

Regulations in red are new this year.

THE BLACK BEAR hunting season consists of two separate segments, A and B. Segment A is October 9–14, 2017. Segment B is December 4–9, 2017. The bag limit is one bear per hunter during Segment A, and each hunter may purchase two permits, which must be for two *different* zones. If no bear is taken during Segment A, the permit(s) is still valid for hunting in Segment B. If a hunter harvests a bear during Segment A, that permit is no longer valid, though the hunter may purchase a replacement permit for that same zone to use during Segment B, if available when permit sales re-open on November 1.

Following commencement of the black bear season, the Fish and Wildlife Director may announce closure of the entire season or extension of Segment B of the season based upon data obtained and reviewed by Fish and Wildlife. A season closure, if announced, will become effective 24 hours from the daily legal closing time of the day on which the decision is made. The dates of a Segment B season extension, if announced, will be Wednesday, December 13 through Saturday, December 16, 2017. Hunting regulations for the Segment B season extension will be the same as those during the regular part of Segment B. Only those permit holders with a valid permit(s) for Segment B who did not harvest a bear during the regular part of Segment B may hunt during the Segment B extension. The notification number for season closure or extension is the permit hotline number, (609) 292-9192. Season closure or extension notification will also be announced by news release, radio and Fish and Wildlife's website NJFishandWildlife.com.

Don't Wait to Buy Bear Permits!

The lottery for bear permits has been eliminated. All hunters (especially hunters who plan to hunt only in Segment B) are **strongly encouraged to purchase their permit(s) during the September–October sales period** rather than wait until permit sales re-open on November 1 since bear permits **may sell out** in some zones before the Segment A hunting period ends. See page 12.

Black Bear Hunting Season

Hunting Hours: Legal hunting hours for black bears shall be ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.

2017 Black Bear Season Hunting Dates

Hunting Segment	Legal Sporting Arms	Dates
A	Archery	Mon., Oct. 9– Sat., Oct. 14, 2017
A	Archery / Muzzleloader	Thurs., Oct. 12– Sat., Oct. 14, 2017
B	Shotgun / Muzzleloader	Mon., Dec. 4– Sat., Dec. 9, 2017
B Extension (if authorized)	Shotgun / Muzzleloader	Wed., Dec. 13– Sat., Dec. 16, 2017

Apprentice License holders are not eligible to hunt black bear. The skills necessary to hunt black bear are not commensurate with an introductory hunting experience as the apprentice license program is intended to provide.

Bag Limit: One bear of either sex and any age may be harvested per permit, but only one bear may be harvested per segment, regardless of the number of permits the hunter holds. A total of two bears may be harvested per hunter—one bear in segment A and one bear in segment B, with valid permits. It is unlawful to take or attempt to take or continue to hunt for more than the number of black bear permitted.

Special permit requirement: All black bear hunters must have a current and valid archery or firearm or all-around sportsman hunting license and a special Black Bear Hunting Permit issued by Fish and Wildlife. See *Black Bear Management Zones* page 52; see also *Black Bear Hunting Permits*, page 12.

Youth Bear Hunters: Youth hunters with a valid hunting license must also possess a black bear hunting permit. Youth hunters aged 10 through 13 on or before October 8, 2017 must be under the direct supervision of a properly licensed adult (21 years of age or older) while bear hunting. The adult must also possess a black bear hunting permit. Direct supervision means the youth hunter and the supervising adult are together at the same location. The youth hunter may not hunt independently of the adult.

Essential Black Bear Bowhunting Strategies

Improve your black bear hunting success while showing respect for the wild game you pursue. Be prepared to make a quick, clean harvest.

- All hunters must **take only high percentage shots.**
- Keep all shots **within 20 yards.**
- Bear must either be standing **broadside or slightly quartering away** for a good shot.
- The **front leg must be extended forward** in order to open up access to the vital zone.
- The length of hair and thickness of fat on a bear's belly make it more difficult to determine the vital zone location than on a deer.

See *Black Bear Hunting Tips — Including Bowhunter Info!* on page 53. Other important black bear hunting FAQs are answered on our website at NJFishandWildlife.com/bearseason_faqs.htm.



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Bear Hunting

REGULATIONS

Firearms, Bows and Ammunition Legal for Bear Hunting

Shotgun (Segment B only): not smaller than 20 gauge nor larger than 10 gauge with rifled slugs and capable of holding not more than three rounds. Lead, lead alloy or copper rifled slug or sabot slug. Buckshot is prohibited.

Muzzleloader Rifle (only during the last three days of Segment A plus all of Segment B): must be single-barrel, single shot rifles not less than .44 caliber. Flintlock, percussion and in-line ignitions are allowed. Double barrel muzzleloaders prohibited. Persons hunting with a muzzleloader rifle must also possess a current and valid rifle hunting permit.

Archery Equipment: (Segment A only) Bows used for bear hunting (long, recurve, compound or crossbow) must have a minimum draw pull weight of 35 pounds at the archers draw length (long and recurve bow) or peak weight (compound bow), or 75 pounds minimum draw weight for a crossbow. Arrows must be fitted with a well-sharpened metal broadhead with a minimum width of 3/4 inch.

Additional Black Bear Hunting Regulations

- Firearm black bear hunters must wear a hat of solid fluorescent hunter orange or an outer garment containing at least 200 square inches of fluorescent orange material visible from all sides at all times while bear hunting and all bear hunters must follow the fluorescent orange requirements pertaining to hunting from a ground blind as specified under *Hunter Orange*, page 27. During the last three days of Segment A, bowhunters in treestands should consider wearing hunter orange.
- It shall be illegal to use dogs to pursue or run black bears.
- No person shall attempt to take or kill a black bear or have in their possession or control any firearm, bow or other weapon of any kind, while elevated in a standing tree or in a structure of any kind within 300 feet of a baited area. On national wildlife refuges and at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the distribution of bait and/or hunting over bait is prohibited. Hunters should also check with the landowner or administrative agency before placing bait on any hunting area.
- Allowable hunting methods: stand hunting, still-hunting or drive hunting.
- Hunters using or possessing any shotgun slug in the field during the bear seasons must have a shotgun with adjustable open iron or peep sights or a scope affixed to the shotgun.
- Telescopic sights of any magnification (scope power) are permitted for bear hunting on all firearms (including muzzleloading rifles) and also on crossbows.
- Shotgun shells containing single spherical projectiles referred to as pumpkin balls are prohibited.
- While bear hunting with a shotgun, it is illegal

to have in possession any ammunition not authorized for bear hunting.

- Only one muzzleloader rifle may be in possession while bear hunting.
- All firearms must be cased and unloaded while being transported in vehicles.
- It is illegal to take or attempt to take a bear in a den structure.

Black Bear Hunting on State Lands

- Baiting is **prohibited** within 450 feet of campsites and picnic areas in all state parks and forests to coincide with the bear management policy for these areas. Learn these locations **BEFORE** you hunt.
- Hunting is prohibited in the Cedar Swamp Natural Area at High Point State Park due to sensitive wetland habitat that could be impacted by going off trail in this area.
- ATV use is prohibited in state parks, forests and wildlife management areas. However, hunters might be permitted to use ATVs to retrieve a bear but only with approval from, and on a pathway approved by, the park superintendent or designee (for state parks and forests) or from Fish and Wildlife's regional Law Enforcement office (for assistance on wildlife management areas).

2016 Black Bear Harvest by Zone and County

2016 Harvest			
BMZ	Hunting Segment A	Hunting Segment B	Total
1	121	23	144
2	199	28	227
3	183	14	197
4	57	9	66
5	2	0	2
Total	562	74	636

2016 Harvest			
County	Hunting Segment A	Hunting Segment B	Total
Sussex	296	48	344
Warren	96	10	106
Morris	98	6	104
Passaic	56	8	64
Hunterdon	13	2	15
Bergen	3	0	3
Total	562	74	636

No bears were harvested in the portions of Mercer and Somerset counties open to bear hunting in 2016.

Black Bear Management Zones

Map for general reference only.

For a complete description of the Black Bear Management Zones, scan this QR code or see Fish and Wildlife's bear management zone webpage at NJFishandWildlife.com/bearzonemap.htm.



After Harvesting a Bear—Mandatory Bear Check Requirement

Properly licensed hunters who harvest a black bear shall immediately complete and affix to the bear hide the "Black Bear Transportation Tag" from their Black Bear Hunting Permit. Information included on the black bear transportation tag shall include: the hunter's name, address, Conservation ID number; date and time of kill; nearest road, county and municipality of kill; and the sex of the black bear. When field dressing a black bear, leave the sex organs intact and attached to the body. **A harvested black bear may be quartered and brought out of the field in sections, provided all parts are brought to the check station at the same time.**

Successful hunters must take the black bear to a designated check station on the day of the kill by 9 p.m. during Segment A or by 7 p.m. during Segment B. Hunters shall surrender the black bear transportation tag and will be issued a legal possession seal.

Any legally killed black bear recovered too late to be brought to a designated black bear check station by the check station closing time on the date of the kill must be reported immediately by telephone to

the Northern Region Office, Bureau of Law Enforcement (908) 735-8240. On the telephone message recording device, hunters must leave their name, address and a telephone number where they can be reached. The harvested black bear must be brought to a designated black bear check station on the next weekday to be registered and to receive a legal possession seal. To protect the meat from spoilage, the hunter may bring only the head and hide to the check station the next day. Note: within 48 hours after a bear is checked, a hunter may be required to produce the meat of the bear or produce records relating to the location of the meat, such as a butcher shop, upon request of a conservation officer. After check stations have closed on Saturday during the regular season segments or Saturday during a season extension (if announced), hunters reporting a bear harvest via the Law Enforcement recorder will be contacted by a Fish and Wildlife biologist on Sunday to legally check the bear and to collect biological data.

Mandatory Black Bear Check Stations

In the event of a season extension, check station information will be announced via the permit hotline (609) 292-9192, news release, and on Fish and Wildlife's website NJFishandWildlife.com.

Hours

Segment A: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Segment B: noon to 7 p.m.

Warren County

- ♦ Pequest Wildlife Management Area
605 Pequest Road, Oxford

Morris County

- ♦ Black River Wildlife Management Area*
(Segment A only)
275 North Road, Chester
- ♦ Green Pond Golf Course
765 Green Pond Rd, Rt. 513, Rockaway

Sussex County

- ♦ Flatbrook Roy WMA**
Rt. 615 (Walpack Rd.), Sandyston
- ♦ Whittingham WMA
148 Fredon-Springdale Rd., Newton

* Operating Opening Day and Saturday during Segment A only.

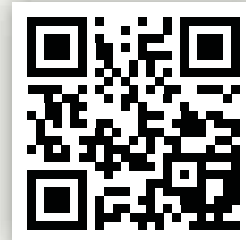
** Operating all week during Segment A plus operating only on Opening Day and Saturday during Segment B.

Black Bear Game Care

As when cooking any raw meat, care must be taken to prevent exposure to disease when consuming wild game. Black bear are known to carry *Trichinella*, a parasite commonly associated with pork. States nationwide report incidents of bears infected with *Trichinella* and New Jersey is no different. A *Trichinella* infection (Trichinellosis) is a risk only if the meat is cooked improperly. To ensure bear meat is safe to eat, be sure it's cooked to an internal temperature of 170 degrees for at least 15 seconds.

Toxoplasmosis, most commonly associated with cats, is another parasitic disease that may be transmitted to humans if meat is not handled properly. To eliminate any health risks associated with Toxoplasmosis make sure no one who may be pregnant handle raw bear meat and always cook the meat thoroughly as you would for *Trichinella*. If you follow these simple guidelines you can enjoy your bear meat without any concern for exposure to *Trichinella* or Toxoplasmosis. **Note: Black bear management zones are different than deer management zones. Choose carefully when purchasing a black bear permit. For the 2017 season, only zones 1-5 are open for hunting.** 🐾

Black Bear Hunting Tips — Including Bowhunting Info!



Scan this code for tips on hunting New Jersey's black bear or visit NJFishandWildlife.com/qr/beartips.htm.

Proper Meat Handling

It is critical to remove the hide and cool the bear immediately after checking the bear. Cooling a bear with ice from inside the body cavity is inadequate to prevent the meat from spoiling. If the hide remains on overnight, the meat may be unsuitable for consumption.

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