



## 2025 SMALL GAME HUNTER MAIL SURVEY

Prepared by staff in the Wildlife Research Unit

### INTRODUCTION

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), Division of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Research Unit annually conducts a mail survey of small game hunters. The small game mail survey was initiated in 1976 as a means to gather small game harvest information, which is used to inform our constituency and guide decisions about hunting regulations and season structure.

### METHODS

A postcard survey (Figure 1) was mailed in early March 2026 following the close of the 2025–26 small game hunting season. Hunters who returned it within three weeks were eliminated from a follow-up mailing to non-respondents. The sampling frame consisted of individuals who purchased a small game hunting license (any type) for the 2025–26 small game hunting season ( $N = 223,740$ ). A stratified random sample ( $n = 7,000$ , ~3%), allocated proportionally by license type, was drawn from the MNDNR electronic licensing system (ELS) database. Small game license types included: Resident Senior Citizen, Resident Youth, Resident Adult, Resident Individual Sport, Resident Combination Sport, Resident Lifetime, Resident Lifetime Sport, Non-resident Youth, and Non-resident Adult. For analysis, license types were pooled into “Resident” ( $N = 213,485$ ) and “Non-resident” ( $N = 10,255$ ; Figure 2). Beginning in 2017, license holders <18-years old at the time of the survey were excluded from the sampling frame but included in the overall expansion for sampling. This group comprised <3% of license holders and estimates should therefore be comparable among years.

Recipients were asked if they hunted small game in 2025–26 and if not, they were instructed to return the survey. Respondents who hunted were asked: (1) total number of days they hunted small game, (2) number bagged by species, (3) number of days hunted by species, and (4) the county in which they hunted most for each species listed. Returned surveys were checked for completeness, consistency, and biological practicability. Dual key-entry and quality control checks were used to minimize transcription errors. Data was tabulated using Viking Data Entry VDE+ software and analyzed using R programming language (R version 4.6.0 (2026-04-24 ucrt); R Core Team 2026).

### RESULTS

#### Survey Response and Overall License Sales Trends

Statewide (resident and non-resident) small game license sales and survey response rate are shown in Figure 2 and Table 1. Of the 7,000 mailed surveys, 172 surveys were returned as undeliverable; 2,239 surveys were completed and returned for an adjusted response rate of 32.8%, which is in line with the slow decline over time (Figure 2). Approximately 69% of respondents reported actively hunting small game in 2025–26, which translates to an estimated 153,890 small game license holders that actively hunted during 2025–26 (Table 1). Overall, statewide license sales (223,740 small game licenses) decreased by 2% from the previous year

and were 6% below the preceding 10-year average (237,867 licenses; Figure 2 and Table 2). Non-resident small game license sales (10,255 licenses) decreased by 1% in 2025 but were 28% above the 10-year average (8,043 licenses; Table 2).

### **Estimates by Species**

Harvest trends for the four most sought-after small game taxa or species (ducks – all species, Canada geese, ruffed grouse, and ring-necked pheasants) in Minnesota since 2002 are shown in Figure 3, Tables 3 and 5, and discussed separately below. For most other species, the estimated number of statewide hunters (Table 4) and harvest (Table 5) showed a mix of increases and decreases compared to 2024 and the preceding 10-year average. Non-resident harvest estimates for the top four taxonomic groups are shown in Table 3, estimated mean harvest per active hunter is shown in Table 6, and estimated hunter success rates (%) and mean harvest per successful hunter are shown in Table 7. Tables 4–6 also provide trend information (i.e., the percent change) for annual and 10-year comparisons. Note that sample sizes (i.e., the number of respondents that reported hunting a particular species) are small and sampling errors are relatively large for most species and years (e.g., Tables 4 and 5), especially for species with  $n < 30$  and where reported harvest has a skewed distribution. Caution is therefore advised when comparing point estimates of harvest statistics between individual years because annual sampling uncertainty is high. The value of the small game survey is long-term trends in license/stamp sales, active hunters, and harvest statistics, especially for the top four taxonomic groups (i.e., ducks, Canada geese, ruffed grouse, and ring-necked pheasants).

#### *Ducks – all species*

In 2025, state duck stamp sales (80,339 stamps) were down 2.0% compared to last year's sales (82,003 stamps) and 5.5% below the 10-year average (85,047 stamps; Table 2). An estimated 51,563 hunters harvested an estimated 410,706 ducks in 2025–26 for an average of 8.0 ducks/hunter (Table 4, 5, and 6, respectively). The estimated number of duck hunters was 12.0% higher than last year's estimate (46,028 hunters) but 15.2% below the 10-year average (60,796 hunters; Table 4). This year's estimated duck harvest was 15.3% below last year's estimated harvest (484,970 ducks) and 33.7% below the 10-year average (619,010 ducks). Hunter success (79.8%) and mean harvest per successful hunter (10.0 ducks) were slightly below the 10-year averages (84.5% and 12.1 ducks, respectively; Table 7).

#### *Canada geese*

An estimated 29,679 hunters harvested approximately 93,733 Canada geese in 2025–26 (Tables 4 and 5) for an average of 3.2 geese/hunter. The estimated number of goose hunters was slightly greater than last year's estimate (28,037 hunters) but 24.7% below the 10-year average (39,434 hunters; Table 4). This year's estimated goose harvest was 22.6% below last year's estimated harvest (121,028 geese) and 55.3% below the 10-year average (209,758 geese; Table 5). Hunter success (66.0%) and mean harvest per successful hunter (4.8 geese) were lower than the 10-year averages (75.3%; 6.8 geese; Table 7).

#### *Ruffed grouse*

In 2025–26, an estimated 66,353 hunters harvested an estimated 235,831 ruffed grouse (Tables 4 and 5) for an average of 3.6 grouse per active hunter. The estimated number of grouse hunters was 12.0% below last year's estimate (75,390 hunters) and 5.1% below the 10-year average (69,892 hunters; Table 4). This year's estimated grouse harvest was 29.6% below last year's estimated harvest (334,970 grouse) and 10.1% below the 10-year average (262,355 grouse). Hunter success (70.3%) and mean harvest per successful hunter (5.1 grouse) were similar to their 10-year averages (70.3%; 5.3 grouse; Table 7).

### *Ring-necked pheasants*

Pheasant stamp sales in 2025 (75,784 stamps) were 1.8% below 2024 sales (77,135 stamps) and 0.6% below the preceding 10-year average (76,246 stamps). An estimated 58,358 hunters harvested an estimated 228,337 pheasants in 2025–26 for an average of 3.9 roosters per active hunter (Tables 4, 5, and 6, respectively). The estimated number of pheasant hunters was 14.6% above last year's estimate (50,935 hunters) and 9.6% above the preceding 10-year average (53,266 hunters; Table 4). This year's estimated pheasant harvest was 2.8% below last year's estimated harvest (234,892 roosters) but 9.2% above the 10-year average (209,146 roosters). Hunter success (71.9%) was slightly higher than the 10-year average (69.5%), but mean harvest per successful hunter (5.4 roosters) was slightly lower than the 10-year average (5.7 roosters; Table 7).

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## FIGURES AND TABLES

Dear Small Game Hunter:

You have been selected at random from among Minnesota's small game hunting license buyers to assist us in evaluating the 2025-2026 small game hunting season (March 2025-February 2026). We need information to estimate the season's harvest and to help set future small game seasons. Answer only for your Minnesota 2025 hunting experience.

**YOUR RESPONSE IS NEEDED  
EVEN IF YOU DID NOT HUNT OR HARVEST SMALL GAME**

Please fill out the attached questionnaire and mail as soon as possible. A reminder will be sent to individuals not returning the questionnaire within three weeks. No envelope or stamp is necessary; just tear along the perforation and drop into a mailbox.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION**

Wildlife Research Program Manager  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Department of Natural Resources

**2025 Small Game Hunter Report**

1. Did you hunt small game, listed below, in Minnesota this year (March 2025 - Feb 2026)? ☐ No ☐ Yes (Please check box)
2. Indicate the total number of days spent hunting small game of all species listed below, in Minnesota. \_\_\_\_\_
3. For the species you hunted indicate your harvest, number of days hunted, and county in which you hunted most for each species, even if None were bagged. Report only game you personally bagged and retrieved in Minnesota. Do not include birds taken on shooting preserves or game farms.

|                                  | Number<br>You bagged | Days<br>Hunted | County |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------|
| Ducks (all species)              | 01                   |                |        |
| Coots (mud hens)                 | 50                   |                |        |
| Canada geese                     | 40                   |                |        |
| Other geese                      | 41                   |                |        |
| Snipe (jacksnipe)                | 51                   |                |        |
| Rails and gallinules             | 52                   |                |        |
| Crows                            | 53                   |                |        |
| Woodcock                         | 60                   |                |        |
| Mourning Dove                    | 65                   |                |        |
| Pheasant                         | 70                   |                |        |
| Ruffed grouse (Forest partridge) | 71                   |                |        |
| Spruce grouse                    | 72                   |                |        |
| Sharp-tailed grouse              | 73                   |                |        |
| Hungarian (Gray) partridge       | 74                   |                |        |
| Fox squirrel                     | 89                   |                |        |
| Gray squirrel                    | 90                   |                |        |
| Cottontail rabbit                | 91                   |                |        |
| Jackrabbit                       | 92                   |                |        |
| Snowshoe hare                    | 93                   |                |        |
| Badger                           | 35                   |                |        |
| Coyote (brush wolf)              | 97                   |                |        |
| Gray fox                         | 96                   |                |        |
| Raccoon                          | 94                   |                |        |
| Red fox                          | 95                   |                |        |
| Bobcat                           | 98                   |                |        |

Figure 1. Sample of Small Game Hunter survey card.

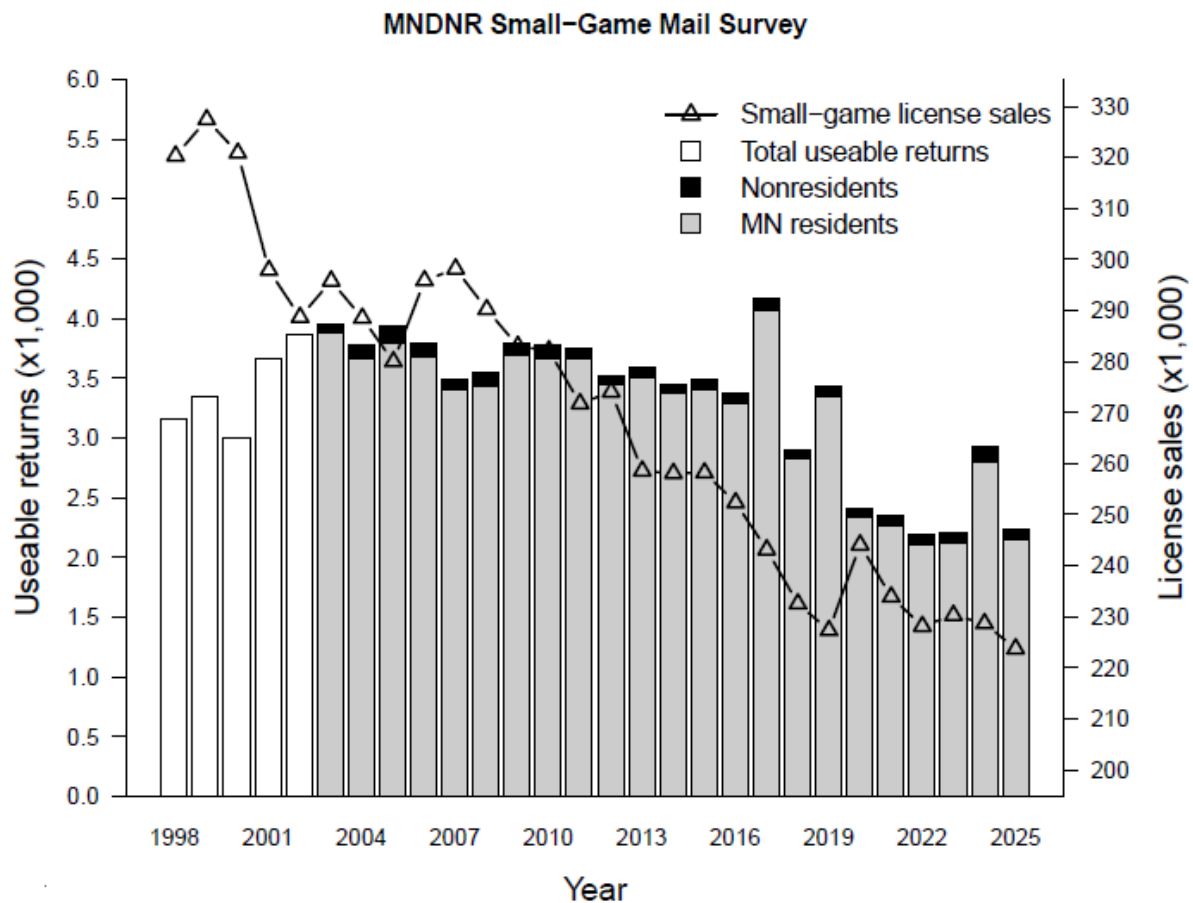


Figure 2. Number of Minnesota small game licenses sold and usable returned surveys, 1998–99 through 2025–26. Includes resident and non-resident licenses and excludes duplicate and free licenses.

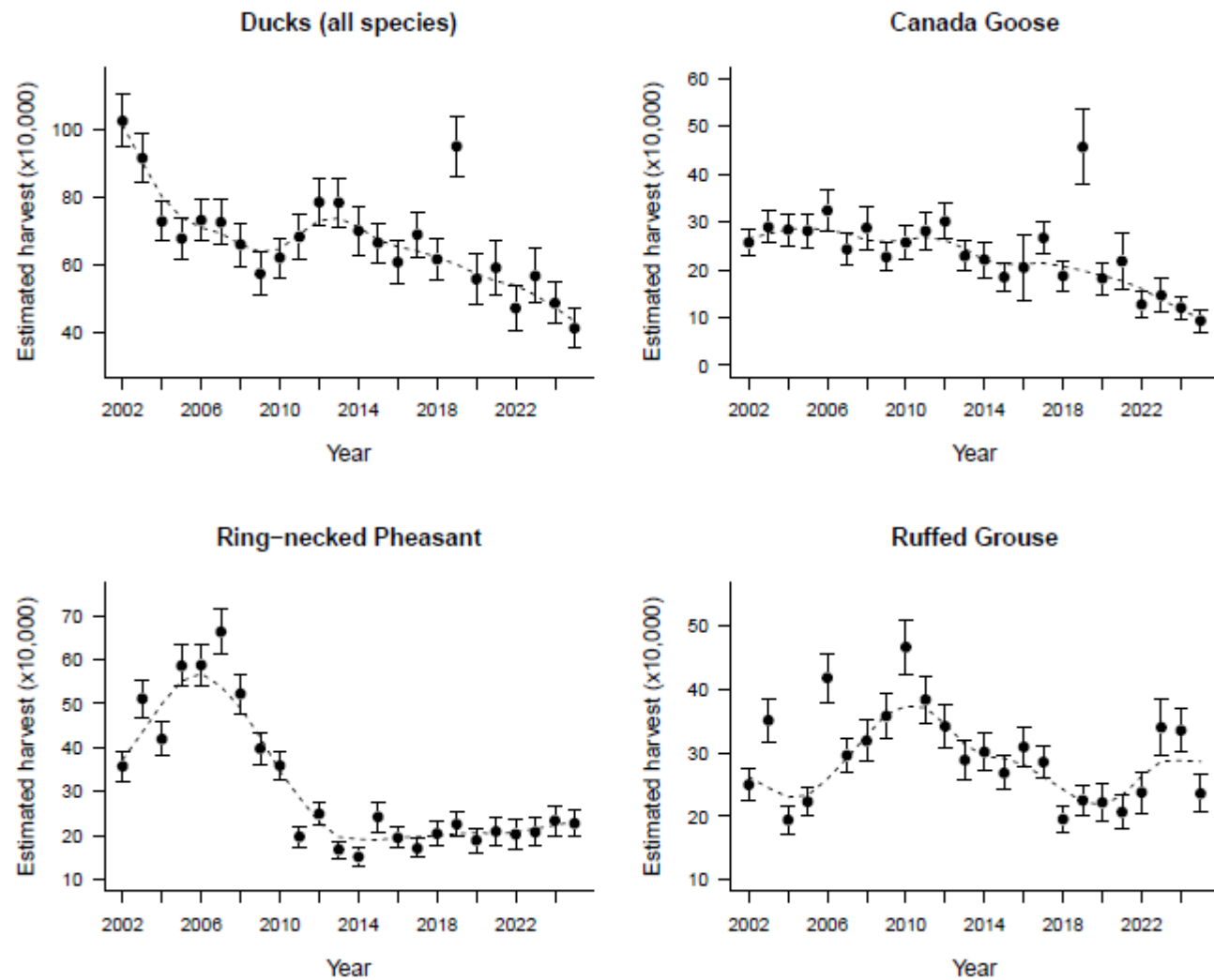


Figure 3. Harvest trends for the four most-harvested small game taxonomic groups harvested in Minnesota, 2002–03 through 2025–26 hunting seasons.

Table 1. Percent of respondents who hunted small game, 2015–2016 through 2025–2026 hunting seasons<sup>a</sup>.

|           |                        | Returns from mail survey                          | Projections from license sales      |
|-----------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2015–2016 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 2,505 (72%)<br><u>980 (28%)</u><br>3,485 (100%)   | 185,604<br><u>72,612</u><br>258,216 |
| 2016–2017 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 2,426 (72%)<br><u>945 (28%)</u><br>3,371 (100%)   | 181,614<br><u>70,744</u><br>252,358 |
| 2017–2018 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 2,768 (66%)<br><u>1,395 (34%)</u><br>4,163 (100%) | 161,658<br><u>81,472</u><br>243,130 |
| 2018–2019 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 2,000 (69%)<br><u>904 (31%)</u><br>2,904 (100%)   | 155,601<br><u>70,331</u><br>225,932 |
| 2019–2020 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 2,524 (73%)<br><u>911 (27%)</u><br>3,435 (100%)   | 164,896<br><u>59,517</u><br>224,413 |
| 2020–2021 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 1,487 (62%)<br><u>926 (38%)</u><br>2,413 (100%)   | 150,425<br><u>93,675</u><br>244,100 |
| 2021–2022 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 1,399 (59%)<br><u>957 (41%)</u><br>2,356 (100%)   | 138,891<br><u>95,010</u><br>233,901 |
| 2022–2023 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 1,383 (63%)<br><u>814 (37%)</u><br>2,197 (100%)   | 143,615<br><u>84,528</u><br>228,143 |
| 2023–2024 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 1,360 (62%)<br><u>850 (38%)</u><br>2,210 (100%)   | 141,713<br><u>88,570</u><br>230,283 |
| 2024–2025 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 1,923 (65%)<br><u>1,013 (35%)</u><br>2,936 (100%) | 149,767<br><u>78,894</u><br>228,661 |
| 2025–2026 | Hunted<br>Did not hunt | 1,540 (69%)<br><u>699 (31%)</u><br>2,239 (100%)   | 153,890<br><u>69,850</u><br>223,740 |

<sup>a</sup> Includes resident and non-resident information. Excludes duplicates and free licenses (youth under 16, active-duty military and disabled veterans).

Table 2. Statewide (resident and non-resident) small game hunting license sales and stamp sales, 2015–16 through 2025–26.

|                                             | 2015–16 | 2016–17 | 2017–18 | 2018–19 | 2019–20 | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 |
|---------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total small game license sales <sup>a</sup> | 258,208 | 252,358 | 243,130 | 225,932 | 224,413 | 244,100 | 233,901 | 228,143 | 230,283 | 228,661 | 223,740 |
| Non-resident license sales <sup>b</sup>     | 6,755   | 6,701   | 6,854   | 6,718   | 6,887   | 8,375   | 8,730   | 8,927   | 10,065  | 10,310  | 10,255  |
| State duck stamp sales                      | 92,176  | 88,905  | 86,258  | 82,955  | 86,568  | 88,163  | 84,327  | 81,864  | 81,976  | 82,003  | 80,339  |
| Pheasant stamp sales                        | 77,750  | 76,920  | 71,925  | 72,192  | 74,921  | 81,850  | 78,538  | 77,448  | 79,037  | 77,135  | 75,784  |

<sup>a</sup> Includes all types of small game licenses. Duplicate and free licenses not included.

<sup>b</sup> Excludes duplicate licenses and non-resident shooting preserve licenses.

Table 3. Mail survey results of non-resident small game hunters, 2015–16 through 2025–26<sup>a</sup>.

|                                                                              | 2015–16       | 2016–17       | 2017–18       | 2018–19       | 2019–20       | 2020–21       | 2021–22       | 2022–23       | 2023–24       | 2024–25       | 2025–26       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Estimated non-residents and (percent) of all licensed non-residents hunting: |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
| Ducks                                                                        | 1,850<br>(27) | 2,320<br>(35) | 2,350<br>(34) | 1,680<br>(25) | 3,040<br>(44) | 1,230<br>(15) | 3,740<br>(43) | 1,632<br>(18) | 2,517<br>(25) | 2,518<br>(24) | 2,650<br>(26) |
| Canada goose                                                                 | 650<br>(10)   | 770<br>(12)   | 1,730<br>(25) | 1,260<br>(19) | 3,120<br>(45) | 1,560<br>(19) | 1,770<br>(20) | 1,152<br>(13) | 1,678<br>(17) | 1,495<br>(14) | 1,613<br>(16) |
| Ring-necked pheasant                                                         | 1,480<br>(22) | 1,550<br>(23) | 1,520<br>(22) | 2,350<br>(35) | 1,120<br>(16) | 890<br>(11)   | 1,460<br>(17) | 4,032<br>(45) | 1,798<br>(18) | 1,495<br>(14) | 3,226<br>(31) |
| Ruffed grouse                                                                | 2,870<br>(43) | 3,520<br>(53) | 2,280<br>(33) | 2,270<br>(34) | 1,760<br>(26) | 3,800<br>(45) | 2,700<br>(31) | 3,648<br>(41) | 4,674<br>(46) | 5,824<br>(56) | 4,148<br>(40) |
| Estimated non-resident harvest:                                              |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
| Ducks                                                                        | 16,863        | 17,701        | 15,717        | 15,792        | 21,228        | 5,810         | 39,395        | 7,008         | 13,664        | 22,430        | 22,814        |
| Canada goose                                                                 | 1,484         | 1,462         | 6,994         | 2,940         | 15,060        | 4,134         | 30,039        | 4,224         | 5,873         | 5,116         | 5,070         |
| Ring-necked pheasant                                                         | 6,581         | 4,040         | 7,274         | 6,048         | 2,645         | 5,141         | 5,924         | 14,112        | 7,432         | 6,532         | 12,329        |
| Ruffed grouse                                                                | 13,805        | 11,772        | 6,994         | 2,856         | 4,325         | 24,793        | 11,020        | 7,104         | 16,659        | 21,879        | 19,473        |

<sup>a</sup> Estimates for non-resident hunters are generally based on small sample sizes; harvest estimates therefore have moderate to high sampling uncertainty.

Table 4. Estimated number of statewide hunters (residents and non-residents) by species for the current year (2025–26), previous year (2024–25), and the preceding 10-year (2015–24) average. Annual and 10-year trends (% change) are also shown.

|                         | 2025-26 |         |       | 2024-25 |         |       | 10-yr mean<br>(2015-24) |     | Change from<br>2024 |        | Change from<br>10-yr mean |        |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|-------|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
|                         | n       | Hunters | SE    | n       | Hunters | SE    | Hunters                 | SE  | %                   | 95% CI | %                         | 95% CI |
| Ducks                   | 516     | 51,563  | 1,982 | 591     | 46,028  | 1,681 | 60,796                  | 603 | 12.0                | 5.9    | -15.2                     | 3.4    |
| Canada geese            | 297     | 29,679  | 1,596 | 360     | 28,037  | 1,375 | 39,434                  | 510 | 5.9                 | 7.7    | -24.7                     | 4.2    |
| Other geese             | 19      | 1,899   | 432   | 14      | 1,090   | 289   | 1,996                   | 126 | 74.2                | 60.9   | -4.9                      | 22.5   |
| American coot           | 26      | 2,598   | 504   | 18      | 1,402   | 327   | 2,828                   | 150 | 85.3                | 56.2   | -8.1                      | 18.5   |
| Common snipe            | 2       | 200     | 141   | 12      | 935     | 268   | 978                     | 90  | -78.6               | 16.3   | -79.6                     | 14.5   |
| Rails & Gallinules      | 1       | 100     | 99    | 5       | 389     | 173   | 285                     | 47  | -74.3               | 27.9   | -64.9                     | 35.2   |
| American crow           | 29      | 2,898   | 532   | 53      | 4,128   | 558   | 5,659                   | 207 | -29.8               | 16.0   | -48.8                     | 9.6    |
| American woodcock       | 97      | 9,693   | 958   | 137     | 10,670  | 884   | 11,195                  | 296 | -9.2                | 11.7   | -13.4                     | 8.9    |
| Mourning dove           | 49      | 4,896   | 688   | 72      | 5,607   | 649   | 6,999                   | 232 | -12.7               | 15.9   | -30.0                     | 10.1   |
| Ring-necked pheasant    | 584     | 58,358  | 2,066 | 654     | 50,935  | 1,745 | 53,266                  | 583 | 14.6                | 5.6    | 9.6                       | 4.1    |
| Ruffed grouse           | 664     | 66,353  | 2,149 | 968     | 75,390  | 1,971 | 69,892                  | 634 | -12.0               | 3.7    | -5.1                      | 3.2    |
| Spruce grouse           | 86      | 8,594   | 904   | 115     | 8,956   | 814   | 7,979                   | 252 | -4.0                | 13.3   | 7.7                       | 11.8   |
| Sharp-tailed grouse     | 38      | 3,797   | 608   | 49      | 3,816   | 537   | 4,516                   | 190 | -0.5                | 21.2   | -15.9                     | 13.9   |
| Gray partridge          | 20      | 1,999   | 443   | 30      | 2,336   | 422   | 1,885                   | 123 | -14.4               | 24.5   | 6.0                       | 24.5   |
| Gray squirrel           | 164     | 16,388  | 1,226 | 218     | 16,978  | 1,099 | 18,185                  | 368 | -3.5                | 9.5    | -9.9                      | 7.0    |
| Fox squirrel            | 73      | 7,295   | 836   | 110     | 8,567   | 796   | 9,826                   | 275 | -14.8               | 12.6   | -25.8                     | 8.8    |
| Eastern cottontail      | 114     | 11,392  | 1,034 | 123     | 9,579   | 840   | 11,088                  | 291 | 18.9                | 15.0   | 2.7                       | 9.7    |
| White-tailed jackrabbit | 6       | 600     | 243   | 13      | 1,012   | 278   | 919                     | 88  | -40.7               | 29.0   | -34.7                     | 27.2   |
| Snowshoe hare           | 17      | 1,699   | 408   | 23      | 1,791   | 370   | 2,644                   | 145 | -5.1                | 30.1   | -35.7                     | 15.8   |
| Raccoon                 | 42      | 4,197   | 638   | 80      | 6,231   | 683   | 5,684                   | 211 | -32.6               | 12.6   | -26.2                     | 11.6   |
| Red fox                 | 16      | 1,599   | 396   | 24      | 1,869   | 378   | 3,181                   | 157 | -14.4               | 27.4   | -49.7                     | 12.7   |
| Gray fox                | 4       | 400     | 199   | 4       | 312     | 155   | 792                     | 76  | 28.2                | 90.1   | -49.5                     | 25.6   |
| Coyote                  | 103     | 10,293  | 986   | 132     | 10,280  | 869   | 14,078                  | 323 | 0.1                 | 12.8   | -26.9                     | 7.2    |
| Bobcat <sup>a</sup>     | 11      | 1,099   | 329   | NA      | NA      | NA    | NA                      | NA  | NA                  | NA     | NA                        | NA     |
| Badger                  | 1       | 100     | 99    | 3       | 234     | 134   | 293                     | 48  | -57.3               | 48.9   | -65.9                     | 34.2   |

<sup>a</sup> 2025 is the first year we asked small game hunters to report Bobcat harvest. We rely on registered harvest for the most accurate numbers.

Table 5. Estimated hunter harvest (residents and non-residents) by species for current year (2025–26), previous year (2024–25), and the preceding 10-year (2015–24) average. Annual and 10-year trends (% change) are also shown.

|                         | 2025-26 |         |        | 2024-25 |         |        | 10-yr mean<br>(2015-24) |        | Change from<br>2024 |        | Change from<br>10-yr mean |        |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|-------------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
|                         | n       | Harvest | SE     | n       | Harvest | SE     | Harvest                 | SE     | %                   | 95% CI | %                         | 95% CI |
| Ducks                   | 516     | 410,706 | 29,315 | 591     | 484,970 | 31,019 | 619,010                 | 11,524 | -15.3               | 8.1    | -33.7                     | 4.9    |
| Canada geese            | 297     | 93,733  | 11,814 | 360     | 121,028 | 12,255 | 209,758                 | 7,375  | -22.6               | 12.5   | -55.3                     | 5.8    |
| Other geese             | 19      | 2,198   | 1,454  | 14      | 2,336   | 1,286  | 4,416                   | 781    | -5.9                | 81.0   | -50.2                     | 34.1   |
| American coot           | 26      | 6,895   | 2,611  | 18      | 4,283   | 1,473  | 11,540                  | 1,274  | 61.0                | 82.4   | -40.3                     | 23.6   |
| Common snipe            | 2       | 400     | 399    | 12      | 935     | 379    | 1,157                   | 185    | -57.2               | 46.1   | -65.4                     | 34.9   |
| Rails & Gallinules      | 1       | 100     | NA     | 5       | 1,090   | 774    | 822                     | 168    | -90.8               | NA     | -87.8                     | NA     |
| American crow           | 29      | 12,791  | 5,394  | 53      | 34,813  | 9,637  | 45,266                  | 4,026  | -63.3               | 18.5   | -71.7                     | 12.2   |
| American woodcock       | 97      | 23,583  | 5,138  | 137     | 30,140  | 5,336  | 35,136                  | 1,999  | -21.8               | 22.0   | -32.9                     | 15.1   |
| Mourning dove           | 49      | 47,066  | 10,209 | 72      | 59,034  | 11,635 | 64,243                  | 3,850  | -20.3               | 23.4   | -26.7                     | 16.5   |
| Ring-necked pheasant    | 584     | 228,337 | 15,545 | 654     | 234,892 | 17,637 | 209,146                 | 4,766  | -2.8                | 9.9    | 9.2                       | 7.8    |
| Ruffed grouse           | 664     | 235,831 | 14,986 | 968     | 334,970 | 17,727 | 262,355                 | 4,860  | -29.6               | 5.8    | -10.1                     | 5.9    |
| Spruce grouse           | 86      | 9,493   | 1,759  | 115     | 14,798  | 2,615  | 11,957                  | 777    | -35.8               | 16.4   | -20.6                     | 15.6   |
| Sharp-tailed grouse     | 38      | 4,297   | 1,211  | 49      | 7,632   | 2,247  | 8,572                   | 916    | -43.7               | 22.9   | -49.9                     | 15.1   |
| Gray partridge          | 20      | 2,698   | 988    | 30      | 7,477   | 2,334  | 3,150                   | 400    | -63.9               | 17.4   | -14.3                     | 33.2   |
| Gray squirrel           | 164     | 85,339  | 9,865  | 218     | 94,782  | 9,472  | 90,864                  | 3,386  | -10.0               | 13.8   | -6.1                      | 11.4   |
| Fox squirrel            | 73      | 24,882  | 4,138  | 110     | 32,477  | 4,762  | 32,062                  | 1,523  | -23.4               | 17.0   | -22.4                     | 13.4   |
| Eastern cottontail      | 114     | 53,662  | 8,240  | 123     | 36,137  | 5,403  | 34,076                  | 1,602  | 48.5                | 31.8   | 57.5                      | 25.3   |
| White-tailed jackrabbit | 6       | 1,199   | 770    | 13      | 857     | 337    | 1,176                   | 277    | 39.9                | 105.4  | 2.0                       | 69.7   |
| Snowshoe hare           | 17      | 3,398   | 1,627  | 23      | 2,648   | 1,105  | 5,326                   | 572    | 28.3                | 81.5   | -36.2                     | 31.3   |
| Raccoon                 | 42      | 25,182  | 7,382  | 80      | 46,418  | 10,161 | 34,885                  | 2,922  | -45.7               | 19.8   | -27.8                     | 22.0   |
| Red fox                 | 16      | 899     | 358    | 24      | 1,947   | 687    | 3,821                   | 369    | -53.8               | 24.6   | -76.5                     | 9.6    |
| Gray fox                | 4       | NA      | NA     | 4       | 312     | 245    | 853                     | 161    | NA                  | NA     | NA                        | NA     |
| Coyote                  | 103     | 22,884  | 3,828  | 132     | 30,218  | 6,162  | 33,510                  | 2,320  | -24.3               | 20.0   | -31.7                     | 12.4   |
| Bobcat <sup>a</sup>     | 11      | 999     | 808    |         | NA      | NA     | NA                      | NA     | NA                  | NA     | NA                        | NA     |
| Badger                  | 1       | 100     | NA     | 3       | 156     | 110    | 251                     | 53     | -35.9               | NA     | -60.2                     | NA     |

<sup>a</sup> 2025 is the first year we asked small game hunters to report Bobcat harvest. We rely on registered harvest for the most accurate numbers.

Table 6. Mean harvest per active hunter (residents and non-residents) for current year (2025–26), previous year (2024–25), and the preceding 10-year (2015–24) average. Annual and 10-year trends (% change) are also shown.

|                         | 2025-26 |      |     | 2024-25 |      |     | 10-yr mean<br>(2015-24) |     | Change from<br>2024 |        | Change from<br>10-yr mean |        |
|-------------------------|---------|------|-----|---------|------|-----|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
|                         | n       | Mean | SE  | n       | Mean | SE  | Mean                    | SE  | %                   | 95% CI | %                         | 95% CI |
| Ducks                   | 516     | 8.0  | 0.5 | 591     | 10.5 | 0.6 | 10.2                    | 0.2 | -23.8               | 6.5    | -21.6                     | 5.1    |
| Canada geese            | 297     | 3.2  | 0.4 | 360     | 4.3  | 0.4 | 5.2                     | 0.2 | -25.6               | 11.6   | -38.5                     | 8.0    |
| Other geese             | 19      | 1.2  | 0.7 | 14      | 2.1  | 1.1 | 2.1                     | 0.3 | -42.9               | 44.8   | -42.9                     | 34.3   |
| American coot           | 26      | 2.7  | 0.9 | 18      | 3.1  | 0.8 | 3.9                     | 0.4 | -12.9               | 36.7   | -30.8                     | 24.1   |
| Common snipe            | 2       | 2.0  | 2.0 | 12      | 1.0  | 0.3 | 1.1                     | 0.1 | 100.0               | 208.8  | 81.8                      | 182.6  |
| Rails & Gallinules      | 1       | 1.0  | NA  | 5       | 2.8  | 1.7 | 2.6                     | 0.5 | -64.3               | NA     | -61.5                     | NA     |
| American crow           | 29      | 4.4  | 1.7 | 53      | 8.4  | 2.1 | 7.7                     | 0.7 | -47.6               | 24.1   | -42.9                     | 22.7   |
| American woodcock       | 97      | 2.4  | 0.5 | 137     | 2.8  | 0.4 | 3.1                     | 0.2 | -14.3               | 21.7   | -22.6                     | 16.9   |
| Mourning dove           | 49      | 9.6  | 1.6 | 72      | 10.5 | 1.7 | 9.2                     | 0.5 | -8.6                | 21.2   | 4.3                       | 18.3   |
| Ring-necked pheasant    | 584     | 3.9  | 0.2 | 654     | 4.6  | 0.3 | 3.9                     | 0.1 | -15.2               | 7.0    | 0                         | 5.7    |
| Ruffed grouse           | 664     | 3.6  | 0.2 | 968     | 4.4  | 0.2 | 3.8                     | 0.1 | -18.2               | 5.9    | -5.3                      | 5.8    |
| Spruce grouse           | 86      | 1.1  | 0.2 | 115     | 1.7  | 0.3 | 1.5                     | 0.1 | -35.3               | 16.4   | -26.7                     | 14.2   |
| Sharp-tailed grouse     | 38      | 1.1  | 0.3 | 49      | 2.0  | 0.5 | 1.9                     | 0.2 | -45.0               | 20.3   | -42.1                     | 16.9   |
| Gray partridge          | 20      | 1.4  | 0.4 | 30      | 3.2  | 0.8 | 1.6                     | 0.2 | -56.2               | 16.6   | -12.5                     | 27.3   |
| Gray squirrel           | 164     | 5.2  | 0.5 | 218     | 5.6  | 0.4 | 5.1                     | 0.2 | -7.1                | 11.1   | 2.0                       | 10.6   |
| Fox squirrel            | 73      | 3.4  | 0.4 | 110     | 3.8  | 0.4 | 3.3                     | 0.1 | -10.5               | 14.1   | 3.0                       | 12.5   |
| Eastern cottontail      | 114     | 4.7  | 0.6 | 123     | 3.8  | 0.5 | 3.1                     | 0.1 | 23.7                | 22.7   | 51.6                      | 20.0   |
| White-tailed jackrabbit | 6       | 2.0  | 1.1 | 13      | 0.8  | 0.2 | 1.2                     | 0.2 | 150.0               | 151.0  | 66.7                      | 95.8   |
| Snowshoe hare           | 17      | 2.0  | 0.9 | 23      | 1.5  | 0.5 | 1.9                     | 0.2 | 33.3                | 74.7   | 5.3                       | 48.6   |
| Raccoon                 | 42      | 6.0  | 1.5 | 80      | 7.4  | 1.4 | 6.0                     | 0.5 | -18.9               | 25.4   | 0                         | 26.4   |
| Red fox                 | 16      | 0.6  | 0.2 | 24      | 1.0  | 0.3 | 1.2                     | 0.1 | -40.0               | 26.9   | -50                       | 17.2   |
| Gray fox                | NA      | NA   | NA  | 4       | 1.0  | 0.7 | 0.8                     | 0.1 | NA                  | NA     | NA                        | NA     |
| Coyote                  | 103     | 2.2  | 0.3 | 132     | 2.9  | 0.5 | 2.4                     | 0.2 | -24.1               | 16.7   | -8.3                      | 14.6   |
| Bobcat <sup>a</sup>     | 11      | 0.9  | 0.7 | NA      | NA   | NA  | NA                      | NA  | NA                  | NA     | NA                        | NA     |
| Badger                  | 1       | 1.0  | NA  | 3       | 0.7  | 0.3 | 0.8                     | 0.1 | 42.9                | NA     | 25.0                      | NA     |

<sup>a</sup> 2025 is the first year we asked small game hunters to report Bobcat harvest. We rely on registered harvest for the most accurate numbers.

Table 7. Hunter success rates and mean harvest per successful hunter (residents and non-residents) for the current year (2025–26), previous year (2024–25), and the preceding 10-year (2015–24) average.

|                         | 2025-26 |           |      |     | 2024-25 |           |      |     | 10-yr mean (2015-24) |      |     |
|-------------------------|---------|-----------|------|-----|---------|-----------|------|-----|----------------------|------|-----|
|                         | n       | % Success | Mean | SE  | n       | % Success | Mean | SE  | % Success            | Mean | SE  |
| Ducks                   | 412     | 79.8      | 10.0 | 0.6 | 510     | 86.3      | 12.2 | 0.6 | 84.5                 | 12.1 | 0.2 |
| Canada geese            | 196     | 66.0      | 4.8  | 0.5 | 261     | 72.5      | 6.0  | 0.5 | 75.3                 | 6.8  | 0.2 |
| Other geese             | 5       | 26.3      | 4.4  | 2.4 | 8       | 57.1      | 3.8  | 1.7 | 42.0                 | 4.9  | 0.7 |
| American coot           | 11      | 42.3      | 6.3  | 1.5 | 14      | 77.8      | 3.9  | 0.9 | 70.4                 | 5.5  | 0.5 |
| Common snipe            | 1       | 50.0      | 4.0  |     | 7       | 58.3      | 1.7  | 0.3 | 54.2                 | 2.1  | 0.3 |
| Rails & Gallinules      | 1       | 100.0     | 1.0  |     | 2       | 40.0      | 7.0  | 1.0 | 45.6                 | 5.6  | 0.2 |
| American crow           | 21      | 72.4      | 6.1  | 2.3 | 46      | 86.8      | 9.7  | 2.3 | 86.5                 | 8.8  | 0.8 |
| American woodcock       | 62      | 63.9      | 3.8  | 0.7 | 89      | 65.0      | 4.3  | 0.6 | 68.5                 | 4.6  | 0.2 |
| Mourning dove           | 40      | 81.6      | 11.8 | 1.8 | 57      | 79.2      | 13.3 | 2.0 | 81.4                 | 11.3 | 0.6 |
| Ring-necked pheasant    | 420     | 71.9      | 5.4  | 0.3 | 451     | 69.0      | 6.7  | 0.4 | 69.5                 | 5.7  | 0.1 |
| Ruffed grouse           | 467     | 70.3      | 5.1  | 0.2 | 701     | 72.4      | 6.1  | 0.3 | 70.3                 | 5.3  | 0.1 |
| Spruce grouse           | 44      | 51.2      | 2.2  | 0.2 | 70      | 60.9      | 2.7  | 0.4 | 53.5                 | 2.7  | 0.1 |
| Sharp-tailed grouse     | 17      | 44.7      | 2.5  | 0.4 | 27      | 55.1      | 3.6  | 0.8 | 49.1                 | 3.8  | 0.3 |
| Gray partridge          | 11      | 55.0      | 2.5  | 0.5 | 18      | 60.0      | 5.3  | 1.1 | 45.9                 | 3.3  | 0.3 |
| Gray squirrel           | 142     | 86.6      | 6.0  | 0.5 | 191     | 87.6      | 6.4  | 0.5 | 83.7                 | 6.1  | 0.2 |
| Fox squirrel            | 64      | 87.7      | 3.9  | 0.4 | 86      | 78.2      | 4.8  | 0.5 | 76.6                 | 4.3  | 0.2 |
| Eastern cottontail      | 100     | 87.7      | 5.4  | 0.6 | 95      | 77.2      | 4.9  | 0.5 | 75.8                 | 4.1  | 0.2 |
| White-tailed jackrabbit | 4       | 66.7      | 3.0  | 1.4 | 7       | 53.8      | 1.6  | 0.2 | 50.4                 | 2.3  | 0.3 |
| Snowshoe hare           | 9       | 52.9      | 3.8  | 1.4 | 12      | 52.2      | 2.8  | 0.9 | 60.8                 | 3.0  | 0.2 |
| Raccoon                 | 37      | 88.1      | 6.8  | 1.7 | 73      | 91.2      | 8.2  | 1.5 | 90.5                 | 6.6  | 0.5 |
| Red fox                 | 7       | 43.8      | 1.3  | 0.2 | 14      | 58.3      | 1.8  | 0.4 | 59.9                 | 2.0  | 0.1 |
| Gray fox                | NA      | NA        | NA   | NA  | 2       | 50.0      | 2.0  | 1.0 | 38.9                 | 1.9  | 0.2 |
| Coyote                  | 68      | 66.0      | 3.4  | 0.4 | 81      | 61.4      | 4.8  | 0.8 | 59.2                 | 4.1  | 0.3 |
| Bobcat <sup>a</sup>     | 3       | 27.3      | 3.3  | 2.3 | NA      | NA        | NA   | NA  | NA                   | NA   | NA  |
| Badger                  | 1       | 100       | 1.0  |     | 2       | 66.7      | 1.0  | 0.0 | 73                   | 1.1  | 0.1 |

<sup>a</sup> 2025 is the first year we asked small game hunters to report Bobcat harvest. We rely on registered harvest for the most accurate numbers.