Results of the 2013 Quabbin Hunter Survey

Included with last year’s newsletter was a hunter survey that we asked Quabbin hunters to fill out and return with their application. We mailed out over 1,400 surveys, but unfortunately very few hunters filled them out and returned them. Only 225 surveys were received. However, we were able to gather a lot of good information from those returned surveys. It appears most respondents were long-standing Quabbin hunters: 90% had applied at least 5 times, 81% had been selected at least 5 times, and 81% had hunted Quabbin at least 5 times. One of the first questions on the survey was about the general level of satisfaction hunters had towards the Quabbin hunt. We were delighted to discover that the vast majority (90%) of hunters were highly satisfied (29%) or satisfied (61%) with the hunt. One area of continued interest among some Quabbin hunters is the status of the Quabbin deer herd. While the Division quickly acknowledges that deer densities are much lower than the early years of the hunt, we also suggest that these lower deer densities have allowed for a remarkable transformation of the forest. Still, we were curious how hunters perceived the Quabbin deer herd in comparison to other areas of the state. Most hunters (66%) believed the density of deer at Quabbin is the same or higher than areas they hunt on the outside. We think this is a strong endorsement for maintaining populations around current levels.

Here are some other results from the hunter survey:

- When asked why do you hunt Quabbin, these reasons were important:
  - Controlled, safe nature of the hunt (83%)
  - Spending time at Quabbin (93%)
  - Antlerless deer don’t count towards bag limit (64%)

- Hunters perceptions of the hunt:
  - Selection process is fair (90%)
  - Hunt organized and efficient (96%)

The complete results of the survey will be available in the near future.
The 2013 Hunt

The 2013 deer hunt was the fourth year of a 5-year rotation, and Prescott was not hunted. About 1,350 hunters applied for the hunt, and about 73% were selected. Just over 780 hunters attended the hunt. The total harvest for the four days was 122 deer, representing a hunter success rate of about 16%.

The following section details the results from each hunting block. The “Quick Facts” in the box in each section summarizes statistics that hunters most often inquire about.

New Salem

New Salem hunters were met with dense fog and mild temperatures. Hunting conditions were challenging as visibility was severely limited. About 200 hunters (83%) showed up to the hunt, and they harvested 10 deer. That equals a success rate of 5.2%.

Pelham

Pelham hunters experienced the same fog and visibility as the New Salem hunters. About 225 (79%) hunters attended the 2-day hunt, and they harvested 14 deer, including several nice ones. Hunters killed 1.0 deer/mi². Success rate in the Pelham block was 6.2%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Yrling</th>
<th>Fawn</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Petersham hunters experienced almost ideal hunting conditions during their 2 days. Fresh snow and cold temperatures provided excellent hunting opportunities. Hunter attendance was similar to other areas; about 200 (86%) attended the hunt. Hunters harvested 4.25 deer/mi2, and hunter success was about 28%. Petersham hunters killed 57 deer.

### Petersham

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Yrling</th>
<th>Fawn</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Quick Facts

**Biggest Buck**
- 164 pounds
- 3.5 years old
- Mark Palmacci

**Biggest Doe**
- 144 pounds
- 3.5 years old
- Charles Stellato

Hardwick

Hardwick had the same 2 great days of hunting weather, and hunters took advantage of the conditions. Hunters harvested 41 deer, which is a success rate of 26%. About 160 (85%) hunters killed 4.6 deer/mi2.

### Hardwick

**Quick Facts**

**Biggest Buck**
- 170.5 pounds
- 3.5 years old
- John Maguire

**Biggest Doe**
- 140 pounds
- 2.5 years old
- Eric Sweryda

**Quick Facts**

**Biggest Buck**
- 151 pounds
- 2.5 years old
- Paul Lafauci

**Biggest Doe**
- 145 pounds
- 3.5 years old
- Jaroslaw Przybyla
Car scouting will again be the weekend before Thanksgiving and is scheduled for November 22-23. Car scouting hours will be 8:00 am – 3:00 pm. Hunters are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity and are reminded that car scouting is for Quabbin hunters only and no firearms are allowed.

The 2014 Quabbin deer hunt application is available online at the DCR website:

[www.mass.gov/dcr/deerhunt](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/deerhunt)

We have included an application for your convenience.

### The 2014 Hunt

Mark Palmacci with his 164 lb. Pelham buck.

Quite a few changes were made during the 2012 season, and all of these will continue into this year’s hunt. We will move forward with our rotation schedule, and New Salem will not be hunted this year. Prescott will be added back into the hunt. Each block will be hunted for one 2-day segment.

Application fees will remain at $5/hunter. Unfortunately, we were unable to transition the application online, so we will continue with paper applications (enclosed) until we can work out an online program. Antlerless permits will be optional again this year.

Antlerless permits can be purchased online again through the MassFishHunt website.

The 2014 Quabbin hunt is scheduled for the following days:

**Hardwick/Petersham:** Dec. 4-5, 2014; **Pelham/Prescott:** Dec. 11-12, 2014.

Any questions? Call Kiana Koenen at 413-323-6921 ext. 163 or e-mail her at kiana.koenen@state.ma.us.