

Hunters await start of '96 firearm deer season

OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARKER

The count-down has begun. Only eight days remain before opening day of the 1996 firearms whitetail deer season. Despite having already spent dozens of hours in the woods during the early archery season I know I'll be as giddy as a kid on Christmas when the eve of opening day rolls around. The excitement and anticipation will build through the night as I wrestle with restless sleep. I'll set the alarm clock, but I know I'll be awake before it rings. When sunrise dawns I'll be comfortably seated in my blind hoping for that one opportunity to present itself.

But hunting seasons have experienced good success as far as particularly in northern Michigan where the deer population is at an all-time high. There were 1.8 million deer in Michigan as of Oct. 1, which is about 10 percent fewer than last year. Although there are more deer in the southern Lower Peninsula, hunters headed to the northern Lower and the Upper Peninsula are likely to see fewer deer than last year. Winter losses were estimated at nearly 200,000 last year in the Upper Peninsula, which is about one-third of the herd after the hunting season.

Don't get the wrong message here. Last year was a record-setting season and this year there may be fewer deer, but there are still plenty of whitetails around. In fact, because of an increase in the number of antlerless permits available this year, DNR biologists expect the 1996 harvest to top 500,000 and eclipse last year's all-time record of 476,960 whitetails. (The DNR issued 295,000 antlerless permits in 1995 compared to 406,000 this year.)

DNR divides the state into 13 management districts. Following is a brief outlook for each district according to DNR wildlife biologists. The accompanying phone numbers are for the corresponding DNR district offices.

Districts 1&2: Baraga/Crystal Falls (901) 876-6832: The western Upper Peninsula was hit hardest by the severe winter and the whitetail population suffered.

Hunters, anglers encouraged to report successful ventures

Bow hunters, anglers, bird hunters, you name it, the success reports are rolling in. If you, a family member or friend has experienced success give me a call or drop me a line and let me know about it. Send information to 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI, 48009. Fax information to (810) 644-3134 or call me in the evening at (810) 901-2573. Now, on with those success reports.

Lake Orion's Chuck Economou had his best finish to date recently in the BASSMASTER Tournament Trail. Competing in the BASSMASTER Tennessee Top 10 tournament, Oct. 17-19 on Old Hickory Lake in Hendersonville, Tenn., he finished ninth overall in the field of 114 of the world's best bass anglers. Economou caught 14 bass which weighed 31 pounds, 1-ounce. He earned \$9,000 for his effort, plus 94 points in the race to qualify for the prestigious BASSMASTER Classic. Economou finished better than such legendary greats as Larry Nixon (8th), Kevin VanDam (9th), Gary Klein (11th), Jimmy Houston (23rd), Roland Martin (33rd) and many others.

Jason Hickmott arrowed his first buck while hunting in Oakland County on Oct. 12. Hunting from a tree blind in a patch of hardwoods surrounded by corn, the 19-year-old Oxford resident dropped an 8-point during an evening hunt.

• Greg Moore, of Troy, shot a doe on Oct. 6 while hunting over bait from a tree blind in Otsego County.

• McAlomara's Larry Kammerer shot an 8-point buck in northern Oakland County on Oct. 24.

• Garden City's Ted Patton started bow hunting last year. He took his first deer with a bow on Oct. 5 when he shot a spike buck from a ground blind in Tuscola County.

Birmingham resident Steve Rock started a Halloween tradition when he dropped a button buck on Oct. 31. Rock was hunting over bait from a tree blind in Lapeer County.

• Oxford's Bob Collins caught a 250-pound Blue Fin tuna while charter fishing in Cope Hatteras, North Carolina. He received a catch-and-release certificate for his catch. In mid-September, Collins, Ed Spinazzola, Jim Klaun, Stan Sals, Mike Sauer and Carl Zoff participated in a pheasant hunt at the House of Beagles on Harsens Island, which produced 65 birds. Spinazzola, of Utica, connected with an 8-point buck the first week of October while hunting at his lodge in Gladwin.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR 1997

Notice is hereby given that the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed budget for the year 1997. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 1996 at 9:00 a.m., Eastern Standard Time, at the Administrative Office Building, 2500 Watkin Lake Road, Waterford, Michigan.

Interested citizens may appear and present written and/or oral verbal comments on the proposed budget.

1997 PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY

REVENUES	AMOUNT
Taxes	\$8,964,100
Fees, Charges, Miscellaneous	\$10,049,049
Total	\$14,470,149

TOTAL APPROPRIATION \$14,470,149

A copy of the proposed 1997 budget will be available at the above address on and after Monday, November 18, 1996.

Published November 7, 1996

ferred, particularly in eastern Gogebic and Iron counties, Dickinson and Ontonagon counties. An estimated 100,000 deer were lost to the winter kill last year in these two districts alone.

Best bets are where last year's winter timber harvest helped the deer survive.

District 3: Escanaba, (901) 786-2351: A record harvest of 23,000 antlerless deer in 1995 coupled with a long, hard winter has resulted in approximately 30-percent fewer deer in District 3 than last year.

Best bets are around the farming regions of south-central Menominee and western Delta counties. However, most of the land in this area is private and access may be difficult to obtain. Public land near the farms provides good opportunities, but hunting pressure is normally high during the firearms season.

District 4: Newberry (906) 293-5163: Winter took its toll in District 4 as well and DNR biologists estimate there are 20 to 25 percent fewer whitetails this full than last year.

Southern Chippewa, western Mackinac and southern Schoolcraft counties have the highest concentrations. Early snow storms will drive deer into the winter cover along M-28.

District 5: Gaylord (917) 732-3541: The 1996 season will be good for hunters in the Gaylord District as deer numbers appear to be higher than in 1995 levels in quite a few areas.

Best bets are in the farm-for-est areas of western Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, Alpena and Presque Isle counties.

District 6: Cadillac (618) 775-9727: A severe winter took its toll on the 7- to 10-month-old deer and a large buck harvest took a toll on the older buck population. Breeding does came through the winter fine and the overall population is close to what it was last year, but there will be more antlerless deer than bucks. As usual, there are more deer on private land than on public and more deer south of M-65 than north.

Best bets are the oak ridges.

There is a great mast crop in the district this year.

District 7: Mid. (617) 820-3201: Expect another good season in District 7 with population levels comparable to what they were last year. An all-time record buck harvest last year has resulted in fewer 2 1/2-year-

old and older bucks, but bowhunters are reporting a good number of 1 1/2-year olds.

Best bets are on private land in agricultural areas with mixed woodland habitat in Clare, Gladwin, Arenac, Isco, Ogemaw and Alcona counties.

District 8: Bay City (517) 684-0141: The outlook is excellent for District 8. Hunters should take more deer of both sexes in this district this fall as compared to last year. The number of bucks is apparently up, but there is a large number of spike bucks in the herd. Agricultural harvests will be later than usual, which means the deer will be dispersed over a wider area. Hunting will get better as the corn is cut.

Best bets are the agricultural areas of Sanilac, Huron and Isabella counties and parts of Tuscola County.

District 9: Grand Rapids (616) 466-5071: Deer numbers are up across the district, but

there are fewer bucks than in 1995. Hard and soft mast crops are better than last year while autumn olive and thornapple have also produced well.

Best hunting will be on private lands across the district. Responsible hunters willing to harvest an antlerless deer stand a better chance of obtaining permission from landowners than buck-only hunters.

District 10: Livonia (313) 983-0241: Deer numbers are similar to last year across the district with the exception of Lapeer County and northern St. Clair County where there are more deer than last year. Most of the land in this district is private and permission is often difficult to obtain in northern Oakland and Macomb counties. Some of the more urban areas have restrictions against the discharge of a firearm so be sure to check with the local unit of government for specific regulations.

Best bets are southern Shiawassee, western Livingston, western Ingham and southwestern Eaton counties. The Maple River corridor should also offer some excellent hunting opportunities.

District 11: Shiawassee (517) 626-4600: The deer population in District 11 is showing a slight increase over last year, particularly in Eaton, Genesee and Shiawassee counties. The overall harvest is expected to be excellent, but standing corn early in the firearms season could be a disadvantage to hunters.

Best bets are southern Shiawassee, western Livingston, western Ingham and southwestern Eaton counties.

District 12: Clinton (517) 820-0851: Expect an excellent season in District 12. The late, wet spring had a dampening effect on hard and soft mast crops so hunters who can locate some mast crop will undoubtedly have located a whitetail hot spot.

Best bet is Cass County, which

cultural areas, particularly after the corn is cut.

District 13: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 13 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 14: Plaistow (616) 228-0851: Expect an excellent season in District 12. The late, wet spring had a dampening effect on hard and soft mast crops so hunters who can locate some mast crop will undoubtedly have located a whitetail hot spot.

Best bet is Cass County, which

continues to hold some of the highest deer densities in the district. Also check in and around unharvested corn and scattered oaks.

District 15: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 15 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 16: Clinton (517) 820-0851: Expect an excellent season in District 16. The late, wet spring had a dampening effect on hard and soft mast crops so hunters who can locate some mast crop will undoubtedly have located a whitetail hot spot.

Best bet is Cass County, which

continues to hold some of the highest deer densities in the district. Also check in and around unharvested corn and scattered oaks.

District 17: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 17 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 18: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 18 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 19: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 19 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 20: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 20 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 21: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 21 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 22: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 22 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 23: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 23 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 24: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 24 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 25: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 25 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 26: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 26 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 27: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 27 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 28: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 28 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 29: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 29 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 30: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 30 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 31: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 31 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 32: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 32 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 33: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 33 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 34: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 34 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 35: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 35 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 36: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 36 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 37: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 37 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 38: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 38 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 39: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 39 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 40: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 40 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 41: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 41 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 42: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 42 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 43: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 43 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 44: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 44 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 45: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 45 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 46: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 46 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 47: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 47 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 48: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 48 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 49: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 49 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 50: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 50 and the harvest should correlate with the population increase. Crop removal may be a little late this fall so there could be a large amount of standing corn.

Best bets are Deer Management Units 147, 250 and 251, which corresponds to Calhoun County and portions of Branch, Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

District 51: Jackson (517) 780-7900: Based on all indicators the deer population is up in District 51 and the harvest should correlate with the