

## REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

**THE BLACK BEAR** hunting season consists of two separate segments, A and B. Segment A is October 12–17, 2020. The season bag limit is one bear per permit, but only one bear may be taken per segment, regardless of the number of permits the hunter holds. In total, a hunter with valid permits may harvest up to two bears, one in each segment.

### State Lands

All state lands, including all state forests, parks, recreation areas, historic sites, natural areas and wildlife management areas, were closed to hunting of black bears as of August 30, 2018 and will remain closed for the 2020 season.

### Black Bear Hunting Permits

A total of 11,000 black bear hunting permits, allocated by bear management zone, will be available to properly licensed hunters and farmer hunters. These permits are valid for the entire black bear hunting season, including Segment A in October

### Don't Wait to Buy Bear Permits!

There is no lottery for bear permits. All hunters (especially hunters who plan to hunt only in Segment B) are **strongly encouraged to purchase their permit(s) during the September 14–October 17 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.

and Segment B in December. A hunter may not possess more than two unfilled permits at any time during the entire season; these permits must be for 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A, the permit(s) is still valid for hunting in Segment B. If a hunter harvests a bear during Segment A, that permit is no longer valid, though the hunter may purchase a replacement permit for that same zone to use during Segment B, if available when permit sales re-open on Nov. 1. Hunters who purchase only one permit prior to the end of Segment A, and **do not harvest a bear** during Segment A, may

continue to use that permit during Segment B, plus may purchase a second permit after Nov. 1 for a different zone.

Hunters who purchase two permits prior to the end of Segment A and **do not fill either permit during Segment A** may NOT purchase a third permit when permit sales reopen in November.

Permit sales are broken into two periods: 10 a.m. on Sept. 9–Oct. 19 and again beginning at 10 a.m. on Nov. 1 until the end of the season or until permit quotas are reached. Hunters are strongly urged to purchase permits during the early sales period. Permits can be purchased at license agents or online.

For permit application process, changes, status check and to claim your permit, see details on page 9.

2020 Black Bear Hunting Permit Quota

Black Bear Management Zone	# of Permits
1	2,000
2	3,000
3	3,000
4	2,000
5	1,000

Following commencement of the black bear season, the Fish and Wildlife Director may announce

## Essential Black Bear Bowhunting Strategies



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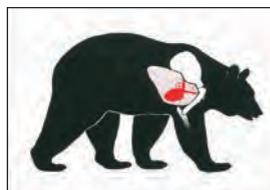
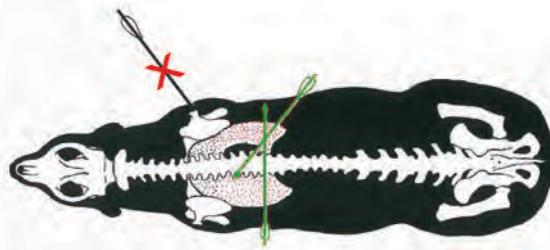
Improve your black bear hunting success while showing respect for the wild game you pursue. Be prepared to make a quick, clean harvest.

- Hunters **must ONLY** take **high-percentage** shots.
- Keep all shots **within 20 yards**.
- Shoot **only** when a bear is standing **on all fours**, broadside or slightly quartering away.
- The front leg **must be extended forward** to create access to the vital area.
- Black bear's long hair and thick belly fat make it more difficult than with a deer to determine the location of the vital zone.

See *Black Bear Hunting Tips — Including Bowhunter Info!* on page 46. Other important black bear hunting FAQs are answered on our website at [NJFishandWildlife.com/bearseason\\_faq.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/bearseason_faq.htm).

### Black Bear Shot Placement Guide

The quartering-away position offers the best lethal approach. Further behind the shoulder is the best aiming spot. Avoid a shot that will hit the paunch area.



Gun or Bow



Wait for this near front leg to move forward like the image shown at left.

**Remember these shot placement images and make wise decisions for a successful harvest!**

Images from IBEP

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 16 through Saturday, December 19, 2020. 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.

## Black Bear Hunting Season

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

## 2020 Black Bear Season Hunting Dates

Hunting Segment	Legal Sporting Arms	Dates
A	Archery	Mon., Oct. 12– Sat., Oct. 17, 2020
A	Archery / Muzzleloader	Thurs., Oct. 15– Sat., Oct. 17, 2020
B	Shotgun / Muzzleloader	Mon., Dec. 7– Sat., Dec. 12, 2020
B Extension (if authorized)	Shotgun / Muzzleloader	Wed., Dec. 16– Sat., Dec. 19, 2020

**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* this page; see also *Black Bear Hunting Permits*, page 44.

**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 11, 2020 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.

## 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 21. During the last three days of Segment A, bowhunters in tree stands 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.

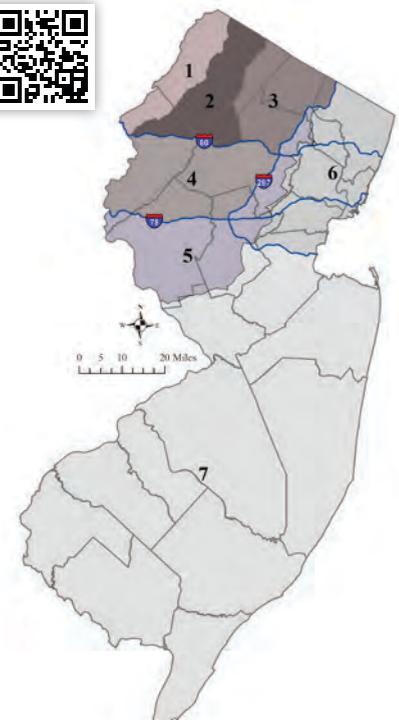
## Black Bear Hunting on State Lands

All state lands, including all state forests, parks, recreation areas, historic sites, natural areas and wildlife management areas, were closed to hunting of black bears as of August 30, 2018 and will be remain closed for the 2020 season.

## 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](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/bearzonemap.htm).



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### After Harvesting a Bear – Mandatory Bear Check Requirement

Due to COVID-19, the mandatory bear check procedure has changed. Read all details below. Bear check will not be available through the automated system.

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 to report on the black bear transportation tag shall include: 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, attached to the body. A harvested black bear may be quartered and brought out of the field in sections. Due to COVID-19, there will be no traditional bear check stations for the 2020 bear hunting season, yet there is still a physical

**checking requirement.** Successful hunters must call (908) 735-0216 for instructions on mandatory check-in no later than 8 p.m. during Segment A or by 6 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 called in by 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 hunter will be contacted with instructions for the bear to be registered and to receive a legal possession seal. To protect the meat from spoilage, the hunter may retain only the head and hide for checking 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 police officer. After 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.

### Black Bear Season Extension

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

See section above for special instructions on how to check bears for the 2020 hunting season.

### 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 from deer management zones. Choose carefully when purchasing a black bear permit. For the 2020 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/bear tips.htm](http://NJFishandWildlife.com/qr/bear tips.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.