

Oklahoma Mule Deer Population

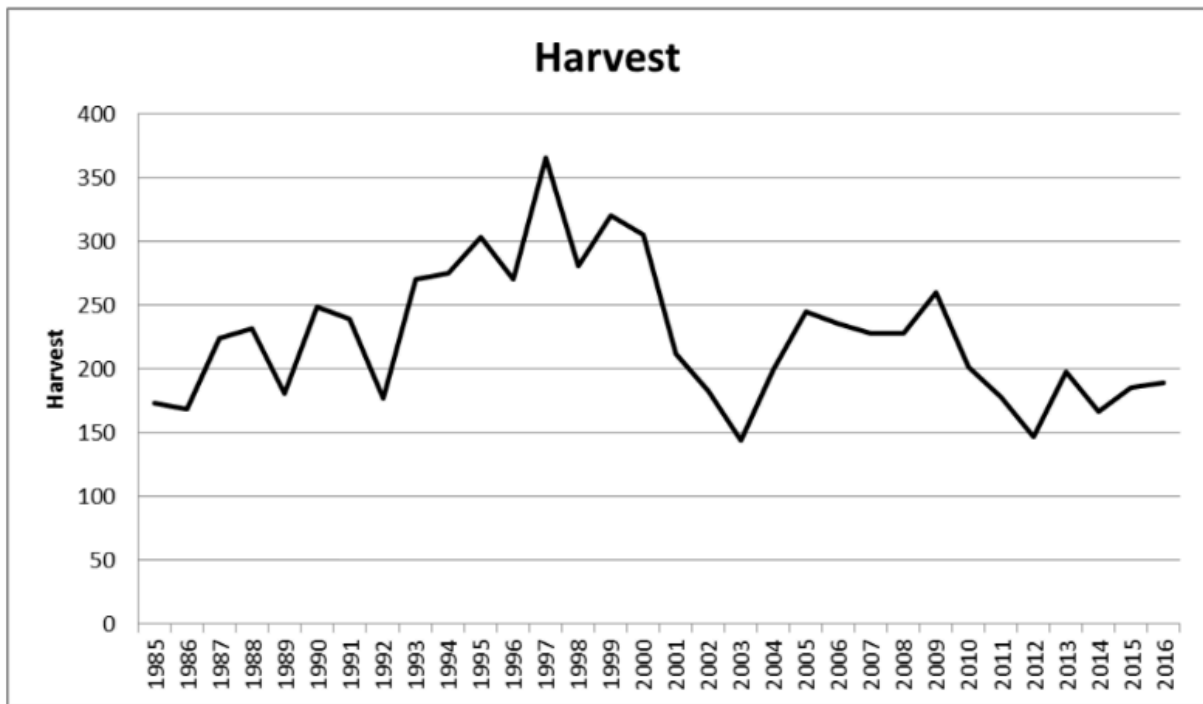
Source: State reports to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

The source is linked below in the Year column

Source Year	Range Pre-hunt	Mid-point
2012		no report
2013	2,000	2,000
2014	1,500 - 2000	1,750
2015	1,500 - 2000	1,750
2016	1,500 - 2,000	1,750
2017	1,500 - 2,000	1,750
2018	1,500 - 2,000	1,750
2019	1,500 - 2,000	1,750
2020	1,750 - 2,250	2,000
2021	1,750 - 2,250	2,000
2022	1,750 – 3,000	2,375
2023	1,750 – 3,000	2,375

From [2023](#) report

In general, habitats are beginning to rebound from catastrophic drought conditions. This is aiding a slight increase in populations, with folks beginning to see mule deer in areas that have not held populations in quite some time.



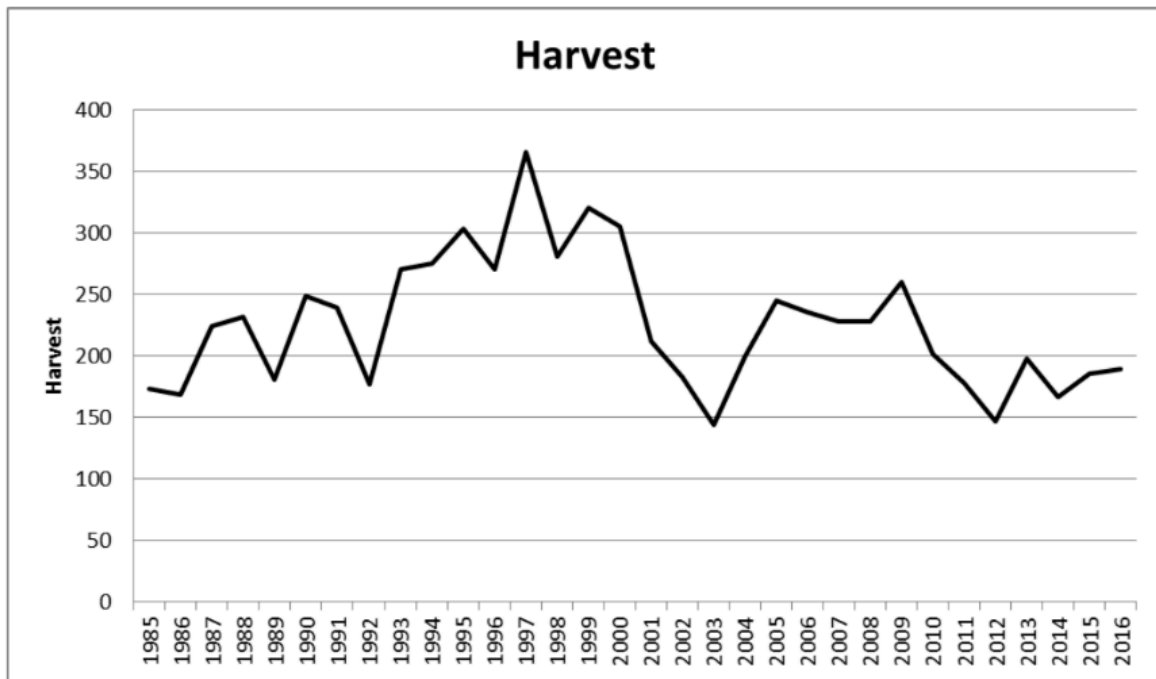
-Dallas Barber, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

From [2022](#) report

With Oklahoma being the eastern edge for what is considered mule deer habitat, we estimate between 1,750 and 3,000 animals pre-hunting season in our panhandle, NW and far SW portions of the state. A slight increase from previous years. Most harvest occurs on private lands, but opportunities to harvest a mule deer does exist on some of our public hunting areas. Oklahoma does not differentiate between mule deer and white-tailed deer in our tagging system.

A statewide deer permit allows the harvest of either species. In general, habitats are beginning to rebound from catastrophic drought conditions. This is aiding a slight increase in populations, with folks beginning to see mule deer in areas that have not held populations in quite some time.

The 2021-22 season led to 254 mule deer being harvested across 15 of our Westernmost Counties. [Graph below is mule deer kill.]



-Dallas Barber, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

From [2021](#) report

With Oklahoma being the eastern edge for what is considered mule deer habitat, we estimate between 1,750 and 3,000 animals pre-hunting season in our panhandle, NW and far SW portions of the state. A slight increase from previous years.

From [2020](#) report

In general, habitats are beginning to rebound. This is aiding a slight increase in populations, with folks beginning to see Mule Deer in areas that have not held populations in quite some time.

From [2019](#) report

After a mild wet spring and summer, habitats are beginning to rebound. This is aiding a slight increase in populations, with folks beginning to see Mule Deer in areas that haven't held populations in quite some time.

From [2018](#) report

With Oklahoma being the eastern edge for what is considered mule deer habitat, we estimate between 1,500 and 2,000 animals pre-hunting season in our panhandle, NW and far SW portions of the state.

From [2017](#) report

Oklahoma has very limited mule deer habitat. Occurring in small numbers in the far southwest

and in greater numbers in the northwest and panhandle region, we estimate our total mule deer population to be between 1,500 and 2,000 animals pre-hunting season.

From [2016](#) report

Mule deer populations have fluctuated with drought conditions. At this time we do not survey populations, however biologists and hunters have reported seeing fewer animals in recent years. The only data we have to corroborate this anecdotal information is harvest data.

Regional harvest data for white-tailed deer has shown a decline the last several years as well. Harvest was fairly high, for Oklahoma, from 1993 to 2000 and then fell off sharply. Harvest rebounded in 2004 to pre-1993 levels and fell off again in 2009. The most recent decline is likely attributed to severe drought conditions in the panhandle.

From [2015](#) report

Mule deer populations have fluctuated with drought conditions. At this time we do not survey populations, however biologists and hunters have reported seeing fewer animals in recent years. The only data we have to corroborate this anecdotal information is harvest data. Regional harvest data for white-tailed deer has shown a decline the last several years as well.

From [2014](#) report

Mule deer in Oklahoma inhabit a very small portion of the state, primarily in the three counties in the panhandle with scattered pockets in the main body of the state. The mule deer that are here are mostly found on private land. The result is that very little opportunity exists to hunt mule deer.

From [2013](#) report

Hunters take an average of 200 mule deer/year in Oklahoma. In 2012, 147 mule deer were harvested. Oklahoma does not have a separate mule deer license, they are part of the general hunting license for deer. However, we do provide some protection for mule deer by not allowing does to be harvested during any firearms season and as a result, have a very low doe harvest rate.