

Small Game Hunting

REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

A CURRENT AND valid hunting license (Bow and Arrow, Firearm or All-Around Sportsman) is required to pursue any small game species. See page 24 for *General Hunting Regulations*. The use of dogs, unless specifically stated otherwise, is permitted to pursue any small game species, except wild turkey. Hunting for those species shown on page 57 is prohibited during the statewide Six-day Firearm (deer) Season and on the Wednesday of the Permit Shotgun (deer) Season that immediately follows the Six-day Firearm Season. For exceptions, see *Coyote and Fox* and *Semi-wild and Commercial Preserve Hunting* sections below. **Sunday hunting is prohibited**; see *Raccoon and Opossum*, page 55 plus *Semi-wild and Commercial Shooting Preserves* for exceptions.

Season Dates and Bag Limits: The *Small Game Hunting Seasons* table on page 57 lists dates, hunting hours and daily bag limits for all small game species open for hunting.

General Small Game Hunting Methods: Properly licensed hunters may hunt small game with shotguns or bow and arrow and limited hunting with small caliber rifles; see air gun and coyote/fox regulations. See also *General Hunting Regulations*, page 24.

Shotgun: Unless specifically stated otherwise, shotguns for small game hunting may be single or double barrel, rifled or smoothbore and not larger than 10-gauge or smaller than .410 caliber and capable of holding no more than three shells.

Shot: Unless specifically stated otherwise, shot size for small game hunting may be no larger than #4 fine shot.

Bow and Arrow: All bows must meet the requirements specified in *General Hunting Regulations*, page 24. **For taking game birds in flight, arrows equipped with an edged head are prohibited. Flu flu arrows are required for taking game birds in flight.**

Air gun: Air guns may be used for taking cottontail rabbit, hare and gray squirrel using ammunition not smaller than .177 caliber or larger than .22 caliber. Air gun BBs are not legal for hunting. See also *Air Guns* under *Firearms and Missiles*, page 25.

Muzzleloading Rifles: For limited small game rifle hunting, see below for *Coyote and Fox—Special Permit Season, Squirrel—Muzzleloading Rifle Season* and *Woodchuck* for restrictions.

Wildlife Damage: Property owners or their agents, and occupants of dwellings that are suffering damage from coyote, fox, opossum, raccoon, skunk, squirrel, weasel or woodchuck may control them by lawful means at any time subject to local ordinances.

Stealing Traps or Trapped Animals: It is illegal to take, carry away or unlawfully remove or steal a trap belonging to another person that is set along, by or in public or private property, ditch, stream, pond or water in this state and which has been set for the purpose of catching any of the furbearing animals species for which a legal season is established. It is also illegal to remove, alive or dead, any animal from the trap of another person.

Coyote and Fox, General and Special Permit Seasons

See chart below for both general and special permit season regulations for coyote and fox. **NOTE: All**

successful coyote hunters must report any coyote harvested to a Fish and Wildlife Regional Law Enforcement Office within 24 hours. Callers must identify themselves by name, CID# and daytime phone number.

In addition to the general coyote and fox seasons described in the chart below, properly licensed turkey hunters may legally harvest coyotes if encountered incidental to legal turkey hunting. Turkey hunters shall not actively pursue coyotes or have coyote calls or decoys in possession. Also, properly licensed persons hunting deer during the Six-day Firearm, Permit Muzzleloader or Permit Shotgun deer seasons may kill coyote or fox if the coyote or fox is encountered before the hunter has taken the season bag limit of deer. However, after the hunter has taken a *daily* bag limit of deer, they must cease hunting immediately. Incidental hunting of coyote or fox while deer hunting may resume the following day (provided the season remains open and the season bag limit of deer has not been reached.) Only applicable projectiles approved for deer hunting may be used to take coyote and fox incidental to deer hunting during the deer seasons described above. See *Firearms, Bow and Ammunition* chart, page 32.

Baiting for coyote/fox is prohibited while hunting elevated in a standing tree or in a structure of any kind within 300 feet of a baited area.

Further, in addition to the general Coyote and Fox seasons plus the incidental harvest of coyote or fox while deer hunting, a Special Permit Coyote and Fox Season runs concurrent with the regular small game coyote and fox season. A Fish and Wildlife-issued permit is required to hunt coyote or fox under the provisions (see below) of the Special

Coyote / Fox Season

Dates	Bow Only: Sept. 10–Nov. 11 in DMZs open for early fall bow deer hunting; otherwise Oct. 1–Nov. 11	Firearm or Bow: Nov. 12–March 15	Special Permit Season: Jan. 1 – March 15 (Permit required with shot larger than #4 fine thru #3 Buck sizes and/or nighttime hunting and/or using a muzzleloading rifle other than incidental to deer hunting and/or using a modern rifle)	
	Hours	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset, except 8 a.m. start on Nov. 12	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset
Weapon Type and Projectiles Permitted	Bow: long, recurve, compound or crossbow See <i>General Small Game Hunting Methods</i> above. Shotgun and Shot Size: See <i>General Small Game Hunting Methods</i> , above.	Bow: long, recurve, compound or crossbow See <i>General Small Game Hunting Methods</i> , above.	Bow: long, recurve, compound or crossbow See <i>General Small Game Hunting Methods</i> , above.	Shotgun: single or double barrel. Not smaller than 12 gauge or larger than 10 gauge, capable of holding no more than 3 shells. Shot: sizes not smaller than #4 fine shot or larger than T
		Shotgun: single or double barrel. Not smaller than 20 gauge or larger than 10 gauge, capable of holding no more than 3 shells. Shot: Not smaller than BB or larger than #3 Buck. Pellets must be lead or a tungsten-nickel-iron hybrid.	Muzzleloading rifle: single-shot, single barrel no less than .44 caliber. Flintlock, percussion and in-line ignitions permitted, loaded only with a single projectile, either round ball or conical bullet. Electronic ignitions prohibited. Centerfire rifles: From .17 to maximum of .25 caliber with soft point or hollow point bullets and maximum of 80 grains. Rimfire rifles: From .17 to maximum of .22 caliber with soft point or hollow point bullets and maximum of 50 grains. A modern rifle magazine need not be pinned (plugged), but may be loaded with no more than three cartridges.	
Notes	Hunter orange not required. Use of dogs prohibited. Daily bag: unlimited coyote or fox	Hunter orange required when using firearm. Muzzleloading rifle may be used only incidental to deer hunting. Use of dogs permitted except not during Dec. 7–12 and Dec. 16. Daily bag: unlimited coyote or fox	While hunting under the provisions of the Special Permit: Hunter orange is not required (but is recommended while traveling to/from hunting areas.) Hunting methods are restricted to calling and stand hunting. A predator-calling device (manual or electronic) must be in possession. Use of dogs is prohibited. Use of bait is prohibited. Portable lights are allowed. Sunday hunting is not legal.	Daily bag: unlimited coyote or fox

Permit Coyote and Fox Season; as follows:

A permit to hunt coyote or fox is required 1.) to hunt at night and/or 2.) to use shot sizes larger than #4 fine and up to size #3 Buck, and/or 3.) to use a rifle for coyote or fox other than incidental to deer hunting. Sunday hunting is not legal.

Coyote/Fox permits: \$2, available at any license agent or via Fish and Wildlife's Internet license sales site (www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com) beginning December 1. A 2017 hunting license must be purchased prior to or in conjunction with the purchase of a Special Season Coyote and Fox Permit.

Northern Bobwhite (Quail)

Northern bobwhite quail are native to the southern half of New Jersey. In recent years, quail populations have declined throughout their range including New Jersey.

Quail Season Closed

In an effort to reverse the decline of quail in New Jersey, the statewide quail hunting season is closed except at Peaslee WMA and Greenwood Forest WMA where Fish and Wildlife will provide hunters and falconers the opportunity to hunt for quail.

See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57 for season dates and bag limits. Exception: This statewide closure does not apply to certain semi-wild and commercial shooting preserves that were permitted to stock quail during the 2009–10 season.

Pheasant

See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57 for season dates and bag limits. See exceptions below for semi-wild and commercial preserve hunting.

Pheasant and Quail Stamp Areas: Anyone aged 16 and over (except 16 year olds whose Youth License remains valid until Dec. 31 in the year they reach 16 years of age) hunting or possessing pheasant or quail on the following designated wildlife management areas shall have in possession a current and valid Pheasant and Quail Stamp (Youth Hunting licenses include pheasant and quail stamp): Assunpink, Berkshire Valley, Millville (Bevan), Black River, Clinton, Colliers Mills, Dix, Flatbrook, Glassboro, Greenwood (including Howardsville), Heislerville, Tuckahoe (MacNamara), Mad Horse, Manahawkin, Manasquan River, Medford, Nantuxent, Peaslee, Pequest, Port Republic,

Rockport, Stafford Forge, Walpack, Whittingham and Winslow. A current and valid Pheasant and Quail Stamp is also required at the Delaware River National Recreation Area.

Pheasant and Quail Stocking

Wearing a hunter orange **hat** is required for all firearm small game hunters on wildlife management areas stocked with pheasant or quail.

Fish and Wildlife anticipates pheasant and quail releases to be as follows:

- ♦ Assunpink, Berkshire Valley, Black River, Clinton, Colliers Mills, Dix, Flatbrook, Glassboro, Millville (Bevan), Nantuxent, Pequest, Port Republic, Tuckahoe (MacNamara), Walpack and Whittingham WMAs will be **stocked with pheasant** for the following dates:
Nov. 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29
Dec. 1, 3, 17, 20, 22, 24, 29
- ♦ Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Heislerville, Howardsville, Mad Horse, Manahawkin, Manasquan, Medford, Stafford Forge and Winslow WMAs will be **stocked with pheasant** for the following dates:
Nov. 12, 19, 24, 26, 29
Dec. 1, 3, 17, 20, 22, 24, 29
- ♦ Greenwood Forest and Peaslee WMAs will be **stocked with quail** for the following dates:
Nov. 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29
Dec. 1, 3, 17, 20, 22, 24, 29

New maps showing the specific field locations for every stocked wildlife management area are now available here: NJFishandWildlife.com/pheasmaps.htm.

Fish and Wildlife reminds sportsmen and sportswomen that the stocking schedule is tentative until approved by the Fish and Game Council in early October. The schedule is subject to pheasant production and may change due to emergency weather conditions. For changes to the stocking schedule due to inclement weather or other necessary adjustments, visit our website at NJFishandWildlife.com/smggame_info.htm.

Rabbit and Hare

The rabbit and hare hunting season will begin the last Saturday in September. The early opening date allows for hunting opportunity when rabbit populations are at their peak. Air guns may be used for taking cottontail rabbit and hare using ammunition not smaller than .177 caliber or larger than .22 caliber. See also *Air Guns* under *Firearms and Missiles*, page 25 and *General Small Game Hunting Methods*, page 54.

See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57 for season dates and bag limits.

Raccoon and Opossum

See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57 for season dates and bag limits.

Hours: Hunting may not begin until one hour after sunset on the opening day of the season. On all other days open during the season, the hours of hunting are one hour after sunset to one hour

before sunrise. Sunday hunting for raccoon and opossum is permitted **only** between the hours of midnight (the *end* of Saturday) and one hour before sunrise (Sunday).

Hunting methods: Portable lights are permitted. Fluorescent orange is encouraged but not required on outer clothing while hunting raccoon and opossum. A current and valid rifle permit is required when possessing a .22 caliber rifle while hunting raccoon and opossum. Only .22 caliber shorts are permitted.

Dog Training: Dogs may be trained during the month of September and from March 2 to May 1, inclusive. The training hours are one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.

Ruffed Grouse

The state's two ruffed grouse hunting zones are delineated by Rt. 70. North of Rt. 70 the season will begin October 15. South of Rt. 70 the season will begin Nov. 12 to reduce harvest mortality of the remaining populations in the southern zone. The ruffed grouse zones are identical to those for woodcock and will provide for consistent regulations for these species that are often hunted simultaneously. See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57 for season dates and bag limits.

MOUNTAIN TRAIL WHITETAILS

Mountain Trail Whitetails Preserve offers the best trophy deer hunting in New Jersey!

Over the last several years we have noticed heavy deer traffic outside of the preserve, and now maintain several baited stand sites outside of the preserve. We are offering hunters the opportunity to hunt these sites for only \$250 a day.

Call Tim Mathews
for more information:
(908) 310-0369

Stocking Maps

Scan this QR code or follow the link for maps of the pheasant and quail stocked fields for each stocked WMA. Go to NJFishandWildlife.com/pheasmaps.htm.



REGULATIONS

Semi-Wild and Commercial Preserve Hunting

Hunting for pheasant, quail and partridge is allowed from Nov. 12 to March 15 on semi-wild and from Sept. 1 through May 1 on commercial shooting preserves (which also allows mallards) that are properly licensed for the taking of such species. These game birds may be hunted on Sunday only on semi-wild or commercial shooting preserve lands.

Youth hunters (in possession of a valid Youth Hunting License and accompanied by a licensed, non-shooting adult) will be permitted to hunt pheasant, quail and partridge on licensed semi-wild preserves on Saturday, Nov. 5—the Youth Upland Bird Hunting Day.

All game taken on semi-wild or commercial preserves must be properly tagged before being transported off the licensed property.

A person may legally hunt on semi-wild or commercial preserves for game birds during deer seasons, but no shot larger than #4 fine may be used. There are no daily bag or seasonal limits for pheasant, quail, partridge or mallards taken on commercial preserves. There are no daily bag limits for pheasant, quail or partridge taken on semi-wild properties. Seasonal harvests on semi-wild properties may not exceed the number of birds to be stocked as indicated on the semi-wild permit application.

Squirrel, Regular Season

Air guns may be used for taking squirrel using ammunition not smaller than .177 caliber or larger than .22 caliber. See also *Air Guns* under *Firearms and Missiles*, page 25 and *General Small Game Hunting Methods*, page 54. See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57.

Squirrel, Muzzleloading Rifle Season

Persons holding a current and valid firearm license and rifle permit may hunt for squirrels from sunrise to ½ hour after sunset with a muzzleloading rifle (.36 caliber or smaller loaded with a single projectile) during the periods Sept. 24–Nov. 11, 2016 and Jan. 7–Feb. 20, 2017. See *Small Game Hunting Seasons* chart, page 57.

Hunting for squirrel in the manner described above is restricted to the areas described.

Woodchuck

All persons in possession of a rifle (including a muzzleloading rifle) while hunting woodchuck must have a current and valid rifle permit in addition to the current hunting license. Rifle hunting (of any kind) for woodchuck is prohibited on state wildlife management areas, state parks, state forests or state recreation areas. Farmers and their agents may use shot not larger than #4 buckshot to control woodchuck causing damage. Hours of hunting are sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. See chart above for woodchuck hunting details. ♫

Woodchuck Season

Dates	Weapon Type Permitted	Gauge, Caliber or Weight	Projectile(s)
March 1 to Sept. 28, 2016	Center-fire rifle	.25 caliber or less	Hollow point, soft point or expanding lead core bullets of any weight.
		Larger than .25 caliber	Hollow point, soft point or expanding lead core bullets of any weight not exceeding 80 grains in weight.
March 1 to Sept. 27, 2017	Rim-fire rifle	.25 caliber or less	Hollow point or soft point of any weight not exceeding 50 grains in weight.
	Muzzleloading rifle: single-shot, single barrel. Flintlock, percussion and in-line ignitions permitted.	No restriction	Must be loaded with a single projectile, either round ball or conical bullet.
	Bow: long, recurve, compound or crossbow	35 pounds pull at archers draw length (long and recurve bows) or peak weight (compound bow); 75 pounds pull for crossbow	Arrows must be fitted with a well-sharpened metal broadhead with a minimum width of ¾"
Sept. 24–Dec. 3 and Dec. 12, 13, 15–31, 2016	Bow: long, recurve, compound or crossbow	35 pounds pull at archers draw length (long and recurve bows) or peak weight (compound bow); 75 pounds pull for crossbow	Arrows must be fitted with a well-sharpened metal broadhead with a minimum width of ¾"
Jan. 2–Feb. 20, 2017	Shotgun: single or double barrel, rifled bore or smoothbore	Not larger than 10 gauge, capable of holding no more than 3 shells	Shot – sizes not larger than #4 fine shot

Squirrel Muzzleloading Rifle Season Zones

For a complete description of the squirrel hunting areas, scan this QR code with your mobile device or go to www.NJFishandWildlife.com/qr/squirrelzones.htm.



Muzzleloading Rifle Squirrel Areas



Upland Project Updates

For a review of Fish and Wildlife's Upland Project Updates, scan this QR code or visit www.NJFishandWildlife.com/qr/upland_updates.htm.



First live-captured fisher in New Jersey.

Joe Garris/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

2016–17 Small Game Hunting Seasons

Species (alphabetical)	Inclusive Dates	Hunting Hours	Daily Limits	Notes
Bobwhite (quail)	Closed statewide; except at Peaslee & Greenwood WMA (see Notes) At Peaslee & Greenwood WMAs ONLY: Nov. 12–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31, 2016 and Jan. 2–31, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	4	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12 Quail may be hunted ONLY at Peaslee and Greenwood Forest WMAs. Pheasant and Quail Stamp required. Season closed in remainder of the state. (See exceptions under <i>Northern Bobwhite</i> , page 55.)
Coyote* and Fox, General All coyote must be reported within 24 hrs.	Bow and Arrow only: Sept. 10–Nov. 11 in DMZ Regulation Sets 4–8 Oct. 1–Nov. 11 in DMZ Regulation Sets 0–3 Firearm or Bow and Arrow: Nov. 12–Mar. 15	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	No limit	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12 Deer hunters may harvest coyote and fox during all open deer seasons with restrictions as specified under Small Game Hunting, <i>Coyote and Fox</i> , page 54. Rifle permit required in possession when hunting with rifle (allowed only incidental to deer hunting).
Coyote* and Fox, Special Permit Season All coyote must be reported within 24 hrs.	Firearm or Bow and Arrow: Jan. 2–Mar. 15, 2017 (permit required)	Permit holders may hunt day and night with certain restrictions; see Notes at right. Sunday hunting for coyote/fox is not legal. All such hunting must end at 11:59 p.m. Saturday night and may resume at 12:01 a.m. Monday morning.	No limit	For complete details, and for when a permit is required, see Small Game Hunting, <i>Coyote and Fox</i> , page 54. Calling and standing hunting only. Predator calling device must be in possession. See <i>Coyote/Fox Season</i> table, page 54, for firearm and ammo restrictions. Rifle permit required in possession when hunting with any legal rifle, allowed only during daytime hunting hours. During night hunting (½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise), only 10 or 12 gauge shotguns are permitted. See pellet restrictions in table on page 54. Coyote/fox permit required.
Crow** (Mon., Thurs., Fri., Sat.)	Aug. 8–Dec. 3** and Dec. 12, 2016–Mar. 17, 2017 (See Notes .)	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	No limit	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12 Maximum shot size is #4
Grouse, Ruffed**	North of Rt. 70: Oct. 15–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31 South of Rt. 70: Nov. 12–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	2	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12
Opossum & Raccoon	Oct. 1 to Mar. 1	1 hour after sunset to 1 hour before sunrise	No limit	Rifle permit required when hunting with rifle. 7:41 p.m. start on Oct. 1. Closed Dec. 5–10 and Dec. 14.
Pheasant & Partridge	Nov. 12–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31, 2016; Jan. 2–Feb. 20, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	Partridge — 7 Pheasant — 2	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12 Pheasant and Quail Stamp required on designated areas (see <i>Small Game Hunting</i> page 55).
Rabbit, Hare & Jackrabbit**	Sept. 24–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31, 2016; Jan. 2–Feb. 25, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	Cottontail — 4 Hare — 1 Jackrabbit — 1	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12. Air guns are legal to harvest rabbits, hare and jackrabbit. See <i>General Small Game Hunting Methods</i> .
Squirrel, Gray**	Sept. 24–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31, 2016; Jan. 2–Feb. 20, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	5	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12. Air guns are legal to harvest squirrel. See <i>General Small Game Hunting Methods</i> page 54.
Squirrel, Gray: Muzzleloading Rifle (.36 caliber or smaller)	Sept. 24–Nov. 11, 2016 and Jan. 7–Feb. 20, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	5	Rifle permit required. Designated areas only (see <i>Small Game Hunting</i> page 56).
Turkey (Fall, Either-Sex)	(Period N) Oct. 29–Nov. 5, 2016	½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.	1 Turkey (either sex) per permit	Permit required. All Turkey Hunting Areas statewide are now open to fall hunting.
Turkey (Spring Gobbler)	(Periods A to E) April 24–May 26, 2017	½ hour before sunrise to noon; starting May 15, hours are ½ hour before sunrise to sunset	1 Male Turkey per permit	Permit required.
Turkey (Spring Gobbler, Youth)	(Period Y) April 22–May 26, 2017	½ hour before sunrise to noon; starting May 15, hours are ½ hour before sunrise to sunset	1 Male Turkey per permit	Permit required.
Woodchuck: Bow, Rifle or Shotgun	Mar. 1–Sept. 28, 2016 Mar. 1–Sept. 27, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	No limit	Rifle permit required when hunting with rifle. Rifle hunting prohibited on state property (see <i>General Hunting Regulations</i> , page 24 and <i>Small Game Regulations</i> page 54).
Woodchuck:** Bow or Shotgun	Sept. 28–Dec. 3; Dec. 12, 13, 15–31, 2016; Jan. 2–Feb. 20, 2017	Sunrise to ½ hour after sunset	No limit	8 a.m. start on Nov. 12
Woodcock**	See <i>Migratory Bird Regulations**</i> on page 65	Sunrise to sunset	3 daily; 6 possession	HIP number required (see page 65). 8 a.m. start on Nov. 12
Youth Turkey Day	April 22, 2017	½ hour before sunrise to noon	1 Male Wild Turkey	Permit required.
Youth Upland Bird Day	Nov. 5, 2016	8 a.m. to sunset	Pheasant — 2 Quail — 4	Selected WMAs and licensed semi-wilds (see page 23).

* All harvested coyotes must be reported to a regional Division Law Enforcement Office within 24 hours. Callers must identify themselves by name, CID# and daytime phone number.

** The starting time to hunt migratory birds on Nov. 12 only on those WMAs designated as Pheasant and Quail Stamp Areas shall be 8 a.m. See list of areas, page 55.