

# ***IOWA OUTDOORS***

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

[www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)

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1. Iowa's Archery Deer Season Underway
2. DNR Plans Lake Darling Drawdown This Fall
3. Volunteers Offered Harvest Season Opportunities

## **IOWA'S ARCHERY DEER SEASON UNDERWAY**

DES MOINES, Iowa – Although many bowhunters wait until late October or early November when the rut begins to spend their time in the field pursuing Iowa's only big game animal, the archery deer season is underway.

Early season hunting can be more challenging due to the thick vegetation and limited visibility. Mosquitoes can also be voracious, but some early season hunters will be rewarded if they are willing to put in the time and effort.

In early October deer are still in their summer patterns and habitats. Deer will visit food sources and water and bed in a fairly predictable, sometimes relatively small area. Many bucks will still be in bachelor groups and their movements can often be patterned during this time. With each cold front, some bucks will begin making rubs and scrapes to advertise their presence, but they are not actively seeking does so movement is still limited. To be successful, hunters should be cautious with their scouting to avoid overly disturbing animals which have often become accustomed to less human disturbance during the summer months. Hunters should look for food sources such as hay or bean fields or acorns as they begin to fall.

Many hunters use tree stands and tree stand safety is crucial for a safe hunt. Hunting is generally safe, but climbing into and out of trees should be done with care. Hunters should inspect all of their gear to make sure it is in good condition and is working properly. And hunters should never get into a tree stand without a safety harness.

Hunters wanting to be successful need to practice with their bows so they can kill deer cleanly. Familiarity with their equipment, practice, sharp broad heads and knowledge of their quarry are all important for hunters to be consistently successful.

The early portions of the season also offer hunters the opportunity to do some needed deer management. Surveys indicate that, in general, portions of northwestern, north central, and central Iowa have deer populations similar to 2006, while populations in northeast, southeast, south-central and southwest Iowa have stable to increasing numbers compared.

Many areas in Iowa have abundant deer populations. Hunters can help farmers and landowners by taking an antlerless deer or two early in the season. Many of Iowa's urban areas offer special hunts that bow hunters can participate in. These hunts often have extra requirements however, so contact the organization listed in the hunting regulation brochure before going a field. Hunters can also use the HUSH program to donate deer to the Iowa Food Bank and provide needed meat for less fortunate Iowans.

The archery deer season runs from Oct. 1 through Nov. 30, and from Dec. 17 through Jan 10. Shooting hours are from ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. Hunters who are successful must report the harvest using the harvest reporting system by midnight following the day the deer is recovered. This is the second year hunters have been required to report their kill. They can call the toll free number (1-800-771-4692) or use the DNR website ([www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)) to report their. New this year hunters can also report a kill at any license vendor. For hunters with Internet access, online reporting of the harvest is the easiest. Last year 52,998 bow hunters harvested a reported 22,008 deer. Roughly half were antlerless deer. The harvest reports are vital information Iowa DNR biologists need for properly managing Iowa's deer population and hunting opportunities.

For more information, contact Tom Litchfield, wildlife biologist in charge of the Iowa deer program, at (641) 774-2958.

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## **DNR PLANS LAKE DARLING DRAWDOWN THIS FALL**

BRIGHTON, Iowa — The DNR plans to lower the water level in Lake Darling this fall to accommodate spillway inspections.

The lake drawdown will allow engineers from French-Reneker-Associates to thoroughly investigate the spillway and to conduct tests. The DNR expects the firm to lower the lake level sometime in October, depending on rainfall.

The engineering firm will draw down the lake to about two feet below the normal lake level. Anglers may still fish the lake along the shoreline.

“The drawdown is just part of our in-lake renovation work at Lake Darling,” said Mike McGhee, DNR lakes and rivers project coordinator. “With the renovation and ongoing work in the watershed, visitors to Lake Darling will continue to enjoy improved water quality.”

For more information, contact Mike McGhee at (515) 281-6281.

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## **VOLUNTEERS OFFERED HARVEST SEASON OPPORTUNITIES**

DES MOINES — As harvest season takes hold across the state, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Keepers of the Land Volunteer Program offers volunteers opportunities to assist with numerous autumn projects and events.

- **Water Quality Monitoring Event Opportunities:** Volunteers are needed for various water quality monitoring snapshot events being held throughout October in the following counties: Benton, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cedar, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clinton, Franklin, Floyd, Grundy, Iowa, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Polk, Marshall, Mitchell, Muscatine, Scott, Story, Tama, Webster, Winnebago, and Worth. For specific dates and locations, visit the DNR's snapshot sampling website <http://www.iowater.net/SnapshotResults/Snapshot%20Samplings.htm>.

- **Fall Tree Planting and Distribution Event Opportunities:** Volunteers are needed to help with various event set-up and logistics needs. Operation ReLeaf events will be held throughout October in the following counties: Winnebago and Hamilton (Oct 6) and Washington (Oct 13). For more information contact Amy Oliver at 515-281-6749. Plant Some Shade events will be held throughout October in the following counties: Webster (Oct 4), Black Hawk (Oct 11), Mahaska (Oct 13), and Johnson (Oct 18). For more information contact Matt Brewer at 515-242-6892.

- **Prairie Restoration Event Opportunity:** Officials at the Sertoma Park, located in Sioux City, in partnership with the DNR are seeking volunteers to assist with invasive species removal at the Sertoma Park Prairie. This event will take place Oct 27. Volunteers are asked to RSVP by Oct 24. For more information contact Andrea Blong at 712-943-6727.

- **Bird Nest Monitoring Opportunities:** DNR Officials are preparing for volunteers to help with bird nest monitoring (that will take place in the spring) by offering training workshops during October in Jones County (Oct 20) and Des Moines County (Oct 27). For more information, visit the DNR's volunteer wildlife monitoring website <http://www.iowadnr.com/wildlife/diversity/vwmp.html>, or contact Stephanie Shepherd at 515-432-2823 ext. 102.

For more information on these and other volunteer opportunities, go to Keepers of the Land website at [www.keepersoftheland.org](http://www.keepersoftheland.org), or contact Merry Rankin at (515) 281-0878 or at Merry.Rankin@dnr.iowa.gov.