

2011 Northern Michigan **FREE** DEER HUNTER

A PRACTICAL GUIDE
FOR NORTHERN MICHIGAN
DEER HUNTING

2011 Deer Hunting FORECAST

PLUS...

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- **Rules & Regulations** page 11
- **Whitetail Breeding Cycle** page 13
- **Baiting & Feeding** page 25

AND MUCH MORE!

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In Michigan, baiting and feeding is allowable except in Deer Management Unit 487, the six-county bovine tuberculosis zone in northeastern Lower Michigan (Alcona, Alpena, Iosco, Montmorency, Oscoda and Presque Isle counties). These are the rules for baiting and feeding.

26 FEATURED PROPERTY: Hunt, Snowmobile, ATV, Ski, Bike & Walk from this great property.

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SAFETY FIRST

Important Tips for Gun Safety

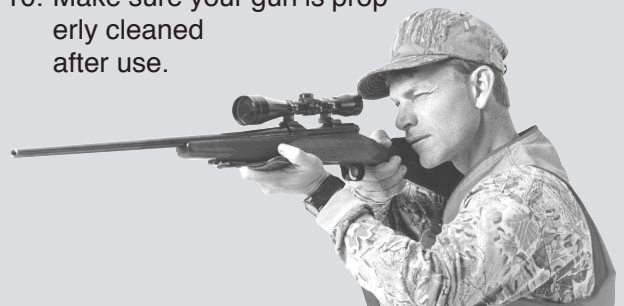
Gun safety should be the first rule of every hunter, says a veteran sportsman.

"If you treat every weapon as if it were loaded and respect the power of every loaded weapon, you'll have a much safer experience," said Dave Jaworski. Jaworski is a lifelong deer and small game hunter and is also a retired firearms expert from the U.S. Navy.

"I used to tell our young sailors the same thing I tell kids in hunter's safety class, you have to respect the capabilities of the weapon," Jaworski said.

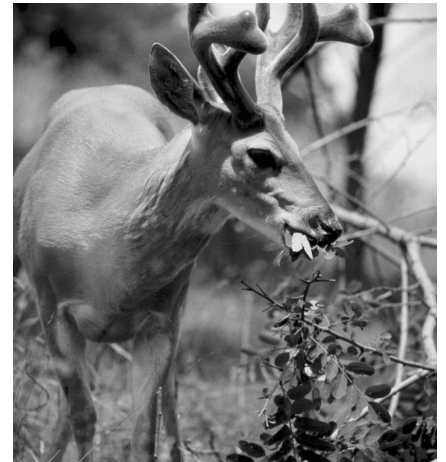
Here are the National Rifle Association's basic rules for firearms safety:

1. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
2. Always keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
3. Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.
4. Know your target – and what is beyond the target.
5. Know how to use the gun safely.
6. Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
7. Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.
8. Never use alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription or other drugs before or while shooting.
9. Store guns in a safe, secure place.
10. Make sure your gun is properly cleaned after use.



2011 Michigan Deer Hunting Prospects

THE STATEWIDE FORECAST



By Brent Rudolph, Deer and Elk Program Leader

STATEWIDE

Over the last few years, around 700,000 individuals have purchased a license to hunt deer in Michigan. These hunters ultimately spend more than 9.6 million days afield and take more than 400,000 deer. Over 300,000 hunters participate in Michigan's archery season, about 600,000 hunt with a firearm and 200,000 with a muzzleloader. While the number of firearm season hunters often rises and falls as the traditional November 15th opening day rotates through days of the week, expanded youth hunting programs and crossbow hunting opportunities have increased participation among other segments of the hunting population. Although surveys show that the leading reasons many participate in deer hunting is simply the opportunity to spend time outdoors with friends and family, many hunters prepare each season to give them-

selves the best chance to see and take deer.

Deer are not evenly distributed across the state. There are considerable differences in habitat and deer numbers across Michigan's three regions - the Upper Peninsula (UP), northern Lower Peninsula (NLP), and southern Lower Peninsula (SLP). In addition to this regional variability, every year hunters only a few miles apart have very different experiences observing and harvesting deer.

Across the state, reports on the soft mast crop are generally positive, with particularly good production of apples. The hard mast crop has shown low production overall, though some scattered areas have noted fair amounts of acorns and beechnuts. Maps and computer-based tools are increasingly available to narrow in on the best locations to focus scouting efforts, including the Mi-HUNT interactive web application available at www.michigan.gov/mihunt. While these and other resources are a great benefit for

hunters, there is no substitute for personally scouting areas in advance of a hunting trip.

Part of hunting preparations each year includes becoming familiar with the most recent regulations. The deer website of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and a new collaborative website with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Michigan State University provide highlights of regulations changes, information about deer management, and links to additional resources, such as a list of deer check stations. These sites are located at www.michigan.gov/deer and <http://deer.fw.msu.edu>. Please refer to the 2011 Hunting and Trapping Digest and Antlerless Digest, available at DNR Operations Service Centers, license vendors, or available in electronic formats through links at these sites, for a map of all Deer Management Units and other regulations

see FORECAST page 29

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Tree Stand Safety

By Mike Guerin

During Bow Season almost all of the deer hunters are hunting from the tree stands. Hunting from above gives you several advantages, such as remaining above a deer's field of view, keeping your scent above the deer's nose, as well as often increasing our visibility of the woods. Unfortunately, as the use of tree stands increases, so has the number of hunters injuring themselves through their use. Deer

hunting has become one of the safest sports you can engage in. With some common sense precautions it can become even safer.

Tree stands can be used safely. I have used many types of stands, often in conjunction with climbing spurs. I have used both ladder-type stands, lock-on-stands as well as boards nailed to a tree as deer stands. I've been using tree stands for deer hunting ever since I started hunting and I've never been

injured.

I won't use a stand if it seems unsafe to me, because where I hunt, I am usually hunting by myself well away from home. If I were to be injured and couldn't notify anyone it would be many hours before I could expect anyone to start searching for me. Risk is not a something that should be taken lightly. Every time you climb into a stand you are taking some risk. It only takes a second to kill yourself.


It might help you to

know some of the common ways people are injured using tree stands. Falling asleep, slipping when climbing in or out of the stand and having components break are the most common ways that hunters are injured. There is a common cure for all of these possibilities. A safety harness. But having a safety harness will not help you unless you wear it. It is not good enough to put the harness in use after

continued on next pg.

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you have settled into your stand. Remember climbing into or out of your stand is when you are most likely to be hurt. Ideally you should be tied off and secured as you climb, when getting in or out of your stand as well as when you are waiting on the big buck. The hassle this causes is small when you really look at it. It is more of a mental hassle than anything else. The delay is usually not more than a minute. That's a small price to pay to ensure that you will go home at the end of the hunt.

Without a doubt using a safety harness is the single most important step you can take to ensure your safety. Even with a

safety harness it is possible that you could be injured in a fall. But the damage will usually not be life threatening and will usually not even put an end to the hunt. Bruises can be avoided when using a safety harness bruises by attaching the tether up the tree so that it is almost tight when you sit down. This shortens your fall should you or the stand slip.

We would like to avoid any injury so here are a few steps to think about in relation to your stands that could minimize the chance of injury. Tree steps or tie on ladders are one of my fa-

see **Tree Stand Safety** page 10



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GPS For Hunters

GPS navigation can be the difference between successful hunting and wandering aimlessly around in the woods. Mark the location of your deer blind, or find your way back to that great duck-hunting spot.

GPS AS A PLANNING AND ANALYSIS TOOL

Use your GPS with topographical maps to make your scouting time more efficient. If you look on a map and notice possible deer funnel areas where ridges come together or a creek or river abuts a bluff you can mark the latitude and longitude as a waypoint and so you can find the spot quickly.

You may have a difficult time remembering all the places where you find buck

scrapes, feeds, and beds. Build database with a GPS receiver making a waypoint for each, and naming them with a code you can understand (i.e. "S" for scrapes, "R" for rubs, "T" for tracks or "S" for sightings, etc). When you get home, record this information in a hunter's log or a computer program. As you study the data you'll begin to notice patterns that will tell you where and when you need to be for a successful hunt. For example, when you hunt for deer you can use your GPS receiver to mark the spot where you discover deer



see **GPS for Hunters** page 21

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TREE STAND SAFETY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

favorite methods of gaining elevation in a tree. I also use large nails as steps. I am partial to nails because they are the cheaper than the tie on ladders. Others prefer climbing stands but they limit you to certain trees. When using nails it is important to test the nail to be sure that it is still securely in place. I have not seen this but my cousin said they have some trees where the nails can be easily pulled out by hand due to the tree growing. My experience is that once in place the tree grows tightly

around the nail. But nails can provide entry for bacteria and fungus into the tree. So I always check to make sure the nail is secure. When using nails it is important to use nails that are long enough and sturdy enough to support your weight. Most injuries occur when the nail bends, causing a slip! Here is a tip for installing these big nails. Bring a portable drill so you can make pilot holes for the nail. These big nails are hard to drive due to their size, so having a pilot hole really helps to get the nail

started.

Tie on ladder sticks should always be checked to make sure that they are still secured to the tree. Examine straps etc. to make sure that they have not become damaged or weakened.

Examine closely all parts of your stand for pos-

sible problems. Look for rust. Any parts that are rusted are now weaker than original non-rusted strength. Check all stand parts of for cuts, nicks, or cracks. Make sure all nuts are not loose. Make sure all crimps on all wires are not damaged or rusted.

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Know the Rules... Firearm, Crossbow and Bow and Arrow Rules & Regulations

Centerfire or rimfire rifles may be used Dec. 1-Nov. 9 in the Shotgun Zone during the open season for all species except no rifles may be used for deer, turkeys and migratory game birds. See Nighttime Raccoon and Predator Hunting restrictions.

The rules listed below may not apply to those having a concealed pistol license or those specifically exempt by law from a concealed pistol license and who carry their handgun in accordance with their license or exemption.

Shell Capacity for Shotguns and Centerfire Rifles

It is unlawful to hunt with a semi-automatic shotgun or semi-automatic rifle that can hold more than six shells in the barrel and magazine combined unless it is a .22 caliber rimfire. Fully automatic firearms are illegal. All shotguns used for migratory game birds (including woodcock) must be plugged so the total capacity of the shotgun does not exceed three shells.

Crossbows

Any licensed hunter who is 10 years old or older and has obtained a free crossbow stamp can hunt with a crossbow during any season in which a firearm is allowed, for both big and small game, except hunters in the Upper Peninsula may not use a crossbow or a modified bow during the Dec. 1 - Jan. 1 late archery deer season and Dec. 2-11 muzzleloader deer season, unless the hunter is disabled and has a crossbow permit or special permit to take game with a modified bow.

Any licensed hunter 10 years old or older may use a crossbow throughout the archery deer season in the Lower Peninsula (Oct. 1 - Nov. 14 and Dec. 1 - Jan. 1) and during the early archery deer season in the Upper Peninsula (Oct. 1 - Nov. 14). Crossbow use is not allowed in the Red Oak Unit during the archery-only bear season (Oct. 7-13).

The DNR may issue a crossbow permit or

a special permit to take game with a modified bow to a person with a valid hunting license to take a deer during an open deer season, if the person is certified as having permanent or temporary disability, as defined in Wildlife Conservation Order 5.95, which renders a person unable to use conventional archery equipment. Hunters may use a

modified bow where crossbows are legal. A modified bow is a bow, other than a crossbow, that has been physically altered so that it may be held, aimed and shot with one arm.

When hunting deer, bear, elk and turkey, crossbow hunters must use only

see **KNOW THE RULES** page 28



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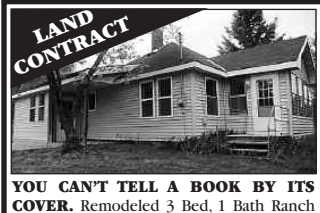
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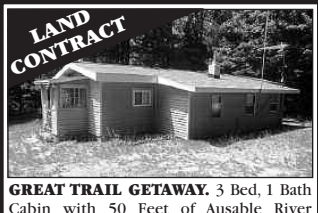
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The Fascinating Whitetail Breeding Cycle

Long before breeding begins for whitetail deer, the bucks are involved in behavior patterns that serve as a preparation for the fall breeding rituals.

During the summer months, small groups of bucks will live together in places where there is open grassland or other convenient feeding spots close by. There will be as many as six bucks in a group, along with some does and fawns.

At this stage, the bucks generally get along together, though the bigger ones are definitely the ones in charge. The dominant bucks are larger in size and have larger racks. The smaller deer in the group are generally docile around the larger ones and move out of their way.

Even though the social order is still being established among the bucks in this summer stage, there are rarely any significant disputes between them because their racks are not up to head-to-head battles. Not yet anyway. The antlers are "in velvet," meaning they are very sensitive at this point and can be injured in a fight. Bucks will often avoid heavily wooded areas during these months to protect their antlers.

As fall approaches, the good feelings among the bucks gradually begin to dissipate. The animals become more and more antagonistic toward each other as the weeks go by. This is especially true in September and October as their antlers begin to harden.

During this stage, known commonly as the prerut stage, the dominant bucks won't wander much. They'll stay close to home and let everybody know who the sheriff is.

It is during this prerut stage that the bucks will begin to mark their territory, letting other deer know where they are staking their claim. The bucks use their antlers to knock bark off the trees. At this point, the rubs are fairly small (6 to 8 inches) and cover less than half of the circumference of the tree; later in the process, the rubs will become much bigger. During these early rubs, the bucks will leave distinctive scents behind. The bucks usually prefer to rub pine, cherry and cedar trees that they can find, probably because

they are attracted by the aroma of the tree.

After the early rubs comes the sparring. The bucks are feeling their oats now and are willing to challenge each other.

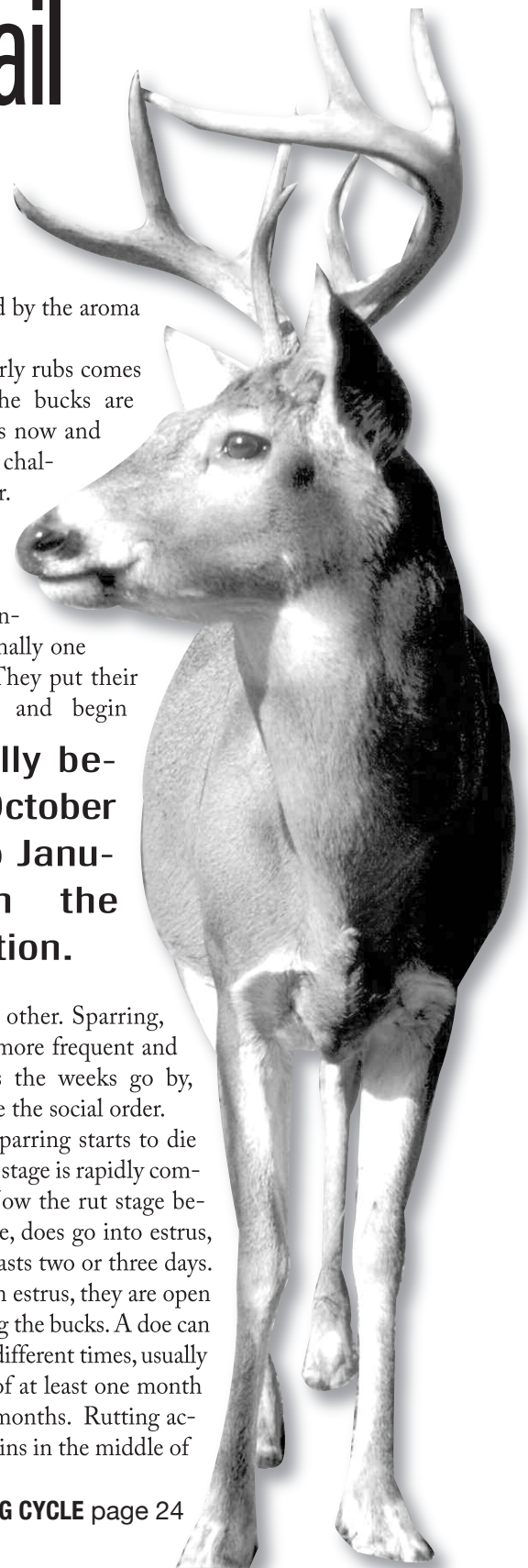
A challenging buck will hold his head low and approach another buck, normally one similar in size. They put their heads together and begin

Rutting activity usually begins in the middle of October and can last well into January, depending on the weather and the location.

pushing at each other. Sparring, which becomes more frequent and more intense as the weeks go by, helps to reinforce the social order.

When the sparring starts to die down, the prerut stage is rapidly coming to a close. Now the rut stage begins. In this stage, does go into estrus, which typically lasts two or three days. While they are in estrus, they are open to courtiers among the bucks. A doe can go into estrus at different times, usually over the period of at least one month and up to three months. Rutting activity usually begins in the middle of

see **BREEDING CYCLE** page 24



Venison

Grilled Venison Backstrap

"Tender chunks of venison are marinated twice, and wrapped in thick bacon before being grilled until crispy on the outside. A venison version of Filet Mignon. This is a heavenly use of the best part of a deer. For the BBQ sauce, I prefer hickory flavored."

Prep Time: 25 Min
Cook Time: 20 Min

Ingredients list:

- 2 pounds venison backstrap, cut into 2-inch chunks
- 1 quart apple cider
- 1 1/2 pounds thick sliced bacon
- 2 (12 ounce) bottles barbecue sauce, your choice

Instructions

Place chunks of venison into a shallow baking dish, and pour enough apple cider in to cover them. Cover, and refrigerate for 2 hours. Remove, and pat dry. Discard apple cider, and return venison to the dish. Pour barbecue sauce over the chunks, cover, and refrigerate for 2 to 3 more hours. Preheat an outdoor grill for high heat. Charcoal is best, but if you must, use gas. Remove meat from the refrigerator, and let stand for 30 minutes, or until no longer chilled. Wrap each chunk of venison in a slice of bacon, and secure with toothpicks.

Brush the grill grate with olive oil when hot, and place venison pieces on the grill so they are not touching. The bacon will kick up some flames, so be ready. Grill, turning occasionally, until the bacon becomes slightly burnt, 15 to 20 minutes. The slower, the better. Dig in, and prepare to want more!

Venison

Venison Wraps

"My husband and I came up with this while looking for new ways to cook venison. Everyone who has tried them has requested the recipe."

Prep Time: 15 Min
Cook Time: 20 Min

Original Recipe Yield
12 wraps

Ingredients list:

- 1/2 pound venison tenderloin
- 3 tablespoons zesty Italian dressing
- 12 slices bacon
- 1/4 cup cream cheese
- 12 slices pickled jalapeno peppers
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoning salt to taste

Instructions

Cut the venison tenderloin into 12 strips lengthwise. Toss with Italian dressing, and allow to marinate for 1 hour in the refrigerator.

Preheat a grill for medium heat.

To assemble the venison wraps, lay a strip of venison on top of a strip of bacon. Place a teaspoon of cream cheese at one end, and top with a slice of jalapeno. Roll up and secure with a skewer. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Season the wraps with desired amount of seasoning salt.

Grill for 10 minutes, then turn over, and continue cooking until the bacon is crisp.

Nutritional Information open nutritional information

Amount Per Serving
Calories: 306 | Total Fat: 22.3g | Cholesterol: 89mg

Venison

Venison Shish Kebabs

"Grilled marinated venison skewered with vegetables with a kick."

Prep Time: 30 Min
Cook Time: 20 Min
Yield 36 Skewers

Ingredients list:

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon white sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard powder
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 5 pounds venison, cut into cubes
- 36 wooden skewers, or as needed
- 6 onions, cut into large chunks
- 10 jalapeno chile peppers, stemmed and cut in half
- 4 green bell peppers, cut into large chunks

Instructions

Whisk the soy sauce, sugar, ginger, mustard powder, garlic powder, and cayenne pepper in a large bowl until the sugar has dissolved. Whisk in the vegetable oil, then stir in the venison cubes until evenly covered in the marinade. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap, and marinate in the refrigerator at least 4 hours. Place the wooden skewers into water to soak.

Preheat an outdoor grill for medium heat, and lightly oil the grate.

While the grill is heating, remove the venison from the marinade, and squeeze off excess. Discard the

remaining marinade. Thread the venison cubes onto the skewers, alternating with the onion, jalapeno, and bell pepper.

Cook the skewers on the preheated grill, turning occasionally until cooked to your desired degree of doneness, about 10 minutes total for medium-rare.

Nutritional Information open nutritional information

Amount Per Serving
Calories: 225
Total Fat: 8.8g
Cholesterol: 88mg

Venison

Easy Venison Stew

"This is a simple and tasty way I make venison. Like anything else it's better with fresh ingredients rather than canned, but this is what I had on hand. This is wonderful served over brown or wild rice."

Prep Time: 10 Min
Cook Time: 30 Min
Yield 4 servings

Ingredients list:

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves minced garlic
1 pound venison, cut into strips
1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (8 ounce) can sliced mushrooms, drained
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon dried sage
1/4 teaspoon dried tarragon
1/4 teaspoon salt

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat; cook and stir the onion and garlic in the hot oil until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the venison to the skillet; cook and stir until evenly browned. Stir the tomatoes, mushrooms, thyme, sage, tarragon, and salt into the mixture; cover the skillet and allow the mixture to simmer until the venison is tender, 30 to 40 minutes.

Venison

Venison Breakfast Sausage

"My husband is an avid hunter and we make this sausage every year. We add pork to the venison because the venison has such a low fat content. For the pork we get really fatty looking roast ground at our grocery store."

Prep Time: 45 Min

Ingredients list:

6 pounds ground venison
2 pounds ground pork
1/4 cup sugar-based curing mixture (such as Morton® Tender Quick®)
1 tablespoon fresh-ground black pepper
1 tablespoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
3 tablespoons dried sage

Instructions

In a very large bowl or plastic tub, sprinkle the venison and pork with the curing mixture, pepper, pepper flakes, sugar, and sage. Mix very well to evenly incorporate everything. When working with large quantities of sausage, cook a small piece to make sure the seasoning is exactly how you like it.

Divide into 1 pound portions and freeze.

Nutritional Information:

Amount Per Serving
Calories: 93
Total Fat: 4.1g
Cholesterol: 46mg

Venison

Whitetail Jerky

"Sweet and hot venison jerky is perfect for a snack while hiking, camping, fishing, etc."

Prep Time: 20 Min
Cook Time: 3 Hrs

Recipe Yield
1 pound of venison

Ingredients list:

1 tablespoon sugar-based curing mixture (such as Morton® Tender Quick®)
1 tablespoon dark brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon onion powder
1/4 teaspoon whole mustard seed
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/8 teaspoon liquid smoke
1 pound lean venison roast, trimmed of all fat and sinew

Instructions

Combine curing mixture, sugar, garlic powder, onion powder, mustard seed, ground pepper, red pepper, and liquid smoke in a large bowl. Mix until evenly blended, and set aside.

Slice venison with the grain into strips 3/16-inch thick, and 2-inches wide. Add to curing mixture and gently mix together until every slice is coated with curing mix. Place into a plastic bag, squeeze out all air, and seal; or place into a glass or plastic bowl and cover. Refrigerate for at least 18 hours to cure.

Turn oven to 150 degrees F (65 degrees C). Spray two wire racks with cooking spray, and place onto cookie sheets.

Squeeze excess liquid from the

venison, and lay the strips onto the prepared wire racks, making sure the pieces do not touch each other. Place the jerky into the oven, and cook until dried, 3 to 8 hours, depending on the temperature of your oven.

You can tell the meat is done when it no longer bends and you could break off a piece with ease, but the meat should not be so dry as to be crisp and break. It is better to be less dry than over dried, because you can finish it by letting it air dry to perfection. Do not worry about color changes of the jerky; it will get lighter and harder as it continues to dry over time. Jerky can be frozen or kept in sealed containers in the refrigerator.

What Influences Whitetail Activity?

Much has been written about deer movement in hunting magazines and I have been intrigued by differences in deer activity over the years myself. We have all been in the woods or maybe just while driving to or from work and noticed large differences in deer activity. You will have some days when you see many deer from your tree stand and other days when, from that same stand at the same time of day, you won't see a single deer. It is also most obvious when you drive to and from work at similar times each day and see large swings in deer activity. After thinking about these changes in deer activity, reading several articles and my hunting observations over the years I've found several situations that effect deer movement.

THE RUT

Some would say that the rut causes the demise of more mature bucks than any other factor. There's no doubt that deer are very active during the rut. It is an exciting time to be in the woods. The woods can explode around you at any time during the rut and at about any time of the day. All deer hunters have stories of seeing bucks on the prowl. One year a spike buck let me take

three shots at him. The doe that this buck was following ran right by me. When the buck ran by I got him stopped and he just stared at me. After my first shot missed he moved a few feet and let me miss another shot. When the doe saw that I had missed, she ran him back by me again. I think that she was trying to use me to get rid of him. Fortunately I've learned a thing or two about shooting a bow since this episode almost twenty years ago.

WEATHER

I have noticed that weather conditions and upcoming storms have an effect on deer activity. Warmer than average temperatures during hunting season definitely minimize deer activity. I also have found that wind makes deer very skittish. It seems that wind messes up all of their senses. The wind causes everything in the woods to move confusing their sight as well as both masking and making noise. I would also think that their great sense of smell is also confused as well. I have spent many days out hunting on windy days where I couldn't hear anything or tell what was or wasn't moving it's no wonder that the deer lay low on these days. Deer don't seem to mind a mild rain, but when the rain is falling heavier I've seldom seen a lot of activity.

Changes in the weather definitely affect deer activity. Deer seem to move. Most likely it is the change in barometric pressure that triggers deer before a storm. On several occasions I have noticed deer activity at odd times of the day in the hours before a storm.

THE MOON

There have been articles written about the moon phases and moon position





ately cause the deer
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arge storms arrive.
d deer out feeding
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on the effects of
on deer activity. I

haven't figured this one out yet but I think that there must be something to it. I have seen increased deer activity on days when I can't use the rut or weather to explain it. Research has been conducted in an effort to determine the effects of the moon phases in relation to the start of the rut. What I have read of this information seems promising as far as predicting the start of the rut and the intensity of the rut. A few years ago there was some research into the effects of moon positioning, or in other words when the moon was high in the sky, on deer activity. I haven't seen any further discussions on this theory in the past couple of

years. I have to believe that if the oceans tides can be predicted with the moon than we might also expect the animals to be effected as well.

Most of us only have a limited number of days that we can hunt each year and the best that we can do is to take full advantage of this time. If you can plan your hunting time in advance and you want high deer activity you should plan your hunt during the rut or pre-rut when moon prediction gurus say activity will be at the heaviest and pray for the right weather. In the end, the best way to handle changes in deer activity is to be in the woods as much as possible.

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Field Dressing:

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from www.DeerHunter.com

The field dressing chore need not be overly messy if the hunter carries the proper field dressing equipment and understands exactly what he is trying to accomplish with the field dressing process.

No, you're not trying to gut out the deer. The intestines are only a small part of what your going to remove from a freshly killed deer. Essentially, field dressing removes all the internal matter inside the deer's body cavity, including the chest and paunch regions. When this matter is removed, only the muscle and skeleton are left intact. It's really as simple as that, especially if you carry the proper field dressing equipment.

Because of possible disease or parasites, it's a good idea to carry a pair of shoulder length skinning gloves. They protect you, and they keep your hands, arms and clothes free of blood and other guppy stuff. You should also carry 30 feet of light cord, two sharp knives, a small hand saw, and a cheese

cloth game bag or two.

The good news is that the entire chest and paunch matter will easily slide out of the deer's body cavity. The trick is to detach all the connecting muscle and tissue that holds this matter inside the body.

The first chore is to insert your sharp knife alongside the anus and slice all around it until that intestinal tract is freed from the body. Use a length of cord and tie it shut to keep droppings from escaping inside of the deer later on when you pull this tract back in through the body cavity.

Next, lay the deer on its back and make a cut in the hide from the vent up to the deer's ribcage. Work that hide away from the middle of the belly and lower chest area until the muscle is exposed. Now gently tickle the muscle of the belly with the tip of the knife until it is sliced open and the guts try to pop out.

Now place your middle and index finger into the opening, thereby shoving the guts back in, and continue opening up the body cavity, sink those

two fingers to guide the knife and keep the guts away from the knife's sharp edge. Eventually, you'll have the body cavity opened up, exposing the stomach, liver and intestines.

Now, gently slice away the soft muscle, called the diaphragm, that separates the paunch from the chest. Reach up as far as you can into the neck and cut the windpipe loose. Now work your way along the deer's backbone, disconnecting the muscle that holds organs and paunch matter in place. The last chore is to reach in at the crotch and pull the tied-off anus tract back in through the body cavity.

Everything is now disconnected, and you can gently roll the deer onto its side, with the body cavity opening facing downhill. The entire insides of the body cavity will effortlessly slip out. Pull the carcass away from the messy area and allow it to lie on its belly side to drain the blood out of the cavity. Now you're ready to drag your trophy to the vehicle and get it home.



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GPS FOR HUNTERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

have fed. You can return to those same sites when you hunt next year and you'll probably find the deer feeding in about the same locations.

SAFETY

GPS is useful too because it allows you to safely and easily navigate your way back even if you get caught in bad weather and visibility is compromised.

Easily navigate back to base camp if you get separated from the rest of the group.

If you get in serious trouble, you can use a GPS unit to communicate your exact

position to rescue teams.

KNOWING WHERE YOU ARE

Hunters often become so preoccupied with the pursuit of game that they forget to pay attention to where they are going and when the game is finally down, they realize they don't have a clue as to where they are. This is when a GPS becomes useful.

Use GPS and your two way radio to communicate your location for an impromptu rendezvous with fellow hunters.

In the dark, it is easy to get turned around by mistake. You may not want to use a flashlight because you want to be as inconspicuous to game as possible. But traveling to and from a stand is no problem with a backlit GPS.

hurry back to camp to get some help and then have trouble finding his trophy again, especially in the dark. Marking the location of the downed animal on your GPS before heading back to camp makes it easy to relocate.

Sometimes hunters down a large animal and have to

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HUNTING STORIES

Opening Day

By **Tim Moore**

The day approaches with a strange mixture of anticipation and dread. Like all hunters, I want the season to begin, but that first day can be crazy. Sometimes in Western Washington opening day of deer season is not just about getting to your favorite hunting spot, it's about hunting a place to park! However, I'm determined.

Saturday, October 14. It's here. Rising early, I collect my gear, coffee, and wits two hours before daylight. My destination is just thirty minutes away on the beautiful Skykomish River. I suit up like a camouflage astronaut and spray myself down with an enzyme scent killer that I believe will hide my humanness so long as I don't breath, sweat, or succumb to nature's other call.

The fog is thick. I am as damp as duck's feet from walking the hundred feet from my porch to the truck. The drive is uneventful but slow going. The intermittent wipers are a must to cut the heavy veil of fog. Twenty miles of my trek is residential. It doesn't feel like I'm getting ready to experience nature's best. But right after the DQ and thrift store, I see a bridge. This bridge is the unofficial

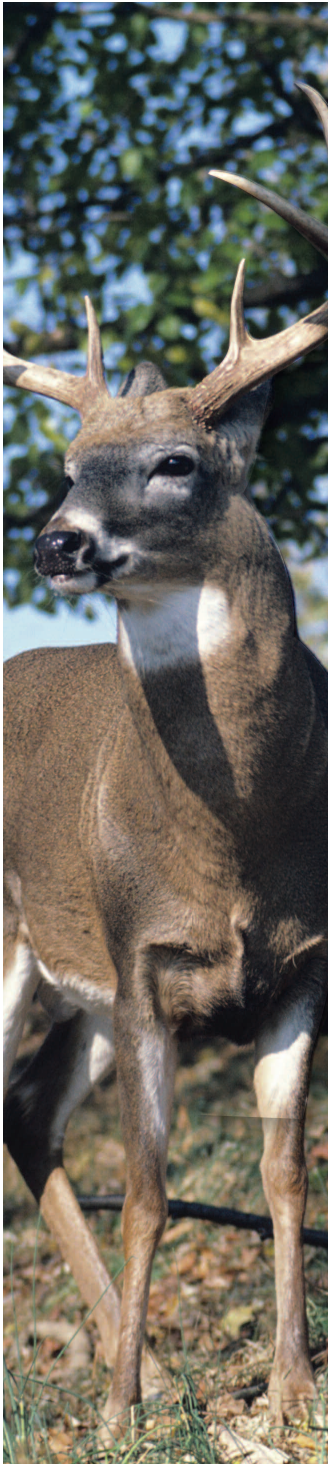
boundary between a white collar populous and the nearest, wonderful, shrinking, hunter's Eden. Does anyone else ever wonder if they were born in the wrong century?

Eight miles from subdivisions I pull off the road. No streetlights in sight. No sounds except the falling of leaves. It is Fall. Things are falling. The bank down to the river is steep, I hope I don't fall. No need to go to the gym after dragging a prize back up this hill. I'll cross that bridge when I come to it.

The most important thing is something I do not see, other vehicles. I am the first to arrive! I claim this section of earth as my own for the morning. I get my L.E.D light and trusty .35 caliber sidekick and I'm ready to descend through damp leaves, brush, and cobwebs to a little highway for furry woodland creatures I discovered scouting a week ago with a buddy from SAfrica.

I stumbled on what I

see **OPENING DAY** page 27

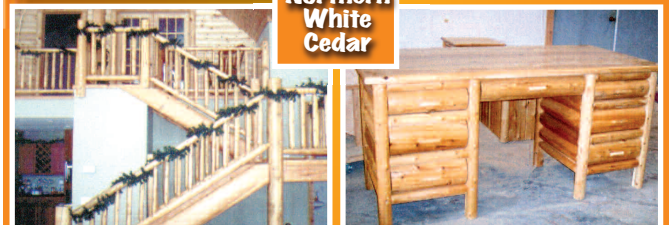


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Breeding Cycle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

October and can last well into January, depending on the weather and the location.

When the does are in estrus, they are by no means passive. The bucks have been busy making scrapes in the ground as a way of letting the does know they are available and "very interested" in getting together. A buck will generally make these scrapes in the ground near his home base. The bucks will deposit scents or urine into the scrapes they've made, giving off a sweet aroma which the does in estrus find rather enchanting. The does in estrus are drawn by the strong scent and eventually find them-

selves at the place where the buck has made his scrapes in the ground. Then, the romance between the buck and the doe blossoms. That is, if the buck is close by. If the buck happens to be elsewhere, the doe will drop her calling card and deposit some of her own urine in the buck's scrapes. Or she will make some scrapes of her own.

As experienced hunters know, the rut stage is the best time to go after the bucks. They have "other things" on their minds and are much more careless than usual.

It is easy to tell when you have encountered a buck that is interested in courting. He

has his head low and his chin up and he is moving with a sense of great purpose and urgency ... toward the doe of his dreams. He will make long, loud grunts as his way of inviting the doe to meet. If the doe is ready for breeding, she will respond. If the doe is not ready, she will run away. It is during the rut stage that bucks have their fiercest battles with each other. They don't want any competition and the sight of another male puts them into a frenzy. When a deer and doe get together while the doe is in estrus, the bucks stays with her day and night. This is known as tending.

During the days when the doe is in estrus, the animals will engage in breeding activity several times.

When the breedable does have all been bred, the final phase of the whitetail breeding season begins. This is known as postrut. Now the bucks discontinue their rubbing and scraping and become less interested in the females. In a month or so, most of the bucks will lose their antlers. With the breeding out of the way, the bucks concentrate on other matters, like eating. They start to feed heavily in preparation for the approaching winter.

The does will eventually give birth in the spring, usually to twins or triplets. The does will remain apart until the fawns are fully nursed, then return to join the family group as the breeding cycle starts anew.

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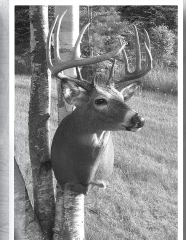
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Baiting and Feeding

In Michigan, baiting and feeding is allowable except in Deer Management Unit 487, the six-county bovine tuberculosis zone in northeastern Lower Michigan (Alcona, Alpena, Iosco, Montmorency, Oscoda and Presque Isle counties). The rules for baiting and feeding deer are as follows.

Feeding for Recreational Viewing:

"Feed" means a substance composed of grain, mineral, salt, fruit, vegetable, hay or other food material, that may attract deer or elk for any reason other than hunting.

The feed material may be of any food type.

The volume of feed at any residence cannot exceed two gallons.

Feed may be no more than 100 yards from a residence on land owned or possessed by that person.

The feed must be scattered on

the ground. It can be scattered by any means, including mechanical spin-cast feeders, provided that the spin-cast feeder does not distribute more than the maximum daily volume allowed.

The feed must be scattered or dispersed at least 100 yards from any area accessible to cattle, goats, sheep, new world camelids, bison, swine, horses or captive cervidae.

Food plots, naturally occurring foods, standing agricultural crops or food placed as a result of using normal agricultural practices are not considered to

be bait or feed.

Baiting:

"Bait" means a substance composed of grains, minerals, salt, fruits, vegetables, hay or other food materials, which may lure, entice or attract deer as an aid in hunting.

Baiting may occur only from Oct. 1 to Jan. 1.

The bait material may be of any food type.

The volume of bait at any hunting site cannot exceed two gallons.

The bait must be dispersed over a minimum of a 10-foot by

10-foot area.

The bait must be scattered directly on the ground. It can be scattered

by any means, including mechanical spin-cast feeders, provided that the spin-cast feeder does not distribute more than the maximum volume allowed.

The DNR requests that individuals not place bait or feed repeatedly at the same point on the ground, and only bait when actively hunting. This may minimize the chance of direct and indirect exposure of deer to diseases that may be present.

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Outstanding access located off Hwy. US 23 is approximately 15 miles east of the City of Cheboygan. This parcel is gated to insure private, and limited access without interruption. Current owner has cut in several trails that wind through out this beautiful property. Unlimited opportunity to develop food plots, build the blinds of your choice, and make this your own wildlife sanctuary awaits the new owner.

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Opening Day

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

call 'Deer Island' by accident a year ago pursuing my other passion, fishing. I was targeting blue-backs. Salmon were jumping. Flying raptors lined the bank of the river. It was surreal. I love raptors. Eagles and hawks are the greatest and most blessed hunters. Can you imagine being able to just forget about the traffic, gas prices, tree stands, expensive hunting gear, licenses, hunting regulations that require legal counsel to decipher, and just launching out wherever you want to hunt using built-in, God-given weaponry to find and fall your prey? I love raptors and I envy them.

The fish were jumping and the raptors were flying. It was quite a while before I even looked down. But when I did there were tracks in the sand; not just a few, not all the same size. I thought, 'interesting.' My commitment came quickly to return God willing, minus a pole, plus a rifle.

So here I am a year later. I take my place on the ground overlooking the smaller tributary of the island and the game trail. I'm hidden by just enough underbrush to seclude, yet afford a somewhat unobstructed shot. I sit still in the darkness, motionless in the dampness. My legs fall asleep: pins and needles. My back starts to ache. It's

cold. It's wonderful. Images of trees, bushes, rocks, and I wonder if that was a deer' begin to emerge from the foggy darkness. It won't be long now. Prophetically I think, "He will appear out of the dark mist. I'll have to concentrate on breathing normally. I'll hear the thumping of my own heart in my ears..." ATV's?! I hear ATV's. I hear yahoos talking about hunting. I ponder the ramifications of shooting their wheels out. Maybe I better not. This is my piece of earth! It's my island for the morning. I guess they didn't get the email. "God, if I have to share my island, let them run the deer right over top of me."

Their noise pollution fades, eventually. I hear nothing but falling leaves again. It's daylight but still foggy. Something moves: trots. It's canine: coyote. He's coming straight at me. Should I shoot? No. It might spook the deer. He's spooking the deer. I think I'll shoot. He's fifty yards away and his head is down. He's on the hunt. So am I. I raise my gun. He turns into the brush. He's gone. Several minutes pass. A coyote head rises from a bush eighty yards away. Gun up. Fire! Head ducks. I don't think I hit him. I better go check. No hair, no blood, and no coyote.

The bank overlooking

the tributary is grassy. The game trail is only fifteen feet down. I lay down like a lion in the grass. I can see about fifty yards of streambed. My caffeine is wearing off. It's pretty comfortable here. I think I'll rest my eyes. A few minutes pass. I'm jump-started by a hawk's cry. No deer in sight. I think I'll just talk to the Nature-maker. After a few minutes of silent communication, my eyes open with my internal 'amen' to meet with a little doe's gaze. She's on the trail only fifteen feet away, head cocked sideways, big ears erect, wondering what this big alien lump is on the hill in front of her. Her sister appears beside her: twin yearlings: They are tentative but

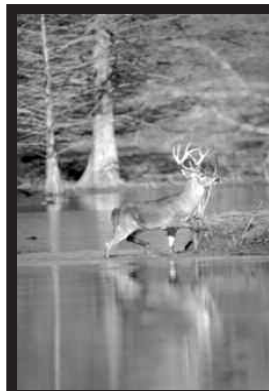
curious. I see more movement to my right. It's mom. She stops and with deer telepathy calls her daughters to herself. They move away slowly: take a few steps, stop and look back at the lump in the grass: repeat. This process continues until the three become beautiful, ghostly apparitions swallowed by the fog.

It's time to go home. Civilization still exists (and a) family waits to do family things. That's O.K. Family is important. My wife will be happy that I get home close to the time I said I'd be back. But I'll be back. After all, my shrinking paradise is not far from my subdivision.

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KNOW THE RULES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

arrows, bolts and quarrels with a broadhead hunting type of point not less than 7/8 of an inch wide with a minimum of 14 inches in length. See Hunter Orange Clothing Requirements.

Archery Deer Seasons

During the archery deer seasons, it is illegal to carry afield a pistol, revolver or other firearm while bow hunting for deer.

Exceptions: This prohibition does not apply to pistols carried under authority of a concealed pistol license or properly carried under authority of a specific exception from the requirement of a concealed pistol license. However, a concealed pistol license does not authorize the individual to use the pistol to take game except as provided by law.

November 10-14

It is unlawful to carry afield or transport any rifle (including rimfire) or shotgun if you have buckshot, slug, ball loads or cut shells.

Exception: You may

transport a firearm to your deer camp or to a target range during this period if the firearm is properly transported (see Transporting - Carrying Firearms and Bows and Arrows).

A resident who holds a fur harvester license may carry a .22 caliber or smaller rimfire firearm while hunting furbearers or checking a trap line during the open season for hunting furbearers or trapping furbearing animals. You also may target-shoot on your own property provided there is no attempt to take game.

Nov. 15-30 Firearm Deer Season

It is illegal for a person taking or attempting to take game to carry or possess afield a centerfire or muzzleloading rifle, a bow and arrow, a centerfire or black powder handgun, or a shotgun with buckshot, slug or ball loads or cut shells, unless you have in your possession a 2011 firearm deer, combination deer or antlerless deer license for the appropriate DMU, with an unused kill tag

issued in your name, or a 2011 firearm deer, combination deer or antlerless deer license for the appropriate DMU issued in your name with an unused deer management assistance (DMA) permit kill tag or an unused managed deer hunting permit.

Muzzleloading Deer Seasons

During the December muzzleloading seasons, muzzleloading deer hunters can carry afield and use only a crossbow (except in the Upper Peninsula) or a muzzleloading rifle, a muzzleloading shotgun, or a black powder handgun loaded with black powder or a commercially manufactured black powder substitute. Only certified disabled hunters may use a crossbow or a modified bow during the muzzleloading season in the Upper Peninsula

All Firearm Deer Seasons - Rifle Zone

In the rifle zone, deer may be taken with handguns, rifles, crossbows, bows and arrows, shotguns and muzzleloading firearms including black powder handguns. It is legal to hunt deer in the rifle zone with any caliber

of firearm except a .22 caliber or smaller rimfire (rifle or handgun). During the firearm deer seasons, a firearm deer hunter may carry afield a bow and arrow, crossbow and firearm.

Exception: See Muzzleloading Deer Seasons above for restrictions during this season.

All Firearm Deer Seasons - Shotgun Zone

In the shotgun zone, all hunters afield from Nov. 15-30, and all deer hunters in this zone during other deer seasons, must abide by the following firearm restrictions or use a crossbow or bow and arrow. Legal firearms are as follows:

A shotgun may have a smooth or rifled barrel and may be of any gauge.

A muzzleloading rifle or black powder handgun must be loaded with black powder or a commercially manufactured black powder substitute.

A conventional (smokeless powder) handgun must be .35 caliber or larger and loaded with straight-walled cartridges and may be single- or multiple-shot but cannot exceed a maximum capacity of nine rounds in the barrel and magazine combined.

see **RULES** page 31

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FORECAST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

details.

The DNR also reminds hunters not to overlook the many other hunting and trapping seasons available in Michigan. These other seasons provide their own unique opportunities and can offer chances to scout or find potential new deer hunting locations. Explore your options at www.michigan.gov/hunting or www.michigan.gov/trapping. With preparation, attention to safety, and awareness of current hunting regulations, hunters can be ready to head into the field to enjoy the recreation opportunity offered by the 2011 Michigan deer season.

As an important reminder, those hunting within the UP and the multi-county Deer Management Unit (DMU) 487 in the tuberculosis (TB) zone must decide, before purchasing their deer license, if they wish the opportunity to take one or two antlered deer. Those desiring the opportunity to shoot two bucks must purchase a combination license. Both bucks have antler point restrictions. One buck must have one antler with at least 3 antler points; the other buck must have one antler with at least 4 antler points. Those choosing to purchase a firearm deer license and/or an archery deer license are limited to taking

only one buck from within these areas during all seasons combined.

Within most of the areas, a deer must have just one antler 3 or more inches in length, but point restrictions remain in place for some individual DMUs as well. These include DMU 117 (Drummond Island) and DMU 122 (primarily in southern Dickinson County, along the Wisconsin border) in the UP, and one small DMU (DMU135 in Iosco County) in the TB zone. In DMU 117, bucks must have at least one forked antler. In DMU 122 bucks must have at least one three-point antler. And in DMU 135, bucks must have at least one forked antler to be legal. Finally, within DMU 487 ONLY, hunters may harvest an antlerless deer with a firearm or combination license within

the Nov. 15-30 firearm season or the Dec. 9-18 muzzleloader season.

UPPER PENINSULA

More than 100,000 hunters have pursued deer in the UP in recent years, including approximately 30,000 participants in the archery season, over 90,000 firearm hunters, and more than 20,000 hunters pursuing deer with a muzzleloader.

Within the UP, deer populations continue to slowly increase following a second mild winter in a row. Fawn production should be good, though predation may have produced some losses. Antlered buck numbers will likely be on the rise, as the increased production of fawns in 2010 should

see FORECAST page 30

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FORECAST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

lead to greater antlered buck numbers this year. More deer will be found in the Southern UP near Lake Michigan, with fewer in the Northern UP near Lake Superior. Antlerless licenses are available in DMUs 022, 055, 122, 152, 155, 252, and 255 for 2011. Special buck harvest restrictions noted above are in place throughout the UP.

NORTHERN LOWER PENINSULA

An average of about 285,000 hunters have pursued deer in the NLP over the last few years, including more than 115,000 participants in the archery season, an average of over 250,000 firearm hunters, and more than 50,000 hunters pursuing deer with a muzzleloader.

Baiting has been reinstated as legal for most of the NLP; however, baiting is still banned in DMU 487. Baiting may only occur from October 1 through January 1. Hunters are restricted to no more than 2 gallons of bait per hunting site; the bait must be spread over 100 square feet (equivalent to a 10 foot by 10 foot area).

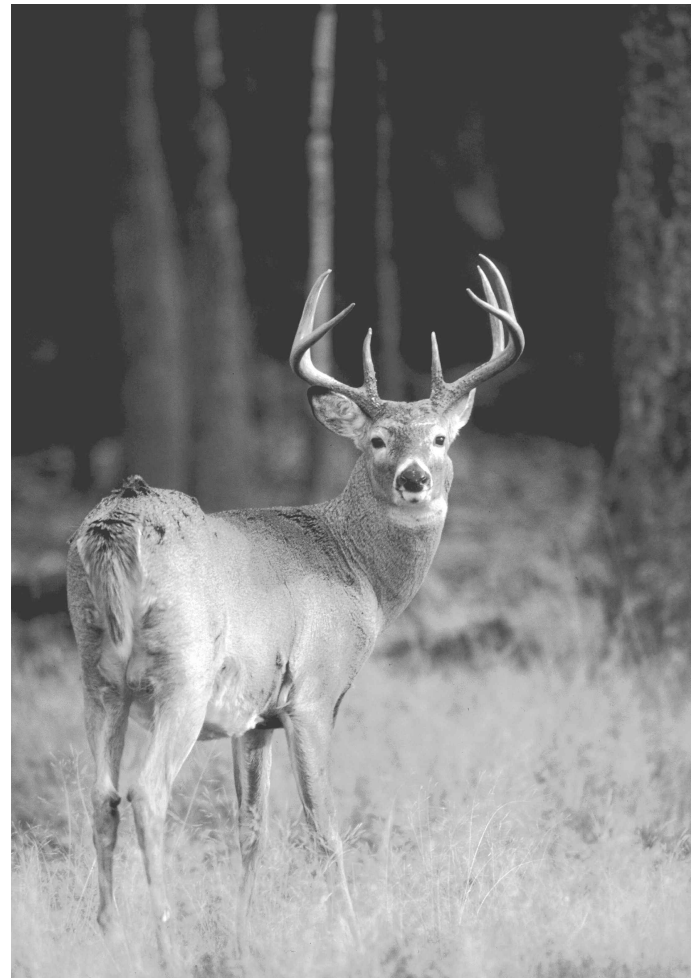
Within the eastern portion of the NLP, TB prevalence continues to show a declining trend over the long-term, but no detectable change has occurred over the previous 5 years. Goals and hunting regulations in the eastern NLP are therefore driven more by the objective to continue to reduce TB prevalence than by num-

bers of deer in this region. It is important for hunters to continue to observe the ban on baiting and feeding in DMU 487 and to harvest at least as many antlerless deer as bucks.

Mild winter conditions for the second year in a row in the NLP should lead to increasing deer numbers. Deer numbers on many state land areas appear to be on the rise, though they are still below goal in some areas. In some NLP units, indications are that there is an overabundance of deer on private land but lower than desired populations on public land. Special antlerless seasons and private land license quotas are used in these units to target deer on private land even if abundant sign and sightings do not occur on public land. The number of antlerless deer licenses is the same as last year in eastern NLP multi-unit area DMU 487, while no antlerless permits were made available in four counties (Cheboygan, Otsego, Roscommon, and Kalkaska). Special buck harvest restrictions noted above are in place in DMU 487. Within DMU 487 ONLY, hunters may harvest an antlerless deer with a firearm or combination license within the Nov. 15-30 firearm season or the Dec. 9-18 muzzleloader season.

SOUTHERN LOWER PENINSULA

An average of nearly 360,000 hunters have pursued deer in the SLP over the last few years, including more



than 185,000 participants in the archery season, more than 290,000 firearm hunters, and an average of about 125,000 hunters pursuing deer with a muzzleloader. Baiting has been reinstated as legal throughout the SLP. Baiting may only occur from October 1 through January 1. Hunters are restricted to no more than 2 gallons of bait per hunting site spread over 100 square feet (equivalent to a 10 foot by 10 foot area).

The deer population in southern Michigan is expected to be similar to the last few years. Abundant food and cover in the form of agricul-

tural crops and scattered swamps and woodlots provide very good habitat across the southern Michigan landscape. This high quality habitat, combined with relatively mild winter conditions, results in an abundant and productive deer population. Deer populations generally exceed DNR goals and fawns generally come in sets of twins and triplets. High numbers of antlerless permits are available again this year, particularly in the multi-county DMU 486 (most of southern Michigan except St. Clair, Macomb, Wayne, and Monroe Counties).

RULES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

During the firearm deer seasons, a firearm deer hunter may carry afield a bow and arrow, crossbow and firearm. Exceptions:

See Muzzleloading Deer Seasons above for restrictions during this season.

From Nov. 15-30, a .22 caliber or smaller rimfire rifle or handgun may be used to kill a raccoon while hunting raccoons with dogs between the hours of 7 p.m. and 6 a.m.

A .22 caliber or smaller rimfire may be used to dispatch coyote, fox, raccoon, bobcat and badger from Nov. 15-30 in the Shotgun Zone provided the firearm is loaded at the point of

kill only.

License Requirements -

Those taking or attempting to take game and in possession of a firearm, crossbow, slingshot or bow and arrow must have the appropriate hunting license with them and the identification used to purchase that license and exhibit both upon demand of a Michigan conservation officer, a tribal conservation officer or any other law enforcement officer. Those using a crossbow must obtain a free crossbow stamp annually.

A hunting license is not required when target-practicing or sighting-in a firearm at an identifiable, artificially constructed target, and there is no attempt to take game.



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