

2003 VERMONT WILDLIFE HARVEST REPORT

Wild Turkey



VERMONT
FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT
(802) 241-3700 / www.vtfishandwildlife.com



Most of the programs described in this report are funded through the **Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program**. This program initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid In Wildlife Act and created a system where by taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States. The State of Vermont use these monies for acquiring land, and for restoring and managing wildlife. These excise tax dollars, coupled with state hunting license fees have been the predominate source of money funding the successful restoration and management of Vermont's wildlife resources.

2003 VERMONT WILDLIFE HARVEST REPORT



Protecting the integrity, diversity and vitality of Vermont's fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Agency of Natural Resources

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Contents

2003 White-tailed Deer Report	3
Overview of Hunting Seasons and Biological Analysis	3-5
Vermont White-tailed Deer Wildlife Management Units	6
2003 Legal Deer Harvest by Wildlife Management Unit and Season	7
2003 Legal Deer Harvest by Season, County and Town	8-12
Hunter Harvested Bucks Weighing 200 Pounds or Greater	13-14
Frequency of 2003 Antlerless Permit Application Distribution	14
2003 Black Bear Report	15
Public Education and Outreach	16
Regulated Harvest & Utilization	16
Harvest Distribution	17
Vermont Black Bear Wildlife Management Units	18
Research and Surveys	18
2003 Legal Black Bear Harvest by Wildlife Management Unit, Town and Sex	19-23
2003 Moose Report	24
Biological Data	25
Moose Seen Per Hour Scouted	26
Vermont Moose Wildlife Management Units	27
2003 Legal Moose Harvest Data—Males Only	28-31
2003 Legal Moose Harvest Data—Females and Calves Only	32-34
2003 Wild Turkey Report	35
2003 Legal Spring Turkey Harvest by Town and Residency	36-39
2003 Spring Turkey Harvest by Wildlife Management Unit	36
Vermont Wild Turkey Wildlife Management Units	40
Fall Turkey Season	41
2003 Legal Fall Turkey Harvest by Town and Method	41-43
2003 Fall Turkey Harvest by Wildlife Management Unit	43
Notable Weights of Vermont’s Harvested Big Game Wildlife	44

2003 Wild Turkey Report

Spring Turkey Season

Vermont's spring season in 2003 resulted in a total harvest of 3,694 bearded turkeys, down 16.1 % from the 2002 spring harvest of 4,403. The 2003 two-day youth season produced 356 birds, also down 27% from the previous year's youth season harvest of 488 birds.

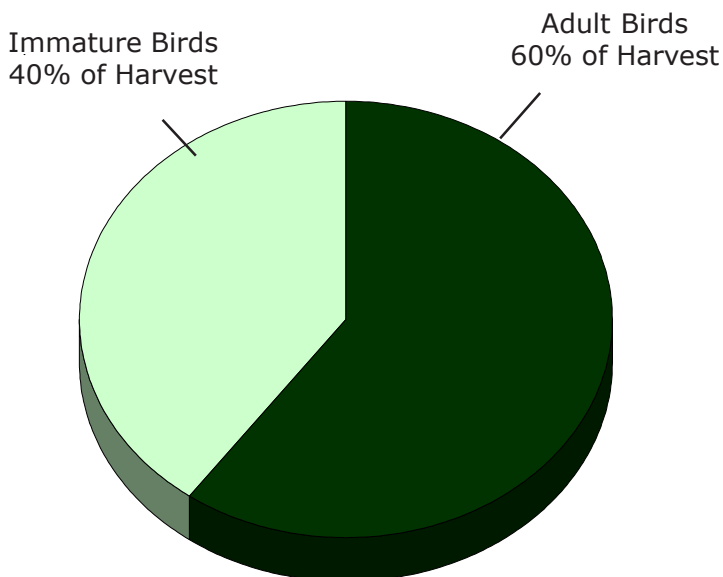
Hunting weather played a significant role in the 2003 spring turkey harvest. Opening day of the youth season brought heavy rains, however, youths still managed to harvest 208 turkeys on that day. Frequent rains throughout the regular May season (rain occurred on 25 of the 31 season days) also challenged hunters and dampened harvest numbers.

A rugged Vermont 2002-2003 winter, registering a Winter Severity Index of 83 (compared with a normal of 51) likely had some negative impact on turkey survival and may have contributed to slight declines in turkey numbers in some regions. A marginal 2002 nesting season resulting in lower productivity. Also, there were 600 fewer spring turkey license buyers in 2003. The effect of the youth season hunt on subsequent gobbling activity and harvest is unknown, but it may have some influence.



John Hall

3,694 TURKEYS HARVESTED

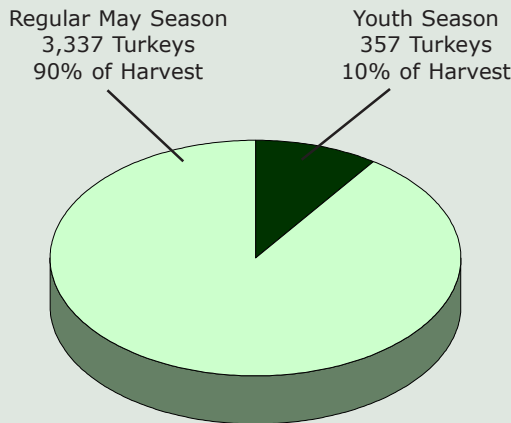


Adult birds made up 60% of the harvest with immature birds comprising 40%. The lower percentage of the immature turkeys in the harvest suggests lower spring productivity in 2002.

2003 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Resident	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
ADDISON	25	1	26
ALBANY	2		2
ALBURG	17		17
ANDOVER	4		4
ARLINGTON	15	1	16
ATHENS	5		5
BALTIMORE	2		2
BARNARD	6	2	8
BARNET	36	9	45
BARRE	21		21
BARTON	10		10
BENNINGTON	13		13
BENSON	65	6	71
BERKSHIRE	1		1
BERLIN	23	4	27
BETHEL	30	3	33
BOLTON	2		2
BRADFORD	18	5	23
BRAINTREE	23	3	26
BRANDON	25	4	29
BRATTLEBORO	8	4	12
BRIDGEWATER	17		17
BRIDPORT	25	1	26
BRISTOL	16		16
BROOKFIELD	24	2	26
BROOKLINE	4		4
BURKE	10		10
CABOT	30	2	32
CALAIS	19		19
CAMBRIDGE	7		7
CASTLETON	37	2	39
CAVENDISH	15	3	18
CHARLESTON	5	1	6
CHARLOTTE	53	1	54
CHELSEA	29		29
CHESTER	30	4	34
CHITTENDEN	14	2	16
CLARENDON	30		30
COLCHESTER	4		4
CONCORD	10	5	15
CORINTH	4		4
CORNWALL	39		39
CRAFTSBURY	20		20
DANBY	29	4	33
DANVILLE	40	5	45
DORSET	29	1	30
DOVER	10	1	11
DUMMERSTON	12		12
E MONTPELIER	31	1	32
EDEN	3		3
ELMORE	6		6
ENOSBURG	1		1
ESSEX	6		6
FAIR HAVEN	11		11
FAIRFAX	9		9
FAIRFIELD	6		6
FAIRLEE	5		5
FERRISBURG	53		53
FLETCHER	1		1
GEORGIA	17		17
GLASTENBURY	2		2

TURKEY HARVEST BY SEASON



Spring birds were harvested in 209 towns (of 253) by 2,987 successful hunters, resulting in an estimated success rate of 21.4%. Among these successful hunters, 23.7% harvested an additional bearded bird to fill the two-bird spring bag limit.

2003 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Resident	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
GLOVER	8		8
GOSHEN	8		8
GRAFTON	14	3	17
GRAND ISLE	26		26
GRANVILLE	4		4
GREENSBORO	10		10
GROTON	17	1	18
GUILDHALL		1	1
GUILFORD	30	7	37
HALIFAX	4	1	5
HANCOCK	4		4
HARDWICK	13		13
HARTFORD	17	1	18
HARTLAND	26	5	31
HIGHGATE	1		1
HINESBURG	36	1	37
HOLLAND	2		2
HUBBARDTON	21	2	23
HUNTINGTON	21		21
HYDE PARK	8		8
IRA	15		15
JAMAICA	9		9
JERICO	7		7
JOHNSON	3		3
KIRBY	12		12
LEICESTER	19		19
LINCOLN	4		4
LONDONDERRY	9		9
LUDLOW	4		4
LUNENBURG	6	8	14
LYNDON	20	1	21
MANCHESTER	11	1	12
MARLBORO	6		6
MARSHFIELD	20		20
MENDON	4		4
MIDDLEBURY	40	1	41
MIDDLESEX	15		15
MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS	21	2	23
MILTON	14		14
MONKTON	31		31
MONTPELIER	5		5
MORETOWN	3		3
MORGAN	2		2
MORRISTOWN	16		16
MT HOLLY	11	3	14
MT TABOR	6	1	7
N HERO	7		7
NEW HAVEN	54	5	59
NEWARK	6		6
NEWBURY	48	20	68
NEWFANE	17	4	21
NEWPORT	8		8
NORTHFIELD	22	4	26
NORWICH	23	8	31
ORANGE	14		14
ORWELL	54	5	59
PANTON	10		10
PAWLET	52	14	66
PEACHAM	26	4	30
PERU	4	1	5
PITTSFIELD	2		2



For the first time, WMU A was open to hunting for all licensed turkey hunters in 2003. Prior to this year, turkey hunting in WMU A was allowed by lottery permit only. As a result, this year's harvest was 70 birds in this zone, as compared with previous years when the kill averaged 36 birds.

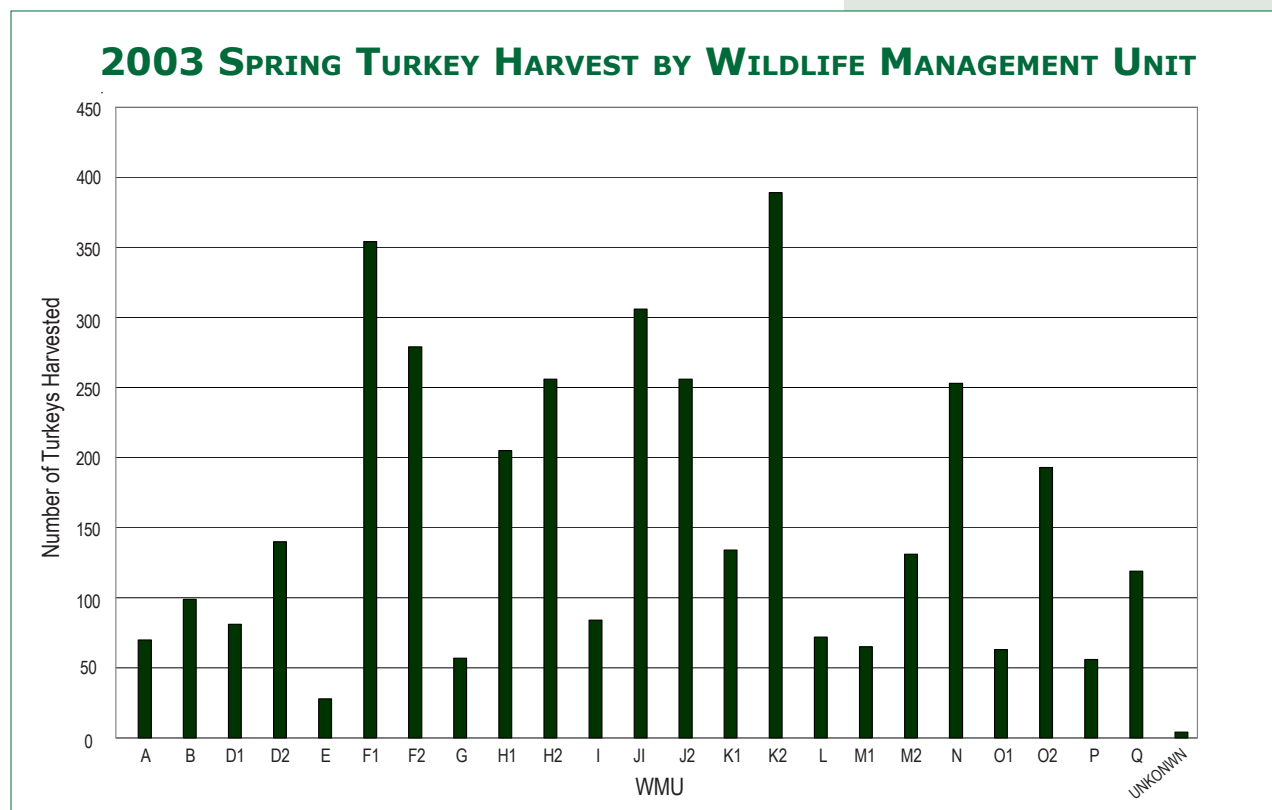
2003 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

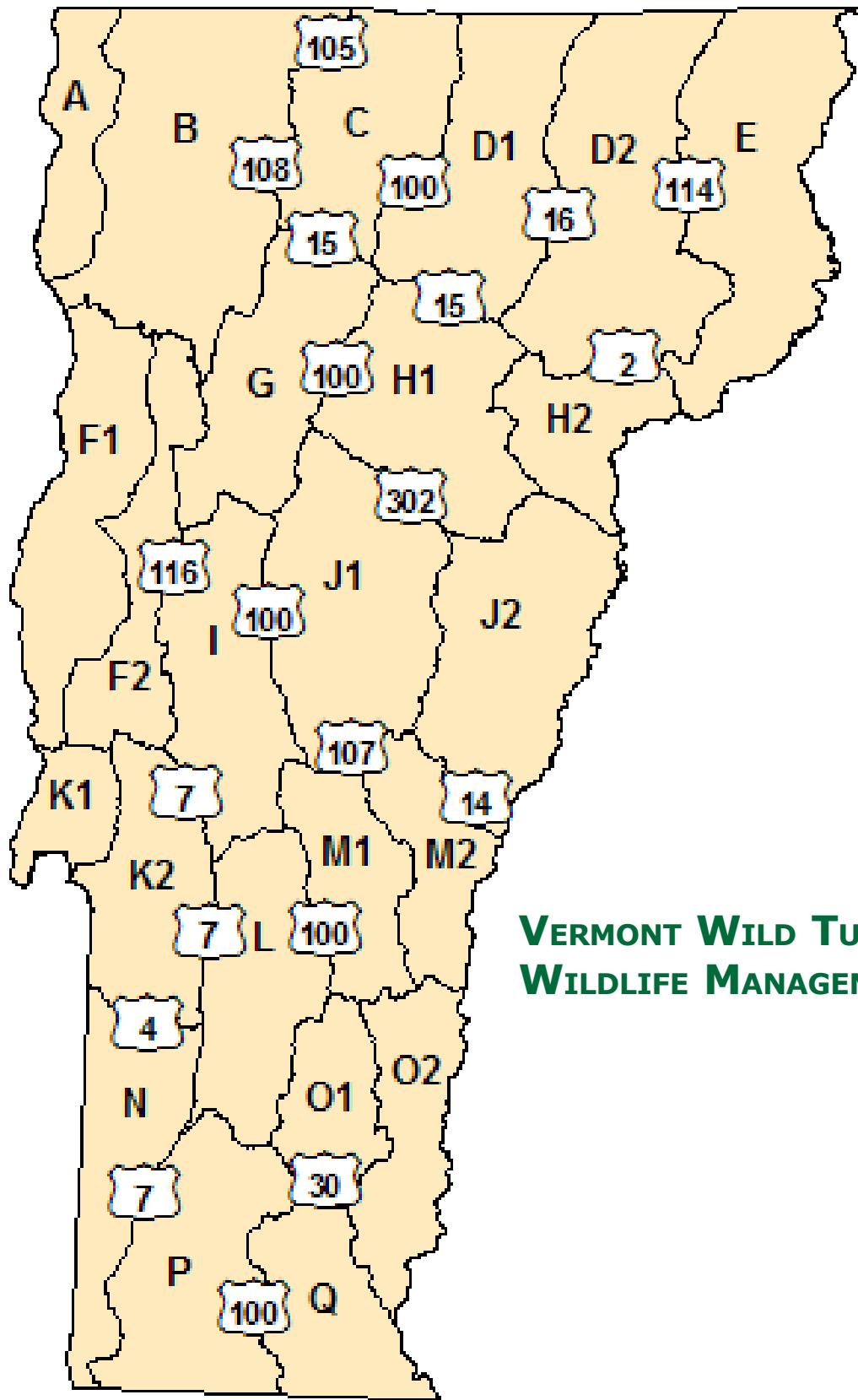
Town of Kill	Resident	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
PITTSFORD	35	2	37
PLAINFIELD	29		29
PLYMOUTH	11	1	12
POMFRET	13	5	18
POULTNEY	46	6	52
POWNAI	42	5	47
PROCTOR	10		10
PUTNEY	7		7
RANDOLPH	36	2	38
READING	14	4	18
RICHMOND	17		17
RIPTON	5		5
ROCHESTER	15	2	17
ROCKINGHAM	34	9	43
ROXBURY	7		7
ROYALTON	21		21
RUPERT	34	22	56
RUTLAND TOWN	7		7
RYEGATE	46	16	62
S HERO	19	1	20
SALISBURY	27		27
SANDGATE	22	3	25
SHAFTSBURY	30	2	32
SHARON	16	2	18
SHEFFIELD	7		7
SHELBURNE	23		23
SHELDON	4		4
SHERBURNE	5		5
SHOREHAM	32	2	34
SHREWSBURY	16		16
SPRINGFIELD	31	11	42
ST ALBANS	3		3
ST GEORGE	3		3
ST JOHNSBURY	24	5	29
STAMFORD	5	3	8
STANNARD	6		6
STARSBORO	15		15
STOCKBRIDGE	6		6
STOWE	11		11
STRAFFORD	12	4	16
STRATTON	2		2
SUDBURY	8	3	11
SUNDERLAND	3		3
SUTTON	7	1	8
SWANTON	3		3
THETFORD	20		20
TINMOUTH	38	1	39
TOPSHAM	4		4
TOWNSHEND	8	2	10
TROY	6		6
TUNBRIDGE	21	4	25
UNDERHILL	10		10
UNKNOWN	5		5
VERGENNES	6	2	8
VERNON	11	2	13
VERSHIRE	13	1	14
VICTORY	2		2
W FAIRLEE	14	1	15
W HAVEN	2	2	4
W RUTLAND	20		20
W WINDSOR	13	3	16

The vagaries of weather and its impact on harvests and populations are unpredictable and difficult to gauge. Declining spring harvests of 2002 and 2003 from previous record levels may suggest that Vermont's turkey population trend has peaked. Potentially lower nesting productivity resulting from the wet, rainy spring of 2003 may also negatively affect the 2004 harvest. In light of this, a conservative fall harvest structure should be continued.

2003 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Resident	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
WALDEN	10		10
WALLINGFORD	24		24
WALTHAM	15		15
WARDSBORO	5		5
WASHINGTON	9		9
WATERBURY	1		1
WATERFORD	7	9	46
WEATHERSFIELD	39	15	54
WELLS	21	9	30
WESTFORD	11		11
WESTMINSTER	14	5	19
WESTON	3		3
WEYBRIDGE	10		10
WHEELOCK	6		6
WHITING	19		19
WHITINGHAM	2		2
WILLIAMSTOWN	62	1	63
WILLISTON	16		16
WILMINGTON	8		8
WINDHAM	9		9
WINDSOR	13	2	15
WINHALL	6		6
WOLCOTT	13		13
WOODBURY	1		1
WOODFORD	1		1
WOODSTOCK	6	2	8
WORCESTER	4		4
TOTALS	3,341	353	3,694





**VERMONT WILD TURKEY
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT UNITS**

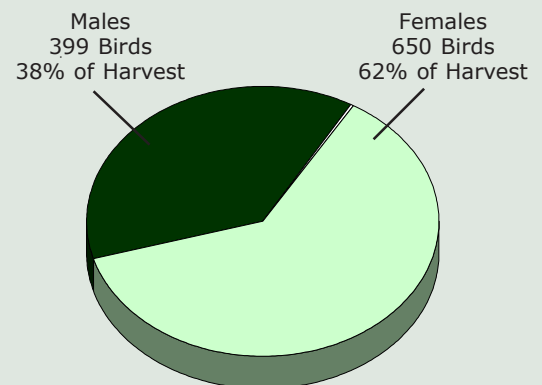
2003 LEGAL FALL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND METHOD

Town of Kill	Archery	Shotgun	Total Harvest
ADDISON	1	11	12
ANDOVER		1	1
ARLINGTON		1	1
BALTIMORE		2	2
BARNARD		1	1
BARNET	3	12	15
BARRE	2	3	5
BENNINGTON		1	1
BENSON	3	9	12
BERLIN	4	12	16
BETHEL	2	18	20
BOLTON	1	1	2
BRADFORD		8	8
BRAINTREE	2	15	17
BRANDON	1	8	9
BRATTLEBORO		3	3
BRIDGEWATER		1	1
BRIDPORT		12	12
BRISTOL	1	9	10
BROOKFIELD	1	18	19
BROOKLINE		1	1
CABOT	6	9	15
CALAIS	1		1
CAMBRIDGE	1	4	5
CASTLETON		1	1
CHARLOTTE	2	15	17
CHELSEA	3	18	21
CHESTER		6	6
CHITTENDEN	1	3	4
CLARENDON		7	7
CORINTH	1	10	11
CORNWALL	2	8	10
DANBY		8	8
DANVILLE		8	8
DORSET		9	9
DOVER	1	3	4
DUMMERSTON		5	5
DUXBURY		5	5
E MONTPELIER		1	1
FAIR HAVEN		1	1
FAIRLEE	2	9	11
FAYSTON	1	2	3
FERRISBURG		14	14
GOSHEN	1	1	2
GRAFTON		2	2
GRANVILLE		1	1
GROTON	4	8	12
GUILFORD	1	5	6
HANCOCK		4	4
HARDWICK	2		2
HARTFORD	3	3	6
HARTLAND	2	3	5
HINESBURG		12	12
HUBBARDTON	2	5	7
HUNTINGTON	2	3	5
IRA	1	9	10
JAMAICA		2	2
JERICHO		3	3
LEICESTER	1	9	10
LONDONDERRY	1	7	8
LUDLOW	1	5	6

Fall Turkey Season

The 2003 fall turkey season resulted in a harvest of 1,049 either-sex birds, higher than the previous three seasons' harvest average of 763 birds. A relatively poor, crop of acorns and beechnuts likely contributed significantly to the higher harvest.

1,049 TURKEYS HARVESTED



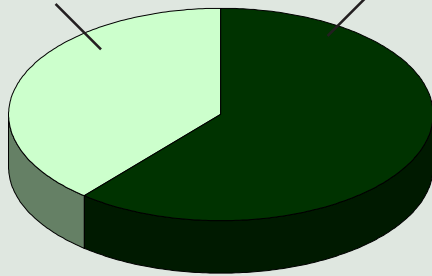
Females made up the majority of the harvest (62%) as is typical of Vermont fall turkey seasons. Fall birds were taken in 146 Vermont towns.

2003 LEGAL FALL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND METHOD

FALL TURKEY HARVEST AGE DISTRIBUTION OF HARVEST

Immature Birds
39% of Harvest

Adult Birds
61% of Harvest



Adult birds made up 61% of the harvest (immature birds 39%) providing an indication of a more marginal spring nesting season.

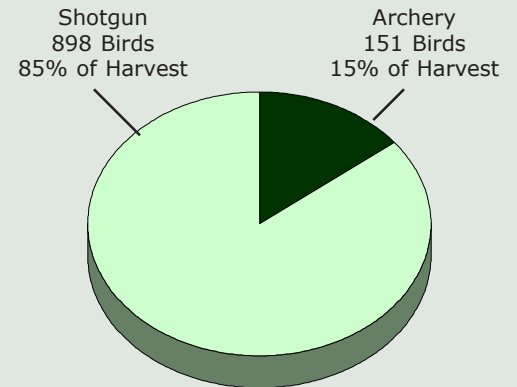


Town of Kill	Archery	Shotgun	Total Harvest
MARLBORO		1	1
MARSHFIELD	1		1
MIDDLEBURY		14	14
MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS3	2		5
MONKTON	2	7	9
MONTPELIER	1		1
MORETOWN		5	5
MORRISTOWN	2	4	6
MT HOLLY		5	5
NEW HAVEN		22	22
NEWBURY	1	20	21
NEWFANE	2	1	3
NORTHFIELD	3	5	8
NORWICH	2	4	6
ORANGE	8	6	14
ORWELL		13	13
PANTON	1	1	2
PAWLET		14	14
PEACHAM	1	13	14
PITTSFIELD		2	2
PITTSFORD	1	26	27
PLAINFIELD	1	2	3
POMFRET	1	3	4
POULTNEY	2	7	9
POWNA		4	4
PROCTOR		6	6
PUTNEY		2	2
RANDOLPH	2	12	14
READING		1	1
RICHMOND		10	10
ROCHESTER	1	11	12
ROCKINGHAM		7	7
ROXBURY	1	3	4
ROYALTON		5	5
RUPERT		13	13
RUTLAND TOWN		10	10
RYEGATE	3	29	32
S BURLINGTON		2	2
SALISBURY		8	8
SANDGATE	2	1	3
SHAFTSBURY		5	5
SHARON		4	4
SHELBURNE	5	11	16
SHOREHAM		12	12
SHREWSBURY	1	3	4
SPRINGFIELD	2	3	5
STARSBORO		4	4
STOCKBRIDGE		5	5
STOWE	3	3	6
STRAFFORD	3	5	8
SUDBURY		4	4
SUNDERLAND		1	1
THETFORD	1	12	13
TINMOUTH		7	7
TOPSHAM	3	4	7
TOWNSHEND		2	2
TUNBRIDGE		8	8
UNKNOWN	1		1
VERGENNES	1	2	3
VERSHIRE		1	1
W FAIRLEE		1	1

2003 LEGAL FALL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND METHOD

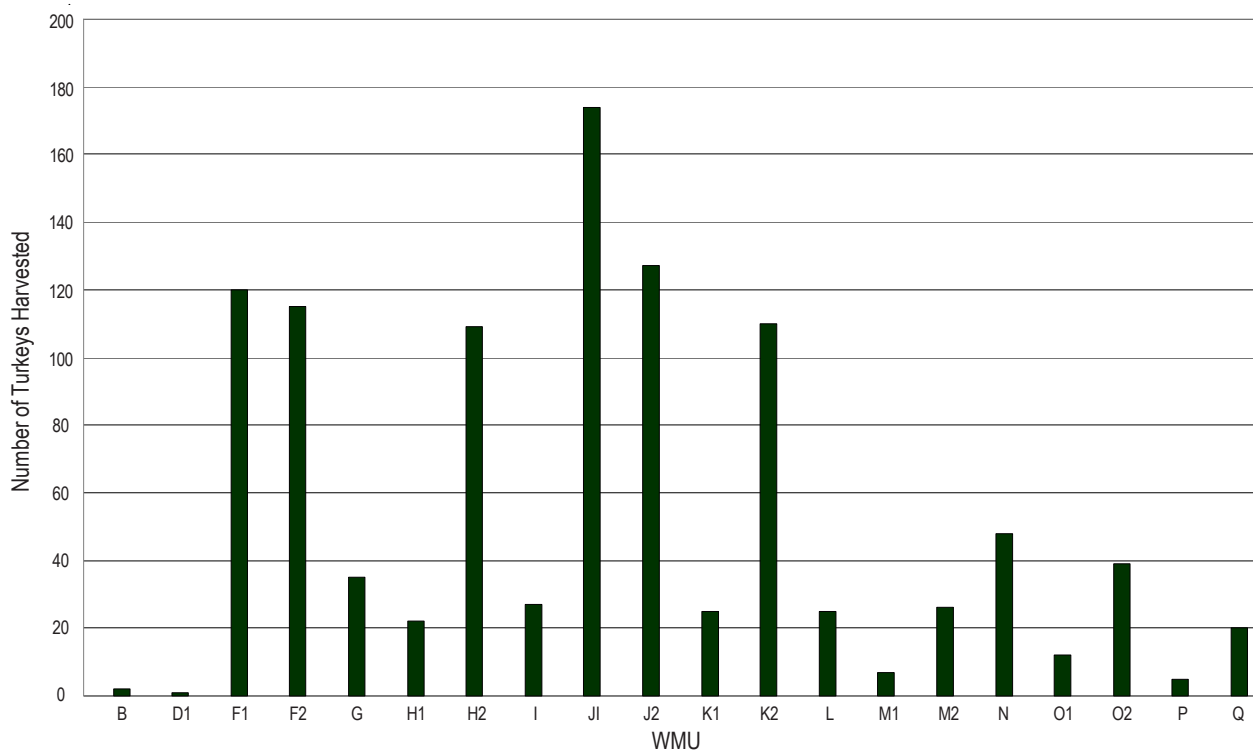
Town of Kill	Archery	Shotgun	Total Harvest
W HAVEN	3	5	8
W RUTLAND	1	4	5
W WINDSOR		1	1
WAITSFIELD	1	9	10
WALLINGFORD	1	5	6
WALTHAM		3	3
WARDSBORO	1	2	3
WARREN		1	1
WASHINGTON	3	8	11
WATERBURY	1	1	2
WATERFORD	3	15	18
WEATHERSFIELD	2	13	15
WELLS	1	5	6
WESTMINSTER	1	3	4
WESTON	1	2	3
WEYBRIDGE		7	7
WHITING		11	11
WILLIAMSTOWN	4	15	19
WILLISTON	1	6	7
WINDHAM	1	1	2
WINDSOR		4	4
WOLCOTT	1		1
WOODSTOCK		4	4
WORCESTER	1		1
TOTALS	151	898	1,049

FALL TURKEY HARVEST METHOD OF HARVEST



The 2003 fall archery turkey season accounted for 109 of the harvested birds, with the balance (940) taken in the shotgun season.

2003 FALL TURKEY HARVEST BY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT UNIT



Notable Weights of Vermont's Harvested Big Game Wildlife

This program keeps track of some of the largest black bear, white-tailed deer and moose taken by legal means in Vermont each year. All animals recorded must be completely field dressed. Wildlife listed here have been entered in to this program based on a submission by the hunter to the department.

Cleaned field dressed weight: All animals must be reported completely field dressed (all internal organs removed, including heart, liver and lungs). By completely field dressing your deer, bear or turkey immediately after tagging you insure the most rapid cooling of the body cavity and the least amount of coagulated blood, and thus the least amount of meat will be at risk of spoilage.

It is your responsibility as a sportsperson to properly care for your game and use it fully. If you take more meat than you and your family can consume within a year, you will easily find friends, relatives and/or local food shelves that will gladly accept your surplus meat. By properly dressing your game you will help to ensure that the meat you consume or give away will be of the finest possible quality.

Points: points are defined as 1 inch above the antler beam.

FIVE HEAVIEST REPORTED BLACK BEAR BY WEIGHT

Year	Weight (lbs.)	Town Harvested
1986	514	Lemington
1985	441	Jay
2001	383	Brookfield
1985	383	Irasburg
1995	363	Ferdinand

FIVE HEAVIEST REPORTED WHITE-TAILED DEER BY WEIGHT

Year	Weight (lbs.)	Points	Town Harvested
1989	269	8	Granby
1993	267	8	Alburg
1994	261	8	Bloomfield
1995	257	11	Averill
1995	255	8	Maidstone

FIVE HEAVIEST MOOSE BY WEIGHT

Year	Weight (lbs.)	Points	Town Harvested
1996	1040	19	Brighton
1997	946	20	Eden
1995	945	16	Ferdinand
1996	943	27	Granby
1997	941	16	Lowell

For more information please contact: Lucy Herring (802) 241-3117