must complete a Massachusetts H.I.P. survey to hunt.
- May not purchase ammunition in Massachusetts (including materials used in black powder firearms).
- Must have their firearms unloaded and enclosed in a case while travelling into or through Massachusetts.
- No gun license (FID) is needed to possess or transport long guns.
- Must contact the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB) Firearms Support Services, 200 Arlington St., Suite 2200, Chelsea, MA 02150, tel. (617) 660-4780 for information on handgun permits.



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA REGULATIONS

The Division of Fisheries & Wildlife owns 213 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), 106 Wildlife Conservation Easements, and 68 Access areas open to hunting, fishing, and trapping. Maps are available for many of these properties on the DFW website and at all DFW offices.

- 1 No person shall possess any alcoholic beverage except under permit, or dump or discard any can, bottle, or rubbish.
- 2 No person shall remove vegetation, soil, or stones from any WMA except under permit.
- 3 No person shall use excessive speed in driving a vehicle.
- 4 No person, unless under permit, shall drive or possess any vehicle except on roads or trails maintained for public vehicular traffic.
- 5 No person shall deface or tamper with any sign, building, or equipment.
- 6 No person shall build or maintain a fire without written permission from the Director of the DFW or his designee.
- 7 No person shall camp within any WMA without written permission from the Director or his designee.
- 8 No person shall engage in target practice without written permission from the Director or his designee.
- 9 No person shall use any means other than shotgun or bow and arrow during the pheasant and quail season on areas stocked with pheasant or quail except for hunting raccoons and opossums between 9pm and 3am, or except for the shooting of captured fur-bearing mammals by a licensed trapper.
- 10 No person shall hunt before sunrise or after sunset on any WMA where pheasant or quail are stocked during the open season on pheasant or quail, except for the hunting of raccoons and opossums between 9pm and 3am.
- 11 No person shall hunt during the pheasant or quail season on WMAs
- 12 No person, except under permit, shall dig or disturb any artifact or archaeological remains.
- 13 The Director may make special regulations to handle special situations peculiar to any WMA. Controlled hunts are in effect at certain times on Martin Burns, Delaney, and Ludlow WMAs. Contact District Manager for details.

NEW TO HUNTING?

For outdoor skills education opportunities for novice, youth, and women hunters, see page 47.



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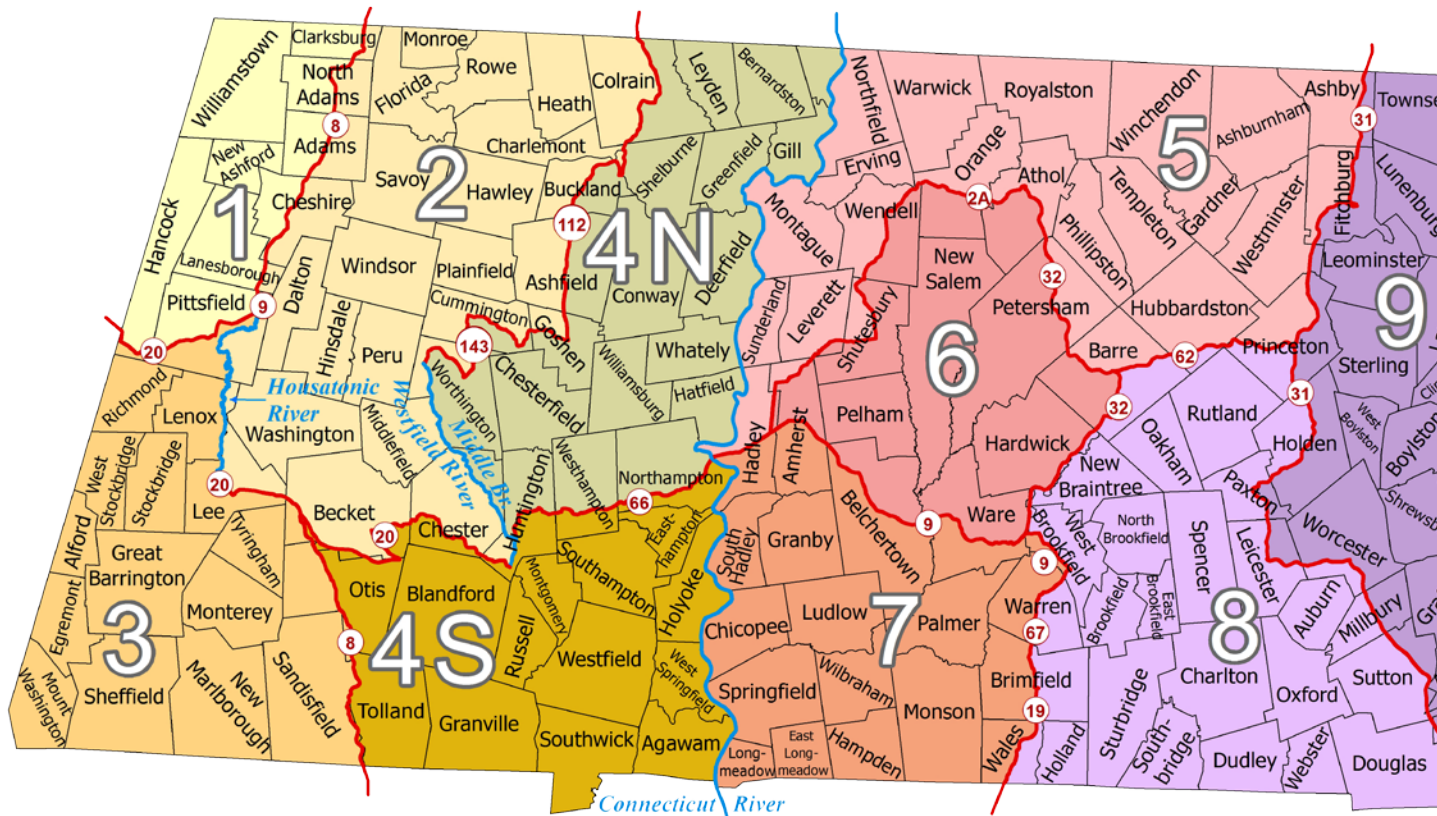
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Wildlife Management Zones



ZONE 1: Northerly by the Vermont border; westerly by the New York border; southerly by a line running along Rte. 20 to the junction with Rte. 7 in Pittsfield; north on Rte. 7 to Rte. 9 and east on Rte. 9 to the junction of Rte. 8; and easterly by a line running from the Vermont border south along Rte. 8 to Rte. 9 in Pittsfield.

ZONE 2: Northerly by Vermont border; westerly by Zones 1 and 3; southerly by the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) from the intersection with the Housatonic River in Lee, east to the intersection (dead end) with Bonny Rigg Hill Road in Becket; and easterly by a line running from the Vermont border south along Rte. 112 to Rte. 143 in Worthington, along Rte. 143 west to the intersection with the Middle Branch of the Westfield River, then south along Tourt Brook to the Middle Branch of the Westfield River to the intersection with the East Branch of the Westfield River, south along the East Branch of the Westfield River to Rte. 20 in Huntington, west along Rte. 20 to Bonny Rigg Hill Road in Becket, south on Bonny Rigg Hill Road to the intersection with the Massachusetts Turnpike.

ZONE 3: Northerly by Zone 1; westerly by the New York border; southerly by the New York and Connecticut borders; and easterly by a line running south along the Housatonic River from the junction with Rte. 9 in Pittsfield to the junction with Rte. 20 in Lee, east along Rte. 20 to the junction with Rte. 8 in West Becket, and south on Rte. 8 to the Connecticut border.

ZONE 4 NORTH: Northerly by the Vermont border; westerly by Zone 2; southerly by a line running north from the intersection of Rte. 20 and the East Branch of the Westfield River in Huntington along the East Branch of the Westfield River to the intersection with Rte. 66, along Rte. 66 to the intersection with Rte. 9 in Northampton, to the intersection with the Connecticut River at the Northampton/Hadley town line; and easterly by the Connecticut River.

ZONE 4 SOUTH: Northerly by Zones 2 and 4N; westerly by Zone 3; southerly by the Connecticut Border; and easterly by the Connecticut River.

ZONE 5: Northerly by the New Hampshire border; westerly by the Connecticut River; southerly by a line running from the intersection of the Connecticut River and Rte. 9 at the Northampton/Hadley line east along Rte. 9 to Rte. 116 in Hadley, north along Rte. 116 to Rte. 63 in North Amherst, east along Rte. 63 and Pine Street to State Street, northeast along State Street and East Leverett Road to Cushman Road, along Cushman Road to Shutesbury Road in East Leverett, east on Shutesbury Road and Leverett Road to Wendell Road in Shutesbury Center, north along Wendell Road to Locks Pond Road, north on Locks Pond Road to Lake View Road, northeast on Lake View Road to Locks Village Road, north along Locks Village Road to Depot Road in Wendell, north on Depot Road to Rte. 2A in Wendell Depot, east on Rte. 2A to Rte. 32 in Athol, south on Rte. 32 to Rte. 62 in Barre, and east on Rte. 62 to the intersection with Rte. 31 in Princeton; and easterly by a line running north on Rte. 31 to the New Hampshire border.

ZONE 6: Northerly by Zone 5; westerly by Zone 5; southerly by a line running from the intersection of Rte. 9 and Rt. 116 in Hadley, east along Rte. 9 to the intersection with Rte. 32 in Ware; and easterly by a line running from the intersection of Rte. 32 and Rte. 62 in Barre, south along Rte. 32 to the intersection with Rte. 9 in Ware.

ZONE 7: Northerly by Zones 5 and 6; southerly by the Connecticut border; easterly by a line running from the intersection of Rte. 9 and Rte. 32 in Ware, east along Rte. 9 to the intersection with Rte. 67, southwest along Rte. 67 to the intersection with Rte. 19 in Warren, and south along Rte. 19 to the Connecticut border.

ZONE 8: Northerly by Zone 5; southerly by the Connecticut and Rhode Island borders; easterly by the following: Rte. 31 in Princeton south to Rte. 56 in Paxton, Rte. 56 south to Rte. 9 in Leicester, Rte. 9 east to Cambridge Street in Worcester, Cambridge Street east to Rte. 146, Rte. 146 southeast to the Rhode Island border, westerly by Zones 6 and 7.

ZONE 9: Northerly by the New Hampshire border; southerly by the Rhode Island border; easterly by the following: Rte. 3 from New Hampshire southeast to Rte. 1-495 south to Rte. 121 in Wrentham, Rte. 121 southwest to the Rhode Island border; westerly by Zones 5 and 8.

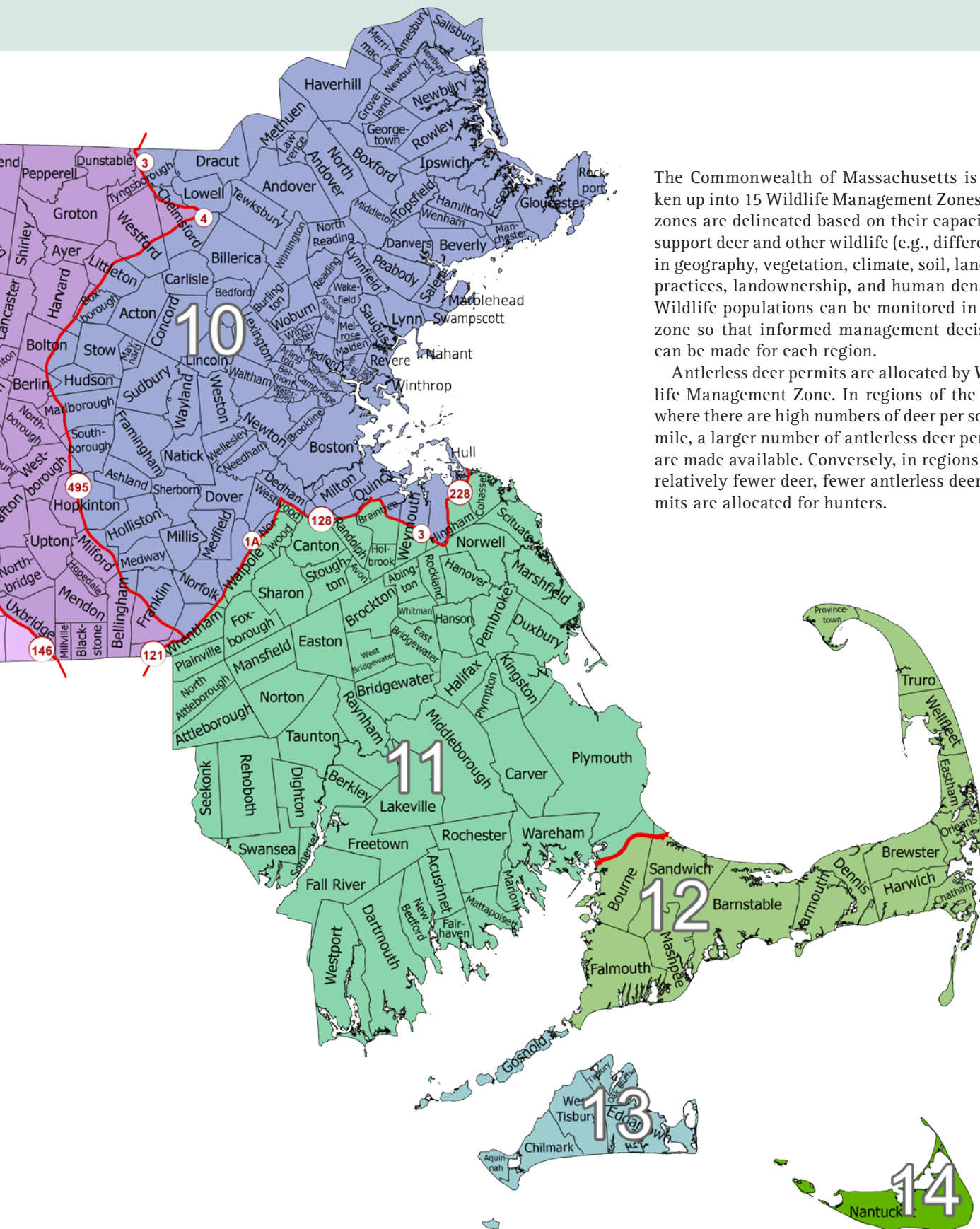
ZONE 10: Northerly by the New Hampshire border; westerly by Zone 9; southerly by a line running from the intersection of Rte. 1A and Rte. 1-495 in the town of Walpole northeast along Rte. 1A to the intersection with Rte. 128 in the town of Dedham, east on Rte. 128 to the intersection with Rte. 3 in the town of Braintree, east on Rte. 3 to the intersection with Rte. 228 in the town of Rockland, and north on Rte. 228 to the Atlantic Ocean at the intersection of Rte. 228 and Nantasket Avenue in the town of Hull; and easterly by the Atlantic ocean.

ZONE 11: Northerly by Zones 9 and 10; southerly by Buzzard's Bay and the Cape Cod Canal; easterly by the Atlantic Ocean; westerly by the Rhode Island border.

ZONE 12: Northerly, southerly and easterly by the Atlantic Ocean; westerly by Zone 11.

ZONE 13: Dukes County (i.e. Martha's Vineyard and Elizabeth Islands).

ZONE 14: Nantucket.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is broken up into 15 Wildlife Management Zones. The zones are delineated based on their capacity to support deer and other wildlife (e.g., differences in geography, vegetation, climate, soil, land use practices, landownership, and human density). Wildlife populations can be monitored in each zone so that informed management decisions can be made for each region.

Antlerless deer permits are allocated by Wildlife Management Zone. In regions of the state where there are high numbers of deer per square mile, a larger number of antlerless deer permits are made available. Conversely, in regions with relatively fewer deer, fewer antlerless deer permits are allocated for hunters.



Hunting

MASSACHUSETTS GUN LAWS

POSSESSION: For hunting, resident citizens ages 15 and over must have a Firearms Identification Card (FID) to possess a low-capacity rifle or shotgun. A License To Carry (LTC) (age 21 and over) is needed to possess large capacity rifles and shotguns and all handguns. **These gun licenses are issued by local Police Departments.** Non-residents with a valid Massachusetts non-resident hunting license do not need an LTC or FID to possess or carry a rifle or shotgun, but must carry their firearms unloaded and in a case while traveling in their vehicles. Non-residents may not purchase guns or ammunition in Massachusetts. To obtain a non-resident License To Carry or a non-resident permit to possess handguns, contact the CHSB (Criminal History Systems Board), Firearms Support Services (see below). No gun license is needed by bow hunters, nor by minors 12-14 years old hunting with a duly licensed adult, nor for the possession of primitive rifles or shotguns as defined in MGL Ch. 140, Section 121, or their ammunition. However, an LTC or FID is required to purchase all ammunition including black powder and Pyrex.

CAUTION: Massachusetts public safety laws define primitive arms differently from the laws and regulations of the DFW.

TRAVEL: Rifles, shotguns, and muzzleloaders may not be carried on public ways unless the person is lawfully engaged in hunting. When transported in a motor vehicle, rifles, shotguns, and muzzleloaders must be unloaded and in an enclosed case. A large capacity firearm must be carried unloaded and contained within a locked trunk or in a locked case or other secure container.

STORAGE: State law requires that whenever a gun is not under your direct control, it must be kept in a locked container or equipped with a tamper-resistant mechanical lock. Muzzleloaders are exempt from this requirement.

PENALTIES: License revoked for one year in addition to other penalties; fines of up to \$1,000; restitutions; and/or 1 year in jail. Careless and negligent use of firearms: fines of up to \$500 and/or 6 months imprisonment and loss of license for 5 years.

HUNTER HARASSMENT

Hunter harassment is against state law. Report violations to the Mass. Environmental Police (800) 632-8075 or to state or local police. Be prepared to provide a description of violators and/or a description and license plate number of the car.

CLOSED HUNTING SEASONS

Hunting seasons are closed throughout the year on all birds and mammals not mentioned herein or in Massachusetts Migratory Game Bird Regulations. During shotgun deer season all hunting seasons are closed except for deer, bear, coyote, and waterfowl.

RESTRICTIONS DURING THE YOUTH DEER HUNT

The Youth Deer Hunt Day is held the 4th Saturday following Labor Day. If hunting other game animals on this date, additional requirements must be followed: rifles and handguns are prohibited for hunting **any** game; dogs may not be used for hunting any game except for waterfowl hunting (ducks and geese) on coastal waters and salt marshes; **all** hunters must wear a minimum of 500 square inches of blaze orange on their

Kurt Palmateer harvested this mature buck in the Connecticut Valley District during the 2012 archery season.



chest, back, and head; waterfowl hunters are required to wear blaze orange in transit to and from their blind or boat.

OPEN HUNTING SEASONS

The following species may be taken year-round (except during shotgun deer season) by licensed hunters with no daily or seasonal bag limit: English sparrow, flying squirrel, red squirrel, chipmunk, porcupine, skunk, starling, weasel, woodchuck.

HUNTING HOURS

Hunting hours are from ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset on each day of open season (see Sunrise-Sunset table, page 10) except for:

- Rabbit, hare, fox, and coyote hunting, which close at midnight, except during the shotgun deer season when coyote hunting closes ½ hour after sunset.
- Spring turkey hunting (see page 34).
- Raccoon and opossum hunting (see page 42).
- WMA Reg. #10 (page 27) which states that no person shall hunt before sunrise or after sunset on any WMA where pheasant or quail are stocked during the pheasant or quail season except for the hunting of raccoons and opossums between 9pm and 3am.
- Migratory game bird hunting, which is ½ hour before sunrise to sunset.

HARVEST REPORTING

Upon harvesting a deer, bear, or turkey, you must immediately fill out and attach the paper tag from your permit or license to the carcass. Your game must remain intact (other than field dressing), with the harvest tag attached, until it is reported and prepared for food or taxidermy purposes. Hunters may report their harvested game online or bring their game to an official check station. **All deer harvested during the 2-week shotgun deer season must be brought to an official check station for biological data collection.** For detailed information on Online Game Check, visit the Game Check Station page on mass.gov/dfw/checkstation. If you report your harvest online, you will be issued a confirmation number. You must write the number on the harvest tag attached to the carcass. The harvest tag with harvest

report confirmation number must remain attached to the carcass until it is prepared for food or taxidermy purposes. Hunters who harvest a deer, bear, or turkey are required to check their game within 48 hours of killing the animal. A complete list of official checking stations is on the DFW website mass.gov/dfw/checkstation. **For general furbearer checking requirements, see page 44.**

MASSACHUSETTS GUN LAWS

For more information on gun laws, contact the MA Dept. of Criminal Justice, Firearms Records Bureau, 200 Arlington St., Suite 2200, Chelsea, MA 02150, (617) 660-4780, or mass.gov/cjis

BEAR SPRAY / SELF-DEFENSE SPRAY

Laws pertaining to self-defense sprays are outlined in M.G.L. c. 140 § 122D. For information about carrying and using self-defense spray as a bear deterrent go to mass.gov/bears and click on FAQs.

LANDOWNER LIABILITY

Landowners permitting use of their property for recreation without charging a fee are not liable for injuries to recreational users of the property except in cases of willful, wanton, or reckless conduct by the owner. (MGL Ch. 21 § 17C)

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Hunting

HUNTING PROHIBITIONS

- Artificial lights for hunting any bird or mammal except raccoon and opossum.
- Baiting migratory game birds, wild turkey, bear, or deer during or within 10 days of the start of the season. This does not apply to the hunting of crows.
- Careless or negligent use of firearms.
- Choke traps, leghold traps, or nets for taking any bird or mammal.
- Crossbows are allowed for certain disabled persons only (see Archery, page 26).
- Decoys for hunting deer.
- Discharge of any firearm or release of any arrow upon or across any state or hard-surfaced highway, or within 150 feet of any such highway, or possession of a loaded firearm, discharge of a firearm, or hunting on the land of another within 500 feet of any dwelling or building in use, except as authorized by the owner or occupant thereof. See page 30 for additional firearms regulations.
- Electronic calls for hunting migratory game birds, wild turkey, or deer. This does not apply to the hunting of crows.
- Ferrets: It is unlawful to hunt with a ferret. Possession of non-vaccinated/unneutered ferrets/fitches without a permit is unlawful.

TRANSPORT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

It is a violation of Federal Law to transport illegally taken fish or wildlife across state lines. For additional information contact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, (617) 889-6616.

It is unlawful to hunt, trap, or fish for any birds, mammals, reptiles, or amphibians not listed within this *Guide* or in the *Massachusetts Migratory Game Bird Regulations*.

- Firearms other than shotguns and bows and arrows are prohibited on WMAs stocked with pheasant or quail during the pheasant and quail season.
- Hunting on posted land without permission.
- Hunting on Sunday.
- Importation, transportation, liberation, or possession of any live vertebrate protected under MGL Ch. 131 except under permit from the Director.
- It is illegal to import, process, or possess whole carcasses or parts of any cervids (members of the deer family) from states or provinces where Chronic Wasting Disease has been detected (including NY and PA). It is legal to import deer meat that is de-boned, cleaned skull caps, hides without the head, or a fixed taxidermy mount. No live deer, of any species, may be brought into Massachusetts for any purpose.
- Intoxication and drugs: No person under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs shall hunt, target shoot, carry a firearm, bow and arrow, or other weapon.
- Loaded shotgun or rifle in or on any motor vehicle, recreational vehicle (including snowmobiles), aircraft or motor boat, except as stated in the *Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations*.
- Machine guns, fully-automatic firearms, any tracer or incendiary ammunition for hunting.
- Motor vehicles, off-highway vehicles (including snowmobiles), and/or aircraft for hunting any bird or mammal.
- Possession of any protected wildlife and/or wild plants, dead or alive, taken from the wild, except by permit.
- Possession of rifles, handguns, or dogs in any woodland or field, or use of same on any game, is prohibited during the shotgun deer season except that the use of dogs is lawful for hunting waterfowl on coastal waters.
- Power or sailboats for hunting birds except when beached or tied to a blind or for retrieving injured birds.
- Removal of any mammal from walls, or holes in trees, ground, or logs.
- Rifles chambered to take ammunition larger than .22 caliber long rifle rimfire, and pistols and revolvers chambered to

It is illegal to hunt MOOSE.

take ammunition larger than .38 caliber, between the hours of ½ hour after sunset and ½ hour before sunrise.

- Sale of all species of mammals and birds or parts thereof, except unprocessed heads, hides, and hooves of deer.
- Shotgun ammunition: Except as provided below, no species other than deer, coyote, or waterfowl may be hunted or taken with shot larger than #1 birdshot. Except during the prescribed open season when deer may be hunted lawfully with a shotgun, a person shall not have in his possession a shotgun shell loaded with a rifled slug, single ball, buckshot of any size, or any shot larger than or equal to air rifle shot in any place where birds or mammals may be found except on a skeet, trap, or target range between sunrise and sunset, or except for the hunting of coyotes (a) during the prescribed open season for coyotes with shot not larger than FF; or (b) during the shotgun deer season when coyotes may be hunted only with archery, muzzleloader, or shotgun—using slugs, buckshot, or shot of any size; or, except as specified in the annual *Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations*.
- Swivel or pivot guns for hunting any bird.
- Taking nests, destroying, or disturbing eggs or nests of birds.
- Target shooting on Sunday except on one's own property or on a recognized trap, skeet, or rifle range.
- Traps for taking birds except under permit. All traps except cage or box traps and common mouse or rat traps are unlawful for the taking of fur-bearing mammals.
- Vandalism or damage to property or livestock.

PENALTIES: License revoked for one year in addition to other penalties; fines of up to \$1,000, restitutions, and/or 1 year in jail. Careless and negligent use of firearms; fines of up to \$500 and/or 6 months imprisonment and loss of license for 5 years.



OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)				DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	ANNUAL LIMIT
Black Bear	Zones 1-14	First Season	Sept. 6 – Sept. 24	See "Black Bear," below.		1
		Second Season	Nov. 7 – Nov. 26			
		Shotgun Season (restrictions apply*)	Nov. 28 – Dec. 10			

*Hunters must wear 500 square inches of hunter orange on their head, chest and back. Rifles and handguns prohibited.



Photo © Bill Byrne

BLACK BEAR

Permit required (see page 13). Limit one bear per year. Hunting only with rifle .23 caliber or larger; muzzleloader .44–.775 caliber, fired from the shoulder, using a single projectile; bows, draw weight 40 lbs. or greater; revolvers .357 Magnum or .40 caliber or larger; or shotgun, no larger than 10 gauge, including shotguns with a rifled bore, slugs or single ball only. Hunting implements are restricted by season, see table below. Revolvers permitted during first season only, shotguns permitted during shotgun season only. Use of dogs for training or hunting is prohibited (see Hunting Dogs on page 26). Baiting of bears is prohibited. During the shotgun season hunters must wear 500 square inches of hunter orange on their head, chest, and back; rifles and handguns are prohibited;

shotguns, muzzleloaders, and archery equipment allowed. Hunting hours close ½ hour after sunset except as noted in WMA Reg. #10 (page 27). Successful hunters must immediately fill out and detach bear tag from permit and attach tag to bear prior to moving it, and then must check/report their harvest **within 48 hours** by **EITHER** 1) reporting online and writing the harvest report confirmation number on tag attached to the bear (see page 31 for details), **or** 2) bringing the bear to an official check station. Bear can only be field dressed, must not be concealed (bear or part of bear must remain open to view during transport), and must remain intact or whole (do not skin, butcher, or take to a taxidermist for mounting) until it has been checked/reported.

HOW OLD IS THAT BEAR?

MassWildlife collects bear teeth to determine the age structure of the harvest. Contribute to the scientific management of the MA Black Bear population! Follow the instructions below and you will receive a letter in June or July with the age of your harvested bear.

- 1 Remove either the left or right premolar (see photo), the small tooth just behind the canine. Using a small sharp knife, or a sharp ¼-inch wood chisel, slide the blade down the side of the tooth and cut or separate the gum



tissue where it sticks to the tooth. Using small needle-nose pliers or the pliers on your multi-tool, wiggle the tooth slightly until you can pull it out of the jawbone and the gum. The root is the most important part; go slow and be careful not to break this very small tooth.

- 2 Put the tooth in a small envelope or bag and mark it with your name, mailing address, customer ID number, and confirmation number (or seal number) of your bear. Enclose everything in a regular mailing envelope and send it to: Black Bear Aging, MA DFW, 1 Rabbit Hill Rd., Westborough, MA 01581.

ALLOWABLE HUNTING IMPLEMENTS FOR BEAR SEASONS

HUNTING IMPLEMENT	FIRST SEASON	SECOND SEASON	SHOTGUN SEASON
Rifle*	✓	✓	
Revolver	✓		
Muzzleloader*	✓	✓	✓
Archery	✓	✓	✓
Shotgun			✓

*Except on WMAs stocked with pheasant or quail during pheasant or quail season.

ANIMALS TAGGED FOR RESEARCH

Some bear, deer, coyotes, and other animals may have ear tags or radio collars. It is legal to harvest them. If you find or take one of these animals, contact DFW's Field Headquarters (508) 389-6300 immediately. You will be asked for information that will help biologists determine the source and status of these animals **AND** you will be asked to return the equipment to the DFW. Thank you for your cooperation.



		OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	SEASON LIMIT
UPLAND GAME BIRDS*					
Wild Turkey	Spring: Zones 1-13	April 25 – May 21	See "Wild Turkey," below.		
	Fall: Zones 1-13	Oct. 24 – Nov. 5			
	Youth Hunt: Zones 1-13	April 23 (see box below)			
Crow		Jan. 1 – April 9 July 1 – April 10, 2017	—	—	—
Pheasant		Oct. 15 – Nov. 26	2	4	6
	Youth Hunt	See page 47.			
Quail	Zones 11-14	Oct. 15 – Nov. 26	4	8	20
Ruffed Grouse		Oct. 15 – Nov. 26	3	6	15

Upland game bird hunting is closed during shotgun deer season.

* Migratory game birds (includes waterfowl, woodcock, snipe, rails): Seasons set annually. see *Migratory Game Bird Abstract* posted in the spring.

CROW

May be hunted on Fridays, Saturdays, and Mondays only during the open season. Electronic calls, rifles, and bait are permissible. Hunting hours close ½ hour after sunset except as noted in WMA Reg. #10 (see page 27). Crow hunting season may coincide with the Youth Deer hunt, special restrictions apply, see page 30.

PHEASANT

Cocks and hens may be hunted on all WMAs statewide. Only cocks can be hunted eastward of the zone from the New Hampshire border south on I-95 to I-495, south on I-495 to I-95, north on I-95 to I-93/128, east on I-93/128 to

Rt. 3, south on Rt. 3 to Rt. 228, north on Rt. 228 to the Hull town line, including the town of Hull and also in Dukes and Nantucket counties. See WMA Reg. #9-11 (page 27).

QUAIL

Zones 11-14 only (see page 28). See WMA Reg. #9-11 (page 27).

RUFFED GROUSE

See WMA Reg. #9-11 (page 27).

WILD TURKEY

Permit required. Official safety sticker must be adhered to firearm such that it is visible to the hunter when sighting down the barrel (typically placed on the tang). If new or replacement sticker is needed, send self-addressed, stamped envelope to any DFW office. Spring hunting hours: ½ hour before sunrise to 12:00 noon. Fall hunting hours: ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset except as noted in WMA Reg. #10 (page 27).

Bag Limit: Annual limit of 2 wild turkeys total, only one turkey may be harvested per day; **EITHER** (a) 2 bearded birds in spring season (1 per day) with NO fall bird allowed, OR (b) 1 bearded bird in spring season, and 1 bird of either sex in fall season. No hunter may take 2 birds in the fall season. Hunting only with shotguns no larger than 10 gauge or .775 caliber smoothbore muzzleloading shotguns using #4-#7 size shot, and with archery equipment (see ARCHERY pg. 26). Use of electronic calls, dogs,

bait, and driving turkeys is prohibited. Successful hunters must fill out tag attached to permit and immediately (prior to moving) attach it to turkey, and must check/report their harvest **within 48 hours** by **EITHER** 1) reporting online and writing the assigned confirmation number on tag attached to turkey (see page 31 for details), **or** 2) bringing the turkey to an official check station.

SPECIAL UPLAND BIRD HUNTING OPTION

Licensed hunters may submit an application to DFW District offices for a free 1 day permit that allows the private purchase, liberation, and hunting of ring-necked pheasants and/or bobwhite quail on selected WMAs (see list below) from January 1 – March 31. If purchasing birds from out of state, a separate importation permit is required. Permits are issued on a first-come, first-served basis; only one party may schedule a hunt on each specific WMA per day. There is no minimum or maximum stocking limit, or daily/season bag limit. For a complete list of procedures and locations available for this permit, contact any DFW District office (see page 5). Locations include: Crane WMA and Erwin Wilder WMA (SE District), Bolton Flats WMA and Winnimuset WMA (Central District), Martin Burns WMA (NE District), Herm Covey WMA (CT Valley District), Housatonic Valley WMA (Western District).

YOUNG ADULT TURKEY HUNT REQUIREMENTS

To participate, Hunter Ed. graduates age 12 to 17 must complete the youth turkey hunt program (details on page 47). All past participants **MUST** complete and mail in the past participant application which can be found at mass.gov/dfw/pastparticipantapp.



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HENS (FEMALES) AND TOMS (MALES) during the spring hunting season: A small proportion of female turkeys may have a beard and therefore can be legally harvested. However, their loss reduces the reproductive potential of the turkey population. To avoid misidentification, use the following features to accurately identify a tom from a hen.

Photos © Bill Byrne



TOM	FEATURE	HEN
Red, blue, or white colors with snood	Head	Blue-gray, no snood
Dark, brown-black	Body	Light, rusty brown
Long bristle/filament like beard	Beard	Usually no beard
Present	Spurs	Usually absent
Gobble, drum	Calls	Yelps, clucks, cuts
Strut with tail fanned and wings dropped	Strut	Do not strut, or fan tail
Larger than hen	Size	1/2 to 2/3 size of Tom

MIGRATORY GAME BIRD REGULATIONS

ALL migratory game bird hunters must complete a Harvest Information Program (H.I.P.) Survey for each calendar year. This includes woodcock, rail, snipe, and coot hunters. Complete the survey when you purchase your license, or when you purchase your state waterfowl stamp. A "waterfowl stamp" or a "H.I.P. Survey Completed" notation will appear on your license. A separate H.I.P. survey must be completed for each state in which you hunt migratory game birds.

Migratory Game Bird Hunting regulations are released in a separate publication. **New in 2016:** Seasons and bag limits will be set in the spring. See mass.gov/dfw/migratory-bird-hunting for more information.

YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT DATES

Two days are set aside prior to the waterfowl hunting seasons for young hunters ages 12–15. Youth hunters must be accompanied by a licensed adult hunter with a valid Massachusetts waterfowl stamp. The young hunter and accompanying adult may have only one firearm between them. The adult may not hunt and may carry the firearm only when it is unloaded and cased. No license or stamp needed for youths ages 12–14. License and Massachusetts waterfowl stamp needed for youths age 15. No federal stamp required. All other hunting regulations apply.

A Waterfowl Consumption Advisory is in effect for the Housatonic River due to PCBs. For more information call the MA Department of Public Health at (617) 624-5757 or visit mass.gov/dph.



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Hunting

		OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	SEASON LIMIT
Deer	Youth Deer Hunt	October 1	See "Deer," below and pages 38–39.		1 antlered deer OR 1 antlerless deer in Zone specified in permit during season
	Paraplegic Hunt	Nov. 3 – Nov. 5	See "Deer," below and pages 38–39.		2 antlered deer + antlerless deer by permit
	Archery	Oct. 17 – Nov. 26			
	Shotgun	Nov. 28 – Dec. 10			
	Primitive Firearms	Dec. 12 – Dec. 31			

DEER

Hunting hours begin ½ hour before sunrise and close ½ hour after sunset except as noted in WMA Reg. #10 (page 27).

ANTLERED DEER: Any deer with at least 1 antler 3 inches long measured on a straight line from the center of the front base of the antler burr to the tip.

ANTLERLESS DEER: Any deer without antlers or both antlers less than 3 inches long measured on a straight line from the center of the front base of the antler burr to the tip. A permit is required

to take antlerless deer during any deer season. To apply for an antlerless deer permit, hunters must apply online or at a license vendor by July 16. Hunters may only apply for 1 permit in a specific Wildlife Management Zone (see WMZ map, page 28). The application is submitted through the *MassFishHunt* system by any license vendor, or online via a computer. To obtain a permit, applicants must return to the *MassFishHunt* system during the Instant Award period (Aug. 1 – Dec. 31) and try to draw an antlerless deer permit in the zone to which they applied. Notification of whether the applicant was

successful or not will be instant. Selection is random and the odds of drawing a permit remain the same throughout the Instant Award period. Instant Award permit issuance is NOT first-come-first-served. The odds of drawing a permit depend on the number of antlerless deer permits issued for a given zone and the number of hunters that applied for that zone. Successful applicants will be assessed a \$5.00 fee and may print the permit immediately or at a later date. Any permits for undersubscribed zones will go on sale in October with details announced in September.



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NOTE: Antlerless deer permits are valid during any deer season in the specified zone only (see Zone map, page 28) and must be in the hunter's possession while deer hunting. Each antlerless deer permit is valid for one antlerless deer. A hunter may possess antlerless deer permits for more than one zone (e.g., drawing a Zone 5 with Instant Award and purchased an additional antlerless deer permit for an undersubscribed zone, such as Zone 14).

TAGGING AND CHECKING REQUIREMENTS: Successful hunters must immediately fill out and detach paper tag from permit/license and attach tag to deer prior to moving it, and then must check/report their harvest **within 48 hours** by **EITHER** 1) reporting online and writing the harvest confirmation number on the tag attached to the deer (see page 31 for details), **or** 2) checking the deer at an official check station. **EXCEPTION:** All deer harvested during the 2-week shotgun season must be brought to an official check station. Until checked/reported, the deer or part of deer must

remain open to view during transport AND must remain intact or whole (may be field-dressed, but not butchered, skinned, or taken to a taxidermist for mounting).

DURING SHOTGUN DEER SEASON hunters may use shotguns no larger than 10 gauge, bows and arrows, or muzzleloaders not smaller than .44 caliber, or larger than .775 caliber. Hunters may

use modern muzzleloaders, hinge action muzzleloaders, muzzleloaders with telescopic sights, and sabot rounds. Rifled barrel shotguns are legal during shotgun deer season.

All hunters, including bowhunters, must wear a minimum of 500 square inches of "hunter orange" on their head, chest, and back during shotgun and muzzleloader seasons. Cap and vest will suffice.

SPECIAL HUNTS

- Quabbin Controlled Deer Hunt, see page 39
- Paraplegic Sportsmen's Deer Hunt, Nov. 3 – Nov. 5, 2016, see page 38
- Youth Pheasant Hunt, see page 47
- Youth Turkey Hunt, see page 47
- Youth Deer Hunt, see page 38
- Youth Waterfowl Hunting Dates, see *Migratory Game Bird Hunting Regulations* (available in Spring of 2016)
- Special Upland Game Bird Hunt, see page 34

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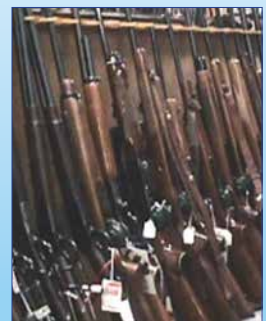
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Hunting

The possession of rifles, handguns, or dogs in any woodland or field, or use of same on any game, is prohibited during the shotgun deer season (youth deer hunt included) except that the use of dogs is lawful for hunting waterfowl on coastal waters.

YOUTH DEER HUNT: Youth aged 12–17 may participate; permit required, see **Minors** on page 12 for licensing requirements. Youth Deer Hunt Permits are free and available only at MassWildlife offices and sporting license vendors; permits not available online. Permits are available beginning August 1. The Youth Deer Hunt Permit with its accompanying tag is valid only for the day of the Youth Deer Hunt and cannot be used during any other deer hunting seasons. Shotgun, muzzleloader, or bow and arrow may be used. When a minor is accompanied by an adult, only one hunting implement between them is permitted. Accompanying adults may not use any hunting implements. **Bag Limit:** The Youth Deer Permit allows the taking of either one

antlered deer statewide OR one antlerless deer in the Wildlife Management Zone (s) specified on the Permit. All youth hunters and any accompanying adults must wear at least 500 square inches of blaze orange on the chest, back, and head. All harvest reporting requirements apply.

PARAPLEGIC SPORTSMEN'S HUNT: There is a special deer hunt for paraplegic sportsmen Nov. 3–5, 2016. Contact DFW Field Headquarters (508) 389-6300 or visit mass.gov/masswildlife for more information.

ARCHERY DEER SEASON: Archery Stamp required. Archers shall not possess firearms on their person or use dogs. Arrows must be well-sharpened steel broadhead blades no less than 7/8 inches in width. Expanding broadheads and mechanical releases are legal. All bows, except permitted crossbows, used for hunting deer (recurve, long, and compound) must have a draw weight of at least 40 lbs. at 28 inches or at peak draw. Blaze orange is not required except as noted in WMA

Reg. #11 (page 27). See page 26 for more archery information.

PRIMITIVE FIREARMS DEER SEASON: Primitive Firearms Stamp required. Hunters may use only shoulder-fired muzzleloaders .44 caliber to .775 caliber; barrel length 18 inches or more with only one barrel operational. Inline ignition systems are permitted providing rifle loads from the muzzle. Single projectile only (no buckshot). Sabot rounds, 209 primers, break/hinge-action muzzleloaders, and scopes are legal. Powder limited to black powder or black powder substitutes. A muzzleloader is considered unloaded when cap or pan powder is removed. Archers may hunt during the muzzleloader firearms season but must purchase a Primitive Firearms Stamp. All deer hunters must wear at least 500 square inches of hunter orange on head, back, and chest.

DAILY BAG: The daily bag limit is determined by the number of valid tags or permits a hunter possesses and whether or not the hunter has checked/reported

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any deer. No hunter may have more than 2 unreported deer in possession at any time, with the exception of Zones 13 and 14, where no hunter may have more than 4 unreported deer in possession at any time. All deer must be checked/reported within 48 hours of being killed.

SEASON LIMIT: Two antlered deer, and as many antlerless deer as the hunter has valid permits. **NOTE:**

- Hunters may purchase additional antlerless deer permits for available zones.
- Hunters may take a maximum of 2 deer in the Quabbin Reservation. Antlerless deer taken in the Quabbin are not considered part of the statewide bag limit. Antlered deer taken in the Quabbin are considered part of the statewide bag limit.

DRIVING DEER while hunting is lawful.

BAITING OF DEER is prohibited during any deer season and any bait made available to deer must be removed 10 days prior to the opening of the first day of archery deer season. Bait includes any natural or artificial substance which may be ingested that is used to entice deer.

IMPORTATION OF DEER PARTS from states or provinces where Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been detected (including NY, PA, VA, WV, and MD) is illegal. It is legal to import deboned meat, cleaned skull caps, hides without the head, or a fixed taxidermy mount. No live deer, of any species, may be brought into Massachusetts for any purpose.

QUABBIN CONTROLLED DEER HUNT: Call the Department of Conservation and Recreation at (413) 323-7221 or mass.gov/dcr in July for information. Must submit an application by Aug. 15.

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Hunting

		OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	SEASON LIMIT
RABBITS & SQUIRRELS					
Cottontail Rabbit	Zones 1-12	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Oct. 15 – Feb. 28, 2017	5	10	—
	Zones 13 and 14	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Nov. 16 – Feb. 28, 2017	5	10	—
Snowshoe Hare	Zones 1-4	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Oct. 15 – Feb. 28, 2017	2	4	—
	Zones 5-12	Jan. 1 – Feb. 5 Oct. 15 – Feb. 4, 2017	2	4	—
	Zones 13 and 14	Jan. 1 – Feb. 5 Nov. 15 – Feb. 4, 2017	2	4	—
Jackrabbit	Zone 14	Nov. 15 – Dec. 31	1	2	—
Gray Squirrel	Zones 1-9	Sept. 12 – Jan. 2, 2017	5	10	—
	Zones 10-14	Oct. 15 – Jan. 2, 2017	5	10	—

Rabbit, jackrabbit, hare, and squirrel hunting are closed during shotgun deer season.

GRAY SQUIRREL

Rifles and handguns of any caliber permitted in Zones 1-9, prohibited in Zones 10-14 (see page 28). No trapping or netting. Shotgun or bow and arrow only during the pheasant and quail seasons on WMAs stocked with pheasant or quail (see WMA Regulation #9, page 27). Hunting hours ½ hour before sunrise to

½ hour after sunset except on Wildlife Management Areas where pheasant or quail are stocked during the open season on pheasant and quail, when hunting hours are from sunrise to sunset (see WMA Regulation #9-11, page 27). Gray squirrel hunting season may coincide with the Youth Deer hunt, special restrictions apply, see page 30.

RABBIT, HARE, AND JACKRABBIT

Hunting hours ½ hour before sunrise to midnight except on certain WMAs (see WMA Regulation #10 Page 27).

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FALCONRY

Hunting with birds of prey is allowed under a special permit from the DFW; see dates and regulations in the Migratory Bird Regulations issued in spring. Contact DFW Field Headquarters (508) 389-6300 or visit mass.gov/masswildlife for more information.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

(ATVs, OHVs, dirt bikes, etc.)

It is illegal to operate any motorized vehicle on any WMA or other property owned or controlled by the DFW; and on most state park and state forest lands. It is illegal to operate these vehicles on private lands without the written permission of the landowner. Penalties for violations have been increased in recent years. Age restrictions apply; operators under the age of 18 must take a safety course. For more information, contact the MA Environmental Police Communication Center at 1-800-632-8075, or go to mass.gov/ole and click on the Safety Bureau link.

A portion of the revenue from vehicle registration is used to support legal riding opportunities; to find a list of State Parks and Forests that allow OHV operation visit: www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/orv.htm.

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		OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT	SEASON LIMIT
FURBEARERS					
Bobcat	Zones 1-8	Jan. 1 – Mar. 8 Dec. 20 – Mar. 8, 2017	—	—	—
Coyote		Jan. 1 – Mar. 8 Oct. 15 – Mar. 8, 2017	—	—	—
Fox (red or gray)		Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Nov. 1 – Feb 28, 2017	—	—	—
Raccoon		Jan. 1 – Jan. 30 Oct. 1 – Jan. 31, 2017	3	—	—
Opossum		Jan. 1 – Jan. 30 Oct. 1 – Jan. 31, 2017	—	—	—

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BOBCAT

Hunting hours ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. Hunting is limited to Zones 1-8. It is illegal to use dogs for bobcat hunting. All bobcats taken or salvaged must be checked within 4 working days of the end of the season (see page 44) at an official check station. Bobcats cannot be reported online.

COYOTE & FOX

Hunting hours begin ½ hour before sunrise and end at midnight, except 1) on WMAs stocked with pheasant or quail during the pheasant and quail season when hunting hours begin at sunrise and end at sunset and, 2) when hunting coyote during the shotgun deer season (see below). Coyote and fox may be hunted with shotguns, muzzleloaders, and archery, as well as rifles and handguns with special nighttime restrictions (see page 32). Coyotes may be hunted with shotguns using numbered or lettered birdshot (≤ 0.230 inch pellet diameter; up to FF), except during the shotgun deer season (see below). Fox may be hunted with numbered birdshot only (≤ 0.160 inch pellet diameter). It is legal to hunt coyote and fox using bait, decoys, electronic or manual calls, and dogs. Artificial lights are prohibited. Coyote and fox pelts/carasses must be checked/reported **within 4 working days of the end of the season** by either 1) checking them at an official check station (see page 44), or 2) reporting them online and writing the harvest confirmation number on a tag of your own making, then attaching the tag to the carcass or pelt (see page 44 for details). Confirmation numbers must remain attached to all pelts/carasses, with the specific confirmation number issued for each particular pelt or carcass, until

the carcass is prepared for mounting by a taxidermist, or the pelt is sold or tanned.

During the shotgun deer season it is legal to hunt coyotes, but not fox; however the following additional regulations apply:

- Hunting hours begin ½ hour before sunrise and end ½ hour after sunset.
- Use of manual or electronic calls and dogs are prohibited.
- Rifles and handguns are prohibited.
- Shotguns and muzzleloaders loaded with slugs, single balls, or buckshot are permitted.
- All hunters must wear a minimum of 500 square inches of hunter orange on their head, chest, and back.

RACCOON

Limit of 3 raccoons from sunset of 1 day to sunset of the following day by 1 person; limit of 6 by 2 or more persons hunting in the same group. Night hunting on WMAs (except Delaney and Flint Pond WMAs) is permitted from sunset to sunrise except during the pheasant and quail season on areas stocked with pheasant or quail, when raccoon may be hunted only from 9pm to 3am. Raccoon hunting season may coincide with the Youth Deer hunt, special restrictions apply, see page 30.

OPOSSUM

No bag limit on opossum. Night hunting on WMAs (except Delaney and Flint Pond WMAs) is permitted from sunset to sunrise except during the pheasant and quail season on WMAs stocked with pheasant or quail, when opossum may be hunted only from 9pm to 3am. Opossum hunting season may coincide with the Youth Deer hunt, special restrictions apply, see page 30.



OPEN SEASON (All Dates Inclusive)	
FURBEARERS – TRAPPING	
Bobcat ^{1,2} Coyote ¹ , Fox ¹ , Weasel	Nov. 1 – Nov. 30
Fisher ¹	Nov. 1 – Nov. 22
Mink ¹ , River Otter ¹	Nov. 1 – Dec. 15
Beaver ¹	Jan. 1 – April 15 Nov. 1 – April 15, 2017
Muskrat, Opossum, Raccoon, Skunk	Jan. 1 – Feb. 29 Nov. 1 – Feb. 28, 2017

1 – Pelt sealing required; see page 44.

2 – Bobcats may only be trapped in zones 1-8

BOBCAT

Bobcat may be taken by trapping or salvaged in Wildlife Management Zones 1–8. All bobcats taken or salvaged must be checked within 4 working days of the end of the season at an official check station. Bobcats cannot be reported online.

MANDATORY TRAPPER EDUCATION

First time trappers and Problem Animal Control agents are required to successfully complete a Trapper Education course from any U.S. state and be issued a certificate

of completion of such training in order to obtain a trap registration certificate. To be notified about DFW Trapper Education courses call the Hunter Education program at (508) 389-7820 or fill out a course notification form online at the DFW website.

There is also mandatory training for anyone planning to use a Bailey or Hancock trap. Bailey and Hancock traps may not be used, set, tended, or placed unless the trapper has successfully completed training in their use. The Bailey and

Hancock certificate must be carried when using such traps. For further information contact the Hunter Education Program at (508) 389-7820.

TRAP TYPES

The only traps that may be used for the taking of fur-bearing mammals are cage or box type traps and common rat traps. Hancock and Bailey traps may be used only when the trapper has been trained in their use, and may be used only for taking beaver. A trapper using these traps must possess a certificate of course completion. Common rat traps may be used for the taking of weasels only.

Steel-jaw foothold traps, padded jaw traps, body-gripping (Conibear) traps (see below), snares, deadfalls, and any traps other than those specified above are prohibited. Such traps may not be set, tended, used, or possessed in the field.

There is a detailed procedure for obtaining a special permit to use a body gripping (Conibear) trap for certain types of wildlife damage. Contact your local DFW District Office for details.



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Trapping

STAKING is not a recognized practice and conveys no special trapping privileges.

STOLEN TRAPS: A trapper must report the loss or theft of a trap in writing to the Office of Law Enforcement within 48 hours of the loss or theft, or remain responsible for its use. The report should include the number and type of traps, the date, time, place and circumstances of the loss or theft. Such reports must be signed under the pains and penalties of perjury. Stolen traps should be reported to:

COASTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT:
Mass. Environmental Police
Office of Law Enforcement
Attn: Trap Loss
Bldg. #45, 349 Lincoln St.
Hingham, MA 02043

INLAND LAW ENFORCEMENT:
Mass. Environmental Police
Office of Law Enforcement
Attn: Trap Loss
183 Milk Street
Westborough, MA 01581

SALE OF PELTS

EXPORTING RAW FURS: When shipping raw fur pelts by any carrier, the contents of the package and the shipper's hunting or trapping license number must be listed on the outside of the package.

The destruction or removal of any identifying tag or label that is attached to a container in which skins are shipped is unlawful.

All river otter and bobcat require CITES tags to be lawfully exported for sale. Go to a DFW District office for these tags.

RAW PELTS of coyote, wild fox, wild mink, gray wolf, bobcat, lynx, fisher, marten, river otter, or beaver may not be sold in Massachusetts unless tagged by the state or province of origin.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND REPORTING VIOLATIONS

If you are aware of illegal trapping activities, or suspect a violation of any wildlife law, Environmental Police Officers can be reached at (800) 632-8075 (toll free) or (617) 727-6398.

VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES: Trapping licenses can be revoked for one year in addition to other penalties and fines as well as restitutions of up to \$1000 and/or six months in jail. Traps and other equipment can be seized and forfeited to the Commonwealth. In addition, Problem Animal Control Licenses and/or Furbuyer licenses can be revoked, plus fines and penalties assessed, and additionally, fur products can be seized and forfeited to the Commonwealth.

TRAP REGISTRATION

All traps used on the land of another must have a valid registration number embedded or cut into the trap. The assigned number, including letter and figures, must be at least 1/8 inches high and legible at all times. The trap must also have attached a

metal tag bearing the owner's name, town and registration number. Once obtained, your registration number is yours for life, but must be renewed every two years. To trap on another's land, a trapper must maintain a current certification of that registration number. Registration numbers are available from the Boston office of the DFW. The initial fee for trap registration is \$5.00. Renewal fee is \$5.00. Make check payable to Comm. of MA-DFW.

PELT CHECKING/REPORTING

Coyote, fox, fisher, beaver, bobcat, river otter, and mink must be checked within 4 working days of the end of their respective seasons. Furbearers/pelts must be checked at an official check station or may be checked online (except bobcat and otter). For detailed information on Online Game Check, visit the Game Check Station page on www.mass.gov/dfw/checkstation; visit the *MassFishHunt* System online at www.mass.gov/massfishhunt to report your harvest online. Once you are issued a harvest confirmation number, write it on a tag of your own making and attach

FURBEARER CHECK STATIONS

Check stations are open Monday-Friday (excluding holidays). Call check stations prior to bringing pelts in for sealing. Some deer check stations may also check coyotes.

The following are Division furbearer check stations:

- Western District: Dalton (413) 684-1646
- Conn. Valley District:
Belchertown (413) 323-7632
- Central District:
West Boylston (508) 835-3607
- Northeast District: Ayer (978) 772-2145
- Southeast District:
Buzzards Bay (508) 759-3406
- Sunderland Hatchery:
Sunderland (413) 665-4680
- Bitzer Fish Hatchery:
Montague (413) 367-2477
- Field Headquarters:
Westborough (508) 389-6300





it to the pelt/carcass. Confirmation numbers must remain attached to all pelts/carcasses for which they were specifically issued until the pelt/carcass is prepared for mounting by a taxidermist or the pelt is sold or tanned. **Bobcat and river otter cannot be reported online. Take all bobcat and river otter to an official check station within 4 working days of the end of the season. You will be issued a plastic CITES seal for bobcat and river otter.**

FURBEARER CHECK STATIONS

Check stations are located at all Mass-Wildlife District offices, and the Bitzer and Sunderland State Fish Hatcheries (Monday–Friday excluding holidays). See list below. Coyotes may be reported/checked online or at other locations; visit our website at mass.gov/dfw/checkstation or call the DFW Field Headquarters for further information. Call check station prior to bringing animals for sealing.

TRAPPING PROHIBITIONS—IT IS ILLEGAL TO:

- 1 Trap before 6:00am on opening day of any trapping season.
- 2 Possess or have under control a trap on land of another in any place where fur-bearing mammals might be found between April 16 of any year and 6:00am on the following November 1.
- 3 Possess the green pelt of any fur-bearing mammal or any part of such pelt except during the open season for such mammal and for ten days thereafter.
- 4 Possess or have under his control an unregistered trap on land of another.
- 5 Possess or have under control the registered trap of another, unless he has entered into a trapping partnership through the Boston Office as provided in M.G.L. c131 § 80 and 321 CMR 3.02(5)(e)14.
- 6 Trap on posted land of another without the written permission of the owner or tenant of such land.
- 7 Trap in a public way, cart road, path or other way commonly used as a passageway for human beings or domestic animals.
- 8 Tear open, disturb, or destroy a muskrat lodge, beaver lodge or beaver dam, except as provided in 321 CMR 2.08.

- 9 Use poison or trap with a trap designed to take more than one mammal at a time.
- 10 Trap on land with a Bailey or Hancock beaver trap or other suitcase type cage trap of similar design, except when set upon a beaver dam or beaver lodge, snag, stump, rock, or other above-water protrusion entirely or substantially surrounded by water, or, when the pan of such trap is not completely submerged.
- 11 Trap with a Bailey or Hancock beaver trap or other suitcase type cage trap of similar design without having completed a training session and having been issued a certificate of completion as provided for in 321 CMR 3.02(5)(c)2., or to fail to carry such certificate on one's person when using such traps.
- 12 Fail to visit all traps staked out, set, used, tended, placed, or maintained, and remove all animals trapped at least once in each calendar day between the hours of 4:00am and 10:00pm.
- 13 Destroy, mutilate, spring, or remove the trap of another.
- 14 Take any fur-bearing mammal from the trap of another unless he has on his person a specific written authorization to do so, signed by the owner of such trap. The owner of traps may give such authorization to any person licensed to trap under M.G.L. c. 131 for a period not to exceed one week from the day the traps were last tended, provided that notice of the giving of such authorization including the name and trapping license number of the person so authorized shall be given to the regional Environmental Police Officer and to the Director within 24 hours of the giving of such authorization.
- 15 Set, use, place, locate, tend, or maintain a trap not bearing on a metal tag the name, town of residence, and trap registration number of the person or persons using the same in a manner as to be legible at all times. Said registration number shall be permanently embedded in or marked on the traps with letters and figures not less than 1/8 inches high in such a manner as to be legible at all times.
- 16 Trap fur-bearing mammals with any trap other than a cage or box type trap, or a common rat trap for weasels.

- 17 Possess any road-killed furbearers during the closed season, or possess road-killed furbearers during the open season without a valid hunting or trapping license as appropriate to that species and season.
- 18 Alter, tamper with, or reapply a furbearer tag or seal, or possess any altered or resealed tag, or possess any pelt bearing an altered or resealed tag or seal.

PROBLEM ANIMAL CONTROL AGENTS

Problem Animal Control (PAC) agents are private individuals licensed by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to assist the public in situations involving sick animals or animals causing property damage. If you are experiencing wildlife damage and wish to contract with a PAC agent, a listing can be found on the DFW website www.mass.gov/masswildlife. Individuals interested in becoming a PAC agent can obtain information on the permitting process from this same website, or call DFW Field Headquarters at (508) 389-6300.

INCIDENTAL CATCH — EMERGENCY PERMIT

Catch of any species other than beaver or muskrat while trapping with a 10 day emergency permit must be turned over to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

RABIES

Rabies in wild mammals has been confirmed in all counties in Massachusetts except Dukes and Nantucket. Wear rubber gloves when skinning furbearers. If you believe you have been exposed to a rabid animal, scrub the area thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical advice immediately. If possible, isolate and preserve the dead animal by refrigeration as soon as possible. Contact your local Board of Health.

Mentoring:

Giving the Ultimate Outdoor Gift

The number of hunters in Massachusetts and nationwide is declining. Although the reasons for this are complex, the bottom line is, *it takes one to make one.*

In the past, people learned to fish or hunt from their family or close friends, and access to land and fishable waters was more readily available. Today, a person who has an interest in these outdoor pursuits may not have the family or social network to help them get started. The barriers faced by novice hunters can be especially daunting; and although entirely possible, individuals rarely begin hunting without the support and guidance of a hunting mentor.

Mentors play a critical role in encouraging new hunters and anglers. That first hunt can mark the beginning of a lifelong passion for the outdoors and a commitment to wildlife conservation. The first few awkward casts are the first step on the road to a lasting love of the water. Mentors make a difference, and not just for youth: they are needed to guide budding anglers and hunters of all ages.

Why Mentor?

In a survey, Massachusetts volunteer Hunter Education instructors were asked why they mentored. They offered four main answers: 1) to promote safe and ethical hunting, 2) to pass down knowledge and traditions of hunting, 3) to pass along love of outdoor activities, and 4) a sense of personal responsibility. Indeed, the sporting community has a long history of promoting safe and ethical fishing and hunting. Whatever your motivations, consider the following tips to make the most of your mentoring activities.

Tips for Mentoring

Start by limiting your expectations. As an experienced hunter or angler, it is easy to take for granted all the knowledge you have accumulated over the years. You may be able to walk for

miles in rugged terrain with a full backpack all day long or spend hours tending tip-ups while ice fishing. Expecting a new angler or hunter of any age to perform at that level can easily discourage them from ever going again. Make the initial outings short, interesting, enjoyable, educational, and relaxed.

- **Fish Safe.** Teach beginning anglers the importance of wearing a personal flotation device (PFD), to be cautious on boats, as well as the proper use of fishing equipment such as hooks and pliers. Review ice safety protocol when venturing out during the winter months.
- **Share Your Knowledge.** Responsible anglers teach good conservation practices, including knowledge of regulations, proper fish handling, and, if applicable, release techniques.
- **Pass on Your Enthusiasm.** Keep a positive attitude even when fishing is slow. Look for opportunities to educate beginners about fish habitats, other aquatic life, or how the weather can affect fishing. Help beginners appreciate that fishing is about more than just catching a fish.
- **Offer Guidance and Encouragement.** Beginners can get discouraged. Explain that mistakes are part of the learning process and that all good anglers have spent hours on the water refining their skills.
- **Hunt Safe.** Teach, review, and model safe hunting practices from trip preparation to firearm safety, from boat safety to tree-stand safety. Always wear hunter orange when appropriate and required. When hunting with a novice, consider carrying one firearm between the two of you. This is safer and assures that you will focus attention on the novice hunter.

- **Hunt Smart.** Include new hunters in the scouting process and make sure they are comfortable with their hunting implement. Match the gun or bow to the novice hunter's size and skill level. Discuss the importance of properly identifying the target — and what lies beyond it — before pulling the trigger or releasing a bow string. Review all hunting laws and regulations.
- **Get Ready.** Be sure the new hunter is dressed for comfort in warm or cold weather and be certain they have packed all necessary equipment. Build excitement by involving new hunters in hunt planning, taking them to sight in firearms, to target practice, or to select equipment.
- **Pass on Your Enthusiasm for the Hunt.** Don't focus on harvesting an animal; instead, stress the enjoyment of the hunt. Slow down and spend time explaining and sharing, rather than expecting.

Have Fun and Go Often!

Sharing your love for hunting or fishing is a rewarding experience. The more time you spend afield or on the water with a beginner, the more solid their skills will become, the more confident they will feel, and you will both have more fun.

Indirect Mentoring

Spending time in the field with a novice hunter or angler isn't the only option; small gestures can make a big impact. A few indirect mentoring opportunities include:

- Tell some of your favorite hunting or fishing stories
- Invite your beginner to share a wild-game or fish dinner.
- Give a hunting- or outdoor-magazine subscription.
- Take someone on a pre-hunting-season scouting or shooting trip.
- Introduce someone to the outdoors through a simple nature walk in the woods.
- Teach some basic outdoor or woodsman-ship skills.

Help MassWildlife Pass on the Tradition

Our outdoor skills programs (page 47) are in need of dedicated volunteer instructors and mentors. Call 508-389-6300 for more information.



Outdoor Skills Programs

Want to develop your Outdoor Skills? MassWildlife has a program for you!

LEARN TO HUNT PROGRAMS

Hunters with little or no experience can learn skills and techniques used to hunt different game animals. Courses are geared toward recent Basic Hunter Education graduates and include classroom learning and outdoor skills exercises. Taught by volunteers, the courses utilize the experience and knowledge of seasoned sportsmen and -women. Courses range from one-day condensed classes to three-day, in-depth courses. To learn more, to be notified about upcoming courses, or to volunteer as an instructor, visit mass.gov/dfw/learn-to-hunt.

EXPLORE BOWHUNTING

This program is designed to help instructors, program leaders, and educators teach outdoor skills associated with bowhunting. Through hands-on experiences, students gain confidence interacting with nature. The program aims to spark an interest and passion for the outdoors, wildlife, and bowhunting. Interested instructors can receive training and certification in the Program through MassWildlife and can borrow all program materials including a module-based curriculum book. For more information, call (508) 389-6305.

ANGLER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Angler Education Program teaches people of all ages about fish and their environment. The program focuses on freshwater fishing skills, safety techniques, outdoor ethics, and aquatic ecology through workshops and family fishing festivals. For more information, call (508) 389-6309.

BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN

Designed primarily for adult women, BOW is an opportunity to learn new skills. Past workshops have included basic fishing, beginning shotgun, kayaking, map and compass, wildlife tracking, archery, nature photography, fly tying, game cooking, and edible plants. Workshop notices are posted at mass.gov/dfw/bow. For more information, call (508) 389-6300.

HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Provides courses in the safe handling of firearms, and other outdoor activities related to hunting and firearm use. Designed for novices, courses in Basic Hunter Education, Bowhunter Education, Trapper Education, and others are offered statewide throughout the year. Certificates in certain courses satisfy hunting license requirements for Massachusetts as well as other states and Canadian provinces. For more information, call (508) 389-7820.

MASSACHUSETTS JUNIOR CONSERVATION CAMP

This two-week residential program, held in August for boys and girls ages 13–17, provides a solid grounding in outdoor skills. Participants learn about fisheries, wildlife, forestry, and camping, and become proficient in the use of shotgun, rifle, archery equipment, map and compass, and more. Participants complete Basic Hunter Education and Boat Safety programs. For more information, call (508) 389-6300, or go to juniorconservationcamp.org.

YOUTH PHEASANT AND TURKEY HUNT

Designed for Hunter Education graduates 12–17 years of age, these programs are supported by the Division and are conducted by sporting clubs across the state. This program includes instruction on firearms safety in the field, hunting ethics, regulations, and game preparation, as well as supervised shooting practice. The program culminates in a supervised

hunt under the guidance of an experienced adult hunter. The youth pheasant hunts are conducted on one of the six Saturdays prior to the start of the regular pheasant season. The youth turkey hunt, developed through a partnership with the National Wild Turkey Federation, allows for a mentored hunt. After completion of a pre-hunt workshop, a special permit is issued that allows for a mentored hunt on the Saturday prior to the last Monday in April. This permit remains valid for the regular spring turkey season following the youth hunt date. All past participants MUST complete and mail in the past participant application which can be found at mass.gov/dfw/pastparticipantapp. To find a participating sporting club check the DFW website at mass.gov/dfw/yaph or mass.gov/dfw/yath, or call (508) 389-6305.

THE MASSACHUSETTS OUTDOOR EXPOSITION

“The Big MOE” is an annual, free, one-day event designed for children and adults to sample a variety of outdoor sports including various shooting and fishing sports, archery, game calling, mountain biking, kayaking, bird house building, rock climbing, and geocaching. Produced by the nonprofit F.A.W.N. Society in cooperation with MassWildlife and many sportsmen’s and conservation organizations, the Big MOE also features hands-on instruction and displays relating to forestry, trapping, tree stand safety, pioneer encampments, tomahawk throwing, wildlife conservation, animal tracking, taxidermy, farm animals, arts and crafts, beekeeping, and more. The Big MOE is held in Sturbridge on a Sunday in late September. For more information visit FawnsExpo.com.



Photos © Bill Byrne

MassWildlife Publication Order Form

PRINTED MATERIALS

	PRICE	QUANTITY
BioMap 2 Report (2010)*	\$2.50	_____
Birds of Massachusetts: A Check-list*	\$2.50	_____
Critters of Massachusetts (2001)	\$5.00	_____
Field Guide to Animals of Vernal Pools (2009)	\$12.00	_____
Field Guide to MA Dragonflies & Damselflies (2007)	\$20.00	_____
Field Guide to MA Amphibians (2013)	\$3.00	_____
Field Guide to MA Reptiles (2009)	\$3.00	_____
Guide to Invasive Plants in MA (2008)	\$5.00	_____
Massachusetts Homeowner's Guide to Bats (2009)*	\$2.50	_____
Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas 13th Edition, Individual Town Map (2008)	\$25.00	_____
Massachusetts Snake Guide*	\$2.00	_____
Massachusetts Wildlife Magazine (4 issues)	\$6.00	_____
Massachusetts Wildlife Magazine (8 issues)	\$10.00	_____
The Wild Turkey in Massachusetts (2009)	\$5.00	_____

CDS, DVDS

An Introduction to the Threatened Turtles of Massachusetts: Why They Need our Help (DVD-2007)	\$5.00	_____
Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas 13th Edition (CD- 2008)	\$15.00	_____
Vascular Plants of Massachusetts: A County Checklist, First Revision (CD- 2011)	\$5.00	_____

POSTERS

BioMap 2 Poster (2010)*	\$2.50	_____
Turtles of Massachusetts (2007)*	\$2.50	_____
Vernal Pool Life: A Race Against Dryness*	\$2.50	_____

TOTAL \$ _____

NOTE: Some items are available at a discount if purchased in bulk or if you are an educator. Items denoted with an * are free of charge if picked up at a MassWildlife office. Please call (508) 389-6300 to ensure availability and for special bulk/educator pricing. Allow 7-10 days for delivery.

SHIPPING ADDRESS

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ARCHERY IN THE SCHOOLS

The National Archery in the Schools Program in Massachusetts is an archery program developed for educators to provide students in grades 4-12 with an exposure to a fun, alternative sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. Taught primarily by physical education teachers, the program also includes social studies, mathematics, and physics. This program is a partnership between the DFW, National Archery in the Schools, the Archery Trade Association, and local sporting groups. Training is provided by the DFW to educators. Schools may borrow archery kits for two weeks free of charge. Funding may be available for schools to buy a kit of their own. For more information, call (508) 389-6305.

PROJECT WILD IN MASSACHUSETTS

A national program of wildlife education workshops designed for educators of a wide range of ages, from pre-school to high school. Hours spent may be used toward professional development or other continuing education credit. Co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Wildlife Federation. For information on attending or hosting a workshop, call (508) 389-6310.

- Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature With Children (Ages 3-7 Years). This workshop is designed for early childhood educators with activities that build on children's sense of wonder about nature and invites them to explore wildlife and the world around them. Educators experience a wide

range of activities that provide a foundation for developing a child's positive impression about nature.

- Project WILD and Aquatic WILD workshops are interdisciplinary, hands-on learning opportunities for educators of K-12 level students focusing on terrestrial and aquatic wildlife and ecosystems. The curriculums encourage problem-solving and decision-making skills concerning the environment. Scout leaders, youth group leaders, homeschoolers, and both formal and non-formal educators find the materials and workshop valuable.
- Flying WILD is a whole-school approach to environmental education using birds as the focus. Targeted for the middle-school level audience, though widely adaptable, Flying WILD offers practical, hands-on classroom and outdoor field-investigation experiences connecting real-world experiences in bird biology, conservation, and natural history. Project-based classroom applications, service learning, and community involvement are encouraged.

NORTH AMERICAN CONSERVATION EDUCATION STRATEGY RESOURCES (CE STRATEGY)

An array of tools and resources developed by state fish and wildlife agencies support conservation educators who offer fish and wildlife-based programs that guide students in grades K-12 on their way to becoming involved, responsible, conservation minded citizens. The CE Strategy delivers unified, research-based Core Concepts and messages about fish and



Photo © Bill Byrne

wildlife conservation, translated into K-12 academic standards to shape students' environmental literacy, stewardship, and outdoor skills. Resources included in the tool kit include: landscape investigation, schoolyard biodiversity, field investigation, fostering outdoor observation skills, applying systems thinking, and much more. Download these free resources at fishwildlife.org; click on Focus Areas, then Conservation Education.

ANGLER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Angler Education Program teaches people of all ages, especially children, about fish and their environment. The program focuses on freshwater fishing skills, basic safety techniques, outdoor ethics, and aquatic ecology through workshop sessions and family fishing festivals. For more information, call (508) 389-6309.

JUNIOR DUCK STAMP

The Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program; *Connecting Children with Nature Through Science and Art* is a dynamic arts and science curriculum for educators designed to teach wetland habitat and waterfowl conservation to students in K-12. Using scientific and wildlife observation principles, the program helps students to visually communicate what they have learned by creating an entry to the state's JDS contest. Guidelines & curriculum for students, educators, homeschool, and non-formal groups designed to spark youth interest in habitat conservation through science, art, math, and technology can be downloaded at www.fws.gov/juniorduck. Co-sponsored by the USFWS and the Massachusetts Wildlife Federation. For more information, go to mass.gov/dfw/jds or call (508) 389-6310.



The acrylic painting of a drake mallard by Claire Schaffer was selected as Best of Show in the 2015 Junior Duck Stamp Program.

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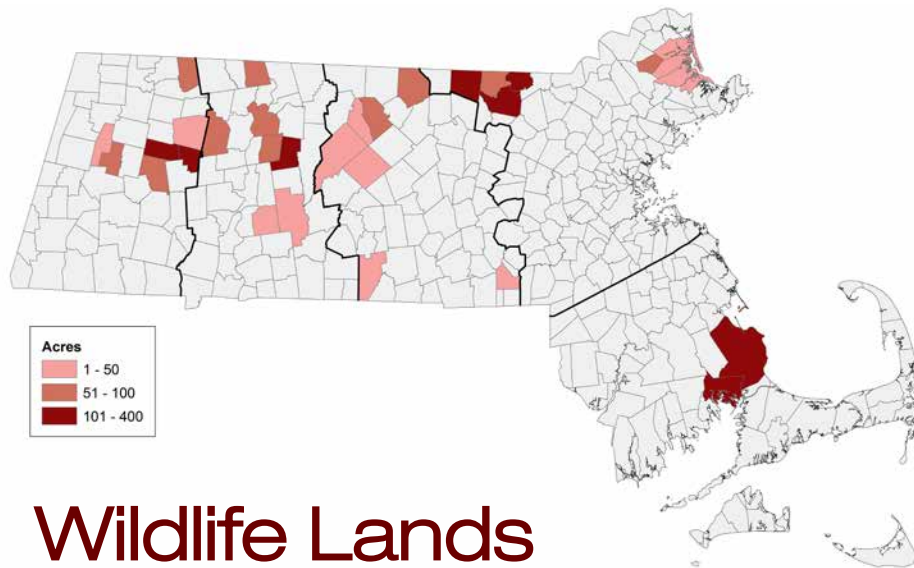
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Wildlife Lands Acquisition

in FY15

The mission of the Land Protection Program, a joint effort of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW), is to protect the ecological integrity of the Commonwealth and to provide wildlife-related recreational opportunities to the public. Each year the Land Protection Program seeks to expand existing wildlife lands, enhance public access to lands and waters open to sporting activity, and protect key habitats. Most of the funding for land acquisition is from bond capital, with the remaining portion provided by the Wildlands Stamp Fund, a \$5 fee added to each hunting, fishing, and trapping license sale.

Fiscal Year 2015 was another excellent year for land protection in Massachusetts, with land agents completing 44 projects conserving 2,570 acres of valuable wildlife habitat at a cost of \$6.7 million. The majority of lands and easements were purchased, although over 160 acres were donated to the Commonwealth.

Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and Wildlife Conservation Easements (WCE) are open to fishing, hunting, trapping, wildlife observation, boating, hiking, and other passive wildlife-related recreation. These wildlife lands, found from the Berkshires to the Cape and Islands, include river corridors, wetlands, forested and grassy

uplands, habitat for state-listed endangered and threatened species, and high quality parcels of other important habitat types.

In the Western District, six acquisitions were completed in FY15 protecting a total of 551 acres at a cost of \$1,072,000. Two key projects stand out, one based on its large acreage, the other due to the formation of an important partnership. The first involved a 291-acre addition to the Swift River WMA in Goshen and Cummington that added over 3,600 feet of cold-water frontage. The second involved working closely with the Franklin Land Trust and Trout Unlimited resulting in an 82-acre conservation restriction in Heath, now designated North River West Branch WCE, which guarantees public fishing access to an important stretch of frontage along the West Branch of the North River.

Ten projects were concluded in the Connecticut Valley District protecting 527 acres at a cost of \$770,030. Three important projects deserve mention here: a 70-acre addition to the northern flank of Montague Plains WMA; the purchase of a 50-acre inholding within the Brushy Mountain area in Shutesbury; and the conservation of a long-sought 110-acre inholding within Satan's Kingdom WMA in Northfield.

Central District staff secured nine acquisitions protecting over 200 acres at a cost of \$320,800, three of which are notable. In Templeton, land staff assembled three significant and adjacent properties (52, 24, and 19 acres) as an addition to Stone Bridge WMA. In Barre, staff worked closely with a landowner to conduct a timber harvest designed to create young forest (early successional) habitat as a part of a 16-acre addition to Moose Brook WMA. And in Brookfield and Sturbridge, the agency partnered with The Trust for Public Land in acquiring 25 acres of land adding to Wolf Swamp WMA as a part of a larger project protecting 320 acres known as Plimton Forest.

In the Northeast District, land staff completed 15 projects conserving 631 acres of land at a cost of \$1,417,800. Of particular note in the Northeast were two impressive property collections, both of which resulted in substantial additions to existing WMAs. In Dunstable and Pepperell, two parcels were acquired comprising 135 acres for addition to the Unkety Brook WMA in Shirley. In Ashburnham, three abutting acquisitions (67, 27, and 2 acres) added important protection to the Ashby WMA along the South Branch of the Souhegan River.

Four large land conservation projects were executed in the Southeast District involving a total of 748 acres at a cost of \$3,147,760. Of particular significance was the addition of almost 400 acres to the resource-rich Maple Springs WMA in Wareham. Substantial acreage was also added to the Southeast Pine Barrens WMA in Plymouth, which protects an incredible array of rare and endangered animals and plants.

The 2,570 acres conserved across the Commonwealth in FY15 bring the total acreage to over 207,000 acres, which is almost 324 square miles of permanently protected wildlife habitat. These lands were conserved with your help and are for your enjoyment. Start planning your next outdoor adventure - visit MassWildlife.com to view maps of wildlife lands.

	WESTERN	VALLEY	CENTRAL	NORTHEAST	SOUTHEAST	TOTAL
WMA	45,189	19,154	36,002	13,470	42,412	156,227
WCE	16,327	7,929	9,116	2,129	10,528	46,029
Access	32	357	1,046	234	54	1,723
Sanctuary	435	0	368	552	73	1,428
WCR	69	0	346	127	38	580
Installation	2	512	0	108	114	736
Other	0	143	0	372	0	515
TOTAL	62,054	28,095	46,878	16,992	53,219	207,238

WMA (Wildlife Management Area) – Land owned outright by DFG/DFW. Open to the public for hunting, fishing, trapping and other passive recreation. Subject to Wildlife Management Regulations.

WCE (Wildlife Conservation Easement) – DFG/DFW owns development and recreation rights. Open to the public for hunting, fishing, trapping and other passive recreation.

Access Areas – Property providing public recreation access to water bodies or adjacent conservation lands owned by a third party. (Does not include Office of Fishing and Boating Access boat launches/ramps or fishing piers).

Wildlife Sanctuary – Wildlife properties donated to DFW and governed by statute and regulation, fishing, hunting, and trapping are prohibited; other public recreation access is permitted.

WCR (Wildlife Conservation Restriction) – DFG or DFW owns development rights, but public access is not allowed. These lands buffer wildlife habitat by preventing unwanted development.

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