

## Chapter 6

# RULES AND REGULATIONS



### Objectives

- Explain three types of wildlife management laws.
- Define the role of a conservation officer.
- Explain three ways in which a hunter can have his license privileges taken away.
- Explain the proper procedures for reporting a game violation.
- Explain two types of public safety laws.
- Explain the meaning of poaching.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the law pertaining to carrying and transporting of firearms in motor vehicles.

### Introduction

It is your responsibility to know and obey all rules and regulations. Ignorance is no excuse for breaking the law. A general listing of the current rules and regulations is found in the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Hunting Digest. These rules may change from year to year. Check the current digest before you go hunting to make sure that you know the current regulations.

### What Do I Need to Hunt in New Jersey?

Anyone can hunt in New Jersey if they have a valid hunting license. Special permits or stamps may be required to hunt certain species or seasons. Permits are needed to hunt turkey, deer bear and coyotes during various seasons. State and federal duck stamps are required to hunt migratory waterfowl. Remember when hunting waterfowl and woodcock you must also have to have a valid HIP (Harvest Information Program) number.



## Juvenile Hunters

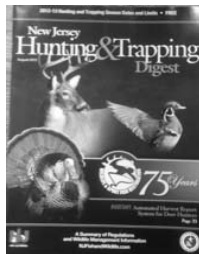


Regardless of age, everyone must have a valid license. Those who pass their Hunter Education course before their sixteenth birthday will receive a free juvenile license. This license is valid until December 31 of the year they turn 16. Both the archery and the shotgun licenses come with a pheasant stamp printed on them. Juveniles under 16 do not need state or federal migratory waterfowl stamps. All other permits must be obtained, but at a reduced price. Juveniles under 14 can not hunt unless they have adult supervision from someone at least 21 years of age who is willing to take responsibility for them.

## Wildlife Laws in New Jersey

Wildlife laws are designed to protect wildlife, promote firearms safety and provide equal hunting opportunity for all interested individuals. The state legislature has given authority to the New Jersey Fish and Game Council to set the seasons and bag limits.

The annual **New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Digest** is an excellent source of information. It contains a



current summary of wildlife laws as well as telephone numbers and addresses of Division of Fish and Wildlife offices. You can find the Digest online, at Division Field Offices or any place you can buy your license at.

There are three basic types of wildlife laws:

1. Wildlife conservation laws
2. Public safety laws
3. Equal opportunity laws

Wildlife conservation laws are designed to protect and manage the resource. Season dates are set to protect the game species during vulnerable times of year. Non-toxic shot regulations are in affect for waterfowl hunters to ensure a healthier environment for both the waterfowl and us. Bag limits are designed to meet various management objectives.

Public safety laws are designed to protect people and property. Our number of hunting incidents dramatically decreased when it became mandatory to wear hunter orange. Safety zones have been enacted to help prevent houses from being shot by irresponsible hunters.



To ensure that both you and your hunting companions are safe it is illegal to have a loaded firearm in a vehicle or shoot from or across a road.

Equal opportunity laws were enacted to ensure that everyone has an equal chance at harvesting game. This is why you can't start small game hunting until sunrise and why there is a lottery for turkey permits.

## Hunting Violations

Here is a basic list of hunting violations. It is against the law to:

- Hunt game with a shotgun that can hold more than three shells.
- Hunt game birds or game animals using anything other than a firearm, a bow and arrow or by falconry.
- Hunt game animals or game birds with a shotgun larger than 10 gauge.
- Hunt wildlife with a fully automatic firearm.
- Hunt big game with a spotlight or other artificial light.
- Hunt, possess or control protected wildlife or endangered species.
- Hunt wildlife from a vehicle or from a boat under motor power.
- Waste game animals or game birds.
- Destroy or possess the nests or eggs of game birds or protected wildlife.
- Allow somebody else to tag a big game animal you have killed.
- Carry, transport, or possess a loaded firearm in any motor vehicle.
- Shoot a firearm from or across a road.
- Firearm hunt on Sundays unless for stocked game on semi-wild land or commercial preserves.

## Role of the Conservation Officer

Years ago, people called the conservation officer a game warden. This has

changed today because the conservation officer does much more than just protect game. Although enforcing wildlife laws is their primary job, they also have the authority to enforce all other state laws. But more importantly the conservation officer acts as a spokesperson for the Division of Fish and Wildlife. You may see your local Conservation officer at sport club meetings, fishing derbies and other community activities. Look upon them as your friend, ask them questions. They are protecting the wildlife that we all enjoy.



To contact the conservation officer in your area, you can call your regional law enforcement office. Leave your name, phone number and the reason why you called.

### **Northern Region - 908-735-8240**

Covers Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties

### **Central Region - 609-259-2120**

Covers Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties

### **Southern Region - 856-629-0555**

Covers Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties

## Reporting Wildlife Violations

Poaching is the illegal harvest of any wildlife. Each year conservation officers find illegal people shooting animals out of season or in excess of the legal bag limit. A poacher is a wildlife thief and gives honest sportsmen like you a bad name.

If you see a poaching violation, please take time to report it to the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Operation Game Thief Program at 1-855-OGT-TIPS.

**Do not confront a poacher.**

Helpful information to provide includes: date, time, location, description of suspect and vehicle, plate number and type of violation. Reports can be kept confidential and rewards are paid on some types of violations.



Poachers will be fined and sometimes sent to jail. They may also have their firearm and vehicle seized and forfeited to the state, depending upon their violation. Certain types of violations may also result in the loss of your hunting and fishing privileges for two to five years. Repeat offenders can lose their privileges for life.

### Did you know?

By following rules and regulations you are helping to preserve the future of our sport in the garden state. Always take the time to report fish and wildlife violations.