

2009 Indiana Deer Season Summary



2009 Indiana Deer Harvest Summary

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Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program

This program supports state fish and wildlife agencies to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats, and the hunting, sport fishing and recreational boating opportunities they provide. This program was initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid in Wildlife Act and created a system where by taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States.



Overview

The 2009 Indiana deer hunting season was comprised of four seasons: Early Archery (Oct. 1 to Nov. 29), Firearms (Nov. 14 to Nov. 29), Muzzleloader (Dec. 5-20), and Late Archery (Dec. 5 to Jan. 3). Additionally, there was a youth-only season Sept. 26-27 that was open to youth age 17 or younger who was accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old. The youth could take one additional antlerless deer during this special season.

The statewide archery bag limit was two deer. Hunters could take one deer per license for a total of either two antlerless deer or one antlered and one antlerless deer. A hunter could take only one antlered deer during all statewide seasons combined using archery, firearm, or muzzleloader licenses. This was the 13th year the crossbow was legal for hunting by non-handicapped hunters under an archery license. The crossbow was eligible for use only during the late archery season and could be used for deer of either sex.



Archers could harvest deer in designated urban zones that did not count towards any other statewide bag limit. Each extra urban zone deer required a separate extra archery license. The archery season in the urban deer zone opened two weeks prior to the opening of the early archery season (Sept. 15 to Nov. 30), and continued again into January (Dec. 6 to Jan. 4). Archers were allowed to harvest up to either four antlerless deer or three antlerless and one antlered deer during this period. Any deer harvested during this period were in addition to all other bag limits.

The bag limit during firearms season was one antlered deer, and the bag limit for the muzzleloader season was one either sex deer (maximum of one antlered deer harvested per hunter). A single firearms license was required to hunt with any or all shotgun, muzzleloader, rifle, or handgun during the firearms season, and a muzzleloader license (separate from the firearms license) was required to hunt during the muzzleloader season.

The resident deer license fee was \$24 and the nonresident fee was \$150. When an agricultural advantage could be gained, resident landowners who hunted on land they own were exempt from purchasing deer licenses, as were lessees.

Special public hunts were held at Muscatatuck and Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuges, Naval Surface Activity Crane, Newport Chemical Depot, and Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center.

Bonus Antlerless Permits

An unlimited number of bonus antlerless permits were available at every deer license vendor statewide, and each permit could be used in any county. County bag limits ranged from A to 8 (Figure 1). Permits were available to both resident and non-resident hunters.

Each permit was valid for one antlerless deer, and hunters were allowed to take as many bonus antlerless deer as desired, as long as the county antlerless bag limits were observed.

Bonus antlerless permits cost \$24 and \$150 for the first permit for residents and nonresidents, respectively. The second and each additional permit was \$15 for residents and \$24 for nonresidents. Bonus antlerless permits could be used during all deer hunting seasons except for “A”-designated counties, where the license could only be used during the last four days of the firearms season (Nov. 26 to Nov. 29) plus the late archery and muzzleloader seasons.



Figure 1. Antlerless deer bag limits in 2009.

Deer Harvested by Season

A total of 132,752 deer were legally harvested in Indiana during the 2009 season (Figure 2). This harvest was 2% higher than the 129,748 deer harvested during the 2008 season. The antlered deer harvest of 52,981 represented a nearly 4% increase from the 50,845 harvested last year. The antlerless harvest of 79,771 was 1% more than the 78,903 harvested in 2008. In 2009, the harvest for total deer and antlerless deer ranks as the highest reported kill for each category in history. The antlered harvest ranks second all-time.

Approximately 2.73 million deer have been legally harvested during the past 57 deer hunting seasons in Indiana.

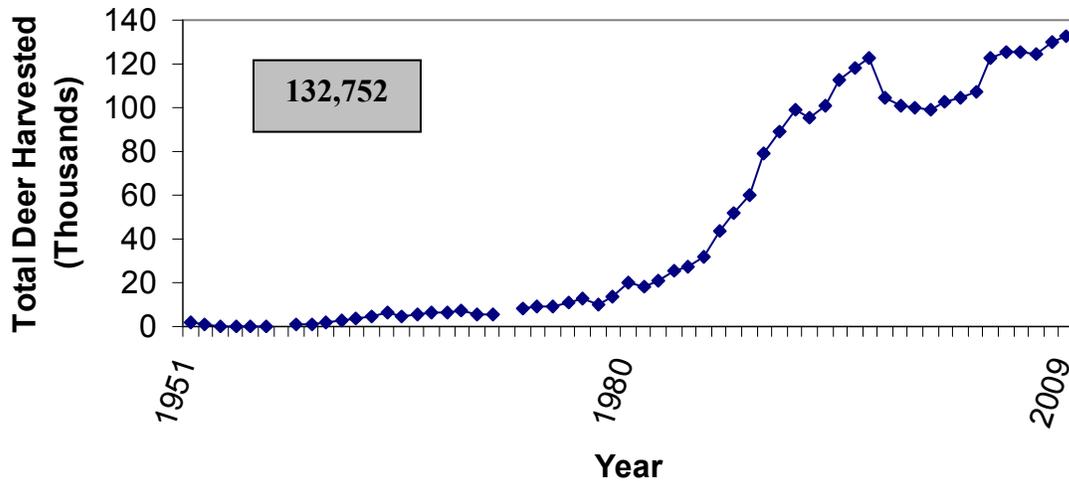


Figure 2. The number of deer harvested in Indiana deer hunting seasons 1951-2009.

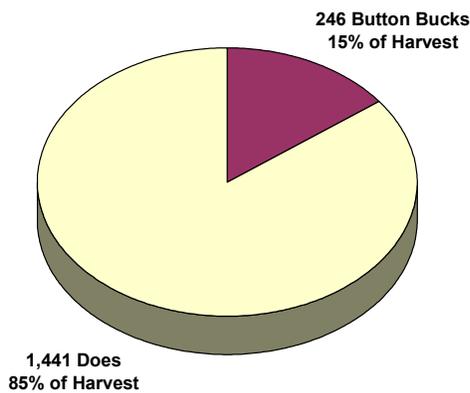


Figure 3. 2009 Youth Season harvest composition.

The early archery season harvest (including the early Urban Deer Zones) of 27,818 deer comprised 21% of the total harvest and was nearly 8% more than the 25,800 harvested in 2008 (Table 1). The late archery season comprised 1% of the total harvest, similar to the 2008 season. The combined archery seasons yielded 29,416 deer, an increase of 9% from the 26,921 harvested in 2008. Antlerless deer comprised 65% of the total archery harvest, similar to 2008's antlerless composition. Antlerless harvest in early archery season was 64%, while in late archery it was 81% (Figure 4). Does made up 55% of the total harvest in early archery season and nearly 70% of the harvest in late archery season.

The hunting season began with urban deer zones (Sept. 15) followed by a youth only weekend (Sept. 26-27). This season was created in 2006 and allowed youths 15 years and younger to harvest one antlerless deer. It was changed this year to include all youths 17 years and younger. A total of 1,687 deer were harvested in 2009 during this season, up 38% from the 1,219 from 2008. This season resulted in 1% of the total harvest (Table 1). Only 15% of the harvest was comprised of button bucks (Figure 3).



Photo by: B. Butler

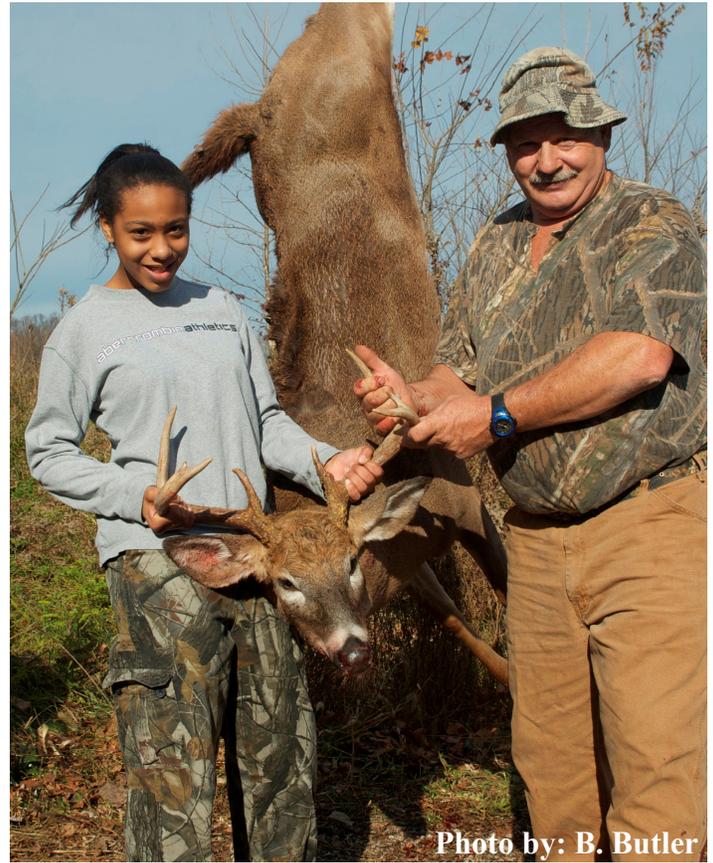
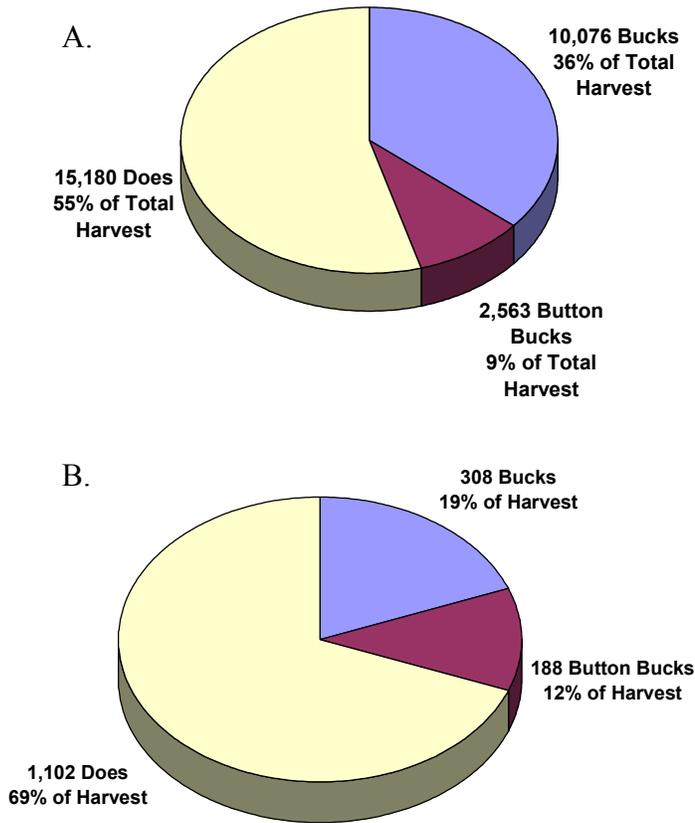


Photo by: B. Butler

Figure 4. A. Early Archery harvest and B. Late Archery harvest composition in 2009

Table 1. Number of deer harvested in each segment of the 2009 Indiana deer hunting season. Percent of total harvest in parentheses (totals may not be exactly 100 due to rounding).			
Season	Number of deer harvested		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Youth season* (26-27 Sept)	0	1,687 (2)	1,687 (1)
Early Archery** (1 Oct - 29 Nov)	10,076 (19)	17,742 (22)	27,818 (21)
Firearms (14-29 Nov)	38,921 (74)	44,175 (55)	83,096 (63)
Muzzleloader (5-20 Dec)	3,675 (7)	14,878 (19)	18,553 (14)
Late Archery (5 Dec - 3 Jan)	308 (1)	1,290 (2)	1,598 (1)
Totals	52,980	79,772	132,752

*Antlerless deer season only

**Includes the early Urban Deer Zone Starting on 15 September

The firearms season harvest of 83,096 deer was a decrease of nearly 4% from the 86,454 deer harvested in 2008 and comprised 63% of the total harvest (Table 1). The antlerless harvest (44,175) was less than the 2008 antlerless harvest (48,130), though the antlered harvest (38,921) for this season was slightly higher than the antlered deer harvest in 2008 (38,324). Antlered deer made up at least half of the total harvest on the first five days of firearm season, while antlerless deer outnumbered antlered deer during the remaining eleven days of the season (Table 2). During the opening weekend of firearms season, 43% of the total firearm season harvest occurred, up from 36% in 2008. Opening weekend contributed to 27% of the statewide total harvest for all seasons, which is 3 percentage points more than opening weekend harvest from 2008. Antlerless deer comprised 54% (82% of which were does) of the firearm season harvest (Figure 5).

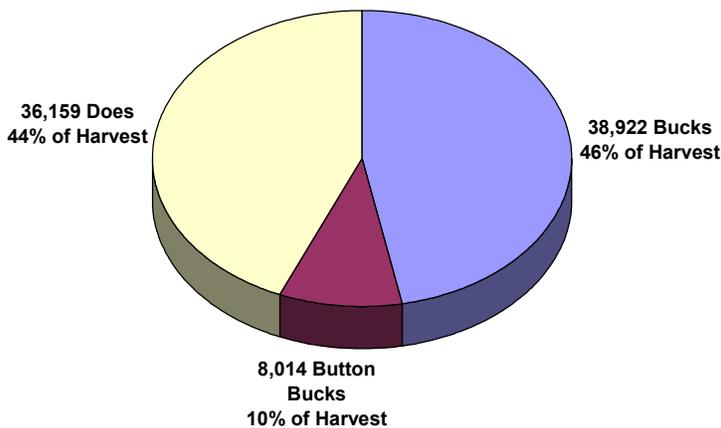


Figure 5. 2009 Firearms season harvest composition

Table 2. Number of deer harvested on each day of the 2009 Indiana firearm season (includes deer taken by bow, shotgun, pistol, rifle, and muzzleloader).

Date	Day	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
		N	Daily %	N	Daily %	N	Total %
14 November	Sat	14,670	59	10,162	41	24,832	30
15 November	Sun	6,157	56	4,909	44	11,066	13
16 November	Mon	1,941	54	1,652	46	3,593	4
17 November	Tue	1,315	50	1,307	50	2,622	3
18 November	Wed	1,349	52	1,217	48	2,566	3
19 November	Thu	1,216	49	1,289	51	2,505	3
20 November	Fri	1,463	43	1,920	57	3,383	4
21 November	Sat	3,029	39	4,667	61	7,696	9
22 November	Sun	1,970	37	3,291	63	5,261	6
23 November	Mon	642	37	1,114	63	1,756	2
24 November	Tue	518	36	922	64	1,440	2
25 November	Wed	461	32	965	68	1,426	2
26 November	Thu	753	33	1,501	67	2,254	3
27 November	Fri	1,138	29	2,787	71	3,925	5
28 November	Sat	1,591	27	4,362	73	5,953	7
29 November	Sun	1,034	28	2,639	72	3,673	4
Totals*		39,247		44,704		83,951	100

* Totals differ from those in previous table because date of harvest is not known for some registered deer and this table includes deer from both the firearms season and the last 16 days of the early archery season.

The muzzleloader season harvest of 18,553 comprised 14% of the total harvest, up 2 percentage points from last year (Table 1). This year's muzzleloader season harvest was 22% higher than the 2008 muzzleloader harvest (15,154). As in years past, a large percentage of the deer harvested during the muzzleloader season were antlerless (80%) (Figure 6).

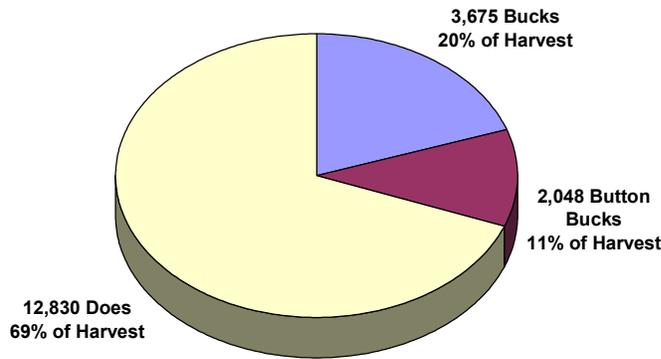


Figure 6. 2009 Muzzleloader season harvest composition



Harvest by Equipment Type

Six types of equipment were legal for hunting deer during 2009: bows, shotguns, muzzleloaders, handguns, crossbows, and rifles. Rifle cartridges were restricted to .357 diameter or larger bullet, and case length must be between 1.16 and 1.625 inches. These types of equipment accounted for 21%, 50%, 25%, 1%, 2%, and 1% of the total deer harvest, respectively (Figure 7). Shotgun harvest decreased 4% from 2008. Harvest by muzzleloader and bow increased 7% and 8% from 2008, respectively (Table 3). Only 4% of the harvest is made up of the remaining three equipment choices.

The total crossbow harvest for the year, including deer taken on disabled hunter crossbow permits, was 927 animals compared with the 827 harvested in 2008. During the late archery season, the crossbow harvest was 182 deer, compared with 159 in 2008 and 154 in 2006 (Table 3). Harvest with rifles increased this year by 57% compared to 2008, and is up 133% since 2007, the initial year they could be used. There are no check boxes for rifles on the current deer check harvest forms, so actual numbers may be higher than reported.

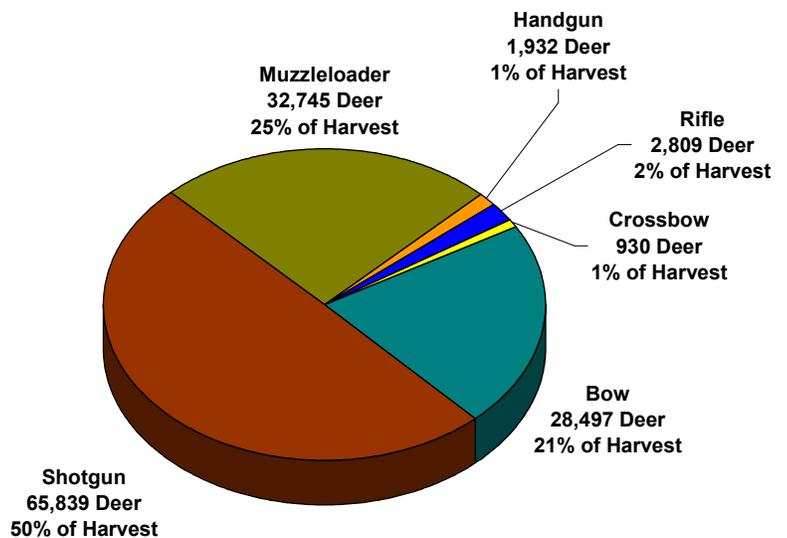


Figure 7. 2009 harvest by equipment type in Indiana

Table 3. Number of deer harvested by type of legal hunting equipment during the 2004-2009 seasons. Approximate percent of total harvest shown in parentheses.

Equipment type	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Bow*	21,498 (18)	23,692 (19)	26,723 (21)	26,187 (21)	26,369 (20)	28,497 (21)
Shotgun	71,251 (58)	70,022 (56)	66,304 (53)	63,919 (51)	68,520 (53)	65,839 (50)
Muzzleloader	28,182 (23)	29,686 (24)	30,247 (24)	30,740 (25)	30,295 (23)	32,745 (25)
Handgun	1,620 (1)	1,606 (1)	1,386 (1)	1,615 (1)	1,949 (2)	1,932 (1)
Rifle	x	x	x	1,203 (1)	1,788 (1)	2,809 (2)
Crossbow						
Disabled	405(0)	427(0)	591 (0)	609 (0)	668 (1)	748 (1)
Late archery	102 (0)	93 (0)	130 (0)	154 (0)	159 (0)	182 (0)
Totals	123,058	125,526	124,562	124,427	129,748	132,752

* Crossbow harvest is not included in bow harvest. Values within this table do not exactly equal those tallied by season (page 3) due to the fact that multiple equipment types can be used during the firearm season. Muzzleloaders may also be used during both the firearm and muzzleloader season. Additionally, differences arise due to the different methods required to analyze data when either the equipment or the season is unknown.

Harvest by License Status

Licensed resident hunters (lifetime, resident, and youth license holders) accounted for over 81% of the total deer harvest (Table 4). Licensed nonresident hunters harvested nearly 2% of the total harvest. Hunters with a regular yearly deer hunting license (resident plus non-resident) took only 45% of the total deer harvest; hunters not paying the full yearly price (i.e. lifetime license holders, youth license holders, landowners/tenants, and military personnel) took nearly 55% of the total harvest. Landowners and lessees who hunted on their own land without a license and military personnel on official leave status accounted for almost 17% of the total deer harvest. Of the deer harvested by license-exempt hunters, nearly 99% were taken by landowners/tenants while only 1% by military personnel on leave.

Table 4. Harvest distribution of deer by license type during 2009 hunting season.

License Status	Deer Harvested	Percent of Harvest
Resident	57,065	42.99
Lifetime	39,031	29.40
Land Owner	22,042	16.60
Youth	11,772	8.87
Nonresident	2,565	1.93
Military	277	0.21
Total	132,752	100.00

Harvest Age and Sex Structure

The age and sex structure of the 2009 deer harvest was 40% adult males (antlered bucks), 36% adult females, 10% male fawns (button bucks), and 14% female fawns (Table 5). These percentages are similar to the harvest in 2008. About 36% of the antlered bucks and 34% of the adult does harvested during 2009 were yearlings (1.5 years old) (Figure 8).

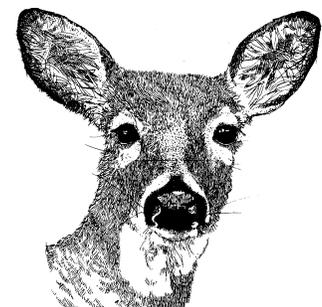


Table 5. Sex and age structure of the Indiana deer harvest during 1987-2009, as determined from mandatory check stations.

Year	Adults		Fawns		Total
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	
1987	29,530 (57)	11,139 (21)	6,164 (12)	4,945 (10)	51,778
1988	34,358(57)	13,170 (22)	7,050 (12)	5,656 (10)	60,234
1989	40,503 (51)	19,464 (24)	10,737 (14)	8,614 (11)	79,318
1990	43,080 (48)	23,680 (27)	12,373 (14)	9,630 (11)	88,763
1991	41,593 (42)	31,211 (32)	14,626 (15)	11,253 (11)	98,683
1992	43,508 (46)	25,387 (27)	14,262 (15)	12,157 (13)*	95,314
1993	44,424 (44)	27,704 (27)	14,751 (15)	14,335 (14)*	101,214
1994	50,812 (45)	32,466 (29)	15,487 (14)	13,651 (12)*	112,416
1995	47,098 (40)	40,946 (35)	16,398 (14)	13,287 (11)*	117,729
1996	47,315 (38)	39,913 (32)	17,307 (14)	18,551 (15)*	123,086
1997	42,537 (41)	35,163 (34)	14,039 (13)	13,198 (12)*	104,937
1998	44,955 (45)	30,711 (31)	12,257 (12)	12,538 (12)*	100,461
1999	46,371 (46)	30,474 (31)	11,645 (12)	11,129 (11)*	99,618
2000	44,621 (45)	31,986 (32)	11,072 (11)	11,046 (11)*	98,725
2001	48,357 (47)	31,806 (31)	11,230 (11)	11,770 (11)*	103,163
2002	47,177 (45)	35,357 (34)	11,291 (11)	10,603 (10)*	104,428
2003	49,533 (46)	36,303 (34)	10,262 (10)	10,887 (10)*	106,986
2004	54,743 (44)	41,749 (34)	12,501 (10)	14,065 (11)*	123,058
2005	52,488 (42)	44,286 (35)	13,030 (10)	15,722 (13)*	125,526
2006	49,097 (39)	45,257 (36)	13,688 (11)	17,339 (14)*	125,381
2007	49,375 (40)	44,514 (36)	13,313 (11)	17,225 (14)*	124,427
2008	50,845 (39)	46,666 (36)	13,083 (11)	19,154 (15)*	129,748
2009	52,981 (40)	48,367 (36)	13,058 (10)	18,336 (14)*	132,752

* Number of adult and fawn females is projected from the % fawns of all females aged at the biological check stations (not from the ratio of fawn doe to fawn bucks in the total deer harvest).

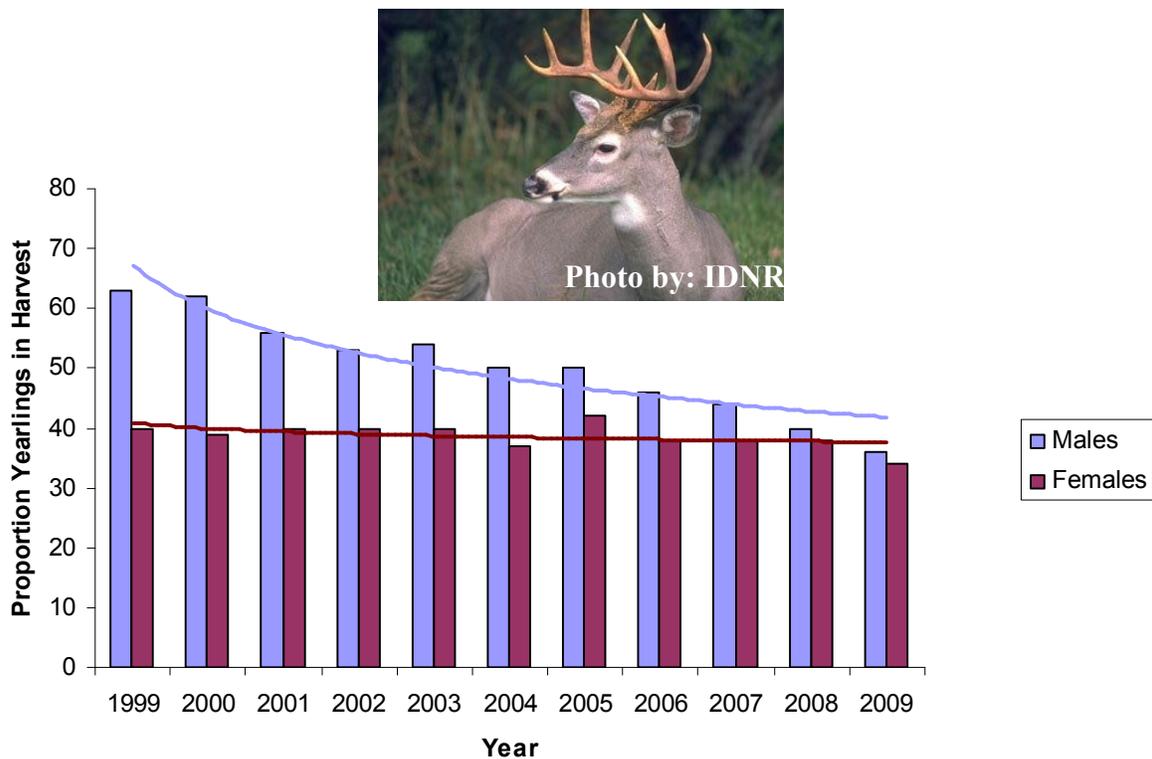


Figure 8. Proportion of male and female yearlings in the harvest (1.5 years old), as determined by aging during the first weekend of the firearms season, for years 1999-2009.

Deer License Sales

Deer license sales increased this year from 2008 by nearly 5%, up to 271,919 (Table 6). Youth licenses increased nearly 3% from 2008. License sales from all categories were up, with the greatest increases seen in the Resident Muzzleloader license and the Military/Refuge licenses (11% and 9% increase, respectively). Resident Firearm licenses comprised the largest proportion deer licenses sold (39%), followed by Bonus Antlerless licenses (26%).

Table 6. Deer license sales in Indiana by type, 2007-2009.

	2007	2008*	2009*
Resident Archery/Extra Archery	51,238	54,414	58,748
Resident Firearm	98,925	103,562	105,150
Resident Muzzleloader	19,670	20,983	23,356
Resident Military/Refuge	2,044	2,460	2,684
Resident Bonus Antlerless	61,389	68,792	71,511
Nonresident	9,449	9,660	10,470
Youth	34,994	37,295	38,330
Total (excluding Youth)	242,715	259,871	271,919

*Includes associated apprentice licenses



Distribution of the Harvest

The number of deer harvested in individual counties ranged from 96 in Tipton County to 4,102 in Steuben County (Table 7). Harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 62 counties; 2,000 deer in 19 counties; and 3,000 deer in five counties. The antlered buck harvest exceeded 1,000 in ten counties (up from 5 in 2008), while the antlerless harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 31 counties compared with 29 in 2008. Antlerless deer comprised at least 50% of the total harvest in 87 of the state's 92 counties in 2009 compared with 88 counties in 2008. The counties with the highest harvests were Steuben, Kosciusko, Switzerland, Noble, Franklin, Dearborn, Marshall, Parke, Harrison, and Washington. The counties with the lowest harvests were Tipton, Benton, Hancock, Marion, Blackford, Shelby, Clinton, Rush, Boone, and Howard.

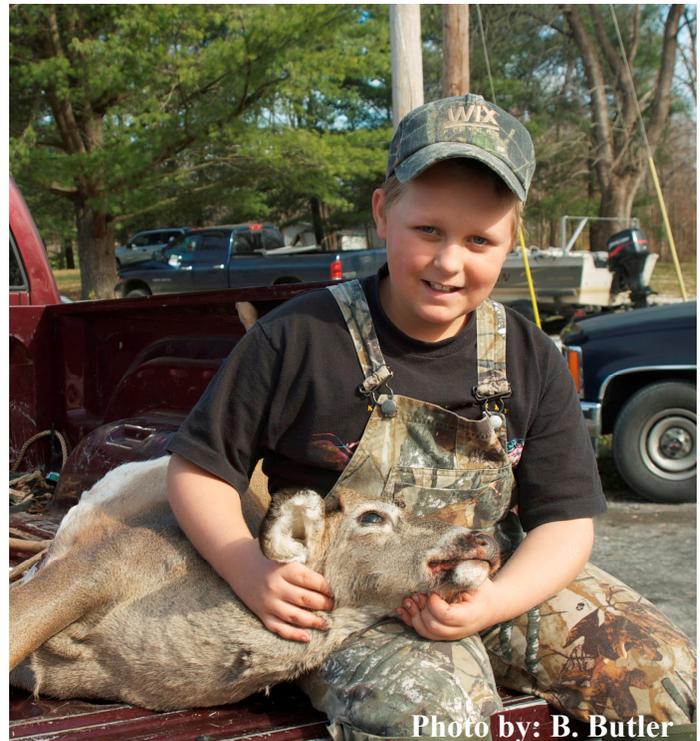


Photo by: B. Butler

Table 7. Number of deer harvested in each Indiana county during 2009 (after adjustment for unknowns).

County	Number Harvested			County	Number Harvested		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total		Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Adams	250	288	538	Lawrence	850	1,141	1,991
Allen	733	1,048	1,781	Madison	223	435	658
Bartholomew	505	718	1,224	Marion	176	134	310
Benton	73	52	125	Marshall	1,049	1,888	2,936
Blackford	152	185	337	Martin	712	937	1,650
Boone	204	217	421	Miami	580	931	1,511
Brown	714	1,255	1,968	Monroe	592	888	1,480
Carroll	412	535	947	Montgomery	335	507	842
Cass	614	821	1,434	Morgan	533	759	1,291
Clark	644	946	1,586	Newton	437	559	996
Clay	489	554	1,044	Noble	1,066	2,021	3,086
Clinton	162	182	344	Ohio	424	690	1,114
Crawford	775	1,044	1,819	Orange	865	1,197	2,062
Daviess	430	606	1,036	Owen	814	939	1,753
Dearborn	1,138	1,843	2,981	Parke	1,152	1,729	2,881
Decatur	293	428	721	Perry	794	953	1,747
DeKalb	953	1,502	2,455	Pike	660	829	1,489
Delaware	309	532	841	Porter	577	910	1,487
Dubois	683	1,180	1,863	Posey	675	899	1,573
Elkhart	546	1,003	1,549	Pulaski	632	953	1,586
Fayette	359	501	860	Putnam	926	1,133	2,059
Floyd	251	320	570	Randolph	266	302	568
Fountain	585	736	1,322	Ripley	762	1,113	1,875
Franklin	1,096	1,967	3,063	Rush	165	178	344
Fulton	760	1,369	2,130	St. Joseph	579	1,014	1,594
Gibson	665	830	1,495	Scott	373	575	948
Grant	323	478	802	Shelby	143	200	342
Greene	845	1,204	2,049	Spencer	644	722	1,366
Hamilton	228	311	539	Starke	639	1,059	1,698
Hancock	118	163	281	Steuben	1,273	2,829	4,102
Harrison	1,146	1,630	2,776	Sullivan	825	938	1,764
Hendricks	306	321	627	Switzerland	1,167	2,056	3,223
Henry	255	346	600	Tippecanoe	601	799	1,400
Howard	190	337	527	Tipton	54	42	96
Huntington	488	744	1,232	Union	242	330	572
Jackson	805	1,218	2,023	Vanderburgh	347	420	767
Jasper	584	1,016	1,601	Vermillion	528	686	1,214
Jay	372	642	1,014	Vigo	622	810	1,432
Jefferson	806	1,313	2,119	Wabash	670	1,072	1,742
Jennings	702	1,064	1,766	Warren	463	749	1,212
Johnson	260	439	699	Warrick	628	782	1,410
Knox	447	435	883	Washington	1,032	1,594	2,626
Kosciusko	1,214	2,437	3,652	Wayne	482	635	1,117
Lagrange	785	1,796	2,582	Wells	269	263	532
Lake	577	681	1,258	White	491	730	1,222
La Porte	863	1,403	2,267	Whitley	531	800	1,332

* Totals may be off +/- 1 due to rounding during partitioning of harvested deer of unknown sex or county.

Disease Monitoring

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease

No reports of Epizootic Hemorrhagic disease were received during 2009.

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is one of a group of diseases called Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies, which is a variant of scrapie in sheep and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. The agents of CWD are called prions which are abnormal, protease-resistant forms of cellular proteins normally synthesized in the central nervous system and lymphoid tissues. Prions that cause CWD are highly resistant to heat or disinfectant. No study has ever proven that CWD is transmissible to humans.

CWD has been reported in Wisconsin, Illinois, West Virginia, and most recently Virginia, among other states. In 2002, Indiana created a monitoring program to detect the presence of CWD, which focused on removing the obex or the retropharyngeal gland from random hunter harvested deer throughout the state, deemed active surveillance. Reports of outwardly noticeable sick deer have also been tested, named targeted surveillance. This monitoring continues today, and well as testing random samples of road killed deer which was instituted in 2007.

Results from the Division of Fish and Wildlife's 2009 CWD sampling have been completed, and tests failed to detect CWD in 835 deer during the 2009 year. CWD has not been detected in over 11,000 deer during this monitoring period.

Bovine Tuberculosis

In September 2008, a cow in Franklin county, Indiana tested positive for Bovine Tuberculosis (TB). In May 2009, several red deer from a captive cervid operation less than ½ mile away tested positive for TB at a slaughterhouse. The subsequent depopulation of the cervid herd resulted in an infection rate of 56%; no other cow tested positive for TB.

Interstate transport records of captive cervids discovered two additional facilities that had purchased TB positive animals from the Franklin county cervid operation. These two facilities were located in Harrison and Wayne counties. These herds were depopulated and found no additional positive TB animals.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife, along with the help of the Indiana Board of Animal Health and the United States Department of Agriculture mobilized staff to collect and test free ranging white-tailed deer at check stations during the opening weekend of firearms season in counties where captive cervids were identified. A total of 431 hunter harvested deer were sampled in these and surrounding counties. A total of 56 deer were determined to have visibly lesioned lymph nodes that weekend, and tissue from those deer were immediately sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, IA for culturing. Those deer have all been classified as TB free. An additional 14 deer were identified as having lesioned lymph nodes by Purdue's Animal Disease and Diagnostic Lab. Preliminary tests failed to detect the presence of TB. Those samples, and the tissue from the remaining 361 deer are currently being cultured and awaiting final results from NVSL.

For more information on deer health, visit www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild.



Photo by: W. Bivans



Photo by: B. Butler

DNR biologists collect disease samples to monitor the health of the Indiana deer herd.