

# Vermont Sporting Journal

Volume V, Issue 9 \* November 2021



## Brian Bailey Jr. with his buck



We return a portion of pre-tax profits as follows:  
2% Hunting and Fishing Education \* 2% Habitat Improvement \* 2% Preservation of the Second Amendment

# Vermont Fish and Wildlife's 2022 Calendar Is Available

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Vermont Fish and Wildlife's colorful 2022 calendar is now available.

The calendar is filled with stunning photos of Vermont wildlife, including the red eft, Eastern brook trout, black bear, moose, and osprey as well as scenes of Vermonters engaging with some of our most treasured species and landscapes. It highlights work by well-known Vermont photographers including Nancy Anisfield, Jim Block, Josh Blouin, Ian Clark, Dale Cockrell, Roger Irwin, Jeff Parsons, and Tiffany Soukup.

"Vermont's wildlife, habitats, and people are interconnected—this calendar celebrates that," says Wildlife Program Director Mark Scott. "It showcases raptors and amphibians alongside game species like white-tailed deer and wild turkey, as well as the Wildlife Management Areas that support these species and uses ranging from hunting to wildlife photography."

The calendar includes hunting, fishing and trapping season dates for each month, along with beautiful photog-

raphy, and it makes the perfect gift for any outdoor recreationist.

The calendar is available for \$15 from Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department with a printable free-shipping mail-in [order form](#) on their website [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com).



**VTF&W photo**

The cover photo of the '22 calendar features an osprey emerging from the water after diving for fish, courtesy of Ian Clark. The osprey is one of the first species removed from Vermont's endangered species list, a milestone achieved through collaboration between the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and many local partners.

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## Trapline Talk

by Randy Barrows

Well, the time of the year we all wait for is finally here. Hopefully you are ready to go'

I am set to go but I will wait a little longer. I have found over the past few years that fur does not prime up until mid-November. Fur prices are low as it is without mucking up the market with un prime fur.

I usually pick up a road kill coon and skin it out to check for primeness. If its blue I will wait for a while. For those who do not know an un prime fur will have a blueish hue to it when skinned. They have no value on the fur market, but they still have value as a wall hanger.

I will start by hitting the water animals first. The main reason I do this is to avoid chopping ice. I love to deer hunt and up North by the time deer season is done the ice is here. So, I am torn every year. I love to trap but when you have to chop ice to check your sets the fun usually stops.

Last year was the worst in years. Hot all thru deer season and then heavy rain and quick freeze ups. Everything froze solid overnite' and the pattern continued. Kind of takes the fun out of trapping.

Then the snow came. Three to four inches per dump nonstop. Every day sets had to be re made. When I was young these conditions did not bother me, but now holy cow, give me a break!!!!

Just remember to keep trapping fun. If you turn it into a job, it will be like a job. And we all know how jobs can be. If you have time limits do not trap beyond the limits. Trapping should not be stressful.

Speaking of time do not forget time in the fur shed. The more you catch the more you have to skin and flesh. I usually skin my catches and freeze them until after the holidays when life is much less hectic.

A side note here. Freezing fur makes it easier to flesh. Freezing does something to the flesh and fat and it just rolls right off'

So, enjoy all fall has to offer.  
Tight chains to all!!!

*P.S. Just a FYI, with trapping season comes the annual anti trapping season. Every year the folks who want to see the end of trapping come out of the woodwork and head to the Golden Dome and start their shenanigans.*

*Every year an enormous amount of money and time are wasted defending our right to trap. They have succeeded in some states, but thankfully not in Vermont. Join your state and national trappers' groups and stay informed. Have your town representatives phone number on speed dial and call often.*

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## Our Newfoundland Adventure

by Adam Martin

October 1, 2021. Friday morning 6AM and my Dad's 75th birthday. Our Newfoundland Moose hunt that was supposed to happen last year was finally here. Covid certainly has affected many and continues to linger. I've always had the opinion that everything happens for a reason, and Covid is no different. If we go last year, my son isn't in the truck for this hunt. If we go last year, we don't have 3 generations in the truck headed north for what would turn out to be an adventure of a lifetime.

We meet at my house, trailer in tow. My buddy Brent and his Dad are also on the hunt. We couldn't imagine the fun that was in store for us but knew that having the Father/Son time would be a memorable one regardless.

So off we went on a beautiful fall day, the leaves starting to show their sign of season. The ride toward North Sydney, Nova Scotia is one that requires minimal interstate travel and winds through some very scenic parts of New England and Canada. Nearly 15 hours later we arrive at the hotel to grab a bite and a good sleep and get ready for day 2.

Reveille wasn't as early as day one, as the ferry wouldn't require us to be there until 09:30 for a noon departure. The ride from North Sydney to Port au Basques, Newfoundland was just over 6 hours and was enjoyable to see during the daylight. Our 4 berth sleeper cabin was enjoyable to catch up on some sleep and get ready for our hunt that would start on Monday. Rain set in about 3/4 into

the trip across the Cabot Strait and Bryson and I enjoyed a couple shots of a perfect rainbow that appeared to start where our ferry was at the time.

The rainy ride from Port to Deer Lake where we would sleep for the night was nothing less than a handful and more tiring than the 15 hour day the day before. White knuckle water filled roads, heavy rains and hydroplaning with a trailer was a true test. Day 2 was complete, tomorrow we would arrive at camp.

With under 2 hours of travel to get to



camp, we were able to sleep in, grab some Tim Hortons (a must when in Canada), and hit the trail. To say that drive was beautiful or breathtaking through Gros Morne National Park would be an understatement. We all agreed that the views through this area was worth the trip already. Truly

one of Gods Gallery's and we all felt blessed to be able to see it first hand.

We arrived at Tuckamore Lodge in Main Brook at the main cabin and were greeted by a shorter gent, with his rubber boots, beard and an accent that took us a week to understand fully. This would be Justin Boyd and one of the owner operators of the lodge. Justin's camp would be where we would spend the week that lied ahead.

The main lodge itself is an amazing facility with all of the amenities. While this wouldn't be where we would stay, it looked comfy and certainly very accommodating. We, on the other hand got our tags, checked in, and began our 1.5 hour trek down a dirt road that would make any road in Vermont seem like a highway...(yes it was even better than Barre City roads where the speed bumps are smoother than the road itself). At about the 45 minute mark we came to boulders in the road. This is where we would argo into our main camp, a very comfortable cabin with 3 rooms with bunks and the cooks quarters. Running water and electric when the generator was running and a wood stove that could get cranking in no time once the wet softwood dried. Our camp cook Hazel began prepping dinner almost immediately. One of many amazing meals that we would have that week together. It was time to get our gear ready for our hunt and get some rest.

The first day of any hunt is reminiscent of Christmas morning to me as

a kid. I don't sleep, an alarm isn't needed, and breakfast isn't necessary. It's GO TIME and we can't get out of camp quick enough for me. Justin would be guiding my Dad who was carrying a cross bow due to a shoulder surgery he had recently. Doctors didn't want him shooting anything with any recoil so a cross bow was it. (Again, everything happens for a reason.) Matt would be our guide. A young aspiring guide and somewhat new to the "scene" in the area. While Brent and his Dad Scott would have Alfie, a well-known and decorated guide in those parts.

Walking on "bogs" in NF is an experience like no other. I equate it to walking on the softest sandy beach you can imagine, where your foot is still sinking while you're trying to put it in front of your other. Walking miles there is not like hiking the hills of VT, NH or ME. It's flat overall and beautiful in its own right. Water everywhere and the young growth showing signs like the leaves did just a few days before. Matt made some great calls and right off we had some bull and cow calls in the distance. A small bull came in down wind and that sit was over. We trekked across to another area not far away and set up again. Within 45 minutes of calling a nice 6 point bull showed at about 250 yards



across the bog. He was looking for the "cow" but needed the wind right and began working the edge around us. At the closest point he came 220 yards where Bryson was able to place a perfect shot to the lungs. While a few other shots ensued, (I may have emptied my rifle), Bryson nailed his moose again before it was able to enter the softwoods. We still aren't sure who was more excited about what had happened, Bryson, myself as "proud dad" or our guide Matt who had to have a smoke he was so excited. It turned out to be an easy spot to argo to and get headed to town to hang it and prep it for the processor. It was an amazing day and one I know I will cherish for a lifetime.

The next morning, while traveling toward a spot we had seen some moose the day before, we were fortunate enough to spot a couple of cows and a nice 17 point bull. (If you haven't caught on, they go by points in NF) At 120 yards I was able to connect and didn't even have to unload my Browning, although I think I did fire 4 times. My father would miss a bull that afternoon with his crossbow at 50 yards and was excited to have had an opportunity. He was learning quickly the challenges of a bow vs. a rifle.

The next morning my Dad would ask Bryson to be put on his tag as a sec-

ond shooter. They left in the argo and by 08:30 Justin had them on a 6 point at 240 yards. Certainly too far for Charlies crossbow, so the torch was passed to Bryson to see if he could fill his Papa's tag. Bryson was able to prove his accuracy again and was able to connect at 240 and 250 yards. Imagine... 3 generations... 3 bulls... 3 days.

Brent and Scott certainly had some opportunities and did end up connecting on a great meat cow and nearly a bull with Alfie. They adventured by boat and hikes throughout the week and had some good stories for another time.

So the Father/Son hunt to NF went 4 out of 5 that week. The harvests are always fun for sure, but I'll always argue it isn't about the kill. It isn't about the meat or the mount. Not for me and not for my family or dear friends that we share the woods with year after year. It's about the "Hunt" itself. It's about the memories and the stories that unfold. The laughs and excitement of success. It's not a competition or a game for us. It's so much more and almost impossible to explain in words. If you could see the tears welling in my eyes as I type this or feel the flutter in my heart, you would understand what "The Hunt" is all about to us. This proved to be a hunt of a lifetime that will live with us for eternity.

So thank you God for delaying our hunt for a year and thank you for allowing us to enjoy your Kingdom together. Thanks to my Dad for teaching me the appreciation of "The Hunt" and for passing it along to my family and the others you have. I am again reminded.... Everything happens for a reason.



## Fish & Wildlife Asks Deer Hunters to Report Wildlife Sightings

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release



The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is asking hunters to participate in its annual deer hunter effort and sighting survey.

The survey asks hunters to record how many hours they hunted and how many deer, moose, bears, or other wildlife they saw on each day of the regular November deer season. This information helps the department evaluate how hunting pressure and the number of these animals varies throughout the season and around the state.

The easiest way to complete the survey is to use the new Deer Hunting Log feature in the Vermont Outdoors mobile app. The app allows hunters to track their

effort and wildlife sightings during the regular season as well as during the archery and muzzleloader seasons. It also offers several other useful features for hunters, including a check station locator tool and an online harvest reporting tool. Online reporting is only available during the archery and muzzleloader seasons. It is not allowed during the regular season. Vermont Outdoors is available through the App Store or Google Play.

A web-based version of the survey is available on Fish and Wildlife's

website [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com). The department also mailed survey cards to several thousand randomly selected hunters, as it has done each year since 1999

“The information we get from this survey is critically important for the management of deer and other wildlife in Vermont,” said Nick Fortin, Fish and Wildlife’s deer and moose project leader. “If we hear from more hunters, our population estimates will be more reliable, and our management will be more effective.”

*Licensed deer hunters are invited to participate in the annual deer hunter survey to report hunter effort, wildlife sightings and other information to the Fish and Wildlife Department.*

*VTF&W photo  
by John Hall*

# Vermont's Regular Deer Season Starts Saturday, Nov. 13

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Hunters are gearing up for the start of Vermont's traditionally popular 16-day regular deer season that begins Saturday, November 13 and ends Sunday, November 28.

A hunter may take one legal buck during this season if they did not already take one during the archery deer season. The definition of a legal buck depends on the Wildlife Management Unit (WMU). A [map of the WMUs](#) is on pages 22 and 23 of the 2021 VERMONT HUNTING & TRAPPING GUIDE available from license agents statewide.

In WMUs C, D1, D2, E1, E2, G, I, L, M, P, and Q a legal buck is any deer with at least one antler three inches or more in length.

In WMUs A, B, F1, F2, H, J1, J2, K, N, and O a legal buck is any deer with at least one antler with two or more antler points one inch in length or longer.

"The greatest numbers of deer continue to be in western regions of the state and other valley areas," said Vermont Fish and Wildlife's deer biologist Nick Fortin. "The Green Mountains and Northeast Kingdom offer more of a big woods experience with fewer, but often larger, deer."

Vermont hunting licenses include a buck tag for this season and a late season bear tag (for Nov. 13-21), cost \$28 for residents and \$102 for nonresidents. Hunters under 18 years of age get a break at \$8 for residents and \$25 for nonresidents. Licenses are available on Fish and Wildlife's website and from license agents statewide.



Hunters who get a deer on opening weekend of the Nov. 13-28 deer season can help Vermont's deer management program by reporting their deer at a biological check station.

VTF&W photo by John Hall

Fish and Wildlife urges hunters to wear a fluorescent orange hat and vest to help maintain Vermont's very good hunting season safety record.

A [2021 Deer Hunting Guide](#) can be downloaded from the department's website at [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com). The guide includes a map of the Wildlife Management Units (WMUs), season dates, regulations, and other helpful information.

Hunters who get a deer on November 13 or 14 can help Vermont's deer management program by reporting their deer at one of the biological check stations listed below that will be staffed from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., unless the store closes earlier:

- Buck Stop Mini Mart – Bennington
- Keith's Country Store – Pittsford

- R&L Archery – Barre
- Newfane Store – Newfane
- West Enosburg Country Store – Enosburg Falls
- The Old Fishing Hole – Morrisville (Saturday only)
- Bob's Quick Stop – Irasburg
- Lead & Tackle – Lyndon
- Village Grocery & Deli – Waitsfield
- Wright's Sport Shop – Newport
- Tyson Store - Ludlow

Hunters who do not go to a biological reporting station are asked to provide a tooth from their deer. Obtain a tooth envelope from your regular reporting agent. Remove one of the middle incisor teeth, being careful to include the root. Place the tooth in the envelope and give it to the reporting agent. Each tooth will be cross sectioned to accurately determine the deer's age, and the results will be posted on the Fish and Wildlife website next spring.

## Eat More Fast Food

by Brad Roy

On a day-to-day basis, very few moments in this adult life give us an opportunity for uninterrupted introspection. Of the precious few minutes per day most American adults receive to engage in such activity, the two most common opportunities I have found in my own life involve either a toilet or a gas pump. While the first delivers quite an obvious break from reality, albeit typically accompanied by social media scrolling on my phone, the latter is one I admire equally as much. Of the roughly 125 billion or more barrels of gasoline we Americans pump into our cars and trucks each year, my personal consumption lands me at the pump for about 20 gallons roughly once every five or six days.

Infrequently as it may occur, the few minutes it takes to fill my tank tends to offer me about as significant of a break in the hustle and bustle of everyday life as anything else, and I enjoy spending it people watching, planning, and thinking. Recently as I pumped the first half of my \$75 fill up, I noticed another pickup truck with a sticker in the rear window featuring a bounding buck poised behind a set of crosshairs. The words below the image proclaimed “Eat More Fast Food.”

As one who has enjoyed the fruits of countless outdoor-themed bumper stickers, including my favorite distributed by Fur Harvesters Auctions which simply states “Kids who hunt, trap, and fish don’t mug little old ladies,” I enjoyed the sight at face value. I couldn’t help but sigh at the si-

lent irony of the sticker, knowing just how many gas station pizza slices and tinfoil wrapped cheese burgers I myself would consume this fall as a result of dedicating the vast majority of my free time to the pursuit of wholesome and healthy wild game meat. The oxymoronic value of buying fast food so you can get back to pursuing wild game is certainly not lost on me, but dang do I love pre-cooked cheese pizzas that have been incubating under heat lamps for a few hours after a morning in the deer woods or tending beaver traps. With a small grin I pulled away from the pump, past the hotdogs dancing in circles on the roller-warmer inside and pondering our culinary relationship to the game we are so passionate about conserving and pursuing. I mean, undoubtedly one of the largest factors egging a sportsman out of bed on a sub-freezing fall morning must be the thought of perfectly seared backstrap right?

Anyone who has been to my house for dinner is likely to tell you a few simple truths about the way I live. One truth being that I am no stranger to trying new foods, and another being that I enjoy sharing new and interesting foods with friends and family even more. I couldn’t tell you why, but it is remarkably accurate that the consumption of game seems to trigger a prehistoric reflex to utilize as much as possible. Likely this is due to the effort and labor that goes in to harvesting such an animal which tells our brains that we would be wise to utilize every last scrap if possible. It is of my opinion that all the fast mov-

ing critters, or “Fast Food” as the sticker suggests have unique characteristics that should earn them a spot at the sportsman’s table. Having dined on a fair spread of ‘controversial’ game meals, I consider myself an authority enough on the subject to do a little preaching to my fellow sportsmen and women.

The vast majority of readers who have found themselves on this page, based on my own completely biased and unsupported data, are probably whitetail deer hunters. For those who are not, I can assume you are either here because of your passion in pursuing another game animal or fish, or because this was the only magazine you were able to find to pass the time at a friend or families camp you are visiting.

In any event, I am here this month to embolden the desire I am sure you all have deep down to try something new with your game this year. If you’re a whitetail hunter who really only cares about backstraps, why not put the effort into a front shoulder for a change? Instead of just grinding it into burger, spend a little less time on the couch this winter and a little more time learning to make wild game sausage. The guests at your next dinner party will thank you, and you will have had the chance to introduce them to wild game in one of the most delicious and unoffensive ways possible. For the turkey hunter who usually just pulls the breast meat; take a few extra minutes and pluck the whole bird! You’ll



be amazed at how much delicious meat you've been leaving behind all these years; and I will personally attest that an entire plucked wild turkey, brined and baked will be one of the tastiest wild game meals you've ever indulged in. Now, for the folks who swear they don't like heart or liver; just give it another try. Know that your tastes change, and when properly prepared, organ meat is some of the finest cuts available to you on the entire animal. The harvest of a wild game animal is something to not only celebrate, but revere.

With access to high-quality recipes available at the click of a button online now, there is no excuse for leaving edible, incredible parts of any wild game animal in the woods. I can say without hesitation that there

is so much more to an animal than steaks and burger, and that a few extra moments of research and preparation can provide you with an entire world of cuisine you never knew you were missing. Once you change your mindset on what cuts are "good" and "bad", you will change your entire perception of eating wild game. You just might find that you actually enjoy heart better than burger; you may discover that a beaver backstrap has all the qualities of grass-fed beef fillet, or that a tongue taco will rival anything you've put on a corn tortilla in your life. All it takes is the ability to leave your comfort zone and give something new a try.

Now don't get me wrong, you WILL have failures. I have made venison sausage so salty I gasped for air,

Jerky so tough my jaw popped, and let's not even talk about that experimental jar of pickled deer testicles that never made it to camp; but failure breeds success, and the more you try the more you will discover you enjoy. Think of it this way, is there really any harm if you mess up a cut you would have thrown away anyways? Take this article as your sign to open up your culinary mind this year and try something new and different with your harvest. I will assure you that with a little research, you will be able to find a recipe for just about any part of any animal that will not only pique your interest, but may just be your new favorite wild game dish. So remember, eat more fast food, and have a safe and happy hunting season.

## Hunters Asked to Help Collect Deer Teeth

*VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release*

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is asking hunters for help in a statewide initiative to gather more biological data on the state's deer population. Hunters who get a deer during the November 13-28 regular deer season are asked to provide an incisor tooth from their deer. Tooth envelopes are available at all deer reporting stations.

Biologists are collecting middle incisor teeth from all regular season bucks to evaluate regional differences in ages and antler characteristics as well as to help estimate population size, growth rate, health, and mortality rates. Each tooth will be cross sectioned to accurately determine the deer's age, and the results will be

posted on the Fish and Wildlife website next spring.

"Knowing the ages of harvested deer is critically important, and more information allows us to make better management decisions," said Nick Fortin, Vermont Fish and Wildlife's

deer project leader. "To produce accurate population estimates, and to better assess our current management strategies, we really need to get teeth from as many bucks as possible."



*Hunters who get a deer during the November 13-28 regular deer season are asked to provide an incisor tooth from their deer.*

*VTF&W photo*

## Dog Gone Turkey

by Brett Ladeau

Fall turkey hunting is quickly taking over as my favorite fall hunt. I've used several approaches to hunt turkey in the fall but had never hunted them using a dog before. The use of a dog to scatter a fall flock has a long tradition and holds great appeal to me as my love of fall turkey hunting grows.

I have talked to several friends from Ohio and Pennsylvania about teaming up on a fall hunt and finally got a chance to hunt with Brett Berry and his dog Josie in Vermont this fall. Joining us on the hunt were Matt Van Cise, Morgan Gouveia, and Sam Vance. We covered a lot of good ground in Central Vermont but were never able to connect on a

flock of birds, but the experience was well worth the time and effort. I am already planning and thinking about next falls hunts and hope to team up with Brett and the rest of the group in 2022. Also, discussing plans to get together with another friend, Andrew Noble, and his Boykin Spaniel. Andrew is new to turkey dogging but has had a few successful hunts this fall that he described as awesome. The turkey vocalization you hear after a good scatter is off the charts from what I have been told and calling and listening to turkey is what makes turkey hunting so much fun in my opinion. Can't wait to experience it. Since I am not an expert on the subject, I reached out to a few friends that I consider experts in fall turkey hunting with a dog.

I asked Matt Van Cise what tactics he uses when hunting without a dog. He says, "For me when hunting without a dog there are a couple different tactics that I use. Find a flock in a known roost area and scatter them from the trees. Check fields for flocks and try to get into position to scatter them as they enter the woods or work known feeding areas and try to locate them by following the scratching."

Matt says, "Hunting with dogs is a much more laid-back approach until the dog finds and scatters them. Once the birds are scattered calling scenarios vary depending on the makeup of the flock. If it's a mixed family flock with hens, jakes and jennies I will start with kee kees and many times that's all that will be needed. If it's an adult hen flock the calling should be more geared towards adult hen

sounds like clucks and lost or assembly yelps. Gobbler flocks take a different approach, many times gobblers will be quiet for several hours after a break and gobbler yelps and deep course gobbler clucks work best. One big difference in turkeys scattered with dog's vs by a human is the overall quality of the break. In a situation where dogs break them, turkeys will sometimes not call for the first hour or two whereas if I break them, they may be calling within minutes."

Brett Berry's journey into turkey hunting is much like mine. We both grew up in areas that didn't have a hunt-able population of turkey. He started spring turkey hunting before he started fall hunting. He says, "My first



spring was over in two days. I filled my tag and I called in two different birds for two different guys. Needless to say, I was hooked!” He continued to read and learn as much about turkey hunting as possible. Reading books, magazines, and watch videos all helped him learn. He even got into competitive turkey calling to help him become a better turkey hunter.

The area he lives in did not have a fall turkey season until the early 2000s. His first fall season he had a flock of birds patterned to a cut bean field. Brett says, “I set up on the edge, called to them, and the flock responded, came in and I shot a bearded hen.” His second fall he got under a flock of roosted birds and scared them off the roost. He told me his scatter wasn’t great but said, “Once I set up and began calling, I heard stuff I had never heard before. There were turkeys plain yelping, Assembly yelping cutting, clucking in purring, kee keeing and, Jake yelping and gobbling! It was absolutely incredible.

I had birds working in around me and I did not kill one. So that evening I went back and sat in the roost and as they came back in the roost, I shot one. I knew that there had to be more to it. I knew that if I’d had a dog to break that flock up it would’ve been an incredible break.”

Brett had read several articles about fall turkey hunting with dogs. He contacted Turkey Trot Acres Pete Clair and spoke with him. He also contacted Mr. John Byrnes regarding turkey dogs. He decided since he loved dogs and loved turkey hunting, he’s decided to combine these two loves.

The evening after his second fall turkey he called Mr. John Byrnes and put his name on a waiting list for a pup. He only had to wait five months and got his first turkey dog, Tess. He trained her all summer long. Brett says, “I had met Matt Van Cise along the way and became incred-

ible friends and invited him along on Tess’s first fall hunt. Bob Hoon joined us. Tess broke a flock and we set up to video and the first bird in I let walk because I wanted Cory to kill the first one. But he couldn’t get a shot so the second bird in was right in front of me and I shot and killed it. Short time later Cory shot and killed one also. I can’t even describe how I felt that evening.” Brett has been at the fall turkey game for nearly 20 years and told me to have anyone that wants to get started or has questions about the sport to look him on Facebook. He loves to talk fall turkey hunting with dogs.

I also talked to Job Elliott from Pennsylvania. I got to spring turkey hunt with Job in 2020 and met his turkey dogs in person. I asked him how he got involved with fall turkey hunting with dogs. He said,

“Ron Meek took me on a fall turkey dog hunt with his dog Gretchen



in 2003 I killed two fall hens in the worst weather conditions. Wind 50-60 mph snow sleet and rain.”

Job started his turkey hunting journey in the fall of 1985. He suggests going with people that hunt with dogs to see if you enjoy it before buying your own. He says, “It’s a big commitment to buy a dog and train it so make sure you’re fully invested.”

He suggests scouting for fall birds by looking for mast crops, such as acorns, beech, and other food. He also spends time scouting open farmland by riding around and locating fall flocks before the season.

Fall turkey doggers are a tightknit group and often share trade secrets and hunts together. Job says he is a self-taught fall hunter but lists Ron Meek, Brett Berry, Rob Mucinski, and Thor Kain that have helped him with advice and tips.

He likes taking new people fall hunting that have never done it before. He

says, “The biggest challenge with a dog is teaching him to sit still on the callback.” Job is also active on Facebook and I am sure he would love to talk turkey dogging with anyone interested.

I have learned quite a lot about fall turkey hunting on my own but when I get to share the woods with these experienced hunters, it only enhances my skills and my love of turkey hunting of all kinds. I love the idea of a turkey dog, but I am still weighing my options on whether to buy one myself or just hunt with my friends that have them. Time will tell if I decide to join the group and get a dog of my own but until then I am going to enjoy the fall hunt in anyway I can and hope to spend many more days chasing birds with a well-trained turkey dog.

Brent and Scott certainly had some opportunities and ended up going one for two with Alfie. They adventured by boat and hikes throughout the week and had some good stories for another time.





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# Legislative Update with Evan Hughes

## It happened in Philadelphia, will it start to happen in Vermont?

A helpless woman was sexually assaulted by an illegal alien while other train passengers only watched and recorded the attack. The illegal alien has previous convictions for violent crimes and still was allowed to stay in the USA.

You can watch the video about this violent crime by clicking on this link: <https://www.foxnews.com/media/judge-jeanine-train-passengers-recorded-woman-raped-assault>

In the video, citizens watch as a victim is violently attacked, and they do nothing to aid the helpless victim. The train traveled through 27 stops for 40 minutes and nobody intervened to stop the attacker.

Is this where Vermont is headed with the enactment of H.145 this year by our elected State officials?

This year, the long standing Vermont law that provided the statutory defense of «justifiable homicide» to good folks aiding other citizens who are the victim of murder, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, and burglary or robbery was amended. The law, now, only allows protecting victims to a limited list

of specified relatives of the «Good Citizen.» Not other citizen victims who are not these specific family members. The link below shows the new restrictions.

Amended Vermont law: 13 V.S.A. § 2305: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/13/053/02305>

In a significant portion of Vermont the only assigned police protection is provided by the Vermont State Police. The VSP does not have troopers on the road from 2 AM to 6 AM. Instead there are troopers in “on-call” status.

Now when a neighbor or law enforcement is being violently attacked, a “Good Citizen” who now acts to save the victim of a vicious attack is no longer protected under the previous and long standing statutory “justifiable homicide” defense. The “Good Citizen” defense is gone, repealed by our elected officials in Montpelier.

Doesn't it seem like our Vermont elected officials are discouraging “Good Citizen” behavior? Are we creating the citizen inaction, just like what happened in the violent sexual assault on the train in Philadelphia?

## U.S. Supreme Court Oral Arguments on November 3, Two Vermont Groups joined Amicus brief

The Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs and the Vermont State Rifle & Pistol Association have joined other private citizen and law enforcement parties in filing an Amicus brief in the case of the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) case New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen, challenging the unconstitutional and overly restrictive New York City firearm permitting law.

NYSRPA petition: [https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/20/20-843/184339/20210720110254979\\_20-843%20Amicus%20Brief%20of%20Constitutional%20Rights%20Union.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/20/20-843/184339/20210720110254979_20-843%20Amicus%20Brief%20of%20Constitutional%20Rights%20Union.pdf)

Amicus brief (second page reports the parties) :  
<https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketP->

[DF/20/20-843/184184/20210719155924977\\_20-843%20Amicus%20Brief%20of%20Law%20Enforcement%20Groups%20et%20al\\_.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/20/20-843/184184/20210719155924977_20-843%20Amicus%20Brief%20of%20Law%20Enforcement%20Groups%20et%20al_.pdf)

The VTFSC has been party to Amicus briefs in the SCOTUS case of District of Columbia v. Heller D.C. (2008) and McDonald v. City of Chicago (2010) The VTFSC has long held that laws should enact sound policy, and be in compliance with the state and federal constitutions. This is why the VTFSC led other Vermont groups in challenging the 2016 law banning and restricting firearm magazines.

The VTFSC, being a party to the current case before the SCOTUS, holds with its long tradition of supporting its above stated principle on laws. The VTFSC is the NRA State Association for Vermont, as the NYSRPA serves the same duty in New York.

## Vermont Bearhound Hunting Under Attack

Recently hunting black bears with hounds has been under attack in Vermont. VT F&W has a mission of management of the wildlife of the state. Bear hunting with hounds is an effective and essential means of managing the populations of wildlife. Farmers need to be able protect their corn crops and farm stock animals.

Bears, attracted by easy food sources left outside by people, have become a nuisance. Trash, pet food, bird feeders draw bears to residences and enticing them to become «nuisance bears». The bear hound handlers can push bears away from these areas, providing an alternative to being destroyed. The Vermont Bearhound Association(VBA) has long provided bumper stickers that read A Fed Bear is a Dead Bear to warn of the danger of providing food sources for black bears. Bearhounders are actively working to promote public education on how to avoid creating «nuisance bears» that can lead to the destruction of the bear.

The Vermont Bearhound Association (VBA) is a long-established organization. The VBA works in cooperation with the VTF&W Department and the VTF&W Board to achieve the responsible and viable management of the black bear population. The VBA funds a substantial number of the scholarships to send youngsters to the two Vermont Conservation Camps, Kehoe in Bomoseen and Buck Lake in Woodbury. These one week camps providing training and education for our youth. The VBA has also funded sending school teachers to a VT F&W training camp for teachers.

Hunting with hounds has long been critical in the management of bears and other wildlife species. Hounding has been a viable means of bear management for so long that it is no surprise it has become a «tradition.»

Will the attack on «hound hunting» be extended to racoon, coyote and rabbit hunting?

## Louis Porter Leaves VT F&W

VT F&W Commissioner Louis Porter departed at the end of October, after serving nearly 8 years in giving excellent leadership to the Department. He will remain working in a leadership position in Vermont. Louis led the Department by use of science as the means to accomplish its mission of the wildlife management. His calm and reasonable management style will be greatly missed.

Governor Scott has named Chris Herrick as the new commissioner. Chris comes over from the Vermont Department of Public Safety and he has some very big boots to fill. But, the folks at F&W will continue to aid their leadership in doing a great job.

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# VT Fish and Wildlife Confirms Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease in Rutland County Deer

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department has confirmed the presence of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) in Rutland County deer. EHD is a common viral disease of deer in North America but had never previously been confirmed in Vermont.

Current and suspected cases in Vermont have been localized in Castleton and West Haven, although they are likely related to more widespread [outbreaks occurring in New York](#). The majority of Rutland County and the rest of Vermont appear not to have been affected by EHD.

Hunters may consider exploring new areas if their favorite hunting spot has been affected by EHD.

EHD outbreaks can temporarily lower deer numbers in a local area, but they do not have a significant long-term impact on regional deer abundance.

EHD virus is transmitted by biting midges, sometimes called no-see-ums. The disease is not spread from deer to deer and humans cannot be infected by deer or bites from midges. The department notes that deer harvested in these areas are safe to eat.

EHD occurs regularly in the southern states, so some southern deer have developed immunity. In the northeast, EHD outbreaks occur sporadically, and deer have no immunity to this virus. Consequently,

most EHD-infected deer in the northeast are expected to die. The first hard frosts kill the midges that transmit the disease, ending the outbreak.

Deer that contract EHD usually die within 48 hours of showing clinical signs. Outbreaks are most common in the late summer and early fall when midges are abundant. Signs of EHD include fever, hemorrhage in the mouth or organs, and swelling of the head, neck, tongue, and lips. A deer infected with EHD may appear dehydrated and weak. Infected deer often seek out water sources and many succumb near water. Several sick or dead deer may be found in a small area, particularly around water. There is no treatment or means to prevent EHD. Dead deer do not serve as a source of infection for other animals.

Sightings of sick or dead deer should be reported to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department by contacting your local State Police dispatcher who will notify the nearest State Game Warden. The department will collect samples from deer for testing and track deer reports to monitor the extent of the outbreak and determine impacts on the deer population.

For more information on EHD, see the [fact sheet from the Wildlife Futures Program](#) or visit [Cornell University's Wildlife Health Lab](#) website.

## Clinical Signs

Clinical signs of hemorrhagic disease can be highly variable and range from very rapid illness resulting in death within 36 hours, to a longer, chronic course where animals remain ill for several weeks or months. Variation in clinical signs between individuals is not fully understood, but it appears that maternal antibodies, innate host resistance, the particular type of HD, and previous immunity may all be contributing factors. White-tailed deer usually develop clinical signs about 5-10 days following infection with the EHD or BT virus, but some infected animals that have previously conferred immunity may remain asymptomatic.

EHD and BT viruses cause disease by damaging the lining of blood vessels, making them weak or leaky, or destroying them. Clinical signs include swelling of the face or neck, loss of appetite, lethargy, weakness, lameness, respiratory distress, high fever, and excessive salivation. Infected animals may develop swollen, bluish tongues. Others will bleed from ulcers in the mouth and may also bleed from the nose. Frequently, deer will go into shock and die within 8 to 36 hours of the onset of clinical signs. Examination of animals that die of HD will often reveal extensive hemorrhage of the internal organs, including the heart, liver, kidneys, lungs, spleen, and intestines<sup>1</sup>. Those that survive may exhibit hoof overgrowth and have indentations or cracks in the walls of their hooves.

*~from Fact Sheet from the Wildlife Futures Program*



# Vermont Hunters Help Meet Moose Population Management Goal

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

With high moose numbers in north-eastern Vermont contributing to the abundance and negative impact of winter ticks, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is pleased to report a successful, regulated 2021 moose hunting season.

“Moose density in Vermont’s north-eastern Wildlife Management Unit—WMU E—is above one moose per square mile,” says Nick Fortin, the department’s moose biologist. “This high density of moose contributes to winter tick numbers that can negatively impact moose health and survival. A goal of this year’s hunt was to improve the overall health of WMU E’s moose population by reducing its density.”

The department issued 100 moose hunting permits this year, resulting in 62 moose harvested between the October 1-7 archery season and October 17-22 rifle season.

Of the 100 permits available, 94 were issued by lottery, to which over 5,700 hunters applied. The department reserves the first five lottery permits for Vermont military veterans. Three non-lottery permits are reserved for youth with life-threatening illnesses, and three more are auctioned as a fundraiser for conservation.

High interest in Vermont’s moose hunt is an important platform for the department to show how science informs hunting regulations to benefit wildlife and people.

“This was my once in a lifetime opportunity,” says hunter Nick Burnham, who estimates that he has applied for the lottery close to twenty times before this year’s successful application and hunt. I believe that hunting is conservation. We’re here to do what benefits the moose population and also to put good, wholesome food on the table.”

This year’s harvest goals were informed by a three-year study led by department biologists and University of Vermont researchers. Researchers fitted 90 moose calves and 36 adult females with GPS collars to understand the interplay between winter ticks, moose density and overall population health in WMU E.

The study showed that chronic high winter tick loads have caused the health of moose in northeastern Vermont to be very poor. Survival of adult moose remained relatively good, but birth rates were very low, and less than half of the calves in the study survived their first winter.

“This year’s hunt in WMU E was an important step towards reducing moose density in the northeast of the state to decrease the number of hosts for winter ticks and achieving a healthy, sustainable moose population,” said Fortin.



## My First Deer

By Owen Dupuis

Hi. My name is Owen Dupuis, and I am seven years old, and I got my Hunter’s Safety card this year. I can go hunting with my dad. On October 24 2021, at 7:03AM I shot at my first deer in my entire life. I’m happy that I harvested a nice 115 pound spike horn and happy that my dad was with me. My day started when my alarm clock went off. Me and my dad got up and ate breakfast and went out on a cold frosty morning at legal shooting hours. Me and dad were there for an hour and 3 deer, one spike came in. I took a shot at the spike and hit it pretty good. I was happy when I found my deer with uncle Pat and my dad. I was hunting with my 30:30 Winchester. I shot my deer in Barre Vermont, and I thought all that waiting paid off. So after, we went to Chelsea Vermont and weighed in my deer. Dad saw two of our deer in the pack. I was so excited, my heart was pumping hard. And that is the story of my first deer hunt.

# Most Recent Information

by Ken Jones

Some times in the white tail woods we find ourselves feeling a little crippled in one way or another from time to time so why not look at it medically and get an MRI. I'm not talking about putting things under some super scanner. Really quite the opposite. Here's a few examples of using MRI (most recent information) that resulted in success for me in the past.

Using fresh sign:

Late season 2018 Vermont muzzleloader season was winding down and I was headed for New York southern zone for their muzzleloader season for the last couple days of it. We had gotten a dusting of snow overnight and reaching deep into my bag of tricks I took a few minutes in the middle of the day to check a little urban spot on the outskirts of my little town. I walked in far enough to notice two sets of fresh tracks heading into a thick bedding area. I made a mental note and went back to work for a few hours.

I returned with a couple hours of daylight left with my turkey lounger and muzzleloader Molly. I set up an ambush sight where I hoped the two deer that went in there by would come out to feed hopefully before dark. I was there about an hour when I heard some stuff break-

ing out in the thicket. Little by little, it became evident something bigger than a squirrel was coming. Before I knew it, two enemy soldiers with the WAX came running into the ambush!! I quickly determined the larger of the two and made a quick accurate 18 Yard shot dispatching her and putting some great venison in the freezer. Turns out, one of the local guys that lives on the other end of the thicket decided to sneak in there and check it out with his muzzleloader. So, I guess I had a little help from him but I'm confident, those deer were coming out the same way they went in there and finding their tracks in that fresh snow gave this hunt. It's MRI

Observation:

2016 Vermont rifle season had gotten into the second week and things

weren't looking all that good with six days left.

Coming home from work with just my .30 carbine in the truck I'd carried that morning for an hour or two as I looked for fresh tracks. On the road coming into town there are several corn fields and I was noticing deer in most of them. All but a few in one of the last fields were on the other side of Otter Creek.

The wheels immediately started turning and I was putting together a stake out plan for the first couple hours of the next morning.

Once again I employed the turkey lounger because I knew there probably wouldn't be any trees to get against on the edge of the corn field. The plan was simple. Sneak out to

the edge of the corn in the dark, hide in some tall grass in the turkey lounger hoping a buck might be still cruising at daylight.

I got myself settled in and brought the .280 because I thought shots could get lengthy and I didn't want any escapees. It literally barely reached shooting light and I thought



I noticed the outline of the inside of a deer's hind quarter directly across the corn field from me. A little tip, train your eyes to look for parts of deer. An ear flick, a tail sway, the way that white melds into the brown on the inside of that hind quarter. I raised the rifle and just as I got my eye in the scope, the flick of a tail confirmed. Enemy spotted!!! Now the deer makes his final mistake. He turns and walks out into the field exposing a pretty good looking set of antlers and I began moving the cross hairs to his chest. This is no Chip shot and the Ruger M77 is not steadying the way I'd like. Suddenly I remember I'm in the turkey lounge and the real me, (turkey hunter) takes over. I slide down into the lounge into turkey position and rest the rifle on my knee. My wool pants made enough noise to stop him broadside at about 125 yds. Easy work for the .280 and now the gun is solid as a rock. He's looking my way but I don't think he saw me. Settle the cross hairs and send it. He sucks it up, hunches up shuffles a few yards and stops. Now I realize, I've got a repeater in my hand!!! I work the bolt, settle again quickly and the second one anchors him!!! A nice six point Vermont buck!!!

Using the power of observation as the MRI filled my Vermont buck tag the day before Thanksgiving.

### Surveillance:

2021 early September and I head to a little lease I'm in with some buddies from New Hampshire and put out a couple Moultrie trail cameras. I set them relatively close to one another on an oak flat each in front of a different tree stand. The old logging

roads and a lot of the area near one of the stands had a lot of standing water while the other one was relatively dry. The cameras soaked for a solid two weeks as I expected, the dryer stand had seen the most action.

One particular buck that showed up I was most impressed with. He definitely sported four points on one rail and was definitely the best deer I'd captured in six years hunting this lease. None of us are trophy hunting so there are no antler restrictions. I've killed a spike in here!!! I put another card in the camera and rest it and planned my return on opening weekend.

I arrived at camp Thursday afternoon and didn't bother to go check the camera. The plan was to hunt the stand in the morning and grab the card when I went in for lunch. I didn't see any deer on the morning sit but the evidence on the card from the camera showed me I'd hit kind of a whitetail jackpot. The series of 15 second videos over the five days the camera soaked revealed there was a community scrape being made in front of this camera!!! The big buck, three other smaller bucks, two spikes, even the does that walked into that scrape threw their heads up into the over-hanging limb.

Friday's afternoon sit brought no encounters and I began to feel that, here we go with deer. They're there, on the camera and when you sit there, they're no shows. We were only one day in so I wasn't panicking. Saturday morning found me back at the community scrape early in the cover of darkness. We'd gotten maybe 45 minutes into the morning. Things getting nice and

bright. Actually I'd put the time at 6:55 am I caught movement about thirty five yards out. As he moved along a row of trees towards the logging road where the scrape was and I drew Ivy. My Mathews Chill R. Once at full draw the plan was to let him get broadside in the road and shoot him. Well, he read a different script. When he broke from the cover, he turned immediately towards me walking right down the road. I just held at full draw and let him come. Thanks to the string splitter peep sight I use, I was able to watch him close and stay at anchor the whole time. The logging road turned right at twenty yards from the stand and when he got just about broadside at twenty I squeezed the release and sent an arrow into probably the second biggest buck, maybe the biggest of my life. When I get his skull back from the taxidermist I'll be able to compare them.

This buck died because of trail camera surveillance that told me he and several other deer were visiting that spot.

So, there you have it. Three different techniques to use to take an MRI and make the best of your

**M** :most

**R** : recent

**I** : information

**C**aption:

The author with his 2021 New York archery buck taken thanks to trail cam intel

## My First Deer

by David Valsangiacomo

I am David Valsangiacomo. I am 12 years old. This is the story of my first deer that I shot using my compound bow.

I went to my first sleep away camp a couple months before bow season. The camp was called Buck Lake. I had a lot of fun shooting guns there. I would recommend going there. The food is so good and the counselors are great. They helped me learn more about hunting.

The first Sunday night of bow season I shot my first deer. A big doe. I shot it with my compound bow.

We were bow hunting on the land that my great-grandfather had owned and now my grandfather and father own it.

Me and my dad got in our trees-stand at 1:30. We were ready and 5 hours later we were about to get out of the stand a little early as it was



a school night. I heard something over my shoulder. I got ready then I saw a big lone doe on an old logging road headed to the apple tree 20 yards in front of our tree-stand. I whispered to my dad don't move. As she got to the apple tree I started to stand up to pull back my bow when I barely hit the velcro on the tree stand armrest. She stopped and looked back up at me for what seemed like 5 mins then she turned quartering away and that's when I slowly stood up pulled back the bow string, aimed and shot the arrow. I heard the arrow hit her. It looked like and sounded like a good hit. She ran with the arrow sticking part way out of her.

We got down to check for blood we didn't find any at first. So we went back to the ranger took off some clothes, left our bows and headed back out. We looked in the woods then my dad found the broken off arrow. It was covered in blood and it had bubbles on it. A lung shot. Then we found blood. We found a lot of blood then it would stop and then we would find more. After about 120 yards of tracking and about 45 mins then we saw a big pile of blood.

I looked down a steep ridge and I saw her wrapped around a tree. We were so happy we hugged and high fived.

We then dragged her to a flat place and I gutted her with the Buck knife my grandfather gave me for christmas {I hit the stomach with my knife and it went in my face} my grandfather drove his truck to use.

We dragged her to the road and we put it in the back of his truck and celebrated some more at home with my grandfather, mom, brother Theo and my friend Danny. The next day after school we reported her. The doe weighed 131 pounds.





*VTF&W photo by John Hall*

**Scats and  
Tracks, a Virtual  
Offering for  
Elementary  
School Students**  
VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE -  
Press Release

The COVID-19 pandemic has had many teachers on the lookout for new and exciting ways to teach outside. Vermont Fish and Wildlife is offering a virtual program for Elementary School classes grades 1-6 designed to get kids outside with their teacher, while also learning about Vermont's local wildlife.

Scats and Tracks is a 4-week program that gives educators plans and support to lead nature hikes on school or nearby grounds. Each week's hike teaches students identify scat and tracks for a different native species, and it is supported with access to a virtual class visit on nature facts from Fish and Wildlife Department experts. This year's species are gray fox, beaver, gray squirrel, and eastern wild turkey.

There are two ways for classes to participate, designed to meet the needs of different schedules and student groups: 1) pre-recorded lessons; or 2) live virtual presentations with a department staff member once a week.

Vermont Fish and Wildlife understands that many educators have questions about leading a nature hike of their own. Staff are available to answer any questions about that portion in advance and to provide tips

The live virtual sessions will take place weekly during January 2022. Educators that choose the pre-recorded

option will receive the video links and additional information in late 2021.

To register for the program, educators should contact Education Specialist Corey Hart by emailing him at [corey.hart@vermont.gov](mailto:corey.hart@vermont.gov), or calling him at 802-505-5562. Please indicate which option you prefer, school, grade level, and how many students will be participating. The homeschool community is also encouraged to reach out.

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## Fall Foods Abundant for Wildlife

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Vermont Fish and Wildlife is reporting that several important fall foods for wildlife are abundant this year following last year when many foods were lacking.

Fish and Wildlife staff survey mast stands around the state each fall season, and last year they documented that many important berry and nut species were lacking which helped cause a dramatic increase in the number of bears harvested in the hunting season due to the bears searching widely for alternative foods including corn.

Results for this year are markedly different, with most species of nuts and berries available to wildlife and some, such as apples, choke cherries and mountain ash berries being very abundant. Acorn numbers were the highest in twenty years. It was a good year in most areas for beech nuts, for although many of the beech stands surveyed contained abundant nuts, other stands contained few or none.

“The great variation in beechnut numbers between sites that were sampled was a surprise to us as we had predicted it to be an excellent year for beechnut production following such poor numbers last year,” said State Wildlife Biologist Jaclyn Comeau who was recently chosen to fill the position of Black Bear Project Leader.



*Mountain ash berries and acorns are some of the fall foods enjoyed by wildlife this year.*

*VTF&W photos by John Hall*



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## My Three Year Quest

By Andrew Bonanno

My first encounter with this bear was about three years ago around July of 2019, while checking some game cameras. At that point, I only had a couple pictures of him. As I was viewing my cameras I heard a sound behind me of leaves and branches breaking. I immediately stopped what I was doing to see what was causing the commotion, but nothing was there. I continued to check my game cameras. Then the sound resumed, and I looked over, and that's when I spotted him. He was a massive bear, probably weighing around 225-250lbs. He never even knew I was there. So I sat in silence and in awe, as I watched him walk away. The following year was a disappointing one, as I never got to see him in person in 2020. He did appear on my game cameras.

The following spring of 2021, the bear did show up on my game cameras. There was not a consistent time where he showed up on my cameras, just at random times of day/night. On July 11, 2021, I headed to my hunting area to check game cameras when I quickly spotted him standing 30 yards away. I quickly pulled out my phone to capture video, but he caught my scent and made a blowing sound that I can only compare to a human huffing out of annoyance. After watching for what seemed like five minutes, I stared in awe as he quickly turned and ran away. Throughout the time leading up to my hunt, I continued to see him pop up on my game cameras, which gave me a glimmer of

hope that I would see him on opening day of bear season.

Opening day came, and while hunting, I came across a small bear. Knowing there was a larger bear in the area, I passed on the bear. A commitment at work prevented me from going out on the second day of the season, however my instincts told me to take the afternoon off on September 3, and I headed for the woods to hunt. By 4:00 that afternoon, I was settled in my stand. Around 6:30 I spotted the back of a bear coming to my right. I grabbed my muzzle loader and looked through the scope, but could only make out its back. I continued to watch him go to my right a bit farther and disappear into some thick brush. I watched through my scope as he walked into an opening where he stopped and sniffed the air. Knowing he picked up my smell, I took the shot. He ran about 50 yards, crashing

into some thick brush making a loud thud. I then heard the death moan that bears make when dying. He moaned three times, and I realized that I had gotten him.

After gaining my composure of knowing I had just shot the biggest bear of my life, I started walking toward him. When I reached him, I was in awe of the size and the beauty of the magnificent bear I had just harvested. As I always do, I knelt down beside the bear and thanked God, then started making some phone calls. I called my dad and girlfriend because I knew I would need help getting him out of the woods. After several attempts and one jet sled later, we finally got him loaded into my truck. We reported the bear, and it tipped the scales at a whopping 290 pounds. He is my biggest trophy yet, and that is a hunt that I will never forget. The bear is currently being scored. It is the largest bear harvested with a muzzle loader.



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## Bats Are on the Move, with A Reputation to Improve

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

The onset of fall sends Vermont's bats into motion, which makes it an important time for conservation-minded Vermonters to learn about, and help conserve, our nine native bat species.

If you have noticed bats roosting in your attic, barn, or office over the summer, fall is the perfect time to safely evict these uninvited guests from your property. This is because summer groups of bats that roost in buildings begin to scatter in the fall, in preparation for migration or hibernation. You can learn how to safely evict bats from your building at the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's [best management practices](#) page.

You can also help bat conservation efforts by [reporting large colonies of bats living in structures to the department's website](#). Locations with rare colonies of one of our endangered species, the [little brown bat](#), are eligible for free bat houses from Vermont Fish and Wildlife.

Bat houses provide an alternative location for safely evicted bats to remain in your yard and continue eating huge quantities of insects that may be forest, agricultural, or human pests. Bat houses can be put up any time of year but do require some simple maintenance. Late fall or winter is the time to look up inside your bat house and make sure

all the bats have left before cleaning out any abandoned wasp nests and planning any needed caulking or repainting.

"Fall also means Halloween, and scary images of bats, but this presents an opportunity to bring positive attention to bats as well," said Vermont Fish and Wildlife Small Mammals Biologist Alyssa Bennett. "So, we celebrate 'Bat Week' in the days leading up to Halloween." Bat Week takes place October 24-31 and aims to raise awareness about the vital ecological function of bats and to dispel the many myths and misinformation about them.

This year, Bennett will be giving a public talk about Vermont's nine native bat species at the Intervale Center in Burlington. You can register for the talk on the [department's events page](#). Anyone interested in learning more can visit the official Bat Week website at [www.BatWeek.org](http://www.BatWeek.org), or email [Alyssa.Bennett@vermont.gov](mailto:Alyssa.Bennett@vermont.gov) for more information about what they can do right here in Vermont to promote bat conservation.

"Vermont is home to several species of threatened and endangered bats that we are working to conserve and recover—we hope Vermonters will support these efforts and come to enjoy seeing bats in their natural environment," added Bennet. "Bats are a very important part of our natural world and now, more than ever, they need our help."



*Bat houses are a great alternative for bats you need to evict from your home, but they do require some maintenance in the late fall or winter to clean out abandoned wasp nests and repair any leaks.*

VTF&W photo