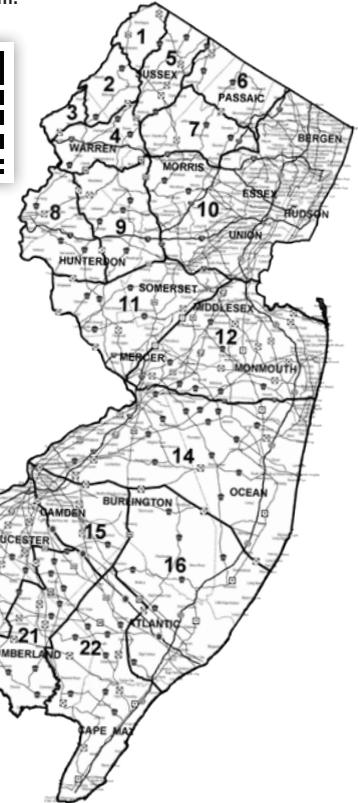


2021 Spring Gobbler Hunting Season Dates

Hunting Period	Dates
Youth Turkey Hunting Day (10–16 years of age) Hunting Period Y	Sat., April 24 If no turkey is harvested on this youth hunt day, Period Y permits may be used in the designated zone for balance of season until a bird is harvested
Hunting Period A	Mon., April 26–Fri., April 30
Hunting Period B	Mon., May 3–Fri., May 7
Hunting Period C	Mon., May 10–Fri., May 14
Hunting Period D	Mon., May 17–Fri., May 21; Mon., May 24–Fri., May 28
Hunting Period E	All Saturdays, May 1, May 8, May 15, May 22

Turkey Hunting Areas

Map for general reference only. For a complete description of the Turkey Hunting Area boundaries, scan this QR code with your mobile device or visit our website at NJFishandWildlife.com/qr/turkeyareas.htm.



Turkey Hunting and Spring Gobbler Permit Information

Note: Harvest reporting of wild turkeys is now automated. See page 54 for details.

Turkey Hunting Permits, General

This hunting *Digest* contains information for both the 2020 Fall Turkey Season and 2021 Spring Turkey Season. Turkey hunting is by permit only. **NOTE:** For the permit application process, lottery notes, changes, status check and directions on how to claim your permits, see details on pages 9–10. See page 1 for fees.

Turkey Permits, 2020 Fall Season

A turkey hunting permit is required and may be purchased at license agents or online at Fish and Wildlife's Internet license sales site www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com.

Fall turkey permits will be available on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at 10 a.m. on Monday, September 14, 2020. Permits will be available until the permit quota is reached or the season ends.

Turkey Permits, 2021 Spring Season

- Spring turkey permits are allocated by lottery. Hunters who apply in the lottery have a much greater chance of receiving their desired area and period choices than hunters who wait for over-the-counter sales of leftover permits.
- Application Period January 25–February 22.
- Award notifications will begin when the lottery is held, and permit pickup begins March 1. Permits must be claimed by 11:59 pm on March 24.
- All permits awarded in the lottery will be available to claim until 11:59 p.m. on March 24. Unclaimed awarded permits will be redistributed in the over-the-counter sale. Application fee(s) will not be refunded for unclaimed permits.
- Over-the-counter sale of leftover permits: 10 a.m. MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021 until permits sell out or the season ends, whichever occurs first.

Spring 2021 Gobbler Season Permits

Hunters are limited to filing only one application which allows for up to two permits, one in the first lottery and one in the second lottery. See pages 8–9 for instructions.

First Lottery

- Selects applicants from the Spring Season First Lottery.
- See table above for dates of the five turkey hunting period segments.
- All youth applicants aged 10 to 15 (16 for those still eligible to hunt using their Youth License) are guaranteed to receive their first choice permit request in the first lottery for the spring Period Y season. Youth permits are not counted in the permit season quotas. Period Y Permits are also available during the over-the-counter sales period.

Youth Turkey Hunt Day

April 24, 2021 (See page 18)

If no turkey is harvested on this youth hunt day, Period Y permits may be used by the youth hunter in the designated zone for the balance of the season until a bird is harvested (see page 18).

All youth turkey hunters 10 to 16 years of age must possess a valid **spring turkey hunting permit** in addition to their **youth** hunting license.

Youth hunters must be accompanied by a properly licensed, non-hunting adult age 21 or older who may not shoot on this youth day.

This season is considered an **extension** of the regular season permit held by the youth.

If youth hunter harvests a turkey on this youth hunting day, the "Y" Period permit is no longer valid for future hunting.

See *Turkey Hunting Permits, General*, this page. For farmers, see *Farmer Turkey Permits*, page 24.

Stalking is Illegal

Use of a hand-held decoy or a turkey tail-on-a-stick as camouflage to sneak up on a turkey is prohibited. In New Jersey, stalking of wild turkeys is illegal, both for ethical reasons and for personal safety.

Fall & Spring Wild Turkey Hunting

REGULATIONS

Regulations in red are new this year.

- ♦ Hunters possessing a **Permit to Shoot From a Standing Vehicle** are guaranteed one first lottery permit only for the Spring Season. Any additional permit purchased is taken from the available permit quota and is not guaranteed. Individuals possessing a Permit to Shoot from a Standing Vehicle must apply and/or purchase their permits via their home computer or go to a license agent.

Second Lottery

- ♦ Assigns unissued first lottery permits (leftover) to applicants who applied for a permit in the second lottery.
- ♦ Youth permit requests for the second lottery are **not** guaranteed. A youth's second permit (or more) is valid *only* for the one designated hunting period A, B, C, D or E.

Consider your requests carefully! If you request the same turkey hunting area and period in both the first and second spring lotteries, you could receive two permits for the identical area and period combination. **Permits will not be exchanged if you receive the permits requested on your application.**

IMPORTANT: Hunters who are awarded two permits in the lottery must claim (purchase) **both** at the same time. Hunters cannot claim only one awarded permit.

Turkey Season Dates and Hunting Hours

The 2020 fall turkey season will consist of one seven day hunting segment, N, (excluding Sunday) from Saturday, Oct. 24 through Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020. Fall hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset.

Hunting hours for the spring season are one-half hour before sunrise until noon daily, except hunting hours for the **last two weeks** of the spring turkey season (including all of period D and the **last Saturday** of period E) are changed to one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Expanded hunting hours during the last two weeks of the season allow opportunities for working and youth hunters.

Coyotes (but not fox) may be harvested incidentally while turkey hunting. See page 49.



Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Turkey Hunting Regulations

- ♦ **Bag Limit:** Fall season: turkeys of either sex are legal. Spring season: only male turkey may be taken; bearded hens may not be taken in the spring. For both seasons, the bag limit is one turkey per permit, *but only one* bird may be taken in a given day, regardless of the number of permits a hunter holds.
- ♦ Artificial decoys may be used while turkey hunting, except the use of electronically-operated decoys is prohibited. Dogs may be used for turkey hunting **only** during the fall season. All hunters are required to possess a calling device while turkey hunting. The use of a hand-held decoy or a turkey tail-on-a-stick as camouflage to sneak up on a turkey is prohibited. **Stalking a turkey is not legal. Electronic calls are not legal.**
- ♦ Hunting methods during the spring gobbler season are restricted to calling or stand hunting.
- ♦ The maximum group size while turkey hunting is five hunters.
- ♦ Hunters may not attempt to chase or drive turkeys for the purpose of putting them in range of other hunters. However, during the fall season only, hunters may rush a flock of turkeys to cause the flock to scatter.
- ♦ No shot larger than #4 fine shot or smaller than #7½ fine shot may be used for turkey hunting.
- ♦ Hunters may not use shotguns larger than 10-gauge or smaller than 20-gauge for turkey hunting. Shotguns must be plugged to be capable of holding no more than three shells.
- ♦ Fluorescent hunter orange is not required to hunt turkeys.
- ♦ Spring turkey hunters may only harvest coyotes (not fox) incidentally while turkey hunting.
- ♦ Properly licensed hunters may use archery tackle to hunt turkeys. Bows used for turkey hunting (long, recurve, compound or crossbow) must have a minimum draw pull weight of 35 pounds at the archer's draw length (long and recurve bow), or peak weight (compound bow), or 75 pounds minimum draw weight (crossbow). Arrows must be fitted with a well-sharpened metal broadhead with a minimum width of 3/4 inch.
- ♦ While turkey hunting, a weapon may not be in possession within 300 feet of any baited area.

Mandatory Turkey Harvest Reporting Requirement (Spring and Fall)

All hunters are now required to report a harvested turkey on the day killed using the Automated Harvest Report System.

Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Mandatory Harvest Reporting:

Upon retrieval, the turkey is considered to be in your possession. The hunter **must**:

1. **Immediately fill out the Turkey Report Card that is part of your permit** with the exception of the Confirmation Number, the

number automatically assigned when the turkey is reported. **Hunters are required to tag their turkey upon harvest and before transporting the turkey. Attach the Turkey Report Card to the turkey. The tag must include the hunter's CID, date and THA of harvest.**

2. Record the turkey's sex, age and take measurements of the beard and longer spur, if applicable. **Measure BEFORE starting the harvest report process to have your answers ready.** See sexing, aging and measuring wild turkeys at https://www.njfishandwildlife.com/turkey_reporting.htm. Use the ½ inch ruler provided on your turkey Turkey Report Card to determine if the longest spur is less than, equal to, or greater than ½ inch. Measure the spur from the very base where it meets the leg scales to the very tip. Use a ruler or tape measure, or a dollar bill (which is 6 inches in length) to determine if the beard is less than, equal to, or greater than 6 inches in length. Measure the beard from the skin at its base to the end of the longest filament.
3. **Report your harvest via the Automated Harvest Reporting System** (by phone or online as printed on every hunting license and permit). During the fall season, a turkey harvest must be reported by 7 p.m. During Youth Turkey Hunting Day, hunting periods A, B, C and the first three Saturdays of hunting period E, **the turkey harvest must be reported by 3 p.m.** During hunting period D and the last Saturday of hunting period E, the turkey harvest must be reported by 9 p.m. If unable to access the Automated Harvest Reporting System by the designated time, the turkey shall be reported immediately by telephone to the nearest Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement office listed on page 12. The hunter must continue to attempt accessing the Automated Harvest Report System until they receive a Confirmation Number for that turkey. When reporting, you will be asked for the turkey's sex, age (juvenile or adult), beard measurement (equal to or greater than 6 inches, or less than 6 inches), and spur measurement (equal to or greater than ½ inch, or less than ½ inch). Again, please take the measurements **BEFORE** you begin the reporting process.
4. **Record your assigned Confirmation Number on your Turkey Report Card.** Retain your Confirmation Number as long as the turkey or its parts are in possession.

Turkey Hunting Seminars

The latest turkey hunting techniques are presented at several turkey hunting seminars sponsored by Fish and Wildlife or wildlife conservation organizations. These seminars focus on how to set up, calling techniques and key safety information for turkey hunters. New turkey hunters are especially encouraged to join us at a seminar. Check your newspaper and our website for the seminars scheduled during March or April. 🦃