

2021 SOUTH CAROLINA DEER HARVEST REPORT



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DEER RESEARCH & MANAGEMENT PROJECT



Submitted by

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INTRODUCTION

The white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) is the most popular, sought after, economically important, and controversial game animal in South Carolina. The 2021 Deer Hunter Survey represents the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' (SCDNR), Wildlife Section's ongoing commitment to conduct pertinent research related to the state's white-tailed deer resource. The primary objectives of this survey research were to obtain valid estimates of: (1) the statewide deer harvest in 2021, (2) the harvest of deer in the constituent counties of the state, (3) hunting effort related to deer, (4) resident and nonresident hunter activities, and (5) weapons use, weapons preference, and harvest rates by weapon type. Information on hunter opinion related to certain aspects of the deer resource as well as estimates of the wild hog and coyote harvest in the state is also presented.

Due to the importance of deer as a state resource, SCDNR believes that accurately assessing the harvest of deer, as well as hunter participation in deer hunting, is key to the management of this species. Proposed changes in deer-related laws and regulations should have foundations in biology, therefore, the population dynamics associated with annual hunting mortality cannot be ignored. Similarly, when issues arise that do not involve biological parameters, it is important to have information related to deer hunter activities afield because they too form an important basis for managing deer.

Since the inception of the Statewide Deer Research and Management Project (Deer Project) the methods used to document the state's deer harvest have changed. Historically, deer harvest figures were developed using a system of mandatory deer check stations in the 18 county Upstate (Game Zones 1 and 2) in conjunction with reported harvests from properties enrolled in the Deer Quota Program (DQP) in the 28 county Coastal Plain (Game Zones 3 and 4). This system yielded an actual count of harvested deer and was, therefore, an absolute minimum harvest figure. Shortcomings in this system included deterioration of check station compliance in the Upstate and failure to report by DQP cooperators in the Coastal Plain. Also, since the acreage enrolled in the DQP tends to be about one-half of the deer habitat in the Coastal Plain, past harvest figures have not documented deer harvests on non-quota lands (3.1 million acres) because there was no legal requirement to report harvested deer in the Coastal Plain. Therefore,

it is suspected that historic deer harvest figures only accounted for about one-half of the total deer harvest that occurred annually in the state.

Survey Methodology

The 2021 Deer Hunter Survey represents a random mail survey that involved a single mail-out. The questionnaire for the 2021 Deer Hunter Survey was developed by Wildlife Section personnel (Figure 1). The mailing list database was constructed by randomly selecting 35,000 known Big Game Permit holders that included 8 license types. The license types included: (1) Resident Sportsman' s, (2) 3-year Resident Sportsman' s, (3) Resident Combination, (4) 3-year Resident Combination, (5) Resident Junior Sportsman' s, (6) Resident Big Game Permit, (7) 3-year Resident Big Game Permit, and (8) Nonresident Big Game Permit. The number of individuals associated with each license type was based on an attempted sampling rate of approximately 15 percent for licenses purchased through December of 2021. Since deer seasons statewide end on January 1 there was no need to sample individuals that were licensed thereafter.

Data entry was completed by Success Staffing, LLC, Seabrook, SC. Statistical analysis was conducted using Statistix 10 (Analytical Software, Tallahassee, FL).

Acknowledgments

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As with any mail survey, a portion of the attempted sample (35,000) was returned as undeliverable mail (406). Therefore, the actual attempted sample was 34,594 representing 22.7 percent of the entire population (152,259) of license holders. A total of 5,876 completed surveys were returned yielding a 17 percent response rate and 3.8 percent sample on the entire licensee population.

Deer Harvest

During the 2021 deer season it is estimated that a total of 95,351 bucks and 79,218 does were harvested for a statewide total of 174,569 deer (Table 1). This represents a 12 percent decrease in harvest from 2020 (197,893) and is 45 percent below the record harvest established in 2002 (319,902). After many years of rapidly increasing from the 1970's to the mid-1990's, the deer population in South Carolina exhibited relative stability between 1995 and 2002. Between 2003 and 2015, however, the population trended down with the overall reduction in harvest likely attributable to a number of factors, including habitat change, two decades of aggressive antlerless deer harvest, and the complete colonization of the state by coyotes and their impact on fawn survival. Although the harvest in 2021 decreased, since 2016 the states' deer harvest has generally been increasing possibly because of declining coyote densities that would naturally occur following colonization.

Explaining the decline in harvest in 2021 is relatively easy and stems from a decrease in hunter numbers. Participation by resident hunters was down 14 percent and for nonresidents it was down 13 percent compared to 2020. Explaining why deer hunter numbers were down in 2021 is more problematic. Hunter numbers had increased during 2020 about 6 percent likely due to COVID-19 and the notion that people had more time and flexibility to hunt. On the other hand, during the fall of 2021 things were returning to normal and people may have opted more for nonhunting activities many of which were not feasible during the pandemic. In any event, it will be interesting to see what deer hunter numbers are in 2022. Deer hunter numbers obviously play an important role in the total deer harvest annually.

Harvest Per Unit Area County Rankings

Comparisons can be made between deer harvests from the various counties in South Carolina if a harvest per unit area is established. Harvest per unit area standardizes the harvest among counties regardless of the size of individual counties. One measure of harvest rate is the number of deer taken per square mile (640ac. = 1 mile²). When considering the estimated deer habitat that is available in South Carolina, the deer harvest rate in 2021 was 8.2 deer per square mile over the entire state (Table 2). Although the deer harvest in the state is lower now than many years ago, South Carolina remains at the top among southeastern states, many of which have also noted a declining trend. The top 5 counties for harvest per unit area were Hampton (15.6 deer/mile²), Anderson (14.7 deer/mile²), Bamberg (14.7 deer/mile²), Spartanburg (12.8 deer/mile²), and Orangeburg (12.3 deer/mile²).

Deer Harvest Rankings by County

Total deer harvest by county is not comparable among counties because counties vary in size and are, therefore, not directly comparable. However, it has become customary to rank the counties based on number of deer harvested (Table 3). The top 5 counties during 2021 were Orangeburg, Hampton, Fairfield, Berkeley, and Colleton.

Deer Harvest on Wildlife Management Areas

Deer hunting on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) remains popular in South Carolina with approximately 60,000 licensees having a WMA Permit. Wildlife Management Areas represent lands owned by SCDNR, other state-owned lands enrolled in the WMA Program, US Forest Service lands enrolled in the WMA Program, and private and/or corporate lands that are leased by SCDNR as part of the WMA Program. Deer harvest figures for coastal WMAs are from check stations and are presented only for those WMA properties that have a deer check-in requirement. Deer harvest figures for upstate WMAs (Mountain and Central and Western Piedmont Hunt Units) were estimated by extrapolating the county deer harvest rates (deer/mi²) to the acreage of WMA land that falls within the respective counties comprising the WMA. This assumes that hunters on WMA lands exhibit effort and deer harvest patterns similar

to those of the general licensee database that was surveyed. Finally, the estimated deer harvest on WMA lands is included in, not additive to, the county and statewide estimates found throughout this report.

During the 2021 season it is estimated that 3,740 bucks, 2,799 does, and 14 deer of unknown sex were harvested for a total deer harvest on Wildlife Management Areas of 6,553 (Table 4). This figure represents an 11 percent decrease from 2020.

Hunter Opinion Regarding the Deer Population

The 2021 Deer Hunter Survey asked participants their opinion regarding the following question. Compared to past years, how would you rate the number of deer in the area that you hunt most often? Survey participants were given 3 choices; increasing, about the same, or decreasing. Most hunters (61%) indicated that the number of deer in the area they hunted most often was about the same as in past years (Table 5). Slightly more hunters (21%) believed that the deer population was decreasing than increasing (18%). On a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 being increasing, 2 being neutral, and 3 being decreasing, the overall mean rating of 2.0 suggests that hunters viewed the deer population about the same as past years.

Number of Deer Hunters

Even though all individuals receiving a survey were licensed to hunt deer, only 85 percent actually hunted deer. For residents, 86 percent of sampled licensees hunted deer and for nonresidents 81 percent hunted deer. Extrapolating to the respective licensee populations yields 115,862 residents (Table 6) and 13,729 nonresidents (Table 7) for a total of 129,591 deer hunters statewide during 2021. This figure represents a 14 percent decrease from the 150,163 hunters in 2020. As previously mentioned, hunter numbers were up in 2020 likely due to people having more time and flexibility associated with COVID-19. Similarly, the decrease in hunter numbers in 2021 may be related to people pursuing other activities as things were opening up. Counties with the highest estimates for individual hunters include Orangeburg, Anderson, Laurens, Fairfield, and Newberry for resident hunters (Table 6) and Hampton, Allendale, Bamberg, Colleton, and Fairfield for nonresidents (Table 7). There were more nonresident hunters in Allendale and Hampton counties than resident hunters.

Hunting Success

For determination of hunting success only those individuals who actually hunted deer were included in the analysis and similarly, success was defined as harvesting at least one deer. Overall hunting success in 2021 was 69 percent, which should be considered very good. Success rates for residents (69%, Table 6) were slightly lower than nonresidents (70%, Table 7). Estimates for resident and nonresident success rates for all counties are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Hunter Effort

For the purposes of this survey hunter effort was measured in days with one day being defined as any portion of the day spent afield. Resident hunters averaged 14 days afield for a total of 1,670,153 days deer hunting and nonresidents averaged 15 days for a total of 205,231 days (Table 8). Total effort expended deer hunting in South Carolina during 2021 was estimated at 1,875,384 days (Table 8), a 15 percent decrease from 2020. The number of days devoted to deer hunting in South Carolina is very significant and points not only to the availability and popularity of deer as a game species, but to the obvious economic benefits related to this important natural resource. Previous surveys conducted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service indicate that approximately 200 million dollars in direct retail sales are related to deer hunting in South Carolina annually.

The top 5 South Carolina counties for overall days of deer hunting during 2021 were Orangeburg, Colleton, Berkeley, Fairfield, and Laurens (Table 8). Resident hunters expended the most hunting effort in Orangeburg, Colleton, Berkeley, Anderson, and Florence counties. Nonresidents hunted the most in Hampton, Allendale, Bamber, Jasper, and Barnwell counties and these 5 counties totaled 50 percent of all the nonresident deer hunting effort that took place in South Carolina in 2021. There was more hunting effort in Allendale, Hampton, and Jasper counties by nonresidents than by residents.

Resident hunters who were successful at harvesting at least one deer averaged nearly twice as many days (17 days) afield as unsuccessful residents (9 days) (Table 8). Similarly, successful nonresidents (17 days) averaged more days afield when compared with unsuccessful nonresidents (10 days).

The amount of effort required to harvest a deer varied between residents and nonresidents and by the county hunted. On the average it took less time for nonresidents to harvest a deer (9 days, Table 7) compared to residents (11 days, Table 6). This may be due to the fact that many nonresidents hunt commercially where considerable preparation is done prior to the hunter's arrival. Also, there may be less selectivity with respect to deer harvested by nonresidents. Counties requiring the least effort to harvest a deer included Beaufort, Hampton, Charleston and Allendale, and Saluda counties for resident hunters (Table 6). On the other hand, nonresidents spent less time to harvest a deer in Dillon, Clarendon, Lexington, Union, and Anderson counties (Table 7), however, none of these counties experienced what should be considered a high level of nonresident hunting activity.

Deer Harvest by Weapon Type and Weapons Utilization and Preference

All areas of South Carolina have long and liberal firearms seasons and the majority (83%) of deer were harvested with centerfire rifles (Table 9). Shotguns (7.5%) and bows (5.5%) also contribute significantly to the overall deer harvest in the state, whereas muzzleloaders, crossbows, and handguns combine to contribute 5 percent to the total harvest (Table 9).

Although rifles are used by about 90 percent of hunters, nearly 80 percent of hunters use multiple weapons during the deer season (Table 10, Table 11). Resident hunters appear to be more flexible than nonresidents in their use of multiple weapons and significantly more residents use archery equipment (30%) and shotguns (17%) than nonresidents (21% archery and 7% shotguns) (Table 11). This finding has been consistent for many years and two points can likely be made. First, since most aspects of deer hunting (travel, accommodations, etc.) are typically more convenient for residents, they may have more time to devote to becoming comfortable or proficient with additional weapons, in this case archery equipment. Second, shotguns are the customary weapon related to hunting deer with dogs and the argument can be made that dog hunting is being practiced more by residents than nonresidents. The weapons utilization data supports this contention.

Unlike weapons utilization, weapons preference is the single weapon that a hunter prefers. Obviously, a majority (80%) of deer hunters prefer rifles (Table 12). Bows (11%) are the second most preferred weapon which is interesting because compared to other states, there are limited exclusive opportunities for bow hunters in South Carolina. Nonetheless, the number

of hunters indicating that bows are their preferred weapon has increased over time. Finally, there are several interesting points that can be made about preferences for other weapons based on residency. Shotguns are preferred significantly more by residents (6%) than nonresidents (2%) and muzzleloaders are preferred more by nonresidents (2.5%) than by residents (0.6%) (Table 12). The explanation of this for shotguns is similar to that for weapons utilization in that residents do most of the dog hunting in the state and tend to use shotguns. With respect to muzzleloaders, nonresidents may use muzzleloaders to take advantage of a special season that is available in South Carolina early than in their home state.

Deer Harvest by Month of Season

The 2021 Deer Hunter Survey asked hunters to provide information on the month of kill for deer taken during the 2021 season. Although South Carolina is noted to have the longest firearms deer season in the country, the relationship between season length and deer harvest is often misunderstood. Deer naturally increase their movements during the breeding season or rut making them more susceptible to being seen and harvested by hunters. In contrast, outside of the breeding season deer movements are reduced, therefore the chances of hunters seeing and harvesting deer are reduced.

Deer harvest by month of season demonstrates this phenomenon (Figure 2). Although firearms seasons are not open in all parts of the state in late August and early September, relatively few deer are harvested during that time where the season is open. On the other hand, a disproportionately high number of deer are taken during October and November. October and November encompass the majority of the breeding season in South Carolina with over 80 percent of does conceiving during that period (Figure 3). Ultimately, timing of the season is a more important factor in determining deer harvest and quality hunting than the length of the season. Although South Carolina offers early opening seasons, there may be negative consequences as it relates to deer harvest. Hunters should understand that hunting pressure that builds prior to the breeding season can suppress daytime movements of deer during the breeding season when deer movements and hunter harvests should be greatest.

Wild Hog Harvest

The 2021 Deer Hunter Survey also asked hunters to provide information on their wild hog and coyote harvesting activities. Documenting the hog harvest became customary several years ago because wild hogs are commonly taken incidental to deer hunting. Wild or feral hogs are often thought of as “game” and there is a certain amount of sport associated with harvesting hogs. Wild hogs provide quality meat for the hunter and mature hogs can make a highly sought-after “trophy”. Wild hogs are not native to South Carolina or any part of the North American continent. They are descendants of European domestic hogs that escaped or were released dating back as far as the early Spanish explorers. Also, closed-range or fencing requirements for livestock did not arise until the 1900's and letting hogs “free-range” was common prior to fencing laws. Wild hogs were historically associated with the major river flood plain systems in Coastal South Carolina. Unfortunately, recent relocations of wild hogs by hunters appear to be responsible for the species populating areas where they were not found in the past. Wild hogs directly compete with native species like deer and wild turkey for habitat and food, and hogs can do significant damage to the habitat and agricultural production through their rooting activities. Legislation passed during the 2005 session of the South Carolina General Assembly prohibits the release of hogs in the state and legislation passed in 2010 prohibits the removal of a live hog from the woods without a permit (SC Code Section 50-16-25). Hogs are not protected animals in South Carolina and hunters can harvest them throughout the year during daylight hours and at night by registering their property.

During 2021 an estimated 27,964 wild hogs were incidentally harvested by deer hunters in South Carolina (Table 13), a less than 1 percent decrease from 2020 (28,043 hogs). Evidence of the presence of hogs in 46 of 46 counties was made by hunter harvest activities (44 of 46 counties in 2020). Statewide, approximately 1.3 hogs/mile² were harvested, however, this figure is deceiving because hogs only inhabit a relatively small portion of the states' land area. The top 5 counties for wild hog harvest per unit area were Allendale (5.2 hogs/mile²), Hampton (5.0 hogs/mile²), Anderson (3.7 hogs/mile²), Abbeville (3.4 hogs/mile²), and Jasper (3.0 hogs/mile²).

Coyote Harvest

Unlike wild hogs which are treated like game to some degree, coyotes are typically thought of as varmints that pose a threat to native game species. Like wild hogs, coyotes are a non-native species in South Carolina. Although a popular notion among hunters is that SCDNR released coyotes, the agency has never released coyotes in South Carolina. The occurrence of coyotes in the state is more recent than hogs and they appear to have gotten to the state by two methods, (1) natural movements from western states and (2) illegal importation. Coyotes were first documented in Oconee and Pickens Counties in 1978 and were thought to be linked to animals that were illegally imported for hunting purposes. Evidence for this includes an illegal importation case that was made and the fact that coyotes had not been documented in adjacent counties in Georgia and North Carolina. Within a few years coyotes began to appear in the western piedmont counties of Anderson, Abbeville, McCormick, etc. indicating a southeastern expansion from the original site. In the early 1980's coyotes were documented in Allendale County and were thought to be natural immigrants from Georgia since they had previously been documented in the adjacent Georgia counties. Coyotes from this source apparently populated to the Northeast until they encountered the Santee Cooper Lakes. In the late 1980's coyotes were documented in the Pee Dee Region, again associated with illegal imports. In any event, by the mid-1990's coyotes had been documented in all South Carolina counties.

Sportsmen often voice concern over the presence of coyotes and the potential impact they have on game species such as deer. Though coyotes are one of the most adaptable animals, they are not designed to prey on big game. The coyote's diet is chiefly composed of small mammals (rats and mice), insects, and a variety of vegetable matter including fruits. On the other hand, coyotes will take deer fawns and deer that are sick or injured. SCDNR completed a major study with researchers at the Savannah River Site investigating the affects coyotes are having on the survival of deer fawns. Cumulative data through the first 3 years of the study indicated approximately 70 percent total fawn mortality with coyotes being responsible for approximately 80 percent of these mortalities. If these findings even moderately represent a statewide situation, this "new mortality factor" is clearly involved in the reduction in deer numbers. This is especially true when combined with extremely liberal deer harvests that have been the norm in South Carolina.

The last 3 years of the study were for the purpose of determining if reducing coyote density through trapping increases fawn survival. It seems logical that if coyotes are preying on fawns, then significantly reducing coyote densities should increase fawn survival. Over the course of the 3-year coyote “control” phase, 474 coyotes were trapped/killed on the study areas. Overall, results showed only modest increases in fawn survival following these efforts with an overall average of about 35 percent increase in survival. Also, trapping seemed to help in some years but have little effect on predation in others. This “year” effect may have something to do with the availability of coyote food sources that may change in abundance annually. Given these results and the difficulty and high cost of coyote control, it seems apparent that making adjustments to how we manage deer, particularly female deer, is more important now than prior to the colonization of the state by coyotes.

Coyotes are not protected animals in South Carolina and hunters are allowed to harvest them throughout the year during daylight hours and at night by registering their property. During 2021 it is estimated that approximately 16,298 coyotes were harvested incidental to deer hunting in South Carolina (Table 13), a decrease of 14 percent from 2020 (18,919 coyotes). As in past years, there was evidence of coyotes being harvested in all counties. Although the number of coyotes killed by deer hunters increased exponentially from the late 1990’s to 2014 pointing to the expansion of this species in South Carolina, the harvest has decreased over 40 percent in recent years likely indicating a moderation in coyote populations across the state which is typical of a species following colonization. Statewide approximately 0.7 coyotes/mile² were harvested and the top 5 counties for coyote harvest per unit area included Spartanburg (2.0 coyotes/mile²), Anderson (1.9 coyotes/mile²), Abbeville (1.7 coyotes/mile²), Saluda (1.6 coyotes/mile²), and Laurens (1.4 coyotes/mile²).

Supplementary Information

The following section is not related to the 2021 Deer Hunter Survey but is offered as information relevant to the state’s deer population.

Based on preliminary data provided by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) the number of reported deer-vehicle collisions for 2021 was 6,409 (Table 14). The reader should bear in mind that many types of deer-vehicle collisions are self-reported by the driver. Additionally, reporting criteria have changed over time.

Average body weights and antler characteristic of deer vary among the constituent counties in South Carolina and are dependent on deer density and habitat conditions (Tables 15 and 16). Statewide averages for male deer indicate that 1.5-year-old bucks average about 107 lbs. and 3.6 antler points while bucks 2.5 years old and older average about 138 lbs. and 6.5 antler points. Yearling (1.5 years old) females average approximately 88 lbs. while does 2.5 years old and older average nearly 101 lbs. This information is based on sampling completed between 1987 and 1994.

The history of the deer population and harvest in South Carolina demonstrates a trend typical of a species that initially expands into available habitat, stabilizes, and begins to decline as habitat changes (Figures 4 and 5). It is important to recognize that habitat is the primary factor controlling deer density in South Carolina, though regulated harvest is important as well. Keep in mind that between 1750 and 1900 the deer population in South Carolina experienced a tremendous decline as it did in most of North America. Although unrestricted subsistence and commercial harvest of deer was important in the decline, major changes in habitat related to clearing of land for agriculture was the controlling factor.

By 1900 deer numbers in the State were very low, perhaps 20,000. However, in the 1920's, significant drought and the cotton boll weevil had devastating consequences for farming. With the decline in farming, reforestation of the state began and was largely complete by the 1970's. Timber harvest activities that followed into and throughout the 1980's created vast areas of early successional habitat that allowed for a dramatic increase in the State's deer population. South Carolina's deer population peaked in the mid to late 1990's at just over 1,000,000 deer.

Over time, deer hunters gained a better understanding of the relationship between deer numbers, habitat, and deer quality leading to more aggressive female harvests in many parts of the state. This increased emphasis on harvesting female deer to control deer densities has played a role in the stabilization and ultimate reduction in the State's deer population. Habitat is also very important. Keep in mind that the same forest management activities that stimulated the growth in South Carolina's deer population in the 1980s have resulted in considerable acreage currently being in even-aged stands that are greater than 15 years old. This habitat type simply

does not support deer densities at the same level as habitat in early stages of ecological succession. As a result, a combination of habitat change, high deer harvests, and the establishment of coyotes has caused the deer population to trend down since 2000. Currently the statewide population is estimated at about 700,000 deer.

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Table 1. Estimated statewide deer harvest in South Carolina in 2021.

County	Acres*	Square Miles	Buck Harvest	Doe Harvest	Total Harvest	Harvest Rates		% Change from 2020
						Ac/Deer	Deer/Mi. ²	
Abbeville	223,113	349	1,845	1,502	3,347	66.7	9.6	-1.2
Aiken	500,546	782	2,391	1,902	4,293	116.6	5.5	-4.8
Allendale	216,455	338	1,894	1,294	3,188	67.9	9.4	-17.0
Anderson	219,068	342	2,923	2,125	5,048	43.4	14.7	-18.3
Bamberg	196,573	307	2,346	2,154	4,500	43.7	14.7	-10.9
Barnwell	281,764	440	2,010	1,948	3,958	71.2	9.0	-5.1
Beaufort	147,441	230	959	945	1,904	77.5	8.3	16.2
Berkeley	567,530	887	3,085	2,489	5,574	101.8	6.3	-10.4
Calhoun	190,584	298	1,201	1,151	2,352	81.0	7.9	-25.3
Charleston	288,732	451	2,286	2,081	4,367	66.1	9.7	6.7
Cherokee	156,664	245	1,236	677	1,913	81.9	7.8	-36.8
Chester	300,589	470	2,250	2,014	4,264	70.5	9.1	5.5
Chesterfield	372,478	582	2,390	1,379	3,769	98.8	6.5	-8.1
Clarendon	298,087	466	1,565	1,653	3,218	92.6	6.9	13.8
Colleton	502,666	785	2,723	2,787	5,510	91.2	7.0	-35.2
Darlington	286,228	447	1,656	1,473	3,129	91.5	7.0	29.3
Dillon	214,069	334	815	771	1,586	135.0	4.7	64.3
Dorchester	302,717	473	1,728	1,858	3,586	84.4	7.6	-17.1
Edgefield	246,543	385	1,589	1,356	2,945	83.7	7.6	-21.1
Fairfield	384,607	601	3,332	2,533	5,865	65.6	9.8	-9.9
Florence	397,888	622	2,121	1,693	3,814	104.3	6.1	-24.2
Georgetown	399,638	624	1,996	1,581	3,577	111.7	5.7	12.1
Greenville	294,257	460	2,431	1,450	3,881	75.8	8.4	15.6
Greenwood	204,400	319	981	960	1,941	105.3	6.1	-48.8
Hampton	324,840	508	3,611	4,327	7,938	40.9	15.6	16.0
Horry	533,336	833	2,331	1,444	3,775	141.3	4.5	4.0
Jasper	309,889	484	1,253	1,075	2,328	133.1	4.8	-17.9
Kershaw	360,485	563	2,601	2,189	4,790	75.3	8.5	-16.9
Lancaster	266,382	416	2,363	1,856	4,219	63.1	10.1	0.5
Laurens	317,916	497	2,865	1,803	4,668	68.1	9.4	-21.1
Lee	220,106	344	1,226	1,172	2,398	91.8	7.0	-19.4
Lexington	280,742	439	2,734	1,556	4,290	65.4	9.8	35.5
McCormick	212,021	331	1,259	1,145	2,404	88.2	7.3	-24.0
Marion	216,907	339	841	618	1,459	148.7	4.3	12.5
Marlboro	281,271	439	993	745	1,738	161.8	4.0	-16.5
Newberry	317,761	497	3,140	2,255	5,395	58.9	10.9	5.8
Oconee	284,348	444	848	609	1,457	195.2	3.3	-28.4
Orangeburg	504,516	788	4,468	5,201	9,669	52.2	12.3	-20.0
Pickens	219,926	344	1,842	943	2,785	79.0	8.1	1.8
Richland	340,121	531	1,806	1,567	3,373	100.8	6.3	-20.0
Saluda	192,173	300	1,720	1,558	3,278	58.6	10.9	-21.1
Spartanburg	265,939	416	2,690	2,621	5,311	50.1	12.8	-25.4
Sumter	338,968	530	2,449	1,132	3,581	94.7	6.8	3.2
Union	258,111	403	1,956	1,313	3,269	79.0	8.1	-26.5
Williamsburg	513,851	803	2,451	2,696	5,147	99.8	6.4	-27.0
York	276,650	432	2,152	1,617	3,769	73.4	8.7	-31.8
Total	14,028,896	21,920	95,351	79,218	174,569	88.0	8.2	-11.8
95% Confidence Interval for harvest			(+ -3,317)	(+ -3,460)	(+ -6,246)			

* Acreage shown represents the acreage of forested land and acreage of row crops considered to be significant deer habitat within each county.

Table 2. County rankings based on deer harvested per unit area in South Carolina in 2021.

County	Acres*	Square Miles	Buck Harvest	Doe Harvest	Total Harvest	Harvest Rates		% Change from 2020
						Ac/Deer	Deer/Mi. ²	
Hampton	324,840	508	3,611	4,327	7,938	40.9	15.6	16.0
Anderson	219,068	342	2,923	2,125	5,048	43.4	14.7	-18.3
Bamberg	196,573	307	2,346	2,154	4,500	43.7	14.7	-10.9
Spartanburg	265,939	416	2,690	2,621	5,311	50.1	12.8	-25.4
Orangeburg	504,516	788	4,468	5,201	9,669	52.2	12.3	-20.0
Saluda	192,173	300	1,720	1,558	3,278	58.6	10.9	-21.1
Newberry	317,761	497	3,140	2,255	5,395	58.9	10.9	5.8
Lancaster	266,382	416	2,363	1,856	4,219	63.1	10.1	0.5
Lexington	280,742	439	2,734	1,556	4,290	65.4	9.8	35.5
Fairfield	384,607	601	3,332	2,533	5,865	65.6	9.8	-9.9
Charleston	288,732	451	2,286	2,081	4,367	66.1	9.7	6.7
Abbeville	223,113	349	1,845	1,502	3,347	66.7	9.6	-1.2
Allendale	216,455	338	1,894	1,294	3,188	67.9	9.4	-17.0
Laurens	317,916	497	2,865	1,803	4,668	68.1	9.4	-21.1
Chester	300,589	470	2,250	2,014	4,264	70.5	9.1	5.5
Barnwell	281,764	440	2,010	1,948	3,958	71.2	9.0	-5.1
York	276,650	432	2,152	1,617	3,769	73.4	8.7	-31.8
Kershaw	360,485	563	2,601	2,189	4,790	75.3	8.5	-16.9
Greenville	294,257	460	2,431	1,450	3,881	75.8	8.4	15.6
Beaufort	147,441	230	959	945	1,904	77.5	8.3	16.2
Union	258,111	403	1,956	1,313	3,269	79.0	8.1	-26.5
Pickens	219,926	344	1,842	943	2,785	79.0	8.1	1.8
Calhoun	190,584	298	1,201	1,151	2,352	81.0	7.9	-25.3
Cherokee	156,664	245	1,236	677	1,913	81.9	7.8	-36.8
Edgefield	246,543	385	1,589	1,356	2,945	83.7	7.6	-21.1
Dorchester	302,717	473	1,728	1,858	3,586	84.4	7.6	-17.1
McCormick	212,021	331	1,259	1,145	2,404	88.2	7.3	-24.0
Colleton	502,666	785	2,723	2,787	5,510	91.2	7.0	-35.2
Darlington	286,228	447	1,656	1,473	3,129	91.5	7.0	29.3
Lee	220,106	344	1,226	1,172	2,398	91.8	7.0	-19.4
Clarendon	298,087	466	1,565	1,653	3,218	92.6	6.9	13.8
Sumter	338,968	530	2,449	1,132	3,581	94.7	6.8	3.2
Chesterfield	372,478	582	2,390	1,379	3,769	98.8	6.5	-8.1
Williamsburg	513,851	803	2,451	2,696	5,147	99.8	6.4	-27.0
Richland	340,121	531	1,806	1,567	3,373	100.8	6.3	-20.0
Berkeley	567,530	887	3,085	2,489	5,574	101.8	6.3	-10.4
Florence	397,888	622	2,121	1,693	3,814	104.3	6.1	-24.2
Greenwood	204,400	319	981	960	1,941	105.3	6.1	-48.8
Georgetown	399,638	624	1,996	1,581	3,577	111.7	5.7	12.1
Aiken	500,546	782	2,391	1,902	4,293	116.6	5.5	-4.8
Jasper	309,889	484	1,253	1,075	2,328	133.1	4.8	-17.9
Dillon	214,069	334	815	771	1,586	135.0	4.7	64.3
Horry	533,336	833	2,331	1,444	3,775	141.3	4.5	4.0
Marion	216,907	339	841	618	1,459	148.7	4.3	12.5
Marlboro	281,271	439	993	745	1,738	161.8	4.0	-16.5
Oconee	284,348	444	848	609	1,457	195.2	3.3	-28.4
Total	14,028,896	21,920	95,351	79,218	174,569	88.0	8.2	-11.8

* Acreage shown represents the acreage of forested land and acreage of row crops considered to be significant deer habitat within each county.

Table 3. County rankings based on total deer harvested in South Carolina in 2021.

County	Acres*	Square Miles	Buck Harvest	Doe Harvest	Total Harvest	Harvest Rates		% Change from 2020
						Ac/Deer	Deer/Mi. ²	
Orangeburg	504,516	788	4,468	5,201	9,669	52.2	12.3	-20.0
Hampton	324,840	508	3,611	4,327	7,938	40.9	15.6	16.0
Fairfield	384,607	601	3,332	2,533	5,865	65.6	9.8	-9.9
Berkeley	567,530	887	3,085	2,489	5,574	101.8	6.3	-10.4
Colleton	502,666	785	2,723	2,787	5,510	91.2	7.0	-35.2
Newberry	317,761	497	3,140	2,255	5,395	58.9	10.9	5.8
Spartanburg	265,939	416	2,690	2,621	5,311	50.1	12.8	-25.4
Williamsburg	513,851	803	2,451	2,696	5,147	99.8	6.4	-27.0
Anderson	219,068	342	2,923	2,125	5,048	43.4	14.7	-18.3
Kershaw	360,485	563	2,601	2,189	4,790	75.3	8.5	-16.9
Laurens	317,916	497	2,865	1,803	4,668	68.1	9.4	-21.1
Bamberg	196,573	307	2,346	2,154	4,500	43.7	14.7	-10.9
Charleston	288,732	451	2,286	2,081	4,367	66.1	9.7	6.7
Aiken	500,546	782	2,391	1,902	4,293	116.6	5.5	-4.8
Lexington	280,742	439	2,734	1,556	4,290	65.4	9.8	35.5
Chester	300,589	470	2,250	2,014	4,264	70.5	9.1	5.5
Lancaster	266,382	416	2,363	1,856	4,219	63.1	10.1	0.5
Barnwell	281,764	440	2,010	1,948	3,958	71.2	9.0	-5.1
Greenville	294,257	460	2,431	1,450	3,881	75.8	8.4	15.6
Florence	397,888	622	2,121	1,693	3,814	104.3	6.1	-24.2
Horry	533,336	833	2,331	1,444	3,775	141.3	4.5	4.0
York	276,650	432	2,152	1,617	3,769	73.4	8.7	-31.8
Chesterfield	372,478	582	2,390	1,379	3,769	98.8	6.5	-8.1
Dorchester	302,717	473	1,728	1,858	3,586	84.4	7.6	-17.1
Sumter	338,968	530	2,449	1,132	3,581	94.7	6.8	3.2
Georgetown	399,638	624	1,996	1,581	3,577	111.7	5.7	12.1
Richland	340,121	531	1,806	1,567	3,373	100.8	6.3	-20.0
Abbeville	223,113	349	1,845	1,502	3,347	66.7	9.6	-1.2
Saluda	192,173	300	1,720	1,558	3,278	58.6	10.9	-21.1
Union	258,111	403	1,956	1,313	3,269	79.0	8.1	-26.5
Clarendon	298,087	466	1,565	1,653	3,218	92.6	6.9	13.8
Allendale	216,455	338	1,894	1,294	3,188	67.9	9.4	-17.0
Darlington	286,228	447	1,656	1,473	3,129	91.5	7.0	29.3
Edgefield	246,543	385	1,589	1,356	2,945	83.7	7.6	-21.1
Pickens	219,926	344	1,842	943	2,785	79.0	8.1	1.8
McCormick	212,021	331	1,259	1,145	2,404	88.2	7.3	-24.0
Lee	220,106	344	1,226	1,172	2,398	91.8	7.0	-19.4
Calhoun	190,584	298	1,201	1,151	2,352	81.0	7.9	-25.3
Jasper	309,889	484	1,253	1,075	2,328	133.1	4.8	-17.9
Greenwood	204,400	319	981	960	1,941	105.3	6.1	-48.8
Cherokee	156,664	245	1,236	677	1,913	81.9	7.8	-36.8
Beaufort	147,441	230	959	945	1,904	77.5	8.3	16.2
Marlboro	281,271	439	993	745	1,738	161.8	4.0	-16.5
Dillon	214,069	334	815	771	1,586	135.0	4.7	64.3
Marion	216,907	339	841	618	1,459	148.7	4.3	12.5
Oconee	284,348	444	848	609	1,457	195.2	3.3	-28.4
Total	14,028,896	21,920	95,351	79,218	174,569	88.0	8.2	-11.8

* Acreage shown represents the acreage of forested land and acreage of row crops considered to be significant deer habitat within each county.

Table 4. Estimated deer harvest on Wildlife Management Areas in South Carolina in 2021.

Area	Acres	Bucks	Does	Total	Deer/Mi.²
Mountain Hunt Unit	193,566	1,086	632	1,718	5.7
Central Piedmont Hunt Unit	159,793	1,381	974	2,355	9.4
Western Piedmont Hunt Unit	119,077	762	665	1,427	7.7
Subtotal for Upstate WMA's	472,436	3,229	2,271	5,500	7.5
Coastal WMA's*					
Bear Island WMA	1,519	8	7	15	6.3
Bonneau Ferry WMA ¹	10,697	32	34	80	4.8
Botany Bay WMA	2,000	24	36	60	19.2
Crackerneck WMA	10,470	42	22	64	3.9
Donnelley WMA	8,048	51	48	99	7.9
Francis Marion WMA	252,578	97	149	246	0.6
Hamilton Ridge	13,281	39	45	84	4.0
Liberty Hill WMA	7,876	12	7	19	1.5
McBee WMA	1,213	6	8	14	7.4
Manchester State Forest WMA	25,505	117	78	195	4.9
Moultrie WMA	9,480	6	3	9	0.6
Palachuola WMA	5,947	28	43	71	7.6
Wateree River WMA	3,674	8	10	18	3.1
Webb Wildlife Center WMA	5,866	41	38	79	8.6
Subtotal for Coastal WMA's	358,154	511	528	1,053	1.9
Total	830,590	3,740	2,799	6,553	5.0

*Check Station data. ¹ Total includes deer of unknown sex

Table 5. Hunter opinion (percent) regarding the number of deer in the area hunted most often in South Carolina in 2021 compared to previous years.

	Increasing	About the Same	Decreasing
Residents	18.6	60.6	20.8
Non-Residents	13.7	62.6	23.7
Overall	17.9	61.0	21.1

Table 6. Resident deer hunter and deer harvest statistics in South Carolina in 2021.

County	Number Hunters	Man/Days Hunted	Percent Success	Deer/Hunter	Days/Deer	Buck Harvest	Doe Harvest	Total Harvest
Abbeville	2,632	39,070	74	1.2	12.2	1,740	1,457	3,198
Aiken	3,524	49,969	70	1.2	12.3	2,241	1,827	4,068
Allendale	1,153	10,420	79	1.1	8.4	740	500	1,240
Anderson	4,220	55,822	71	1.2	11.2	2,893	2,110	5,004
Bamberg	1,719	25,321	76	1.5	9.9	1,327	1,240	2,567
Barnwell	1,371	23,995	76	1.8	9.9	1,305	1,109	2,415
Beaufort	1,196	12,182	76	1.5	6.8	914	870	1,784
Berkeley	4,199	61,194	70	1.3	11.3	2,980	2,415	5,395
Calhoun	1,414	25,605	72	1.4	12.7	1,066	957	2,023
Charleston	2,937	35,849	77	1.5	8.3	2,241	2,067	4,307
Cherokee	1,414	21,755	72	1.2	12.7	1,131	587	1,719
Chester	2,719	38,396	69	1.2	11.5	1,740	1,610	3,350
Chesterfield	1,806	30,455	72	1.7	9.7	2,045	1,110	3,154
Clarendon	1,588	24,734	74	1.8	8.9	1,370	1,414	2,784
Colleton	3,568	65,870	76	1.3	14.3	2,154	2,458	4,612
Darlington	1,893	33,501	77	1.6	11.2	1,566	1,414	2,980
Dillon	957	19,209	84	1.5	13.4	740	696	1,436
Dorchester	2,306	38,504	77	1.5	11.2	1,653	1,784	3,437
Edgefield	2,371	31,392	75	1.2	11.0	1,523	1,327	2,850
Fairfield	4,177	52,277	71	1.2	10.0	3,002	2,219	5,221
Florence	3,002	54,472	67	1.2	15.2	2,001	1,588	3,590
Georgetown	2,088	39,550	80	1.7	11.3	1,936	1,566	3,502
Greenville	3,415	40,964	73	1.1	10.8	2,371	1,436	3,807
Greenwood	1,893	21,167	70	0.9	12.0	892	870	1,762
Hampton	2,132	20,014	70	1.3	7.1	914	1,914	2,828
Horry	2,676	51,318	69	1.3	14.2	2,197	1,414	3,611
Jasper	1,109	11,400	65	1.1	9.7	609	566	1,175
Kershaw	3,481	49,122	78	1.3	11.1	2,436	1,980	4,416
Lancaster	2,262	44,423	80	1.7	11.7	2,154	1,632	3,785
Laurens	4,199	53,015	65	1.0	12.4	2,611	1,653	4,264
Lee	1,392	24,821	76	1.6	11.2	1,197	1,022	2,219
Lexington	3,220	42,051	75	1.3	9.9	2,719	1,544	4,264
McCormick	1,653	23,408	71	1.2	11.4	1,110	935	2,045
Marion	1,218	17,534	69	1.1	12.8	827	544	1,371
Marlboro	1,022	17,316	76	1.3	12.8	783	566	1,349
Newberry	4,003	53,973	75	1.3	10.1	3,111	2,241	5,352
Oconee	1,958	21,472	53	0.7	14.7	848	609	1,457
Orangeburg	5,547	78,139	75	1.6	9.0	3,959	4,677	8,636
Pickens	2,719	32,718	70	1.0	11.9	1,827	914	2,741
Richland	2,654	38,223	67	1.2	11.6	1,762	1,523	3,285
Saluda	2,088	26,997	79	1.5	8.4	1,675	1,523	3,198
Spartanburg	3,959	47,186	69	1.3	9.1	2,676	2,502	5,177
Sumter	2,262	40,418	73	1.5	12.0	2,284	1,088	3,372
Union	2,893	38,547	66	1.0	13.7	1,762	1,044	2,806
Williamsburg	2,850	42,442	73	1.6	9.0	2,197	2,502	4,699
York	3,002	43,944	62	1.1	13.1	1,958	1,392	3,350
Total	115,862	1,670,153	69	1.3	11.0	83,188	68,417	151,605
% Change from 2020	-14.0	-17.0	0.0	0.0	-3.6	-12.9	-17.1	-13.9

Table 7. Nonresident deer hunter and deer harvest statistics in South Carolina in 2021.

County	Number Hunters	Man/Days Hunted	Percent Success	Deer/Hunter	Days/Deer	Buck Harvest	Doe Harvest	Total Harvest
Abbeville	135	1,334	67	1.1	8.9	105	45	150
Aiken	180	2,998	83	1.3	13.3	150	75	225
Allendale	1,349	21,777	67	1.4	11.2	1,154	794	1,949
Anderson	60	225	50	0.8	5.0	30	15	45
Bamberg	1,034	17,821	82	1.9	9.2	1,019	914	1,933
Barnwell	600	11,646	82	2.6	7.5	704	839	1,544
Beaufort	75	884	40	1.6	7.4	45	75	120
Berkeley	165	2,128	64	1.1	11.8	105	75	180
Calhoun	120	1,694	75	2.8	5.1	135	195	330
Charleston	45	1,199	100	1.3	20.0	45	15	60
Cherokee	90	1,859	67	2.2	9.5	105	90	195
Chester	495	6,475	775	1.8	7.1	510	405	914
Chesterfield	540	8,483	58	1.1	13.8	345	270	615
Clarendon	120	1,199	25	3.6	2.8	195	240	435
Colleton	674	9,442	73	1.3	10.5	570	330	899
Darlington	105	1,379	57	1.4	9.2	90	60	150
Dillon	75	330	80	2.0	2.2	75	75	150
Dorchester	150	1,154	70	1.0	7.7	75	75	150
Edgefield	75	585	60	1.3	6.1	66	30	96
Fairfield	629	7,404	74	1.0	11.5	330	315	644
Florence	150	1,649	67	1.5	7.3	120	105	225
Georgetown	120	1,334	37	0.6	17.8	60	15	75
Greenville	75	734	80	1.0	9.8	60	15	75
Greenwood	90	1,364	83	2.0	7.6	90	90	180
Hampton	2,368	38,280	81	2.2	7.5	2,698	2,413	5,111
Horry	165	3,387	64	1.0	20.5	135	30	165
Jasper	779	13,204	67	1.5	11.4	644	510	1,154
Kershaw	240	3,522	68	1.6	9.4	165	210	375
Lancaster	375	4,661	60	1.2	10.7	210	225	435
Laurens	255	3,402	82	1.6	8.4	255	150	405
Lee	90	944	50	2.0	5.3	30	150	180
Lexington	15	75	100	1.8	2.8	15	12	27
McCormick	195	2,488	76	1.8	6.9	150	210	360
Marion	75	1,034	80	1.2	11.5	15	75	90
Marlboro	195	2,458	79	2.0	6.3	210	180	390
Newberry	90	614	50	0.5	13.7	30	15	45
Oconee	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Orangeburg	540	10,477	83	1.9	10.1	510	525	1,034
Pickens	75	1,454	60	0.6	32.3	15	30	45
Richland	60	989	50	1.5	11.0	45	45	90
Saluda	45	734	67	1.8	9.2	45	35	80
Spartanburg	105	1,364	85	1.3	10.1	15	120	135
Sumter	180	1,874	58	1.2	8.9	165	45	210
Union	270	2,203	83	1.7	4.7	195	270	465
Williamsburg	240	4,062	75	1.9	9.0	255	195	450
York	225	2,908	80	1.9	6.9	195	225	420
Total	13,729	205,231	70	1.6	8.9	12,176	10,823	23,000
% Change from 2020	-13.4	0.8	4.5	6.6	-4.4	3.5	6.7	5.0

Table 8. Hunting effort (man/days) by county for successful and unsuccessful resident and nonresident deer hunters in South Carolina in 2021.

County	Residents (man/days)			Total Effort Residents	Nonresidents (man/days)			Total Effort Non-residents	Total Days
	Successful	Unsuccessful	Average		Successful	Unsuccessful	Average		
Abbeville	16.8	9.4	14.8	39,070	13.2	3.3	9.9	1,334	40,404
Aiken	16.0	9.9	14.2	49,969	18.0	10.0	16.7	2,998	52,967
Allendale	10.0	5.3	9.0	10,420	18.9	10.0	16.1	21,777	32,197
Anderson	16.0	6.4	13.2	55,822	3.5	4.0	3.8	225	56,047
Bamberg	17.4	6.9	14.7	25,321	17.9	13.8	17.2	17,821	43,142
Barnwell	20.2	9.0	17.5	23,995	21.0	12.1	19.4	11,646	35,640
Beaufort	11.7	5.3	10.2	12,182	6.0	15.7	11.8	884	13,067
Berkeley	16.9	9.2	14.6	61,194	15.3	8.8	12.9	2,128	63,322
Calhoun	20.7	11.3	18.1	25,605	17.0	5.5	14.1	1,694	27,299
Charleston	13.1	9.3	12.2	35,849	26.7	0.0	26.7	1,199	37,049
Cherokee	19.3	5.1	15.4	21,755	22.0	18.0	20.7	1,859	23,613
Chester	16.3	9.3	14.1	38,396	14.5	8.8	13.1	6,475	44,871
Chesterfield	20.3	8.0	16.9	30,455	18.0	12.5	15.7	8,483	38,938
Clarendon	18.4	7.6	15.6	24,734	12.8	1.5	10.0	1,199	25,933
Colleton	20.9	10.8	18.5	65,870	14.7	12.0	14.0	9,442	75,312
Darlington	20.7	7.8	17.7	33,501	20.0	4.0	13.1	1,379	34,880
Dillon	20.3	18.7	20.1	19,209	4.3	5.0	4.4	330	19,538
Dorchester	19.0	8.9	16.7	38,504	9.3	4.0	7.7	1,154	39,658
Edgefield	15.1	7.5	13.2	31,392	11.0	3.0	7.8	585	31,977
Fairfield	14.1	8.4	12.5	52,277	13.9	5.8	11.8	7,404	59,681
Florence	20.8	12.7	18.1	54,472	13.9	4.3	11.0	1,649	56,121
Georgetown	20.9	11.1	18.9	39,550	7.7	13.2	11.1	1,334	40,884
Greenville	13.1	9.0	12.0	40,964	11.0	5.0	9.8	734	41,699
Greenwood	11.6	10.2	11.2	21,167	17.8	2.0	15.2	1,364	22,531
Hampton	11.1	5.3	9.4	20,014	18.1	8.1	16.2	38,280	58,295
Horry	23.9	8.6	19.2	51,318	23.4	15.5	20.5	3,387	54,705
Jasper	10.4	10.0	10.3	11,400	16.6	17.7	16.9	13,204	24,604
Kershaw	15.8	8.2	14.1	49,122	16.9	9.8	14.7	3,522	52,645
Lancaster	23.5	3.5	19.6	44,423	13.3	11.1	12.4	4,661	49,084
Laurens	13.8	10.4	12.6	53,015	14.3	9.0	13.4	3,402	56,417
Lee	18.8	14.7	17.8	24,821	16.3	4.7	10.5	944	25,765
Lexington	14.9	7.2	13.1	42,051	5.0	0.0	5.0	75	42,126
McCormick	15.2	11.5	14.2	23,408	14.9	5.7	12.8	2,488	25,895
Marion	16.7	9.1	14.4	17,534	16.5	3.0	13.8	1,034	18,568
Marlboro	19.3	9.1	16.9	17,316	12.4	13.3	12.6	2,458	19,774
Newberry	15.9	6.2	13.5	53,973	5.7	8.0	6.8	614	54,587
Oconee	13.9	7.6	11.0	21,472	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	21,472
Orangeburg	16.1	8.0	14.1	78,139	19.1	21.0	19.4	10,477	88,616
Pickens	14.3	6.9	12.0	32,718	19.3	19.5	19.4	1,454	34,172
Richland	16.8	9.5	14.4	38,223	15.5	17.5	16.5	989	39,212
Saluda	14.3	7.9	12.9	26,997	23.0	3.0	16.3	734	27,731
Spartanburg	13.9	7.4	11.9	47,186	14.8	2.0	13.0	1,364	48,550
Sumter	21.3	8.6	17.9	40,418	14.7	4.4	10.4	1,874	42,292
Union	16.9	6.3	13.3	38,547	8.7	5.7	8.2	2,203	40,751
Williamsburg	16.8	9.3	14.9	42,442	19.0	10.8	16.9	4,062	46,504
York	16.4	11.8	14.6	43,944	14.2	8.0	12.9	2,908	46,852
Total	16.6	8.7	14.4	1,670,153	16.6	10.3	14.9	205,231	1,875,384
% Change from 2020	-3.0	-5.5	-3.4	-17.0	10.6	22.6	13.7	1.0	-15.4

Table 9. Estimated deer harvest by weapon type in South Carolina in 2021.

	Rifle	Bow & Arrow	Shotgun	Muzzle-loader	Crossbow	Handgun	Total
Number of Deer Harvested	145,416	9,601	13,093	2,619	3,666	175	174,569
Percent Total Deer Harvest	83.3	5.5	7.5	1.5	2.1	0.1	100.0
Percent Hunter Success With Weapon	70.2	31.3	37.1	20.4	24.4	15.7	NA*

* Total is not applicable because individual hunters take deer with multiple weapons.

Table 10. Number of hunters using each type of weapon in South Carolina in 2021.

	Rifle	Bow & Arrow	Shotgun	Muzzle-loader	Crossbow	Handgun
Residents	103,581	22,593	19,581	10,080	12,513	3,128
Nonresidents	12,809	1,798	920	1,167	1,057	247
Total	116,390	24,392	20,501	11,247	13,570	3,375

Total across weapons not given because hunters use multiple weapons. Total hunters = 129,591.

Table 11. Weapons utilization (percent) among deer hunters in South Carolina in 2021.

	Rifle	Bow & Arrow	Shotgun	Muzzle-loader	Crossbow	Handgun
Residents	89.4*	19.5*	16.9*	8.7	10.8*	2.7
Nonresidents	93.3	13.1	6.7	8.5	7.7	1.8
Total	90.0	18.4	15.1	8.7	10.3	2.5

* Significant difference in weapons use category based on residency.

Table 12. Weapons preference (percent) among deer hunters in South Carolina in 2021.

	Rifle	Bow & Arrow	Shotgun	Muzzle-loader	Crossbow	Handgun	Total
Residents	79.5	11.2	5.9*	0.6*	2.5	0.3	100.0
Nonresidents	84.2	9.3	1.8	2.5	1.9	0.3	100.0
Total	80.3	10.9	5.2	0.9	2.4	0.3	100.0

* Significant difference in weapons preference category based on residency.

Table 13. Estimated wild hog and coyote harvest by deer hunters in South Carolina in 2021.

Rank is by per unit area harvested.

County	Hog Harv.	Harv./ Mile ²	% Change from 2020	2021 Rank	2020 Rank	Coyote Harv.	Harv./ Mile ²	% Change from 2020	2021 Rank	2020 Rank
Abbeville	1,191	3.42	-29.4	4	1	618	1.77	-23.6	3	2
Aiken	948	1.21	-16.2	20	14	684	0.87	-12.9	14	17
Allendale	1,764	5.22	25.2	1	2	154	0.46	-4.5	36	35
Anderson	1,279	3.74	113.0	3	12	662	1.93	-22.6	2	1
Bamberg	551	1.80	-23.0	10	7	221	0.72	6.1	21	26
Barnwell	463	1.05	-41.0	21	11	573	1.30	90.9	9	26
Beaufort	66	0.29	43.2	40	41	66	0.29	43.2	43	44
Berkeley	1,720	1.94	69.2	7	20	441	0.50	-52.3	34	15
Calhoun	309	1.04	11.4	22	29	331	1.11	138.7	10	37
Charleston	706	1.56	91.0	14	30	618	1.37	167.3	6	32
Cherokee	57	0.23	-17.4	41	38	243	0.99	-34.4	11	9
Chester	419	0.89	-37.4	25	15	397	0.85	-4.5	15	19
Chesterfield	595	1.02	51.6	24	34	485	0.83	-27.6	17	12
Clarendon	640	1.37	45.7	15	27	132	0.28	-61.8	44	23
Colleton	397	0.51	-62.6	34	16	397	0.51	1.1	32	33
Darlington	750	1.68	131.9	13	33	132	0.30	-36.3	42	38
Dillon	154	0.46	122.8	36	40	198	0.59	329.6	26	46
Dorchester	309	0.65	-41.9	29	22	243	0.51	-30.0	32	24
Edgefield	176	0.46	-52.3	36	26	287	0.74	-17.3	20	18
Fairfield	1,081	1.80	-23.3	10	6	287	0.48	-54.0	35	15
Florence	485	0.78	-4.5	26	30	529	0.85	9.1	15	21
Georgetown	772	1.24	-22.3	17	13	243	0.39	162.6	38	45
Greenville	44	0.10	4,310.9	46	45	265	0.58	-23.6	27	22
Greenwood	595	1.86	98.3	9	27	198	0.62	-72.3	25	3
Hampton	2,536	5.00	44.5	2	3	684	1.35	146.6	7	30
Horry	860	1.03	-13.4	23	18	154	0.19	-55.4	46	39
Jasper	1,456	3.01	46.5	5	10	309	0.64	167.3	24	43
Kershaw	750	1.33	24.9	16	23	309	0.55	67.1	29	41
Lancaster	176	0.42	52.8	38	38	331	0.79	-28.4	18	13
Laurens	331	0.67	-15.8	27	32	706	1.42	-7.4	5	8
Lee	229	0.67	22,800.3	27	45	463	1.35	-8.9	7	10
Lexington	66	0.15	240.0	42	36	287	0.65	3.4	23	28
McCormick	595	1.80	-47.4	10	4	309	0.93	-10.9	12	14
Marion	441	1.30	-43.8	17	8	132	0.39	14.6	38	40
Marlboro	176	0.40	-68.2	39	17	110	0.25	-20.4	45	42
Newberry	66	0.13	-64.2	44	37	265	0.53	-39.7	31	20
Oconee	287	0.65	-34.7	39	25	243	0.55	5.0	29	31
Orangeburg	463	0.59	1,905.0	32	44	551	0.70	40.4	22	33
Pickens	198	0.58	-49.5	33	21	198	0.58	-65.6	27	7
Richland	1,345	2.53	2.2	6	5	243	0.46	-4.5	36	35
Saluda	154	0.51	-48.6	34	24	507	1.69	-15.5	4	5
Spartanburg	44	0.11	90.9	45	42	882	2.12	3.2	1	4
Sumter	1,015	1.92	62.7	8	19	198	0.37	-46.3	41	25
Union	243	0.60	31.3	31	35	309	0.77	-58.2	19	6
Williamsburg	992	1.24	-46.3	19	9	309	0.38	-36.4	40	29
York	66	0.15	186.4	42	43	397	0.92	-31.3	13	11
Total	27,964	1.28	0.0	NA	NA	16,298	0.74	-13.9	NA	NA
	(+ -2,045)					(+ -1,250)				

95% Confidence Interval for harvest

Ranking is based on harvest per square mile

Table 14. Number of deer-vehicle collisions reported by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety 2017-2021.

County	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Abbeville	7	7	8	4	51
Aiken	79	78	93	95	277
Allendale	12	7	19	11	31
Anderson	63	100	97	69	318
Bamberg	16	24	27	21	43
Barnwell	16	22	15	21	43
Beaufort	106	110	130	136	171
Berkeley	77	90	115	109	195
Calhoun	41	27	31	24	64
Charleston	216	252	248	249	296
Cherokee	19	22	41	31	70
Chester	24	36	48	46	114
Chesterfield	27	36	37	49	91
Clarendon	20	13	19	16	73
Colleton	73	60	51	39	132
Darlington	100	86	133	106	129
Dillon	71	63	71	74	63
Dorchester	55	63	60	54	135
Edgefield	4	8	11	2	36
Fairfield	24	28	33	27	81
Florence	137	186	176	136	189
Georgetown	61	29	31	32	59
Greenville	138	149	162	132	335
Greenwood	13	15	19	17	124
Hampton	18	14	18	17	51
Horry	251	313	340	286	369
Jasper	64	60	64	62	116
Kershaw	24	40	37	37	137
Lancaster	37	45	40	45	134
Laurens	20	18	14	19	175
Lee	18	32	15	14	94
Lexington	30	34	33	30	214
McCormick	3	2	0	0	10
Marion	62	68	63	44	71
Marlboro	80	73	85	75	155
Newberry	14	16	13	6	76
Oconee	13	17	26	11	75
Orangeburg	145	130	148	132	257
Pickens	37	28	50	35	131
Richland	69	55	54	58	259
Saluda	7	8	5	2	32
Spartanburg	145	151	169	142	389
Sumter	26	18	25	20	128
Union	13	14	20	27	33
Williamsburg	102	75	85	68	81
York	119	117	107	106	302
Total	2,696	2,839	3,086	2,736	6,409

* Preliminary figures

Table 15. Average live body weights of deer from South Carolina counties, based on historic data.

COUNTY	Males				Females			
	1.5 Years Old		2.5+ Years Old		1.5 Years Old		2.5+ Years Old	
	N	Avg. Wt.	N	Avg. Wt.	N	Avg. Wt.	N	Avg. Wt.
Abbeville	1,390	111.7	484	145.9	466	90.4	747	102.7
Aiken	2,667	121.6	1,485	162.6	808	94.9	1,522	109.6
Allendale	6,175	108.9	3,333	146.0	2,503	87.7	5,606	100.8
Anderson	30	121.9	17	148.1	4	92.5	8	113.0
Bamberg	2,414	111.9	1,113	142.4	884	91.4	1,721	103.9
Barnwell	1,478	119.1	695	156.6	601	94.3	1,071	106.9
Beaufort	952	101.6	1,236	135.2	690	86.7	1,818	99.8
Berkeley	3,162	100.6	4,198	127.3	1,086	83.4	3,991	97.2
Calhoun	1,588	110.2	633	144.1	312	91.4	943	104.6
Charleston	1,256	97.9	2,088	123.3	422	83.3	1,581	95.8
Cherokee	1	80.0	1	139.0	9	77.8	26	89.6
Chester	1,445	105.9	963	140.1	470	87.4	1,091	99.4
Chesterfield	79	119.4	140	152.5	27	93.5	1,128	99.8
Clarendon	13	101.3	29	152.5	42	89.6	87	103.0
Colleton	5,822	105.6	6,908	135.5	3,279	87.9	8,920	100.4
Darlington	334	113.6	273	153.3	216	92.8	573	105.2
Dillon	74	112.8	46	138.5	13	92.8	50	103.9
Dorchester	1,868	107.2	2,205	137.0	653	88.0	2,055	103.0
Edgefield	556	100.9	334	133.4	159	84.6	306	96.9
Fairfield	2,048	102.1	1,444	136.5	761	86.3	2,021	99.2
Florence	696	110.8	459	139.2	198	89.6	621	102.8
Georgetown	1,881	98.7	2,281	126.1	668	85.6	1,961	97.6
Greenville	7	122.1	9	149.9	7	79.3	16	98.4
Greenwood	1,158	111.4	537	145.1	313	90.2	629	103.0
Hampton	6,103	106.7	4,710	140.0	3,034	87.2	7,236	100.5
Horry	302	96.1	311	126.1	129	79.2	301	91.3
Jasper	3,385	101.8	4,691	135.4	2,142	84.6	5,948	96.9
Kershaw	603	108.9	588	144.6	251	89.6	758	102.9
Lancaster	472	113.1	246	153.3	213	91.4	441	105.2
Laurens	240	104.7	181	132.9	107	87.3	238	96.9
Lee	472	119.6	187	151.3	162	96.6	330	108.5
Lexington	20	120.8	9	164.8	6	101.3	15	115.8
McCormick	2,354	101.5	1,056	134.5	877	85.3	1,745	97.3
Marion	690	108.5	501	138.7	256	88.6	630	98.7
Marlboro	106	115.0	62	149.8	30	95.0	70	107.8
Newberry	143	97.1	100	135.6	85	86.0	171	92.7
Oconee	74	113.1	58	152.6	33	85.3	39	99.6
Orangeburg	2,293	112.5	1,375	145.0	686	90.8	1,684	103.4
Pickens	47	109.1	41	145.4	18	79.9	48	100.5
Richland	1,320	106.1	1,274	145.2	651	92.7	1,879	106.3
Saluda	100	115.8	40	148.0	25	93.6	34	105.2
Spartanburg	34	109.3	22	142.2	13	95.0	31	98.8
Sumter	666	111.3	353	142.1	188	94.4	509	105.3
Union	958	101.7	608	135.8	439	87.9	761	97.8
Williamsburg	469	112.5	559	143.3	150	91.4	478	106.0
York	13	96.9	30	143.9	20	78.7	41	93.9
Total	57,958	107.3	47,913	137.9	24,106	88.0	61,879	100.6

Table 16. Antler characteristics of male deer from South Carolina counties, based on historic data

COUNTY	1.5 Years Old Males			2.5+ Years Old Males			% 1.5 Bucks in Antlered Harvest
	Number Points	Percent Spikes	Outside Spread	Number Points	Percent Spikes	Outside Spread	
Abbeville	4.2	32		7.2	2		74
Aiken	4.4	28	8.7	7.4	1	14.7	64
Allendale	4.0	36	7.7	7.2	3	13.7	65
Anderson	4.7	28		6.8	0		63
Bamberg	4.0	34	7.6	6.7	4	12.5	68
Barnwell	4.6	21	8.7	7.1	2	13.9	68
Beaufort	3.1	58	7.4	6.4	9	13.0	44
Berkeley	3.0	62	6.6	5.8	12	11.5	43
Calhoun	4.0	33	7.4	7.0	3	13.2	72
Charleston	2.8	69	6.2	5.4	15	10.6	38
Cherokee				7.0	0		50
Chester	3.4	47	8.7	6.7	4	13.9	61
Chesterfield	4.5	21	8.6	7.2			61
Clarendon	2.8	58	6.2	7.7	3	12.9	31
Colleton	3.3	50	6.9	6.4	7	11.7	46
Darlington	3.1	57	7.4	6.7	5	13.7	55
Dillon	3.2	54	8.1	5.7	9	11.6	62
Dorchester	3.3	53	6.6	6.0	9	11.1	46
Edgefield	3.3	50		6.6	5		63
Fairfield	3.1	55	7.5	6.4	6	13.8	59
Florence	3.4	47	7.4	6.1	9	12.1	60
Georgetown	2.8	65	6.6	5.6	13	11.0	45
Greenville	4.7	14		7.6	0		44
Greenwood	3.9	34		6.7	3		68
Hampton	3.9	39	7.7	6.9	4	13.0	56
Horry	3.0	58	6.8	6.2	8	12.1	49
Jasper	3.3	52	7.0	6.6	6	12.8	42
Kershaw	3.6	47	7.7	6.9	7	12.3	51
Lancaster	4.3	27	6.7	7.4	0	15.0	66
Laurens	3.2	53	6.7	6.0	10	13.7	57
Lee	4.3	25	8.4	6.7	2	12.9	72
Lexington	4.1	30	9.1	7.3	0	15.7	69
McCormick	3.5	47		6.8	4		69
Marion	3.3	52	7.3	6.2	10	12.4	58
Marlboro	3.1	53	7.0	6.4	10	12.6	63
Newberry	2.8	54		6.3	8	13.3	59
Oconee	3.4	52		7.3	3		56
Orangeburg	3.8	38	7.6	6.8	5	12.6	63
Pickens	4.0	43		7.2	2		53
Richland	3.3	52	7.3	6.8	5	13.5	51
Saluda	4.0	32	9.0	6.9	0	10.8	71
Spartanburg	4.0	33	6.1	7.1	0		61
Sumter	3.7	41	7.7	6.6	5	12.5	65
Union	3.3	51	7.2	6.6	5	13.6	61
Williamsburg	3.6	43	7.6	6.8	5	12.6	46
York	3.1	60	5.3	7.4	0	13.3	30
Total	3.6	44	7.4	6.5	7	12.4	55

Figure 1. South Carolina Department of Natural Resources 2021 Deer Hunter Survey

2021 South Carolina Deer Hunter Survey

1. Did you hunt deer in SC this past season (2021)? Yes No

If you answered No to this question please go to question # 9.

2. Did you harvest any deer in SC this past season? Yes No

3. Even if you did not harvest any deer, please record the SC counties you deer hunted and the number of days hunted in each county this past season (2021). **Please begin with the county you hunted the most.** If you harvested deer please record the number of bucks and does taken in each county. A day of hunting is defined as any portion of the day spent afield. Please do not give ranges (i.e. 5-10), rather provide absolute numbers (i.e. 5). Provide information only for yourself - not friends, relatives, or other hunt club members.

1.	SC Counties You Deer Hunted	# of Days Hunted	# of Deer Harvested	
			#Bucks	#Does
2.			#Bucks	#Does
3.			#Bucks	#Does
4.			#Bucks	#Does

If you did not harvest any deer in SC in 2021 please go to question # 6.

4. Please record the number of deer taken by month of season in SC last season (2021).

August	September	October	November	December	January

5. Please record the number of deer taken with each weapon in SC last season (2021).

Rifle	Bow	Shotgun	Muzzleloader	Crossbow	Handgun

6. Please circle **all** the weapons that you hunted deer with in 2021.

1. Rifle 2. Bow 3. Shotgun 4. Muzzleloader 5. Crossbow 6. Handgun

7. Please circle the **one** weapon that you **prefer to hunt deer with**.

1. Rifle 2. Bow 3. Shotgun 4. Muzzleloader 5. Crossbow 6. Handgun

8. Compared to past years, how would you describe the number of deer in the area that you hunt most often? (*Circle one*)

1. Increasing 2. About the same 3. Decreasing

9. If you **harvested** any wild hogs or coyotes while hunting in SC in 2021, please complete the box below.

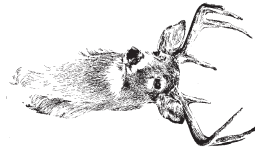
If you did not harvest any hogs or coyotes please go to question # 10.

	County	# of Hogs		County	# of Coyotes
1.			1.		
2.			2.		

10. Are you a resident of SC? Yes No

11. If yes, which county? _____

Separate and return this portion of the survey. Postage is prepaid. Please do not staple this form.



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Figure 1 Cont.

January, 2022

Dear Sportsman:

White-tailed deer are one of the most important game species in South Carolina. Therefore, it is important that this species be monitored for population status and harvesting activities. Wildlife resource managers require current and accurate information about deer harvests to aid in successfully managing this important natural resource and to optimize future hunting potential. To obtain this needed data, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is conducting a survey of licensed Big Game Permit holders.

You are one of a group of randomly selected hunters asked to participate in this survey. To draw accurate conclusions it is very important that you complete the survey and return it. Please take time to read each question. Even if you did not hunt deer last season please indicate this by answering the appropriate questions and moving on to the next set of questions.

In addition to the questions concerning your deer hunting activities, there are questions concerning the weapons that you used to harvest deer and questions concerning the number of wild hogs and coyotes that you may have harvested. Not only is this data important to DNR game biologists, many hunters are interested in this type of information so it is important that you answer these questions too.

Please note that complete confidentiality will be given to you. There is no number on your survey form, therefore, there is no way to link your responses to you. Keep in mind that the primary purpose of the survey is to determine the deer harvest in South Carolina and not to determine whether game laws are observed. By accurately answering the survey questions you will enable DNR biologists to better manage the white-tailed deer resource for you and other citizens of the state.

Please keep in mind that in order to reduce costs, this is the only 2021 Deer Hunter Survey form you will receive. There will be no reminders or second surveys sent to individuals that do not respond to this initial survey. Therefore, it is very important that you take a few minutes to complete this survey and mail it. Return postage is prepaid.

Results of this survey will be posted on the DNR web site once completed (hopefully by June). The results from the 2020 survey can be found at www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/deer/2020/DeerHarvestReport.html

Thank you for your assistance.

Charles Ruth
Wildlife Biologist
Big Game Program Coordinator

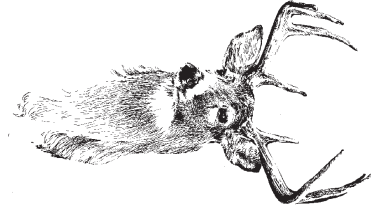
PLEASE MAIL YOUR SURVEY AFTER SEPARATING THIS HALF FROM THE SIDE ON WHICH YOUR ANSWERS HAVE BEEN ENTERED. NO POSTAGE IS NECESSARY.

If you have questions regarding this survey, please call 803-734-3886 or write 2021 Deer Hunter Survey, SCDNR, P.O. Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion or age. Direct all inquiries to the Office of Human Resources, P.O. Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202

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SC DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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Figure 2. Percent of deer harvested by month of season in South Carolina in 2021. Note that December includes January 1 which is the last day of deer season.

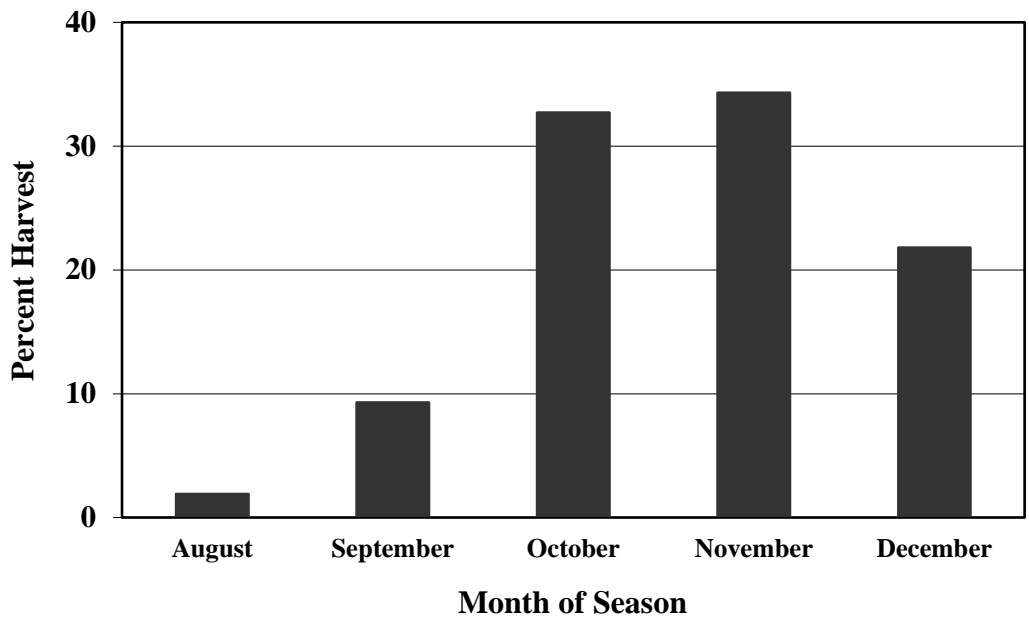


Figure 3. Percent of female deer conceiving by week in South Carolina, based on historic data.

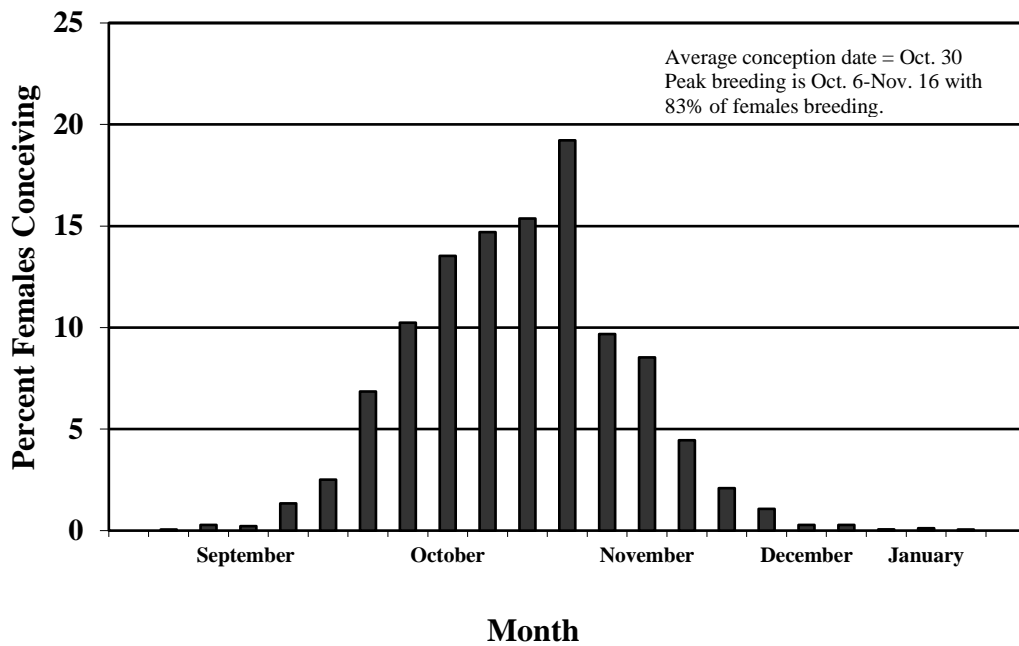


Figure 4. Estimated deer harvest in South Carolina 1972-2021.

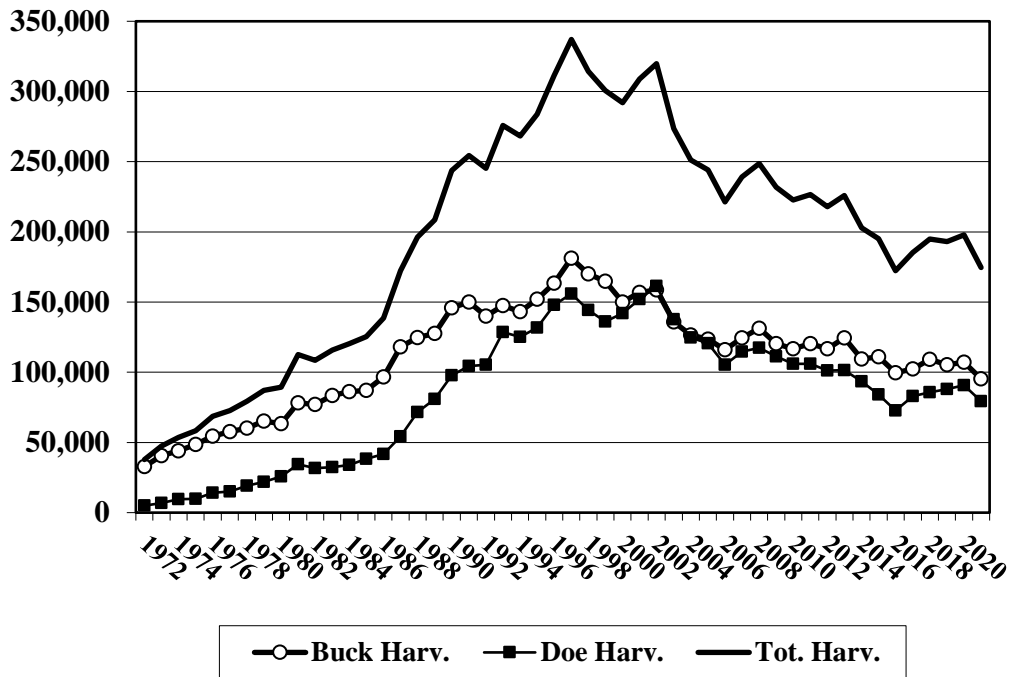


Figure 5. Estimated South Carolina deer population 1972-2021 based on population reconstruction modeling. Note that antlerless deer includes male fawns (button bucks).

