

2021 New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Hunter Harvest Survey

An online survey for holders of 2021 New Jersey firearm hunting licenses was developed with objectives to:

1. Estimate the number of hunters and statewide harvest since mandatory reporting is not required for all game species.
2. Estimate the number of hunter days afield.
3. Estimate hunter expenditures (excluding state sale of licenses, stamps, and permits) during the 2021-22 hunting season.

The 2021-22 survey was administered by New Jersey Fish and Wildlife using the Survey Monkey internet-based platform. 63,102 unique firearms license holders were sold in New Jersey during the 2021 calendar year. The survey was sent to individuals who provided an (optional) email address (n = 52,319, 83%) when obtaining a license. All resident and non-resident firearms license types were included in the survey. Respondents were required to enter their Conservation Identification Number (CID) to authenticate their submission and ensure only one response per hunter was recorded.

A website link to the survey was provided 2–16 March 2022. The survey contained 58 questions; however, participants were prompted to skip sections for species they did not pursue. Respondents were asked specific questions related to their harvest, hunting effort and economic expenditures. Hunters were asked to provide approximate dollar amount spent during the season, excluding costs of licenses, stamps, and permits. 3,054 usable surveys were received. Eleven percent of respondents indicated they purchased a license but did not hunt, yielding an estimated 55,664 active firearms license holders in New Jersey during the 2021-22 hunting season.

Results

The estimated harvest, hunter effort, and hunter expenditures for the 2021-22 hunting season (Tables 1 – 3) were derived using 3,054 survey responses. Information from this survey is used to estimate harvest, hunting activity, and expenditures for: crow, pheasant (pen-raised), bobwhite quail (pen-raised), red fox, gray fox, rabbit/hare, gray squirrel, opossum, raccoon, and woodchuck. Harvest statistics for wild turkey (fall season), deer, and coyote are reported through the Automated Harvest Report System and although estimates of hunting activity and harvest are derived from this survey. The black bear season was closed to hunting during the 2021-22 season. Questions related to waterfowl hunter activity were not gathered during this survey, since the US Fish and Wildlife Service provides New Jersey estimates using Harvest Information Program (HIP) data. New Jersey waterfowl harvest and hunter activity information can be accessed through the [Migratory Bird Hunting Activity and Harvest Reports](#) page. For harvest information relating to spring turkey hunting, see the [Spring Gobbler Season Harvest Data](#) page.

Harvest

An estimated 1,298 hunters actively pursued crows and harvested 7,437 birds.

Hunters took 31,723 pheasants and 5,513 quail of the 57,480 pheasants and 11,000 bobwhite quail released on public lands (23 Wildlife Management Areas, Fort Dix, and Delaware Water Gap NRA).

Mammal harvest was estimated at: 659 gray fox; 6,901 red fox; 21,219 cottontail rabbit/hare; 31,540 gray squirrel; 597 Virginia opossum; 4,058 raccoon; and, 20,024 woodchuck.

Hunters are required to report harvests for several species, including: 77 coyote, 36,787 white-tailed deer, and 68 wild turkey during the fall season.

Expenditures and Days Afield

Survey estimates indicate pheasant (n = 13,102) and/or quail (n = 2,781) hunters spent 134,55 days afield and approximately \$4.3 million while pursuing birds on designated public lands. An estimated 14,689 hunters spent 105,087 days afield pursuing small game mammals, while contributing \$3.1 million. 46,682 deer hunters spent 1.2 million days afield and contributed approximately \$31.5 million to the state economy.

Hunting license, permit, and stamp sales were calculated through the electronic licensing system. During the 2021 calendar year \$7.2 million was generated through the purchase of hunting licenses, permits, and stamps.

Table 1. Estimated number of hunters and hunter effort (days) in New Jersey, 2021-22.

Species	Respondents (n)	Est. # Hunters	Avg. days/hunter	Est. hunter effort (days)
Crow	63	1,298	3.6	4,882
Pheasant (public land only)	636	13,102	9.2	119,054
Quail (public land only)	135	2,781	5.5	15,101
Turkey (Fall only)	255	2,090*	2.1	4,343
Small game mammals	713	14,689	7.2	105,087
Coyote / Fox	310	6,386	4.3	26,287
Gray squirrel	324	6,675	4.2	27,255
Opossum / Raccoon	34	700	7.4	5047
Rabbit / Hare	283	5,830	4.7	27,132
Woodchuck	124	2,555	7.6	19,365
White-tailed deer	2,266	46,682	22.9	1,250,152

*Not an estimate; reported through electronic licensing system

Table 2. Estimated number of hunters and harvest in New Jersey, 2021-22.

Species	Respondents (n)	Est. # Hunters	Est. Harvest
Crow	63	1,298	7,437
Pheasant (public land)	636	13,102	31,723
Quail (public land)	135	2,781	5,513
Turkey (Fall)	255	2,090*	68*

Coyote			77*
Gray Fox	310	6,386	659
Red Fox			6,901
Gray Squirrel	324	6,675	31,540
Opossum	34	700	597
Raccoon			4,058
Rabbit/Hare	283	5,830	21,219
Woodchuck	124	2,555	20,024
White-tailed Deer	2,266	46,682	36,787*

*Not an estimate; reported through electronic licensing system or Automated Harvest Report System

Table 3. Estimated hunter expenditure (USD) by species, 2021-22.

Species	Est. # of Hunters	Expenditure Mean (\$)	Estimated Expenditure (\$)
Crow	1,298	\$86	\$106,240
Pheasant (public land)	13,102	\$306	\$4,372,683
Quail (public land)	2,781		
Small Game Mammals*	14,689	\$242	\$3,139,784
White-tailed Deer	46,682	\$696	\$31,458,620

Small game includes coyote, fox, gray squirrel, opossum, racoon, rabbit, hare, and woodchuck.

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