

DNR 2019 Peninsula Deer Forecast

Deer hunting forecast – Upper Peninsula

Numbers: Despite some areas that saw record-breaking snow levels, overall the winter of 2018-2019 was considered average for the U.P. Luckily, snow melt occurred quickly throughout the region, and it appears that few deer succumbed to harsh winter conditions. Observations indicate that deer numbers appear similar to last year.

Food: Most areas are reporting good to great production of soft mast (fruit with a fleshy interior), especially wild apples. A couple of areas in the U.P., especially around Shingleton, are reporting good acorn production as well.

Bucks: With overall deer numbers being low in the U.P., buck sightings have been limited. Those that have been observed look very healthy, and antler development appears average for the region.

Deer hunting forecast – northern Lower Peninsula

Numbers: It was a mild to average winter for the northern Lower Peninsula, which allowed deer populations to continue to increase across much of the region. Fawning conditions appear to have been average, with observations being similar to last year.

Food: Growing conditions have been very good across the region, with good rainfall during the early summer months. Thus far, it appears to be an average year for production of both acorns and wild apples. Scouting to find these areas will be crucial.

Bucks: Observations of bucks have been similar to last year across the entire northern Lower Peninsula. With the average winter this year and previous winters not taking a major toll on the herd, deer numbers have been increasing. Nutrition has been good, leading to healthy deer body conditions and good numbers of bucks.

Deer hunting forecast – southern Lower Peninsula

Numbers: Winters generally have little impact on deer in the southern Lower Peninsula, and this past winter was no exception. Deer numbers appear to be similar or higher than last year, and there seems to be excellent fawn production. The deer are in great shape.

Food: Rainfall totals were high for nearly all of southern Michigan, causing many crops to be planted late or not at all. Harvest will undoubtedly be late this year, which may have a direct impact on the number of deer taken. The amount of fallow and unplanted

fields also may affect deer movement this fall. Thus far, it appears to be an average to above average year for production of both acorns and wild apples. Again, scouting to find these areas will be important, and we recommend [contacting your local DNR office](#) to get staff perspective on the area.

Bucks: Deer, including bucks, are abundant in many areas. Observations coming in show buck numbers and condition are similar to last year. Bachelor herds are being seen with some nice 2.5- and 3.5-year-old deer in them.