

Antlerless Deer Season Open Only December 12 and 13 in Pennsylvania

**Antlerless Deer Season
Dec. 12 and 13 Only**

The 1955 antlerless deer season in Pennsylvania will be observed Dec. 12 and 13 only. On both days of the season hunting hours will be 7 a. m. to 5 p. m., Eastern Standard Time. The holder of a license for this special season is required to hunt deer without visible antlers only in the county in which the license was issued.

Persons who took a legal antlered deer in either the archery or "buck" season this year may not hunt for, take or kill, or stand on watch for another white-tail in the antlerless deer season. Farm occupants permitted by law to hunt without license may hunt for antlerless deer on the same land as for other game. If not possessed of a hunter's license, to which is attached a kill tag report card, such farm people who bag a deer are asked to report the fact to the Game Commission at Harrisburg.

Five Reasons Listed

Based on the findings of Commission personnel and forestry officials, and on the recommendation of sportsmen and farmers, the authorities established the 1955 season for these reasons: 1. Good herd management, and also in the interest of other wildlife. 2. Diminish damage to farm crops. 3. Reduce over-browsing of forests growths. 4. Lessen the incidence of highway accidents involving human safety and property damage. 5. Prevent the waste caused by deer dying of malnutrition in winter.

The Game Commission established county quotas in relation to the need of harvest in each locality. The license total for Pennsylvania's antlerless deer season of this year was set at 240,250. On Dec. 1, county treasurers from only the counties of Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming still reported antlerless deer licenses available. Prior to season, non-residents who have a current Pennsylvania hunter's license may purchase a license to hunt antlerless deer.

Past experience indicates one hunter in 5 or 6 licensees will bag an antlerless deer in the two-day season. Therefore, the 1955 harvest will probably fall between 40,000 and 50,000 legal animals. Weather and other conditions will, however, be factors determining the total take in this special season.

Ducks Are Here

Latimer Reports

The Game Commission's waterfowl specialist, Robert E. Latimer, reports a goodly number of ducks have been coming into Pennsylvania in the last two or three weeks. He says that hunters equipped with decoys and duck boats, and willing to take rough weather, have been getting good waterfowl shooting of late.

Typically, along the Susquehanna River, ducks have been feeding in nearby fields, Latimer says. The birds will stay as long as the water is open and the corn is available, not covered by snow.

Except for locally-reared ducks, waterfowl hunting during the earlier weeks of the season was

comparatively slack, but with the migration of the northern birds shooting has greatly improved.

Latimer reports a "pretty good number of leg bands have been turned in to the Game Commission so far this fall." The wildlife authorities again request that hunters send to Harrisburg the band number, date and locality of any banded waterfowl kill. Such reports are of great assistance to state and federal wildlife agencies in planning waterfowl management.

Small Game And

Bear Seasons Close

Preliminary estimates on the small game and bear kills during the 1955 seasons are being received by the Game Commission at Harrisburg. The authorities point out, however, the official total for bears will not be available until all big game kill tags are in and counted. A survey is being made by each Game Protector prior to reporting the estimated small game kill in his district, from which division-wide and state-wide tabulations will be made. Generally speaking, the seasons were "successful".

Early reports indicate the legal bear kill for the recent season may be slightly less than the 403 reported killed last year.

The switch to wild turkey hunting by many hunters brought about a reduction in the amount of hunting in farm areas compared to forest areas. In several large sections of the state small game hunting, over the entire season, was gauged at less than last year. Nonetheless, early estimates of small game kills — both farm and forest game — indicated the 1955 bag of birds and animals was as good as that of 1954, in some cases probably better in several parts of the state. The hold-over of small game brood stock was reported as encouragingly good at the completion of the 1955 season.

Bear Kill Tags Due;

Mail To Harrisburg

Hunters who bagged a bear in the 1955 Pennsylvania season are reminded to observe the legal requirement that a big game kill report be mailed the Game Commission at Harrisburg.

Rat Trappers Busy —

Season Ends Jan. 28

Trappers began making their muskrat sets at 7 a. m., Saturday, Dec. 3, the first day of Pennsylvania's current rat season. The lure of the trapline and money for Christmas urge many farm boys and other youngsters, as well as adults, from warm beds to cold streams and marshes before daybreak. Compared to the sagacious mink the rat is easily trapped, making it the boys' "meat".

The muskrat, an aquatic rodent, is much sought for its dark, glossy brown pelt. It is the most abundant furbearer in Pennsylvania and, in total, provides fur takers with their greatest cash return.

The season for taking the "marsh rabbit" ends at noon Jan. 28, 1956. The little furbearers may be taken in unlimited numbers. All traps must be tagged with metal name tags.



GIANT'S PLAYTHING—Resembling an out-of-this-world version of a playground slide, this modernistic cement structure is a ski jump. Located in the Dolomite Mountains, near Cortina, Italy, it is being readied for the 1956 Winter Olympic Games.

Considerate Hunters

Draw Praise

Says Nicholas M. Ruha, Land Utilization Assistant in the Game Commission's Northeast Division: "On the opening day of the 1955 small game season I assisted Game Protector Bruce Yeager in patrolling Farm-Game Project No. 91, Montour County. This general area is one of the best ringneck sections in the state. Hunting pressure is extreme, particularly on the first day.

"Cooperators on the project were apprehensive that unharvested crops, especially soybeans, would be trampled and damaged. Many of the bean fields were not posted with signs warning hunters to stay out because the farmers had expected to have the crop in before the season opened. Wet weather prevented their doing so. The behavior of the hunters was nevertheless excellent. There were undoubtedly a few careless gunners who entered bean fields, but the percentage was so small compared to the number who acted like gentlemen the cooperators commented most favorably on the fact. Project farmers I contacted declared that from the standpoint of hunter conduct, it was the best opening day in years."

Hunter's Dream Situation:

This Bruin Comes Back

William E. Fulmer, a Game Protector, reports the following: "The city of Bethlehem is building another large dam on its property in Penn Forest Township, Carbon County.

"While digging holes to secure clay for use in the construction of the dam one of the workmen was surprised, on a recent morning, to find a large bear standing in one of the pits. The bear was chewing on the handle of a shovel, probably for the salt deposited there by sweaty hands. The man shouted and the animal climbed out of the hole and lumbered from the scene. Later, while in the pit digging the workman looked up and saw the bear, standing on its hind legs, "inspecting" the operation. The man again shouted and made go-away motions, whereat the bear dropped to all fours and slowly left the scene."

License Revocation

Upheld By Court

An important development affecting conservation law enforcement took place on October 18th, 1955, when the Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster County upheld a Game Commission order revoking the hunting rights of one Leon H. Bixler. Last fall, Bixler shot and injured another man, Russel Unger Neff, while hunting. A referee hearing was held in accordance with the Game Code and the shooter was found guilty of negligence. Bixler's hunting license was subsequently revoked for one year, following which action he petitioned the court to review the facts surrounding his hunting license revocation.

A transcript of the court record of the appeal case reads, in part: "It . . . becomes the duty of the court to determine anew from the testimony taken whether the petitioner should be denied the right to hunt or trap within this Commonwealth, with or without a license, for a period of one year, and be required to furnish satisfactory proof to the Commission that all required bills have been satisfactorily adjusted before such license shall be restored. . . . According to the evidence there were four hunters in the party of Russel Unger Neff who was shot and three hunters in the party of Leon H. Bixler, the petitioner. All of them, as well as two representatives of the Game Commission who investigated the case, testified. Their testimony in some respects was conflicting. . . . Nevertheless, considering all of it, the court finds as a fact that Russel Unger Neff was injured by the discharge of a firearm on October 30, 1954, in East Cocalico Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, fired by Leon H. Bixler, the petitioner, in a careless and negligent manner, while engaged in hunting; and that the payment of hospital and medical services required by Russel Unger Neff have not been satisfactorily adjusted. . . . The court feels that the Pennsylvania Game Commission was justified in revoking petitioner's hunting license for a period of one year, and requiring him to furnish satisfactory proof to the Commission that all required bills have been satisfactorily adjusted before such license shall be restored."

The wildlife authorities remind hunters if the coming winter brings deep, long lying snows or an ice crust many turkeys will be saved through supplemental food placed by clubs and individuals, in addition to the stores of corn put in many large feeders established by Commission personnel.

Director Practices

Own Preachment

Dr. Logan J. Bennett, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, recently demonstrated that wildlife administrators are serious about obtaining information on every banded or tagged bird or animal killed or found.

On Nov. 5 Bennett, an ardent woodcock hunter, shot a banded "timber doodle" about 4 miles west of Port Matilda, Centre County. Search of the records revealed the bird was trapped and banded as an adult by Steve Lascinsky, a member of the Commission's research staff, on July 1, 1955, at Matina Furnace. The release point is approximately seven miles from the place the bird was bagged.

Information obtained from leg bands on migratory birds is not only important to federal and state wildlife administrators, it often provides an interesting sidelight to the hunt. For example, the woodcock in this account could have been banded in New Brunswick or Louisiana.

The hunter who receives information on this bird, banded in some distant locality, gets lasting enjoyment from musing over the travel habits of the migrant, plus the satisfaction that comes of cooperating with game managers intent on improving his sport.

Scarcity Of Winter

Game Food

Sportsmen seeking wild game in northern counties this fall have noted the general scarcity of winter foods, nuts particularly. The Game Commission is aware that game food there is in short supply and has accordingly planned an extensive winter feeding campaign.

In recent years sportsmen's organizations and individuals, as well as farmers and others, have built wild turkey feeders in remote areas, and have kept them filled with corn during the critical months.

Having learned of the game food shortage many deer hunters will undoubtedly journey to their northern county camps prepared to build or fill turkey feeders in their areas.

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