

HUNTING INFORMATION

Many state lands, including Wildlife Management Areas, State Forests, Forest Preserve and State Parks are open for hunting during the appropriate seasons.

The areas in Putnam County open for hunting are:

- [Big Buck Mountain State Forest](#)
- [Bog Brook Unique Area](#)
- [California Hill State Forest](#)
- [Cranberry Mountain Wildlife Management Area](#)
- [Fahnestock \(Clarence\) State Park](#)
- [Great Swamp Wildlife Management Area](#)
- [Hudson Highlands State Park](#)
- [Nimham Mountain State Forest](#)
- [White Pond Multiple Use Area](#)



Written permission or permits are sometimes required to use state lands. In addition regulations can vary, depending on the type of state land. It is best to check with the nearest [DEC Regional Office](#) or a [NY Forest Ranger](#) for specific requirements or regulations for the area you are interested in.

Many state parks offer waterfowl, small game and big game hunting. See [State Parks that Allow Hunting](#).

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) allows deer, bear, turkey, and small game hunting on designated City Water Supply lands as provided by New York State regulations. DEP is no longer issuing Hunting Tags for hunting on City Water Supply Lands. Hunters must possess the appropriate, valid New York State hunting license and a valid Access Permit to hunt on designated hunting areas on City Water Supply Lands. DEP Access Permits are not required on Public Access Areas.

Hunting on City-owned lands generally begins each fall on September 1 (the first day of squirrel season) and ends at the close of spring turkey season on May 31. Interested hunters should refer to Open Recreation Areas and Use Designations by County for specific DEP properties that are available for hunting during specific seasons.

Many hunters are probably familiar with the term “Quality Deer Management” (QDM) from hunting magazines and other sources. QDM is the concept that a deer herd is healthiest when females (does) and males (bucks) co-exist in a one-to-one balance and young bucks are allowed to grow into bigger, stronger, mature bucks that will pass their genetic material on to future generations. Thus, QDM focuses on bringing deer populations down to levels that the landscape can support over the long-term, primarily through the increased harvesting of does and restrictions on the harvesting of immature bucks. This management approach is particularly important in the City’s water supply watersheds where estimates of the female-to-male deer ratio may be as high as three-to-one in some areas. Heavy deer browse impacts on vegetation not only impacts the growth of young tree seedlings into a healthy and diverse forest, but it threatens the very habitat that deer need to survive.

A QDM project is currently underway in Putnam County in partnership with the Kent Rod and Gun Club and with support from the Putnam County Sportsmen's Federation and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The Kent Rod and Gun Club unanimously decided to practice QDM on their own lands. To assist with this effort, DEP instituted QDM principles on the following City-owned lands in the towns of Kent and Putnam Valley:

Richardsville Unit,
West Branch Headwaters Unit,
Knapp Road Unit,
and Boyds Corner North Unit.

On the QDM hunting areas, the following enforceable conditions apply to all hunters over 17 years of age: Only does may be harvested on the first two days of bow season, the first two days of regular gun season, and the first two days of muzzleloader season—no bucks may be taken on these days. On all other days of the legal hunting season, bucks may be harvested if they have an antler spread of at least 15 inches in width and/or a minimum of three points on a side greater than one inch long, excluding brow tines.

Throughout the hunting season in general, all hunters are encouraged to harvest more does than bucks to help with maintaining balanced herd populations and healthier forests.

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