

HumanDimensions
Research Program

Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign



Federal Aid Project
Number W-112-R-29
Job Number 102.3
Wildlife Restoration
Oct. 1, 2019-Sept. 30, 2020

Colleen Callahan, Director
Illinois Department of Natural
Resources

Paul Vehlow,
Federal Aid Coordinator

Mike Wefer,
Chief, Division of Wildlife
Resources

2019-2020

Illinois Deer Hunter Report



Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Program Leader and Principal Investigator
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey

Prepared by
Eric M. Walberg, Craig A. Miller,
Ph.D., and Lauren J. Stephens



INHS Technical Report 2022 (02)
January 20, 2022

Key words: Illinois, deer, deer hunter, deer hunting policy and regulations, hunter attitudes, management preferences

Suggested Citation:

Walberg, E.M., C.A. Miller and L.J. Stephens. 2022. 2019-20 Illinois Deer Hunter Report. Job Completion Report, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration W-112-R-29. Human Dimensions Research Program Report SR-20-03/INHS Technical Report 2022 (02). Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL. 40pp.

2019-2020 ILLINOIS DEER
HUNTER REPORT

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

HUMAN DIMENSIONS RESEARCH PROGRAM

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NUMBER: W-112-R-29
STUDY 102
JOB NO. 102.3

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Program Leader and Principal Investigator
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois

Prepared by
Eric M. Walberg, Craig A. Miller, Ph.D., and Lauren J. Stephens
Illinois Natural History Survey
Champaign, IL
January 20, 2022

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration
W-112-R-29
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Colleen Callahan, Director
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Mike Wefer, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other non-merit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; 217/785/0067; TTY 217/782/9175.

ABSTRACT

A random sample was drawn of 3,000 Illinois residents with a 2018 Illinois deer hunting permit and/or were drawn for a 2019 deer lottery permit on public land. Selected individuals were mailed an 8-page self-administered questionnaire designed to understand attitudes, constraints, and related behaviors regarding deer hunting in Illinois. We received 1,417 questionnaires for a 49% response rate. A majority of hunters participated in the archery (66%) and/or firearm seasons (82%), and 15% participated in the muzzleloader season. Deer hunters on average harvested 0.5 deer/hunter during the archery season, 0.6 deer/hunter during the firearm season, and 0.3 deer/hunter during the muzzleloader season. Respondents reported that the most essential items for deer hunting (aside from license, permit, bow or firearm/ammunition) were: (1) tree stands (71%), (2) binoculars (39%), (3) cover scent (39%), and (4) range finders (39%). A majority of respondents believed that the deer population in the county where they hunt deer most often was about right (61%), 24% believed the deer population was too low, and 15% believed the deer population was too high. Most hunters (83%) were satisfied with their overall hunting experience during the 2019-20 deer hunting season. Respondents believed that the most important strategy for the IDNR to take in managing CWD in deer in Illinois were: (1) use all methods necessary to manage CWD (47%), (2) use existing hunting seasons alone to manage CWD (16%), and (3) take no action and let nature take its course (6%).

OBJECTIVE

We will conduct a repeat mail survey using a random sample of 3,000 2019 deer hunting permit holders to understand attitudes, satisfaction, constraints, and related behaviors regarding deer hunting in Illinois.

METHODS

A random sample of 3,000 Illinois residents with a 2018 Illinois deer hunting permit and/or were drawn for a 2019 deer lottery permit on public land were selected to receive questionnaires regarding the 2019-20 Illinois deer hunting season. All Illinois residents that purchased a 2018 Illinois deer hunting permit and/or were drawn for a 2019 deer lottery permit on public land were included in the sample frame except for Youth License holders ($n = 182,656$). Data was collected using a self-administered mail-back questionnaire. On 22 September 2020, hunters were mailed an 8-page questionnaire (Appendix A), cover letter (Appendix B), and a postage-paid return envelope. A thank you/reminder postcard (Appendix C) was sent to hunters on 9 October 2020. Non-respondents were mailed a second questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix D) on 21 October 2020, followed by a second postcard mailing on 6 November 2020. A third and final questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix E) were mailed to non-respondents on 7 December 2020. Data were coded, entered, and analyzed using SPSS 27.0 (IBM Inc. 2019). Basic descriptive statistics and frequencies were analyzed using R (R Core Team, 2020).

Of the 3,000 questionnaires mailed to Illinois residents with a 2018 Illinois deer hunting permit and/or were drawn for a 2019 deer lottery permit on public land, 115 were undeliverable or otherwise invalid. Of the remaining 2,885 questionnaires, we received 1,417 usable questionnaires for an overall response rate of 49%.

RESULTS

Deer Hunting Experience in Illinois

Most respondents hunted deer in Illinois during the 2019-20 deer hunting seasons (90%). Only individuals who hunted deer during the 2019-20 deer hunting season in Illinois completed this section of the survey. A majority of hunters participated in the archery (66%) and/or firearm seasons (82%), and less than 20% participate in the muzzleloader (15%), late winter (12%), CWD (5%), and/or youth-only seasons (2%; Table 1). The counties where respondents hunted deer most often during the 2019-20 Illinois deer seasons were: (1) Jo Daviess, (2) Knox, (3) Fayette, (4) Fulton, and (5) Jackson.

Less than half (45%) of respondents purchased a 2019-2020 Illinois deer hunting permit online. Among hunters that purchased a permit online, most purchased a firearm permit (92%) with fewer hunters purchasing permits for the archery (12%), muzzleloader (18%), late winter (2%), and/or CWD seasons (1%; Table 2). Twenty-eight percent of online permit purchasers purchased a permit from a lottery for a state site. The main reasons for purchasing permits over the counter were: (1) convenience of purchasing permit in person ($n = 402$), (2) extra fee for internet purchases ($n = 44$), and (3) poor/no internet connection at home ($n = 35$).

Half of deer hunters hunted 10 or fewer days during the 2019-20 Illinois deer hunting seasons (52%) with 3% hunting one day, 28% hunting 2 to 5 days, and 21% hunting 6 to 10 days (Table 3). Seventeen percent of hunters hunted 25 or more days during the deer hunting seasons. Respondents reported harvesting 0.5 deer/hunter during the archery season, 0.6 deer/hunter during the firearm season, and 0.3 deer/hunter during the muzzleloader season (Table 4). Nine percent of hunters ($n = 119$) reported shooting but not retrieving a deer during the 2019-20 deer hunting season with a total of 131 deer not retrieved. Eighteen percent of hunters ($n = 230$) reported knowing someone that shot but did not retrieve a deer during the 2019-20 season with a

total of 61 deer not retrieved. Most respondents indicated they reported their deer harvest by phone (74%), while 24% reported their harvest online and 7% reported their harvest at a check station (Table 5). Hunters processed their harvested deer using a commercial processor (41%) and on their own (39%) at similar rates, while 23% of hunters processed harvested deer using both commercial processors and on their own (Table 6). Five percent of hunters ($n = 53$) donated any of their venison to an organization like Hunters for the Hungry or a food bank. Over half of hunters (58%) reported sharing venison with others not in their household. Among hunters that shared venison, 56% shared venison with non-hunting family not living with them and 55% with non-hunting friends (Table 7).

Less than half of hunters (44%) used crossbows while hunting deer in Illinois during the 2019-20 deer archery season. Nearly all crossbow hunters used a crossbow during the archery season (99%) with limited use during the firearm season (5%; Table 8). The most common reasons for using a crossbow during the 2019-20 deer hunting season were: (1) health/fitness limitations (58%), (2) increased accuracy (37%), and (3) increased range (20%; Table 9). On average, hunters reported using archery equipment to hunt deer a total of 21.3 years and 3.8 years with crossbows (Table 10). Half of crossbow hunters (50%) indicated that they would not have participated in the 2019-20 deer archery season if using a crossbow was not an option. One-third of hunters (33%) used a bow other than a crossbow during the archery season with 46% using a bow other than a crossbow every year during the archery season, 28% most but not all seasons, and 26% some seasons but not most. Twenty-four percent of hunters used a compound bow if they hunted during the archery season with a bow other than a crossbow, 2% used a recurve bow and 0.2% used a longbow. Five percent of hunters ($n = 13$) indicated they switched to a different bow type after harvesting one deer.

Hunters satisfaction with the 2019-20 deer hunting season was compared between crossbow and compound/recurve archery hunters (Figure 1). Crossbow and compound/recurve archery hunters were most satisfied with: (1) overall deer hunting experience (86% and 85%), (2) obtaining deer permits (78% and 81%), and (3) habitat conditions (76% and 74%). Crossbow and compound/recurve archery hunters were least satisfied with: (1) number of other deer hunters seen (41% and 50%), (2) access to places to hunt deer (52% and 52%), and (3) deer hunting regulations (58% and 62%). Satisfaction with the deer hunting season was similar between crossbow and compound/recurve archery hunters with no significant difference, except for satisfaction with habitat conditions ($\chi^2 = 12.65, p < .05$). Demographics, hunting experience, and deer harvest was also compared between crossbow and compound/recurve archery hunters (Table 11). On average, crossbow hunters were older than compound/recurve archery hunters (57.1 years and 47.5 years) and a majority of both groups were male (96% and 95%). Crossbow hunters have hunted deer (31.0 and 25.4 years) and hunted with archery equipment (21.1 and 19.0) longer on average than compound/recurve archery hunters. Deer harvest per hunter was greater among crossbow hunters than compound/recurve archery hunters (0.59 and 0.45).

Past interactions with IDNR staff was limited among respondents with 24% having past interactions with law enforcement and less than 10% for other staff types, including: Springfield staff (8%), regional staff (10%), district biologists (5%), site superintendent (8%), and CWD check station (7%; Table 12). A majority of respondents reported their past interactions with IDNR staff were positive, including: site superintendents (97%), CWD check station (94%), district biologists (91%), regional staff (90%), law enforcement (89%), and Springfield staff (80%).

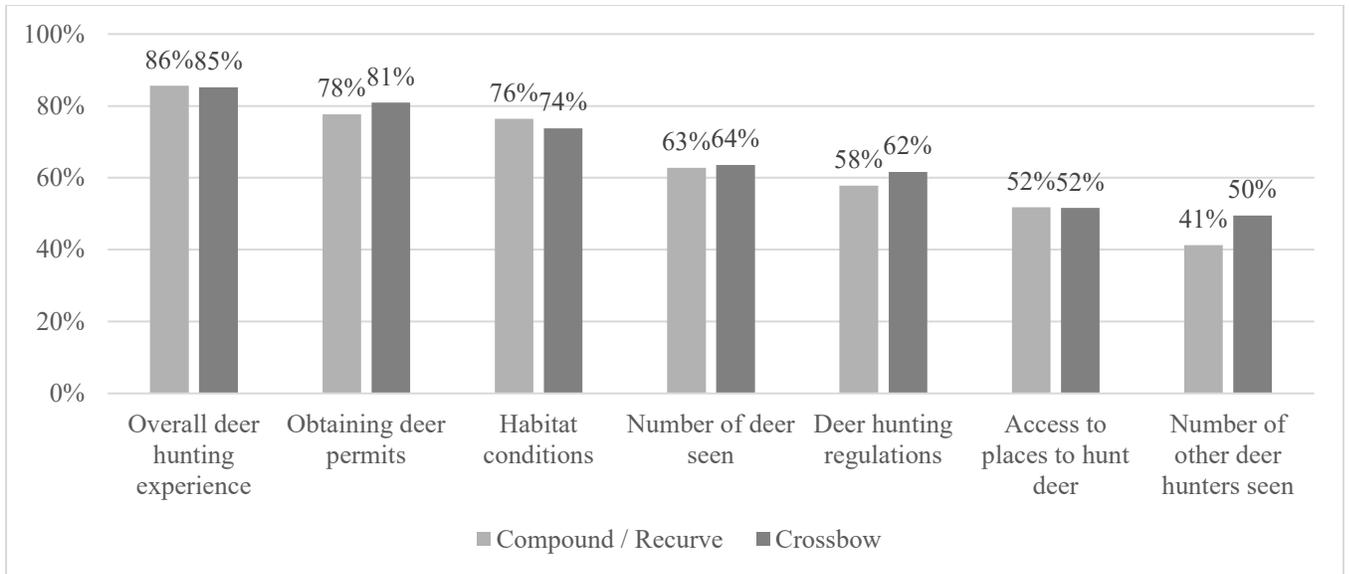


Figure 1. Satisfaction with 2019-2020 Illinois deer hunting season among archery hunters using crossbows ($n = 422$) or compound/recurve bows ($n = 434$).

Table 1. Hunting participation during the 2019-20 Illinois deer hunting season.

Season	% Response ¹
Archery season	66.4
Firearm season	81.9
Muzzleloader season	15.3
Late winter season	11.9
CWD season	4.5
Youth-only season	1.7

¹ Respondents who hunted deer in Illinois during 2019-2020 hunting seasons ($n = 1,280$)

Table 2. Types of deer hunting permit(s) purchased online.

Permit type	% Response ¹
Archery permit	11.7
Firearm permit	92.1
Muzzleloader permit	18.0
Late winter permit	1.9
CWD permit	0.9

¹ Respondents who purchased any 2019-2020 deer hunting permit online ($n = 573$)

Table 3. Total days (for all types of deer hunting) hunting deer during the 2019-20 Illinois hunting seasons.

Days hunted	% Response ¹
1 day	2.5
2-5 days	28.0
6-10 days	21.2
11-15 days	10.2
16-20 days	12.3
21-25 days	9.2
25+ days	16.6

¹ Respondents who hunted during 2019-2020 deer hunting seasons ($n = 1,280$)

Table 4. Number of deer harvested during 2019-20 Illinois deer hunting seasons.

	n	Bucks		Does		Combined	
		Total Harvest	Deer / Hunter	Total Harvest	Deer / Hunter	Total Harvest	Deer / Hunter
Archery season	850	195	0.23	249	0.29	444	0.52
Firearm season	1,048	307	0.29	335	0.32	642	0.61
Muzzleloader season	196	13	0.07	40	0.20	53	0.27

Table 5. Method used to report deer harvested.

Report Method	% Response ¹
Phone	73.8
Online	24.3
Check Station	7.1

¹ Respondents who hunted during 2019-2020 deer hunting seasons and reported harvesting at least 1 deer ($n = 663$). Total percentage greater than 100% because respondents can use multiple report methods during season.

Table 6. Method used to process deer respondent harvested.

Method	% Yes ¹
Commercial Processor	40.6
Own Processing	39.4
Used Both Commercial and Own Processing	23.2

¹ Respondents who hunted during 2019-2020 deer hunting seasons and reported harvesting at least 1 deer ($n = 663$). Total percentage greater than 100% because respondents can use multiple processing methods.

Table 7. Percentage of respondents who shared venison with others not in their household.

	Hunters ¹ (%)	Non-hunters ¹ (%)
Family not living with me	36.4	56.0
Friends	32.2	54.8
People in my community (church, school, etc.)	2.5	9.9
Other	0.8	3.0

¹ Respondents who hunted during 2019-2020 deer hunting seasons and reported sharing venison with others not in their household ($n = 593$). Total percentage greater than 100% because respondents can share with multiple groups.

Table 8. Hunted deer using crossbows during 2019-2020 deer hunting season ($n = 425$).

	% Yes
Archery season	99.3
Firearm season	4.7

Table 9. Reason for using a crossbow during the 2019-2020 deer hunting season ($n = 425$).

	% Response
Health/Fitness limitations	57.9
Increased accuracy	36.7
Increased range	20.0
To hunt in archery season	15.1
To use something different	13.4
Different challenge	13.2
Other	6.6

Table 10. Total years hunting deer using archery equipment and/or crossbow.

	n	Mean Years
Archery equipment	437	21.3
Crossbow	414	3.8

Table 11. Demographics, hunting experience, and deer harvest among crossbow and compound/recurve archery hunters in Illinois.

	Compound/ Recurve	Crossbow
Age (Years)	47.5	57.1
Gender (% Male)	94.9%	95.7%
Years archery hunting	19.0	21.1
Years deer hunting	25.4	31.0
Archery harvest (deer/hunter)	0.45	0.59

Table 12. Quality of interaction with IDNR staff.

	Past Interaction ¹ (%)	Quality of Interaction ² (%)				
		Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive
Site Superintendent	8.0	0.0	1.7	1.7	22.4	74.1
District Biologist	4.8	0.0	2.9	5.9	20.6	70.6
Regional staff	9.6	1.4	1.4	7.0	28.2	62.0
CWD Check Station	7.4	0.0	0.0	5.6	35.2	59.3
Law Enforcement	24.0	2.1	1.6	7.8	32.1	56.5
Springfield staff	8.2	5.0	6.7	8.3	30.0	50.0

¹% reflects respondents who hunted deer in Illinois during the 2019-2020 hunting seasons ($n = 1,280$).

²% reflects respondents that reported past interaction with respective IDNR staff group.

Hunting Activities

Respondents reported that the most essential items for deer hunting (aside from license, permit, bow or firearm/ammunition) were: (1) tree stands (71%), (2) binoculars (39%), (3) cover scent (39%), and (4) range finders (39%; Table 13). Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with fourteen statements about equipment for hunting in Illinois (Table 14). Respondents agreed most that: (1) “it is more important for new hunters to learn proper hunting skills than harvesting deer” (92%); (2) “we should support technology that allows people to hunt who otherwise would not be able to do so” (81%); and (3) “fair chase is more important than harvest” (70%). Respondents agreed least that: (1) “there are too many restrictions on hunting equipment” (27%); (2) “technology in hunting equipment has made it too easy to harvest deer” (32%); and (3) “new hunters should be allowed to use equipment that helps them harvest deer” (35%).

Over half of respondents (53%) watch and/or stream hunting shows (e.g., The Meat Eater, Hunting Public) with 56% watching hunting shows 3 times a month or more during the past 12 months (Table 15). The most common reason for watching hunting shows was to “get ideas about hunting trip locations” (37%) and “learn new hunting techniques” (27%; Table 16).

Table 13. Items (aside from license, permit, bow and firearm/ammunition) that respondents consider essential to deer hunting ($n = 1,417$).

	Essential Item (%)
Tree stands	71.1
Binoculars	39.2
Cover Scent	38.7
Range finder	38.7
Laundry scent eliminator	35.7
4-wheeler/ATV	35.0
Trail Camera	32.5
Calls	27.2
Rattling antlers	20.3
Lures/attractants	18.3
Deer Cart	17.7
GPS/satellite imaging	8.7
Other	5.6

¹Total % exceeds 100% as respondents can select multiple items.

Table 14. Agreement with statements about equipment for hunting in Illinois ($n = 1,417$).

	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
It is more important for new hunters to learn proper hunting skills than harvesting deer.	1.2	0.6	1.8	4.2	8.1	33.2	50.9
We should support technology that allows people to hunt who otherwise would not be able to do so.	1.7	2.4	2.4	12.9	20.1	37.2	23.4
Fair chase is more important than harvest.	2.0	3.0	4.3	20.2	17.0	32.8	20.7
Any deer harvested without fair chase is game not worth having.	5.5	9.0	5.5	24.6	13.2	24.5	17.6
I feel some equipment takes the skill out of hunting.	5.7	9.3	6.4	16.9	22.8	23.2	15.8
Any equipment that increases my chance to harvest game should be permitted.	9.0	14.9	11.1	18.1	16.2	17.2	13.4
Some hunting equipment violates my principles of fair chase.	9.7	11.2	5.7	23.9	14.9	23.2	11.4
I support any equipment that helps me harvest deer.	5.5	12.8	13.5	21.7	19.6	16.6	10.3
Some hunting equipment eliminates basic deer hunting skills.	3.8	9.1	7.9	22.7	23.7	22.7	10.1
Regulations should restrict equipment if it makes it too easy to harvest deer.	5.8	8.6	11.0	23.8	20.2	20.9	9.6
Advances help retain deer hunters.	1.5	6.0	6.7	31.6	25.1	21.9	7.2
New hunters should be allowed to use equipment that helps them harvest deer.	7.2	15.9	14.2	27.3	16.3	12.7	6.5
There are too many restrictions on hunting equipment.	6.4	18.1	12.7	34.7	14.2	7.5	6.4
Technology in hunting equipment has made it too easy to harvest deer.	6.8	17.2	16.1	27.9	16.4	10.6	5.0

Table 15. Frequency watching/streaming hunting shows (The Meat Eater, Hunting Public, etc.) ($n = 711$).

Frequency	% Response
Every week	33.9
Between 5 and 12 times the past year	22.1
About 3 times a month	31.2
Less than 5 times in the past year	12.8

Table 16. Respondent’s reasoning for watching hunting shows ($n = 711$).

	% Response
Get ideas about hunting trip locations	36.8
Learn new hunting techniques	26.5
Entertainment	17.6
See hunts in different locations	12.4
Learn about wildlife management	6.6

Attitudes toward Deer Hunting

A majority of respondents agreed with three statements about deer hunting in Illinois, including: (1) “we need more public land for deer hunting in Illinois” (66%), (2) “there should be a limit on the total number of deer a hunter can harvest in a year” (65%), and (3) “deer hunting regulations in the Hunting Digest are easy to understand” (61%; Table 17). Over half of respondents (55%) disagreed that a 2-buck limit in Illinois results in too many bucks harvested.

A majority of respondents believed that the deer population in the county where they hunt deer most often was about right (61%), 24% believed the deer population was too low, and 15% believed the deer population was too high. Over forty percent of respondents (43%) felt that the

level of the deer population where they hunt deer most often was lower compared to 5 years ago, 35% felt the deer population was about the same, and 22% felt the deer population was higher. A majority of respondents believed that the buck to doe ratio where they hunt was about right (55%), 39% believed there was not enough bucks per doe, and 6% believed there were too many bucks to does (Table 18). Over half of respondents (52%) believed the ideal buck to doe ratio for the area where they hunt was 1 buck to 5 does, 30% believe the ideal ratio was 1 buck to 2 does, and 6% believed the ideal ratio was 1 buck to 10 does (Table 19).

In 2019, legislation was proposed that would allow certain rifles to be used during firearm deer season. Half of respondents (50%) would support regulations permitting rifles to be used during the firearm deer season statewide in Illinois. Over three-quarters of respondents (77%) indicated that the main reason that they do not support regulations permitting rifles during the firearm deer season was because it would create an unsafe hunting environment (Table 20). Less than half of respondents (46%) would use a rifle to hunt deer if rifles were allowed to be used during the firearm season.

Table 17. Respondents' attitudes toward deer hunting in Illinois.

	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
We need more public land for deer hunting in Illinois.	2.0	4.5	2.9	25.1	12.4	28.4	24.8
There should be a limit on the total number of deer a hunter can harvest in a year.	6.3	9.5	8.0	11.1	13.6	28.5	23.0
There are not enough deer hunting opportunities on public lands in Illinois.	3.6	7.0	7.1	38.6	14.4	18.4	10.9
The 2-buck limit in Illinois results in too many bucks harvested.	12.9	31.1	11.4	19.4	9.5	9.2	6.5
Deer hunting regulations in the Hunting Digest are easy to understand.	1.8	3.8	8.9	24.1	16.1	39.7	5.5
Hunter fact sheets for state sites are easy to understand.	1.6	4.7	7.3	46.2	12.2	23.4	4.5

Table 18. Respondents' perceptions of buck/doe ratio in the county where they hunt ($n = 1,417$).

	% Response
Not enough bucks per doe	39.3
About right mix of bucks to does	55.1
Too many bucks to does	5.7

Table 19. Respondents' toward ideal buck to doe ratio for the area they hunt ($n = 1,417$).

	% Response
1 buck to 1 doe	5.4
1 buck to 2 does	29.5
1 buck to 5 does	52.0
1 buck to 10 does	5.7
2 bucks to 1 doe	3.8
3 bucks to 1 doe	1.8
5 bucks to 1 doe	0.2
Other	1.6

Table 20. Respondents' reasons for not supporting regulations permitting rifles during the firearm deer season.

	% Response ¹
It would create an unsafe hunting environment	76.9
It would increase the number of deer harvested in Illinois	11.5
Other	6.0
There would be too many hunters afield	5.5

¹% based on respondents who **do not** support regulations permitting rifles during the firearm deer season ($n = 669$).

Hunting Access

The type of land used most often by respondents to hunt deer during the 2019-20 seasons were: (1) private property not owned by them (36%), (2) their own private property (35%), and (3) private property owned by their family (16%; Table 21). Most hunter have not purchased land for hunting (80%) with 19% purchasing land in Illinois and 1% in a state other than Illinois. Only 3% of respondents were unable to hunt during any of the **2018-19** deer seasons and 5%

during the **2019-20** deer seasons. Most respondents that were unable to hunt during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 deer seasons was due to the county where they wanted to hunt having sold out of tags (81% and 79%, respectively) and about 20% were not drawn for a state site (19% and 21%; Table 22). Nearly all respondents (94%) hunted during the **2018-19** Illinois deer season with most hunters participating during the archery (66%) and firearm seasons (82%; Table 23). Most hunters reported hunting deer in Illinois every year (81%), 13% hunting deer most years, 5% on occasional years, and 1% hunted their first year (Table 24).

Hunters were asked their satisfaction with the 2019-20 deer hunting season (Table 25). Hunters were most satisfied with: (1) overall deer hunting experience (83%), (2) obtaining deer permits (76%), and (3) habitat conditions (74%). Hunters were least satisfied with: (1) number of other deer hunters seen (45%), (2) access to places to hunt (51%), and (3) deer hunting regulations (58%). The most common reasons that respondents hunted were: (1) “enjoy the sights and sounds of nature” (98%); (2) “experience the excitement of hunting” (97%); and (3) “be close to nature” (96%; Table 26). The least common reasons for hunting were: (1) “use advanced equipment” (24%); (2) “manage disease” (56%); and (3) “harvest a big buck” (65%).

Table 21. Type of land hunted most often by respondents during the 2019-20 Illinois deer hunting season ($n = 1,280$).

	% Response
Private property not owned by me	36.3
My own private property	35.2
Private property owned by my family	15.9
Public lands, IDNR sites	6.2
Public lands, Shawnee National Forest	3.7
Public lands, county sites	2.1
Private outfitter property	0.5
IRAP land	0.0

Table 22. Reason for not receiving a permit during the 2018-2019 and 2019-20 deer hunting seasons.

	2018-19 Season (%)	2019-20 Season (%)
Not drawn for a state site.	19.4	20.6
County where respondent wanted to hunt was sold out of tags.	80.6	79.4

% reflects respondents that were unable to get a permit for the 2018-19 ($n = 31$) and/or 2019-20 deer season ($n = 63$)

Table 23. Seasons respondents hunted during the **2018-19** Illinois deer hunting season.

	% Response ¹
Archery season	65.7
Firearm season	81.8
Muzzleloader season	15.5
Late winter season	11.3
CWD season	5.0
Youth-only season	1.2

¹ % based on respondents who hunted during 2018-19 Illinois deer season ($n = 1,211$). Total % exceeds 100% since hunters can hunt during multiple seasons.

Table 24. Frequency of hunting deer in Illinois ($n = 1,417$).

	% Response
First year	0.8
Occasional years	4.8
Most years	13.1
Every year	81.3

Table 25. Hunters' satisfaction with the 2019-20 Illinois deer seasons ($n = 1,417$).

	Very Dissatisfied	Moderately Dissatisfied	Slightly Dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Obtaining deer permits	1.7	2.4	4.2	15.9	11.8	29.6	34.5
Overall deer hunting experience	1.6	2.6	3.9	9.5	17.6	37.2	27.7
Habitat conditions	1.4	2.7	5.1	17	17.1	36.6	20.2
Access to places to hunt	7	6.3	10.7	25	12.1	19.7	19.2
Deer hunting regulations	1.9	3.1	7.4	29.9	16.2	27.3	14.1
Number of deer seen	6.9	10.1	15.3	8.4	21.2	25.5	12.5
Number of other deer hunters seen	4.4	6.9	9.2	34.7	14.4	19.1	11.3

Table 26. Respondents' motives for hunting hunt deer ($n = 1,417$).

I hunt deer to...	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Unsure (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
...enjoy the sights and sounds of nature.	0.4	0.2	0.5	1.1	8.3	31.7	57.9
...be close to nature.	0.4	0.3	0.3	2.5	9.7	34.3	52.5
...experience the open space.	0.2	0.2	0.3	3.3	9.4	35.6	51.0
...experience the excitement of hunting.	0.2	0.3	0.2	2.4	9.3	36.9	50.7
...get venison to eat.	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.3	8.6	38.6	47.2
...be with friends/family.	1.9	2.5	2.0	6.4	12.7	32.1	42.4
...be with others for shared experiences.	1.6	3.1	2.2	6.6	13.4	33.9	39.2
...feed my household.	3.0	4.6	6.0	11.1	19.4	24.8	31.2
...harvest game.	0.6	1.8	2.4	6.3	19.0	39.7	30.1
...fill my freezer.	3.2	6.1	6.2	9.7	21.8	24.3	28.6
...get venison to share with family and friends	2.1	2.6	4.3	8.9	18.9	35.0	28.3
...test my hunting abilities.	1.4	2.0	3.4	9.0	19.7	38.0	26.5
...harvest a buck of a lifetime.	7.6	7.7	5.9	12.0	21.0	21.1	24.6
...harvest a trophy buck.	8.1	8.3	6.0	10.4	23.4	20.6	23.2
...develop my knowledge of hunting.	1.5	3.7	2.1	8.6	22.2	39.2	22.7
...harvest an exceptional buck.	5.0	7.6	6.4	10.1	23.2	25.0	22.7
...develop my hunting skills.	1.6	3.8	2.1	10.4	23.1	37.8	21.3
...help manage deer populations.	2.8	4.5	4.5	16.4	20.6	31.2	20.0
...harvest a big buck.	8.4	8.0	6.4	12.0	23.2	22.0	19.9
...manage disease.	2.9	5.8	7.9	27.8	16.9	21.8	17.0
...use advanced equipment.	13.6	18.8	15.2	28.6	13.1	7.6	3.1

Chronic Wasting Disease

Twelve percent of respondents have had any of their deer harvested in Illinois tested for CWD, and 3% of these hunters ($n = 5$) having any deer test positive. Only 3% of respondents ($n = 39$) reported knowing anyone who had a deer that they harvested in Illinois test positive for CWD. The most common changes to respondents' hunting behavior due to CWD in Illinois was: (1) wearing disposable gloves when field dressing deer (35%), (2) testing deer before eating venison (5%), and (3) hunting less often (4%; Table 27). A majority of respondents indicated that testing of deer in CWD counties to monitor local distribution and the percent of deer with the illness (67%) and/or testing of deer in non-CWD counties to determine whether CWD has spread to new areas (62%) was very important or extremely important (Table 28). Respondents believed that the most important strategy for the IDNR to take in managing CWD in deer in Illinois were: (1) use all methods necessary to manage CWD (47%), (2) use existing hunting seasons alone to manage CWD (16%), and (3) take no action and let nature take its course (6%; Table 29). Additionally, 28% of respondents were not sure which strategy was most important for the IDNR to manage CWD in deer in Illinois.

Table 27. Changes to hunting behavior due to CWD in Illinois ($n = 1,417$).

	% Yes
I wear disposable gloves when field dressing my deer	35.4
Other	12.6
I have all deer tested before eating venison	4.9
I hunt less often	3.8
I moved to a non-CWD county	0.9
I no longer serve venison to my family	0.4

Table 28. Importance of testing throughout the state to monitor where CWD is in Illinois ($n = 1,417$).

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Testing of deer in CWD counties to monitor local distribution and the percent of deer with the illness.	3.3	8.4	21.1	36.5	30.6
Testing of deer in non-CWD counties to determine whether CWD has spread to new areas.	4.1	10.2	24.0	32.5	29.3
Testing of YOUR deer so that you can decide whether you should eat it	15.9	19.1	27.1	20.4	17.5

Table 29. Most important strategy for IDNR to manage CWD in deer throughout Illinois ($n = 1,417$).

	% Response
Use all methods necessary to manage CWD	46.6
I am not sure	27.6
Use existing hunting seasons alone to manage CWD	15.8
Take no action and let nature take its course	6.1
Monitor CWD distribution and rate of infection, but take no action to manage it	3.9

Background Information

On average, respondents have hunted deer 27.7 years including 26.3 years hunting deer in Illinois and 15.6 years hunting deer in Illinois during the archery season. The most frequent counties of residence were: (1) Madison, (2) Cook, (3) St. Clair, and (4) Will counties. On average, respondents were 53.3 years old and 91.7% were male.

Only 25% of respondents have hunted deer or elk as a nonresident in a state other than Illinois and the most frequent destinations were: (1) Colorado, (2) Missouri, and (3) Wisconsin.

Most respondents that hunted deer or elk in another state used a firearm (76%) with 49% using archery equipment and 11% using a muzzleloader. One-quarter of respondents that hunted deer or elk in another state have only hunted one season (26%), 39% hunted 2-5 years, 13% hunted more than 5 seasons but less than 10 seasons, and 23% more than 10 seasons (Table 30).

Only 21% of respondents have themselves or any member of their family participated in a youth deer hunt in Illinois during the past 5 years. Beginning in 2020, Youth Deer Hunting Permits changed from a county-specific permit to a statewide permit. One-quarter of respondents (24%) have themselves or members of their family hunted using a Youth Deer Hunting Permit. Less than half of respondents (45%) that have an apprentice license have permission/access to hunt on private land in Illinois.

Table 30. Frequency of hunting deer or elk in another state.

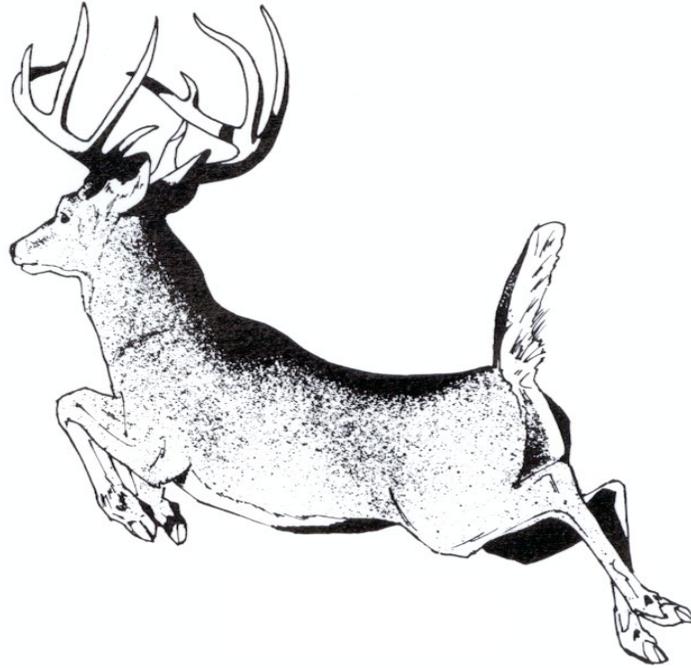
	% Response
One season	25.9
2-5 seasons	38.5
More than 5 seasons but less than 10	12.9
More than 10 seasons	22.7

REFERENCES CITED

IBM Corp. 2019. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 27.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

R Core Team. 2020. R: A language and environment for statistical computing, Vienna, Austria.
Retrieved from <https://www.r-project.org/>.

2019-2020 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey



Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife Resources
and the
Illinois Natural History Survey

I ILLINOIS
Illinois Natural History Survey
PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. Disclosure of information is voluntary.

Section 1. Hunting Experience. Please complete the following questions related to your deer hunting experience.

1. Did you hunt during the **2019-20** Illinois deer season? Yes No (Please skip to **Section 2**)

1a. During which of the 2019-20 seasons did you hunt deer in Illinois? (Please check **all that apply.**)

Archery season Firearm season Muzzleloader season
 Late winter season CWD Season Youth-only season

2. In which county(s) did you hunt deer **most often** during the 2019-20 Illinois deer seasons?

Season	Counties Hunted
Archery season	
Firearm season	
Muzzleloader season	
Late winter season	
CWD Season	
Youth-only season	

3. Did you purchase any 2019-20 deer permit(s) online?

Yes No (Please go to **question 4**)

3a. If “Yes,” please check which permit(s) you purchased online. (Please check **all that apply.**)

Archery permit Firearm permit
 Muzzleloader permit Late winter permit
 CWD permit

3b. Were any of your permits from a lottery for a state site? Yes No

3c. If you purchased your permit over the counter, please indicate your reasons for doing so. (Please check **all that apply.**)

Do not trust Internet purchases
 Extra fee for Internet purchases
 Convenience of purchasing permit in person
 Poor/No Internet Connection at home
 Other (Please identify): _____

4. How many **total days** (for **all types** of deer hunting) did you hunt deer during the 2019-20 Illinois hunting seasons? Note: Part of a day counts as one day.

1 day 2-5 days 6-10 days 11-15 days
 16-20 days 21-25 days More than 25 days

12. Did you hunt deer with a crossbow in Illinois during any 2019-20 Illinois deer hunting seasons? (Please check **all that apply**.)
- _____ Yes, deer archery season _____ Yes, firearm season _____ No (Please go to **Question 16**)
13. Which of the following **best** describes your reasons for using a crossbow? (Please check **all that apply**.)
- _____ Increased accuracy _____ Increased range _____ To use something different
- _____ Different challenge _____ To hunt in archery season _____ Health/Fitness limitations
- _____ Other: _____
14. How many **total years** have you used archery equipment to hunt deer? _____ years
15. How many **total years** have you hunted deer with a crossbow? _____ years
16. Would you have participated in the 2019-20 deer archery season if using a crossbow was not an option?
- _____ Yes _____ No
17. Did you hunt during the archery season with a bow other than a crossbow? _____ Yes _____ No
- 17a. If “Yes,” how often did you hunt with a bow other than a crossbow during the archery season?
- _____ Every season _____ Most, but not all seasons _____ Some seasons, but not most
- 17b. If “Yes,” what type of bow did you use?
- _____ Compound _____ Recurve _____ Longbow
- 17c. Did you switch to a different bow type after harvesting one deer? _____ Yes _____ No
18. Have you interacted with any of the following IDNR staff? If “Yes,” please rate your interaction by circling the number that matches your response.

	Interaction		Quality of Interaction				
	Yes	No	Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive
Springfield staff	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
Regional staff	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
District Biologist	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
Law Enforcement	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
Site Superintendent	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
CWD Check Station	1	2	1	2	3	4	5

Section 2. Hunting Activities. Please answer the following questions about your deer hunting in Illinois.

1. Which of the following do you consider essential for deer hunting (aside from license, permit, bow or firearm/ammunition)? (Please check **all that apply**.)

- Trail camera Binoculars Lures/attractants Cover Scent
 Calls Tree stands Rattling antlers Range finder
 4-wheeler/ATV Deer Cart Laundry scent eliminator
 GPS/satellite imaging (Google Earth)/other mapping apps for phone
 Other (Please identify): _____

2. Please indicate whether you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about equipment for hunting in Illinois by circling the number that matches your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Any equipment that increases my chance to harvest game should be permitted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Some hunting equipment violates my principles of fair chase.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is more important for new hunters to learn proper hunting skills than harvesting deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel some equipment takes the skill out of hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are too many restrictions on hunting equipment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Any deer harvested without fair chase is game not worth having.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I support any equipment that helps me harvest deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Technology in hunting equipment has made it too easy to harvest deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We should support technology that allow people to hunt who otherwise would not be able to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fair chase is more important than harvest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
New hunters should be allowed to use equipment that helps them harvest deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Regulations should restrict equipment if it makes it too easy to harvest deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Some hunting equipment eliminates basic deer hunting skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Advances in equipment help retain deer hunters.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Do you watch/stream hunting shows (for example, The Meat Eater, Hunting Public, etc.)?

Yes No (Please go to **Section 3**)

3a. If “Yes,” how often have you watched hunting shows in the past **12 months**? (Please choose one response.)

Every week Between 5 and 12 times in the past year
 About 3 times a month Less than 5 times in the past year

4. Which of the following **best describes** your reason for watching hunting shows? (Please choose one response.)

Learn new hunting techniques Learn about wildlife management
 Get ideas about hunting trip locations See hunts in different locations
 Entertainment

Section 3. Attitudes Toward Deer Hunting in Illinois. Please answer the following questions about your opinions toward deer hunting in Illinois.

1. Please give your opinions about deer hunting in Illinois by circling the number that matches your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The 2 buck limit in Illinois results in too many bucks harvested.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunter fact sheets for state sites are easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are not enough deer hunting opportunities on public lands in Illinois.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Deer hunting regulations in the Hunting Digest are easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There should be a limit on the total number of deer a hunter can harvest in a year.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We need more public land for deer hunting in Illinois.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. In thinking about the county where you hunt deer **most often**, would you say the deer population is... (Circle one number)

Way too low	Too low	About right	Too high	Way too high
1	2	3	4	5

3. What do you feel is the level of the **deer population** where you hunt deer most often compared to 5 years ago? Please circle the number that matches your response.

Much Lower	Lower	Somewhat Lower	About the Same	Somewhat Higher	Higher	Much Higher
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. In your opinion, which of the following best describes the **buck to doe ratio** where you hunt?

- Not enough bucks per doe
- About right mix of bucks to does
- Too many bucks to does

5. In your opinion, what would be the **ideal buck to doe ratio** for the area where you hunt?

- 1 **buck** to 1 **doe**
- 1 **buck** to 2 **does**
- 1 **buck** to 5 **does**
- 1 **buck** for 10 **does**
- 2 **bucks** to 1 **doe**
- 3 **bucks** to 1 **doe**
- 5 **bucks** to 1 **doe**
- Other (please give ratio): _____

6. In 2019, legislation was proposed that would allow certain rifles to be used during firearm deer season. Would you support regulations permitting rifles to be used during the firearm deer season statewide in Illinois?

- Yes (Please go to **Question 7**)
- No

6a. If you **do not** support regulations permitting rifles during the firearm deer season, please select **one statement that best** describes your reason:

- There would be too many hunters afield
- It would create an unsafe hunting environment
- It would increase the number of deer harvested in Illinois
- Other (please explain): _____

7. If rifles were allowed to be used during the firearm season, would you hunt deer with one?

- Yes
- No

Section 4. Hunting Access. Please answer the following questions about access for **deer hunting in ILLINOIS.**

1. On which type of land did you hunt deer **most often** during the 2019-20 seasons? (Please **choose one response.**)

- My own private property
- Public lands, Shawnee National Forest
- IRAP land
- Private outfitter property
- Public lands, IDNR sites
- Public lands, county sites (Forest Preserves, etc.)
- Private property **not** owned by me
- Private property owned by my family

2. Have you purchased land for hunting?

- Yes, in Illinois
 Yes, in a state other than Illinois (Please identify) _____
 No

3. Were you unable to hunt during any of the **2019-20** deer seasons because you were not able to get a permit?

- Yes, I was not drawn for a state site
 Yes, the county where I wanted to hunt was sold out of tags
 No

4. Did you hunt during the **2018-19** Illinois deer season? Yes No

4a. If “Yes,” during which season(s) did you hunt? Please check all that apply.

- Archery season Firearm season Muzzleloader season
 Late winter season CWD Season Youth-only season

5. Were you **unable** to hunt deer during any **2018-19** deer seasons because you were not able to get a permit?

- Yes, I was not drawn for a state site
 Yes, the county where I wanted to hunt was sold out of tags
 No

6. Which of the following describes how often you hunt deer in Illinois? (Please **choose one response**.)

- Every year Most years Occasional years First year

6a. If you **do not** hunt every year, do you buy an Illinois deer hunting permit each year?

- Yes No

7. During the **2019-20 deer season(s)**, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following?

	Very Dissatisfied	Moderately Dissatisfied	Slightly Dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Habitat conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of deer seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Access to places to hunt deer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Obtaining deer permits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of other deer hunters seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Deer hunting regulations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall deer hunting experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. Please answer the following questions on reasons why you hunt by circling the number that matches your response.

I hunt deer to ...	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Slightly Disagree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Slightly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>
... get venison to eat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... develop my hunting skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... develop my knowledge of hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... be close to nature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... experience the open space.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... be with friends / family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... test my hunting abilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... harvest an exceptional buck.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... get venison to share with family and friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... help manage deer populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... use advanced equipment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... harvest a big buck.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... enjoy the sights and sounds of nature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... harvest game.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... manage disease.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
...feed my household.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
...harvest a buck of a lifetime.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
...fill my freezer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... experience the excitement of hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... be with others for shared experiences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... harvest a trophy buck.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 5. Chronic Wasting Disease. Please respond to the following questions about CWD in Illinois.

1. Have you ever had any of the deer that you **harvested in Illinois** tested for CWD?

Yes No

1a. If “Yes,” did any deer test positive? Yes No

2. Do you personally know anyone who had a deer that they **harvested in Illinois** test positive for CWD?

Yes No

3. Have you changed any of your hunting behaviors due to CWD in Illinois? (Please check **all that apply.**)

I moved to a non-CWD county

I hunt less often

I wear disposable gloves when field dressing my deer

I have all deer tested before eating venison

I no longer serve venison to my family

Other (please list): _____

3. IDNR annually tests thousands of deer from throughout the state to monitor where CWD is in Illinois. In your opinion, how important is this surveillance for each of the following purposes? Please circle the number that matches your response.

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Testing of deer in CWD counties to monitor local distribution and the percent of deer with the illness	1	2	3	4	5
Testing of deer in non-CWD counties to determine whether CWD has spread to new areas	1	2	3	4	5
Testing of YOUR deer so that you can decide whether you should eat it	1	2	3	4	5

4. Which of the following strategies do you feel is the **most important** for IDNR to take in managing CWD in deer in Illinois? (Please check **one** response.)

Monitor CWD distribution and rate of infection, but take no action to manage it

Use existing hunting seasons alone to manage CWD

Use all methods necessary to manage CWD

Take no action and let nature take its course

I am not sure

Section 6. Background. The following questions are important to help us understand more about the people involved in deer hunting in Illinois. Please tell us something about yourself by checking the responses that apply. All responses are kept confidential.

1. How many years have you hunted deer? _____ years
2. How many years have you hunted deer in Illinois? _____ years
 - 2a. How many years have you hunted deer in Illinois during the archery season? _____ years
3. What is your county of residence? _____ County
4. Please give your age. _____ years
5. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female
6. Have you (as an Illinois resident) **hunted deer (any species) or elk** as a nonresident in a state other than Illinois?
_____ Yes _____ No (Please go to **Question 10**)
 - 6a. In which state(s) have you hunted?: _____
7. What method have you used when hunting deer or elk in other states? (Please check **all that apply**.)
_____ Firearm _____ Archery _____ Muzzleloader
8. How often have you hunted deer or elk in another state? (Please choose **one** response.)
_____ More than 10 seasons _____ 2 - 5 seasons
_____ More than 5 seasons, but less than 10 _____ One season
9. Have you or any member of your family participated in a **youth deer hunt** in Illinois during the **past 5 years**? _____ Yes _____ No
10. Beginning in 2020, Youth Deer Hunting Permits will change from a county-specific permit to a statewide permit.
Have you or members of your family hunted using a Youth Deer Hunting Permit?
_____ Yes _____ No
 - 10a. If "Yes," what year did you or members of your family hunt using an Apprentice Hunting License?
_____ Year
 - 10b. If you have an apprentice license, do you have permission/access to hunt on private land in Illinois?
_____ Yes _____ No (If "No," please skip to **Question 3**)
 - 11c. If "Yes," how many counties do you have access to hunt on private land? _____ Counties

Comments



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!
Please return this survey in the postage-paid envelope provided.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the Officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240. discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787.

Appendix B



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Illinois Deer Hunter,

Your name was randomly selected from a list of 2019 Illinois deer license purchasers. We are asking you to provide information about your activities during the 2019-20 deer hunting seasons in Illinois. **Even if you did not hunt during the 2019-2020 deer seasons, we ask that you please take a few minutes to complete the portions of the questionnaire that pertain to you.** A postage paid envelope is provided for returning the questionnaire to us.

This study by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Natural History Survey is being done to gather important information about deer hunting activities in Illinois. Results of this study will help wildlife managers make decisions to improve deer hunting opportunities and to better manage Illinois' deer population. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.** By responding you will help us more effectively manage wildlife and hunting in Illinois.

If you do not wish to participate, please return the blank form so we can remove your name from our mailing list.

You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <https://publish.illinois.edu/human-dimensions/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/>.

If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA

Appendix C



IL Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
1816 South Oak St.
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Illinois Hunter,

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire about your deer hunting expenses in Illinois. We have not yet received your response. **If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is very important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Appendix D



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Illinois Deer Hunter,

Your name was randomly selected from a list of 2019 Illinois deer license purchasers. We recently mailed you a questionnaire regarding your deer hunting experiences in Illinois during the 2019-20 hunting seasons. If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you.

If you have not returned your completed questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. We have enclosed another copy for you. The information you and other selected hunters provide will help wildlife managers make decisions to improve deer hunting opportunities and to better manage Illinois' deer population. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.**

Even if you did not hunt in Illinois during the 2019-20 deer seasons, we ask that you please take a few minutes to complete the portions of the questionnaire that pertain to you. A postage paid envelope is provided for returning the questionnaire to us.

You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <https://publish.illinois.edu/human-dimensions/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/>.

If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121.

Thank you for helping with this important study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA

Appendix E



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Illinois Deer Hunter,

We recently mailed you a questionnaire regarding your deer hunting experiences in Illinois during the 2019-20 hunting seasons. If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you.

If you have not returned your completed questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. We have enclosed another copy for you. The information you and other selected hunters provide will help wildlife managers make decisions to improve deer hunting opportunities and to better manage Illinois' deer population. **Your responses are voluntary and completely confidential.**

Even if you did not hunt in Illinois during the 2019-20 deer seasons, we ask that you please take a few minutes to complete the portions of the questionnaire that pertain to you. A postage paid envelope is provided for returning the questionnaire to us.

You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <https://publish.illinois.edu/human-dimensions/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/>.

If you have questions regarding this study, please call us at (217) 244-5121.

Thank you for helping with this important study.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 US