

NY Big Game,

The 2010 deer harvest numbers are now available at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/42232.html. Check out the PDF version of the 2010 Deer Take Summary for the harvest breakdown by WMU, county and town, and much more.

The entire press release is copied below.

Jeremy Hurst
Big Game Biologist

Hunters harvested just over 230,000 deer in the 2010 hunting season, up about 3% from 2009, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Joe Martens announced today. The Junior Big-Game License was popular once again, with over 16,000 junior hunters taking advantage of the opportunity to hunt big game, harvesting approximately 4,900 deer.

“Deer hunters play a crucial role, benefitting all New Yorkers, by helping to maintain deer numbers at levels that are ecologically and socially appropriate, and we appreciate their participation,” Commissioner Martens said.

The 2010 deer take included approximately 123,100 antlerless deer (adult females and fawns) and just under 107,000 adult bucks. Deer harvests in the Northern Zone were very comparable to 2009, with adult buck take (approx. 16,100) essentially unchanged and antlerless take (approx. 12,500) only increasing about 3%. In the Southern Zone, excluding Long Island, adult buck take (approx. 89,900) increased nearly 6% while antlerless take (approx. 108,600) increased only about 2%.

Western New York continues to lead the state in total deer-harvest densities, but Orange County in southeastern New York remains a strong contender. The top five counties for 2010 were Yates (14.3 total deer per square mile), Wyoming (12.2), Genesee (11.0), Cayuga (10.0), and Orange County (10.0). Importantly, total harvest is strongly impacted by the number of Deer Management Permits (DMPs) available in an area, which directly affects the harvest of antlerless deer. A more accurate picture of relative deer population densities is revealed by the density of buck harvest. By this figure, the top counties for buck harvest density were: Wyoming (4.9 bucks per square mile), Yates (4.9 bucks per square mile), Allegany (4.0), Schuyler (3.8), and Cayuga County (3.8).

Across the state, hunters took a slightly higher proportion of 2.5 year old and older bucks than in previous years, continuing a trend that has developed over the past decade. This past year, about 45% of harvested bucks were 2.5 years or older, compared to only 33% in 2000.

Deer harvest data are gathered from two main sources: harvest reports required by all successful hunters, and DEC staff’s examination of harvested deer at check stations and meat processors. Statewide harvest estimates are made by cross-referencing these two data sources. Though an

average of only 45% of successful hunters have reported their harvest each year since 2005, statewide harvest estimates remain statistically accurate to within $\pm 2\%$.

During the 2010 deer season, DEC tested 1,780 hunter-harvested deer for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and found no CWD infected deer. With no CWD detections since 2005, last summer, DEC decommissioned the CWD containment area and no longer required mandatory checking of harvested deer in that area.

Additionally, DEC continues to develop a deer management plan based on input collected during a series of public meetings held in 2009; information from a recent statewide survey of deer hunters; and assessments from a deer biologist and regional wildlife managers. This plan will provide a blueprint for deer management for the next five years, including a number of reforms to strengthen the program. DEC anticipates that the plan will be available for public review and comment later this spring.

Deer populations and harvest vary widely across the state. The 2010 and previous year's deer harvest by county, town, and Wildlife Management Unit are available at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/42232.html on the DEC website