2006-2007 Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey

Purpose of the study: To survey resident hunters (18-24 game animal hunting categories) annually to determine their activities and harvests in Illinois, as well as their characteristics, attitudes and opinions toward specific wildlife issues.

Methods: 2,919 purchasers of 2006-2007 hunting licenses or habitat stamps were sent a mail-back questionnaire in February - April 2007. 50% of the individuals had purchased hunting licenses and 50% had purchased habitat stamps. We received 1,744 useable responses for a 61% response rate.

Highlights of results: Key findings of this survey were as follows:

- Sales of resident hunting licenses increased 1% from 280,000 sold for the 2005 season to 282,000 sold for the 2006 season.
- Harvest decreased for 9 game animals (rabbit, quail, pheasant, dove, woodcock, gray partridge, raccoon, coyote, and opossum), and increased for 4 animals (fox squirrel, gray squirrel, red fox and gray fox).
- 20% of resident hunters hunted on controlled hunting areas or shooting preserves in Illinois. Most hunted for pheasants (n = 262), quail (n = 64) or doves (n = 44).
- Upland game (59%) and waterfowl (55%) hunters reported difficulty gaining access to hunting land. Deer, small game and furbearer hunters reported little difficulty finding places to hunt (63% of deer, 61% of small game and 60% of furbearer hunters reported no difficulty finding hunting land).
- Few resident hunters leased land (6%) or hired outfitters (1%) to hunt any species in Illinois. Deer (25%), turkeys (18%) and waterfowl (13%) were the most commonly pursued species on leased land. 12% of lessees were able to hunt any species on land they leased.
- 72% of respondents hunted deer in Illinois during 2006-2007. Deer hunters reported spending an average of $382 to hunt deer for an average of 17 days.
- Resident deer hunters harvested 0.7 deer/hunter during all seasons, 0.9 deer/hunter during the regular firearm, 0.8 deer/hunter during the archery, 0.4 deer/hunter during the muzzleloader and 0.3 deer/hunter during the late-winter seasons.
- Resident hunters harvested more does (44% of total harvest), than bucks with ≥4 antler points per side (25%), bucks with <4 antler points per side (13%), buck fawns (11%) and doe fawns (8%).

For more information:
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