

Michigan Bow Hunters

NEWS



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HISTORY OF BOWHUNTING IN MICHIGAN

In 1937, Michigan became the second state in the nation to establish a special deer season for archers. Two counties, Iosco and Newaygo, one on each side of the Lower Peninsula, were opened to bowmen for bucks only from November 1 to 14. Bowhunting was not unheard of before 1937, however. Prior to that a few persons had hunted deer with bow and arrow during the general deer seasons, concentrating mainly in the area near the Lumbermans Memorial monument northwest of East Tawas. The discharge of firearms was prohibited there for fear of damage to the monument.

In 1939, the archery season was extended to include all counties open to deer hunting in the regular gun season. This meant bowmen could hunt in most northern areas. Then in 1941, Allegan county, because of severe crop damage, was opened to archers for deer of either sex. It was the first time bowhunters were permitted to shoot antlerless deer.

Three years later, in 1944, the southern section of the state was opened to archers. They then had a state-wide bucks only season during the first two weeks of November. In 1945, a major change was enacted by the State Legislature. The bow and arrow season was increased to 36 days--from October 1 to November 5. This year, 1967, another major change was enacted, extending the season for bowhunters from October 1 to December 31st, in Zone 3 with the exception that the season shall be closed

during the firearms season. This now gives the bow hunters 76 days of bow hunting.

Except for Allegan county, bow hunters still had to look for bucks only until 1947, when 17 northern counties were opened to antlerless whitetails during the bow season. By 1952, bowmen could shoot deer of either sex in nearly every county in the state.

That first archery season back in 1937 saw 186 persons, two of them from out-of-state, buy bow and arrow licenses. They killed just four deer. In 1938, 227 archers--all from Michigan--harvested a grand total of eight deer. License sales topped the one thousand mark for the first time in 1941. That year 1046 bowhunters shot 22 deer.

Michigan record archery license sales were recorded in 1965 when 52,200 bow licenses were sold. The states record archery kill came during the 1964 season when bowhunters bagged an estimated 2,810 whitetails for a 6.3% hunter success.

The average hunting success among Michigan archers is about five percent. This means that one of every 20 brings home venison each fall. Statistics show, meanwhile, that 30 yards is the average distance at which a deer is shot by an archer in this state.

Michigan has recorded just four serious bowhunting accidents since 1937. Two were fatalities.

It is presumed that many of our members new to bowhunting, didn't realize the long hard path travelled by old time bowhunters in securing the favorable regulations that we enjoy today. The Michigan Bow Hunters Association has played an important

role to members and non-members alike in getting favorable legislation established for bowhunters.

Douglas Bartrem,
Vice-President

'NOCKIN' 'ROUND THE NORTH

by Liz Gall

September was terrible -- couldn't keep my mind out of the woods and on the house work. Even ran out of gas in the lawnmower before the job was finished because a beautiful vision of that big buck we sighted this summer kept getting in the way. There must have been more than one round that I repeated. So, if you should happen by our diggin's before the snow flies, you will no doubt notice a pretty spotty lookin' lawn (I did the front last of course) as chances are slim that it will be done again this year. And that's not all -- if during the winters meals, you should be our guest thing nothin' of it if the pickles don't taste just right. I was shootin' right for the heart of a very obliging imaginary deer, standing broadside about 20 yards away, as I measured "one cup salt, one quart vinegar, two quarts water ---".

And finally we heard it -- the honk of geese flying south. A crisp wind blew, the smell of buring leaves reached our nostrils and we knew it was here at last -- that wonderful fall season and bow and arrow deer hunting! Blue and Gold days filled with sounds of the wood creatures, falling leaves and dropping acorns. Cool, cool nights bright from the light of a full pumpkin moon. The howl of the coyote, the cry

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