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SPRING TURKEY SEASON OPENS MAY 1

The 2013 spring turkey season opens May 1 in all of upstate New York lying north of the Bronx-Westchester County boundary, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Joe Martens announced today.

“Turkey hunting remains a very popular activity with more than 100,000 turkey hunters taking to the field each spring,” Commissioner Martens said. “As part of Governor Cuomo’s NY’s Open for Hunting and Fishing initiative, the annual Youth Turkey Hunt took place this past weekend and was an excellent chance for young hunters to spend time afield with experienced adult hunters to learn about conservation first-hand, gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to become safe and responsible members of New York’s hunting community.”

Other Important Details for the Spring Turkey Season, May 1-31, 2013:

- Hunting is permitted in most areas of the state, except for New York City and Long Island.
- Hunters must have a turkey hunting permit in addition to their small game hunting or sportsman license.
- Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to noon each day.
- Hunters may take two bearded turkeys during the spring season, but only one bird per day.
- Hunters may not use rifles or handguns firing a bullet. Hunters may hunt with a shotgun or handgun loaded with shot sizes no larger than No. 2 or smaller than No. 8, or with a bow and arrow.
- Successful hunters must fill out the tag which comes with their turkey permit and immediately attach it to any turkey harvested.
- Successful hunters must report their harvest within seven days of taking a bird. Call 1-866-426-3778 (1-866 GAMERPT) or report harvest online at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8316.html>.

For more information about turkey hunting in New York, see the 2012-13 Hunting and Trapping Regulations Guide or visit the “Turkey Hunting” pages of the DEC website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8366.html>.

New York has an extremely safety-conscious generation of hunters, largely due to the annual efforts of more than 3,000 dedicated volunteer Sportsman Education instructors. Even one incident is too many, so be sure to follow the cardinal rules of hunting safety: (1) assume every gun is loaded; (2) control the muzzle; (3) keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot; (4) be absolutely sure of your target and what may be beyond it; and (5) don’t stalk! Set-up with your back against a large tree and call birds to you. To find a sportsman education class in your area, go to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9191.html> or call 1-888-HUNT-ED2 (1-888-486-8332).

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Results from 2012:

An analysis of the 2012 spring turkey take, including a county-by-county breakdown, can be found on the DEC website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/30420.html>.

Participation Opportunities:

DEC Seeks Turkey Hunters for Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey: Turkey hunters in pursuit of that wary gobbler in the spring are ideally suited for monitoring ruffed grouse during the breeding season. The characteristic sound of a drumming male grouse is as much a part of the spring woods as yelping hens and gobbling toms. Turkey hunters can record the number of grouse they hear drumming while afield to help DEC track the distribution and abundance of this game bird. To get a survey form, go to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/48169.html> or call (518) 402-8886.

To participate in DEC's Summer Wild Turkey Sighting Survey or other wildlife surveys visit the "Citizen Science" page of the DEC website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/1155.html>.

Do you have photos from a spring turkey hunt you would like to share? DEC has created a Hunting and Trapping Photo Gallery for junior hunters ages 12-15, young trappers under age 16 and hunters who have harvested their first big or small game animal. If you are the parent or legal guardian of a junior hunter, or if you are an adult who would like to share your first successful hunt, visit the photo gallery on the DEC website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/54055.html>.

Governor Cuomo's NY Open for Hunting and Fishing Initiative is an effort to improve recreational activities for in-state and out-of-state sportsmen and sportswomen and to boost tourism opportunities throughout the state. For more information, go to <http://www.governor.ny.gov/press/02202013-ny-open-for-fishing-and-hunting>.

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