

# Delaware's 2016/17 deer harvest sets new all-time high record

## *Sunday deer hunting participation boosts record harvest*

**DOVER** – Delaware hunters harvested 14,742 deer during the 2016/17 hunting season, surpassing 2015/16's record of 14,681 deer taken, DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife announced today. This season marks the seventh time within the last 12 years the deer harvest has exceeded 14,000 since Delaware's first modern-day deer season was held in 1954.

Sussex County had the highest harvest with 7,675 deer, followed by Kent County with 4,397 and New Castle County with 2,670.

With Sunday deer hunting allowed in the state for the first time, a total of 1,170 deer were harvested on the five Sundays open to deer hunting on private lands and Division of Fish & Wildlife public wildlife areas.

"Sunday deer hunting provided additional hunting opportunities and another tool to help manage Delaware's robust deer population," said Division Fish & Wildlife Director David Saveikis. "Sunday deer hunting occurred throughout the state without any notable conflict thanks to hunter ethics, including on division public wildlife areas where different outdoor recreational activities were compatibly managed."

"We are analyzing how Sunday deer hunting contributed to the overall harvest," said Division Wildlife Biologist Emily Boyd. "Preliminary analysis of this year's deer harvest surpassing last year's total strongly suggests that the five Sundays helped achieve the record harvest, despite less than ideal weather during some of the more popular hunting weekends."

During the 2016/17 season, hunters harvested more females (does) than males (bucks), with 51.3 percent (7,556) does and 48.7 percent (7,186) bucks. Antlerless deer – does, juvenile bucks without antlers known as button bucks, antlered bucks with antlers measuring less than three inches and bucks that had already shed both of their antlers when harvested – represented 67.9 percent of the total harvest.

In addition to the new statewide harvest record, several other deer records were set by hunters this past season:

- Kent County: 4,397 deer harvested
- Antlered bucks harvested in a single season: 4,729
- Total bucks harvested in a single season: 7,186

“Many hunters enjoyed success this year as indicated by the total harvest as well as several new records set, and we fully expect hunters to continue to enjoy Delaware’s deer hunting opportunities for years to come,” said Wildlife Section Administrator Rob Hossler. “As we continue to analyze the harvest data, we anticipate finding other harvest records that were broken this past season and will share those on the Division of Fish & Wildlife website when they become available.”

For more information about the Delaware deer harvest or other deer-related information, please contact Emily Boyd at 302-735-3600, or visit the Division of Fish & Wildlife’s [Delaware Deer Information](#) webpage. Additional harvest data will be available on this webpage at a later date following more detailed analysis of the harvest data.

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