

Small game season opens November 3

HARRISBURG - Pennsylvania's regular small game hunting season will open on Saturday, November 3, at 9 a.m.

Since the entire state will be operating on Eastern Standard Time on November 3, there should be no confusion on the starting time for all hunters everywhere in the state.

Season opener on November 3 includes cottontail rabbits, ringneck pheasants, wild turkeys and bobwhite quail. The raccoon

hunting season will also open on November 3.

Grouse and squirrel hunting started two weeks prior to the regular small game season, beginning on October 20 this year.

The regular small game season for cottontails and pheasants, as well as the squirrel and grouse season, will close on Saturday, November 24. The statewide turkey season closes one week earlier on Saturday, November 17.

This year, there will be only a one-week quail

season, ending on Saturday, November 10. The raccoon hunting season continues through January 31.

Pre-season reports by district game protectors indicate that supplies of most small game species this year are in the fair-to-good range, following generally successful reproductive seasons with good food supplies and cover conditions.

Last year during the regular small game season, hunters were complaining about a shortage of rabbits. A Game Commission survey showed that the cottontail harvest, as well as the take of pheasants, was lower than in the preceding year.

But in the spring of this year, district game protectors received more complaints of damage by rabbits than they had ever received before.

This fall, district game protectors reported that their supply of cottontails, at least in September, was at an excellent level in three counties, good in 27 counties, fair in 28 counties, and poor in only nine counties. The best rabbit populations seem to be in the eastern counties.

Ringneck pheasant supplies are not at the all-time record level chalked up a few years ago. Game managers point out that when the population of any game species reaches its peak, there is only one direction the supply can go—down. But the pheasant supply has not dropped to alarmingly low levels.

In September, district game protectors rated their pheasant populations as excellent in one county, good in 10 counties, fair in 42 counties, and poor in 14

counties. Most of the top ringneck populations are found in southeastern counties.

Turkey populations have shifted somewhat in the past year, being lower in northcentral counties and higher in northeastern counties than in previous years. The total turkey supply is down slightly from the record peak of a few years ago.

In September, district game protectors in six counties rated their turkey supplies as excellent, 24 counties reported good populations of birds, 25 counties had fair levels of turkeys, and the big game birds were in poor supply or nonexistent in twelve counties.

The best turkey hunting this year should be in northcentral, southeastern and northwestern counties.

This year's regular small game season is starting one week late due to hunters' complaints about scarcity of game last year, lower wildlife populations due to three successive severe winters, and requests from farmers, on whose land most small game hunting is done, that the season open as near to November 1 as practicable.

These are the daily and possession limits for small game species during the regular season:

Cottontail rabbits - A limit of four per hunter per day and eight in possession.

Ringneck pheasants - The daily limit is two, with a possession limit of four.

Wild Turkey - A limit of one per hunter for the fall hunting season.

Bobwhite quail - A daily limit of four, with eight in possession of the hunter.

DER schedules two water quality hearings

HARRISBURG - Public hearings on proposed revisions to the Commonwealth's water quality regulations will be conducted by the Environmental Quality Board in Harrisburg October 29 and in Sandy Lake, Mercer County, November 1.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources is proposing to better protect aquatic life and water irrigation uses by incorporating specific conductance criterion into its regulations governing total dissolved solids.

It is also recommending that the nitrite-nitrate standard, designed to protect drinking water, be modified to include a section spelling out circumstances under which the criterion is to be applied.

Both proposals incorporate citizens' suggestions mailed in and presented orally at a Feb. 22 public hearing in Harrisburg.

Leonard A. Green, Citizens Advisory Council representative to the Quality Board, will conduct the 1 p.m., October 29 hearing in the Fulton Bank Building, 200 North Third Street, Harrisburg.

The November 1 hearing, also starting at 1 p.m., will be led by Rep. Roy W. Wilt, R-Mercer, in McKeever Environmental Learning Center, Route 358, three miles east of I-79's Exit 34, Sandy Lake.



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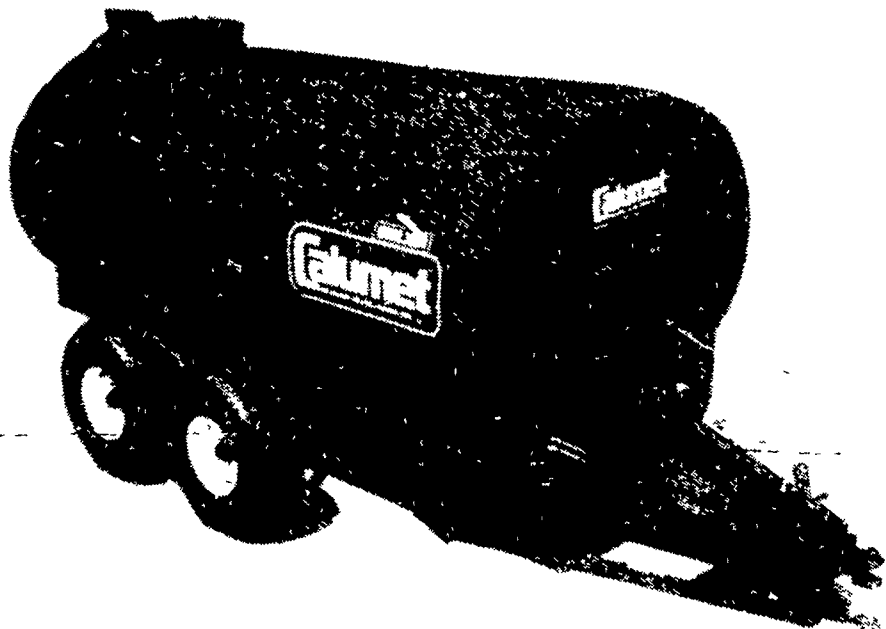
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