

# DEC Announces 2022 Bear Harvest Totals

## Overall Harvest Declined Slightly; Harvest Density Greatest in Catskills

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos today announced that New York bear hunters harvested an estimated 1,318 black bears during the 2022 hunting season. As in past years, the Catskill region recorded the greatest bear harvest densities.

"New York's black bear populations remain robust, particularly in the Catskill and Adirondack regions," **Commissioner Seggos said.** "Regulated bear hunting is a necessary tool for population management, especially with numbers increasing in recent years. I'm pleased to see hunters across the state logged another successful and safe bear hunting season."

Hunters harvested an estimated 458 bears in the Northern Zone and an estimated 860 bears in the Southern Zone, an increase of about 14 percent in the north compared to the previous year and a decrease of approximately nine percent in the south. The total bear harvest was approximately 10 percent fewer than the five-year average. As in past years, the Catskill region produced the greatest bear densities. In Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) 3C, 3H, 3K, 3M, and 4R, hunters took more than 10 bears per 100 square miles, with hunters taking more than 15 bears per 100 miles in WMU 4R.

### Estimated Bear Harvest Totals

	2022 Total	2021 Total	Recent 5-year Average (2016-2020)
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<b>Northern Zone</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>449</b>
Bow	15	12	30
Muzzleload	8	12	32
Regular	434	376	263
Youth	1	3	1
<b>Southern Zone</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>988</b>
Early	234	100	213
Bow	348	322	347
Muzzleload	4	23	13
Regular	274	490	408
Youth	0	8	7
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>1,438</b>

### Notable Numbers

- **13** and **93**: the ages of the youngest and oldest hunters who successfully harvested a bear in 2022.
- **15.5**: the number of bears harvested per 100 square miles in WMU 4R (western Greene County and portions of Schoharie, Delaware, and Ulster Counties), which had the greatest bear harvest density of any WMU.
- **11.8**: the number of bears harvested per 10 square miles in the town of Port Jervis, Orange County, which had the greatest bear harvest density of any town.

- **520 pounds:** the heaviest dressed-weight bear reported to DEC in 2022, taken in the town of Windsor, Broome County, WMU 7S. Scaled weights of dressed bears were submitted for 26 percent of bears taken in 2022.
- **612:** the number of hunter-harvested bears in 2022 from which DEC collected teeth to determine the bear's age.

Black bear harvest data are gathered from two main sources: harvest reports required of all successful bear hunters; and the physical examination of bears by DEC staff and cooperating taxidermists. Harvest estimates are made by cross-referencing these two data sources and determining the rate at which hunters report bear harvests in each zone. In 2022, 80 percent of successful bear hunters in the Northern Zone and 89 percent of successful bear hunters in the Southern Zone reported their harvest. In the fall of 2023, DEC will send a [2022 Black Bear Management Coordinator Patch](#) and a letter confirming each bear's age to all hunters who reported their bear harvest and submitted a tooth for age analysis.

DEC's [2022 Bear Harvest Summary report](#) provides tables, charts, and maps detailing the bear harvest around the state. [Past harvest summaries](#) are also available on DEC's website. DEC's [Black Bear Management Plan \(PDF\)](#) provides information on how DEC determines black bear population objectives throughout the state.