



Deer Hunting in Massachusetts

Hunting is safe for both hunters and non-hunters

There have been **0 non-hunters** killed due to hunting in Massachusetts.

There have been **0 non-hunters** injured in Massachusetts from archery hunting.

- Hunting is a highly regulated, safe activity and all hunters must be properly licensed.
- All first-time hunters are required to complete a Hunter Education course that teaches safety and laws.
- Hunting laws are strictly enforced by the Massachusetts Environmental Police.
- Deer hunting typically occurs in the early morning hours in the fall and winter when fewer other people are outdoors.
- Hunting and other outdoor recreation activities like birdwatching and hiking have taken place concurrently throughout Massachusetts for decades without issue.

Hunting is an important conservation tool

- Deer are common and abundant in Massachusetts.
- In areas where hunting is limited, deer populations exceed management goals set by biologists.
- Many towns in eastern Massachusetts have more deer than the habitat can sustainably support.
- Without population management, deer become overabundant, increasing habitat damage and risks to public safety from vehicle collisions.
- Each year, approximately 1 out of every 115 drivers is involved in a deer-vehicle collision in Massachusetts. Far more human injuries and deaths occur from deer-vehicle collisions than from hunting.
- Every state in the country relies on legal, regulated hunting to manage deer populations.
- Revenue from hunting licenses is used to conserve all wildlife species and their habitats.



When there are too many deer on the landscape, they overbrowse tree saplings and seedlings. This degrades forest health and negatively impacts many other kinds of wildlife and plants.

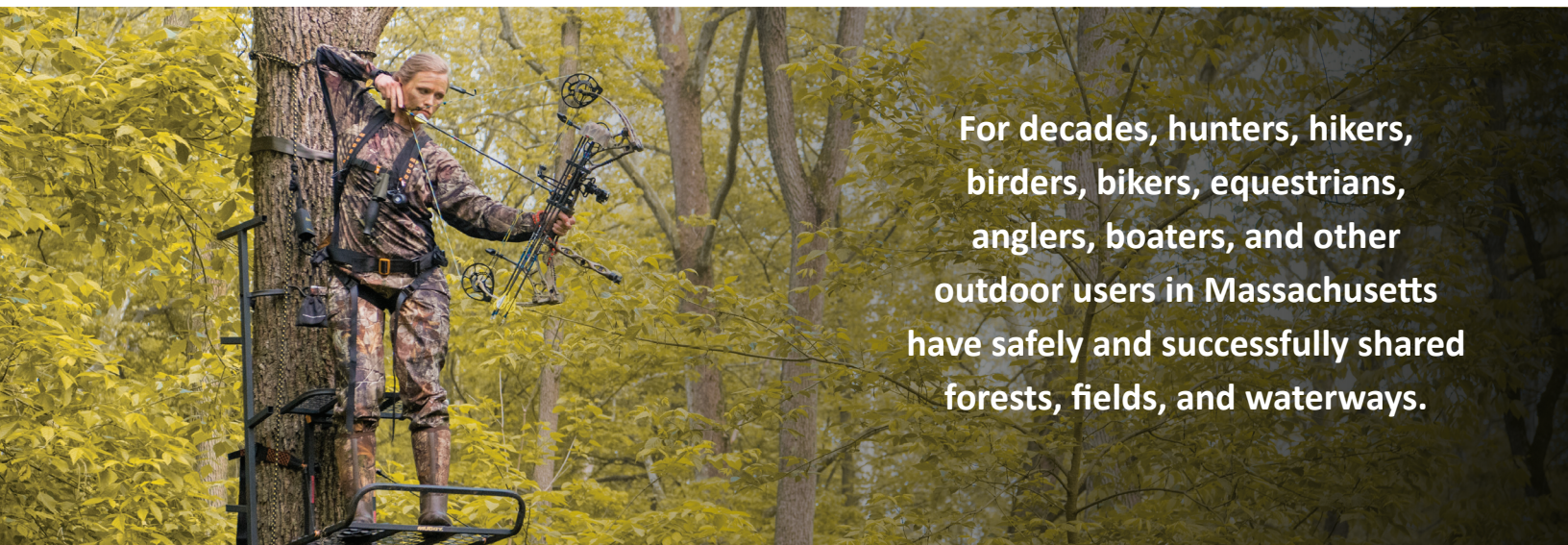
Hunting provides food for families

- Deer are harvested for a legitimate purpose and do not go to waste.
- Free range, organic venison is a healthy protein with a low carbon footprint that feeds many families.

MassWildlife and Hunting

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) is responsible for the conservation of freshwater fish and wildlife in the Commonwealth, including rare plants and animals. Through effective management, MassWildlife ensures quality outdoor recreational opportunities for hunters, anglers, and all outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy the impressive variety of plants, fish, and wildlife found in Massachusetts. By offering outdoor skills clinics, safety courses, wildlife education workshops, and online resources, MassWildlife provides all residents with a greater understanding and appreciation for wildlife conservation.

MassWildlife supports regulated hunting as a safe activity that brings communities together through the sharing of food, skills, and time spent outdoors. Through science-based regulations, MassWildlife uses hunting as a tool for managing wildlife. Learn more: [Mass.gov/MassWildlife](https://www.mass.gov/MassWildlife)



Safety Training and License Requirements

Hunting is safe and highly regulated. While hunting accidents are extremely rare, any injury is one too many. Most hunting injuries are caused by falls from a tree stand and rarely involve non-hunters. All hunting accidents must be reported and are investigated by law enforcement.

Safety Requirements: In Massachusetts, first-time hunting license buyers must successfully complete a Basic Hunter Education course. The Basic Hunter Education course was developed by the International Hunter Education Association and is endorsed, administered, and required of first-time and/or youth hunters by all U.S. states and Canadian provinces. The 12–16 hour curriculum focuses on safe handling and storage of hunting arms and ammunition, hunting laws and ethics, care and handling of wildlife taken by hunters, and wildlife conservation.

Gun License Requirements: Massachusetts hunters using firearms are required to complete approved training and possess a gun license issued by their municipal police department.

Hunting Regulations: Hunters must follow strict regulations in order to hunt deer and other game in Massachusetts, including holding all required licenses and permits. Hunters report harvested deer to MassWildlife within 48 hours so biologists can monitor population levels.