Decoys and Electronic Devices

- Persons may hunt with the aid of deer decoys statewide in those zones open for deer hunting only during the Fall Bow, Permit Bow and Winter Bow seasons. When carrying or moving deer decoys for the purpose of hunting, persons must wear a fluorescent orange hat or outer garment consisting of at least 200 square inches of fluorescent orange material, which shall be visible from all sides as currently required for firearm deer hunting.
- It is unlawful to hunt for deer with the aid of an electronic calling device or any device that casts a beam of light upon the deer.

Bag Limits

- For all seasons except Six-day Firearm, properly licensed and permitted hunters are limited to taking one antlered buck per season, regardless of the number of antlerless, zone-specific permits purchased, when applicable.
- During fall bow in early season zones, the hunter need only harvest one antlerless deer to satisfy the antlerless-first requirement and may then harvest a buck in any zone where the early season is open.
- Bag limits for the fall bow and winter bow seasons are as prescribed for each zone (see Regulation Sets, page 38) except that once a hunter has met the bag limit in a given regulation set, he or she may not harvest additional deer from any zone in that regulation set or in one of identical or more restrictive bag limits. However, the hunter may subsequently hunt in a zone with a more liberal (greater) antlerless bag limit as described in the regulation sets.
- Bowhunters may take two antlered deer legally on a Bow or All-around Sportsman License, one antlered deer each during the Fall Bow and Winter Bow seasons. Hunters who want to pursue and harvest an antlered deer during the Permit Bow Season must purchase a buck permit valid only when used in conjunction with the zone-specific antlerless Bow Permit. For permit purchasing deadline, see Deer Season Permits, page 18.
- Bowhunters may take antlered deer with their bow during the Six-day Firearm season, provided that they have a current and valid firearm license in addition to an archery license, or have an All-around Sportsman License. Bow hunters who bag an antlered deer during the Six-day Firearm Season with their bow must use the Harvest Report for the Six-day season from their firearm or All-around Sportsman License only. However, during the overlapping Six-day Firearm Season, bowhunters with a valid Permit Bow Season zone permit in those areas governed by Regulation Sets 4–8 may continue to hunt using their bow and arrow license and must register their harvest with their Permit Bow Season zone permit Harvest Report Number.
- Firearm hunters legally may take two antlered deer during the Six-day Firearm Season on a firearm or All-around Sportsman License only. For firearm hunters to harvest an antlered deer during the Permit Shotgun or Permit Muzzleloader seasons must purchase a buck permit for the corresponding season, valid only when used in conjunction with the zone-specific antlerless Shotgun or Muzzleloader permit. If hunters take a second antlered deer during the Six-day Firearm Season, their Shotgun Permit Season bag limit is

Deer Hunting—General Seasons vs. Permit Seasons

New Jersey has six distinct deer hunting seasons, all of which require a hunting license and three that also require a zone-specific permit.

General Deer Seasons

Three general seasons include the Fall Bow, Winter Bow and Six-day Firearm (buck) statewide seasons open to any hunter bearing a valid license corresponding to the season. During these statewide seasons, hunters are not restricted to hunting particular deer management zones but still must abide by the specific season dates and bag limits regulated on a zone basis. Consult the Regulation Sets beginning on page 38.

For these general seasons, a deer Harvest Report is an integral part of every hunting license valid for taking deer.

Permit Deer Seasons

Three permit seasons include the Permit Bow, Permit Shotgun and Permit Muzzleloader zone-specific seasons open to any hunter bearing a valid license corresponding to the season plus an appropriate deer permit (bow, shotgun or muzzleloader) for the deer management zone in which you are hunting. These deer permits are valid only for taking antlerless deer. To harvest an antlered buck during any permit season, the hunter must purchase a buck permit (one per person per season) which is not zone-specific but may be used only in a zone for which the hunter possesses the antlerless zone permit. (See page 33.)

During the Permit Bow Season hunters must possess a valid Bow and Arrow or All-around Sportsmen license plus a Bow Permit for the specific zone being hunted.

During the Permit Shotgun and Permit Muzzleloader seasons hunters must possess a valid Firearm or All-around Sportsmen license plus either a Shotgun or Muzzleloader Permit for the specific zone being hunted. For the Permit Muzzleloader season, the hunter must also possess a valid Rifle Permit. (See Muzzleloaders page 27.)

Expiration Dates

All licenses (Firearm, Bow and Arrow and All-around Sportsmen licenses) are valid for the calendar year from January 1 through December 31.

All deer permits (Shotgun, Muzzleloader, Bow permits and their respective Buck permits) are valid for the duration of the season—even when the season crosses into the new year. Numerous deer management zones have seasons that begin in November/December and end in January/February of the following year.

All Rifle Permits (not the deer muzzleloader permit) are valid for the fiscal year from July 1—June 30.

Find Regulations by Season

Know the deer management zone where you will hunt—use the Deer Hunting Location Viewer at NJFishandwildlife.com/ahrs_deer_viewer.htm to determine zone if unsure. Go to the Regulation Sets table on page 38. Zones numbers are listed below each regulation set column heading. Confirm season dates and bag limits according to the chosen sporting arm and the corresponding dates. Several deer seasons may be open concurrently.