

## DNR reports this deer year was safest in recent memory

Congratulations to all the successful deer hunters and a special congratulations to all deer hunters who worked to make the 1996 firearms season the safest ever in this great hunting state.

Upwards of 700,000 hunters took to the field over the recently ended 16-day season and just 15 accidents, including one fatality, were reported.

Certainly, that's still 16 too many. But the efforts of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Hunter Safety and Education Program — which has over 2,500 volunteer instructors and certifies over 32,000 new hunters each year — seem to be paying off.

"Although one fatality or even one injury is always one too many, this season's statistics reflect the successful effort of hunter education safety instruction in Michigan," said Lt. Suzanne Koppelo, the DNR's hunter safety and education coordinator. "Michigan hunters are learning how to be safe and they're observing the laws and safety guidelines that contribute to this significant decline in injuries and fatalities."

Of the 16 accidents, five were self-inflicted. Nine others were caused by careless handling of a firearm; four were caused by line-of-sight misjudgments; one was caused by the discharge of a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle, which is against the law; and one was caused by a hunter wearing full camouflage, which is also against the law, being mistaken for game.

### Successful hunters

Canton's Jerry Putin continued his buck-hunting success by downing a 4-point on

opening day of the firearms season while hunting in a cedar swamp in Delta County. It was the 14th buck Putin has shot and his ninth in the last 12 years.

Sean Fritz shot his first deer this fall during the early bow hunting season. The 20-year-old Canton resident was hunting from a tree blind near Gladwin. Sean's father, George, was hunting near Harrison on opening day of the firearms season when he bagged a spike buck.

Neil Billas of Canton shot his first deer, a 4-point buck, on opening day of the firearms season. Neil was hunting near Cadillac with his father, Bob, who had recently returned from a successful hunting trip in Casper, Wyoming. On that hunt, Bob shot a Boone & Crockett class pronghorn antelope with a green score of over 82. Northville's Bob Hall also took a trophy pronghorn on the trip out west, then returned to Michigan and shot an 8-point buck on Nov. 15. The rack featured an 18 1/2-inch inside spread.

Bob Nichols shot a spike buck on opening day of the firearms season while hunting with the Biellas party near Cadillac.

The Gates family of West Bloomfield had a fantastic firearms season while hunting near St. Ignace. Brian Gates, in just his second season of hunting, took a dandy 8-point buck on Nov. 18 at 9:20 a.m. Brian's father, Gary, shot a 4-point on Nov. 19 and Brian's Uncle Warren added an 8-point to the family total on Nov. 20.

Clarkston's Joe Vander shot a 7-point buck on Nov. 18 while hunting in oak ridges in Montmorency County. He returned home and shot a doe on Nov. 20 in Oakland County.

Anglers and hunters are urged to report their success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax information to (810) 644-1314 or call Bill Parker evenings at (810) 901-2573.



BILL PARKER

## ARCHERY

### OPEN SHOOTING

Open shooting hours at Detroit Archery in West Bloomfield are 7-10 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; 4-9 p.m. Thursdays; and 1-5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Call (810) 539-3030 or (810) 661-9610 for more information.

### YOUTH EDUCATION

Detroit Archery is offering a youth education league at its clubhouse in West Bloomfield. Call (810) 539-3030 or (810) 661-9610 for more information.

### 30 SHOOT

Royal Oak Archers will hold a 30 shoot Sunday, Dec. 15, on its walk-through range in Lake Orion. Call (810) 693-9799 for more information.

## CLASSES

### SNOWMOBILE SAFETY

The DNR Law Enforcement Division is offering a free home-study snowmobile safety course. Anyone who completes the course, attends a two-hour class and satisfactorily passes a test will earn a Snowmobile Safety Certificate. The two-hour class, including a review and a test, begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 14, at the Lake Erie Metropark museum in Rockwood. Home-study packets are available by calling (313) 432-1255.

## FISHING CLUBS

### FISHING BUDDYS

Fishing Buddys Fishing Club meets monthly in Rochester Hills. Call (810) 656-0556 for more information.

### MICHIGAN FLY FISHING

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School. Call (810) 478-1494 for more information.

### FOUR SEASONS

The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7-9 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Maplewood Center in Garden City. Call Sam Pilato at (313) 420-0521 for more information.

## METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS

Metro-West Steelheaders meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at Garden City High School. Call (313) 420-0521 for more information.

## SEASONS/DATES

### DEER

Archery season runs through Jan. 1. Muzzleloading season runs through Dec. 16 in Zone I and Dec. 13-22 in zones II and III.

### ELK

The December elk hunt runs through Dec. 17.

### GOOSE

Through Dec. 13 in the South Zone outside goose management units (GMUs). Check the 1996 Waterfowl Hunting Guide for GMU restrictions and open dates. A special season will be held Jan. 4-Feb. 2 in the Southern Michigan Goose Management Unit. Consult the 1996-97 Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide for additional details.

### PHEASANT

An experimental late season hunt runs through Dec. 15 in southern Michigan. Check the Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide for details.

### RABBIT

Through March 31.

### RUFFED GROUSE

Through Jan. 1 in zones II and III.

### SQUIRREL

Statewide through Jan. 1.

## SHOOTING RANGES

### BALD MOUNTAIN

Bald Mountain Recreation Area in Lake Orion has rifle, pistol, muzzleloader and archery shooting facilities. Range hours are 10 a.m. to sunset, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Bald Mountain is located at 1330 Greenfield Rd. (three miles north of the Palace of Auburn Hills). Call (810) 814-9193 for more information.

### PONTIAC LAKE

Pontiac Lake Recreation Area in Waterford has rifle, pistol, muzzleloader, shotgun and archery

ranges. Range hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Pontiac Lake Recreation Area is located at 7800 Gale Rd. Call (810) 666-1020 for more information.

### ORTONVILLE RECREATION

Ortonville Recreation Area in Ortonville has rifle, pistol, muzzleloader and shotgun shooting facilities. Range hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The Ortonville Recreation Area is located at 5779 Hadley Rd. Call (810) 693-8767 for more information.

### POINTE MOUILLEE

Pointe Mouillee State Game Area in Rockwood has rifle, pistol and shotgun shooting facilities. Range hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily. Pointe Mouillee State Game Area is located at 37205 Mouillee Road. Call (313) 379-3820 for more information.

## METROPARKS

### METROPARK REQUIREMENTS

Most Metropark programs are free, while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all programs. Call the respective parks, toll free: Stony Creek, 1-800-477-7756; Indian Springs, 1-800-477-3192; Kensington, 1-800-477-3178.

### TOYS FOR TOTS

The Huron-Clinton Metroparks are on again serving as drop-off points for the Toys for Tots program. The program is conducted annually by the United States Marine Corps Reserve to serve needy children in local communities by providing new, unwrapped toys during the holiday season. Anyone wishing to drop off a new, unwrapped toy that has no violent connotation can drop the toy off at any of the following Metroparks: Metro Beach near Mt. Clemens, (800) 477-3172; Stony Creek near Rochester, (800) 477-7756; Indian Springs near White Lake, (800) 477-3192; Kensington near Milford, (800) 477-3178; Hudson Mills near Ann Arbor, (800) 477-3191; Lower Huron near New Boston, (800) 477-3182; Lake Erie near Brownstown Twp., (800) 477-3189; or at the Metropark Administrative Office

near Brighton, (800) 477-2752.

### PERMITS ON SALE

The 1997 Huron-Metroparks annual motor vehicle entry permits and annual boat launching permits go on sale Dec. 1 at all Metropark offices. Vehicle entry permits are \$15 regular and \$8 for senior citizens (62 and older). Boat launching permits are \$18 regular and \$9 for senior citizens. Corporate discounts are also available. Call (800) 477-PARKS for details.

### SNACKS WITH SANTA

Children and their parents will have an opportunity to enjoy a snack with Santa, take a hayride, and sing holiday songs during this program, which will be held in several sessions on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 14-16, at Kensington. Tickets are \$5 and available by advanced purchase only. Call (810) 685-1616 for tickets and registration.

### NATURE FOR KIDS

Children ages 7-10 can make their own holiday decorations with materials from nature's storehouse during this program, which begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at Kensington.

### FOR THE BIRDS

Learn how birds adapt to winter conditions during this program, which begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at Indian Springs.

### WINTER WREATHS

Learn to make a holiday wreath during this program, which begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Indian Springs.

### LAUGHING LOON

Learn about loons and their unforgettable calls during this one-hour indoor program, which begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.

## OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

### COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS

Advanced registration is required for all nature programs at Oakland County Parks. Call (810) 625-6473 to register or for more information.

### SMALL HANDS WORKSHOP

Children ages 6-8 will learn to make simple gifts during this workshop, which begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Independence Oaks.

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**SUN., DEC. 22 VS. MICHIGAN @ 6:00**

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