



MOHONK PRESERVE'S 2026 DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

As a participant in Mohonk Preserve's Deer Management Program, you play a critical role in helping to mitigate the impacts of deer over-browsing on the unique forests of the Shawangunk Mountains.

2026 Mohonk Preserve Deer Hunting Season Dates and Time Restrictions (Specific to Mohonk Preserve) October 13th through January 1st (No hunting in Southern Zone December 23rd – 25th)

TIME RESTRICTIONS

During the first four weeks of our hunting season (October 13th – November 5th), The Mohonk Preserve has time restrictions placed on hunting hours Monday through Thursday due to the presence of education groups on the Preserve. Please regard these hunting time restrictions below.

HUNTING ALLOWED:

Monday - Thursday

From 30 minutes before sunrise to 8:45 AM **AND** from 3:00 PM to 30 minutes after sunset (10/13 – 11/05)

NO HUNTING ALLOWED:

Monday - Thursday

Between 8:45 AM and 3:00 PM (10/13 – 11/05)

These restrictions **DO NOT** apply on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays between the dates of October 13th and November 5th.

The Monday through Thursday time restrictions on hunting are lifted starting Monday, November 9th. Hunting is allowed every day from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset from November 9th to January 1st with the exception of the NYS Southern Zone blocked out dates of December 23rd – December 25th.

MOHONK PRESERVE HUNTING SEASONS

Mohonk Preserve follows the same season dates as New York State's Southern Zone with the exception of a later opening day (October 13th vs. NYS October 1st). You can view deer hunting season dates on the [NYS Department of Environmental Conservation website](#).

EARLY BOWHUNTING and CROSSBOW: October 13 – November 20

For more information on crossbow state regulations as outlined by the Department of Environmental Conservation please visit: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/68802.html>.

SHOTGUN / HANDGUN (NO RIFLES): November 21 – December 13

MUZZLELOADER / LATE BOWHUNTING: December 14 – December 22 & December 26 – January 1. (No hunting from December 23 – December 25)

Please Note: All other recreational activities are still allowed at the Preserve during hunting season. Recreationists are encouraged to wear blaze-orange while hiking and must always keep their dogs on a leash. Blaze-orange vests are available at every trailhead.

MOHONK PRESERVE HUNTING REGULATIONS

All New York State hunting laws, rules, and regulations apply to Mohonk Preserve lands. In addition, we require the following:

Mandatory Hunting Information Session: Hunters are required to attend one, 1-hour mandatory hunting information session located at the Mohonk Preserve's Visitor Center when prompted by administration before each hunting season. Sessions are scheduled upon permit registration.

Hunting Permit: Hunting is permitted only with a purchased Mohonk Preserve permit and a current New York State hunting license. Mohonk Preserve hunting permits allow for deer hunting only. No target shooting, sighting in, or trapping allowed. Though hunting concludes on the last day of the season your hunting permit allows you to visit the Preserve until the expiration in January of the subsequent year. This granted time after the hunting season allows hunters sufficient time to remove all equipment (treestands, trail cameras, blinds) from Preserve land. Hunting permits will be mailed out to registered hunters before the hunting season.

Hunting Permit Fee: There is a \$40 fee to purchase a Mohonk Preserve hunting permit. There is also an option to purchase both a hunting permit and a Mohonk Preserve yearly basic membership together for a discounted price of **\$100**. If you are interested in earning a free hunting permit you may earn this privilege by joining the Mohonk Preserve Volunteer Program: <https://www.mohonkpreserve.org/volunteer/>.

Display of Hunting Permit and Gaiter: Mohonk Preserve property is patrolled by our Rangers. To aid in identification, hunters are required to prominently display their Mohonk Preserve blaze orange gaiter and have their permit on their person at all times.

Parking: Parking is available at our designated trailheads, hunter-reserved lots (see hunting map), and Visitor Center. When parking, hunters are required to display their car placard on the dashboard of their parked vehicle. Driving and parking on any carriage roads is prohibited.

Reporting Your Deer Harvest: All harvested deer must be reported to Deer Management Program administration within **72 hours** of harvest. Report your deer harvest by using the Survey123 app or desktop website: <https://arcg.is/0v10Hu>. By law, you must also report your deer to the NYS DEC. Failure to submit harvest reports will impact approval for hunting permits in 2027.

Hunting Logs: All hunters must report daily hunting hours, location, and deer observations when hunting on the Preserve. Report these metrics by using the Survey123 app or desktop

website: <https://arcg.is/G84PT0>. The deadline for submission is Sunday, **January 31st, 2027**. Failure to submit hunting logs will impact approval for hunting permits in 2027.

Hunter Effort: Hunters are expected to commit to 24 hours of hunting throughout the season (~3 days).

No Rifles: Rifles are not permitted on Mohonk Preserve lands.

No Hunting Zones: There is absolutely no hunting allowed on Mohonk Mountain House property. The Mohonk Mountain House property is located in the center of the Mohonk Preserve land and is shown on the hunting maps in light purple. All other No Hunting Zones for the Preserve are shown on the hunting maps in orange.

No Access: There is absolutely no-off trail access in these areas. There is no access to NYC DEP Aqueduct land, marked on the maps in dark purple.

Retrieving and Checking Your Deer: Mohonk Preserve carriage roads are closed to all motor vehicles (excluding Mohonk Preserve staff vehicles). A Ranger may assist you in hauling out your deer. Rangers are constantly patrolling on weekends; at other times patrol is sporadic. Therefore, during the week if you need assistance bringing your deer out, stay with your deer at a carriage road and call the Visitor Center with your information at 845-255-0919. Visitor Center hours are 9 am - 5 pm. If you would like to age or weigh your deer, you may check your deer with a Preserve Ranger. It is not guaranteed that a Ranger will always be available to retrieve or check your deer.

Setback Distances: Setback distances from dwellings and buildings in use are 150 feet for vertical bows, 250 feet for crossbows and 500 feet for firearms. To ensure the safety of our recreationists, the setback distance from carriage roads and trails is always 150 feet. When actively hunting or setting up equipment, be sure to be at least 150 feet away from any carriage road or trail. The 150-foot setback distance is represented by an orange border around roads and trails on the hunting map.

Carriage Roads and Hiking Trails: Do not aim or fire across any road or trail and respect the 150-foot setback distance. When walking with a firearm on road/trail it must be in a sock, sleeve, or other similar cover.

Equipment: Treestands, blinds, and trail cameras are allowed and can be left on Preserve property from the time of hunting permit purchase until stated removal deadline. Equipment must be removed by Sunday, **January 31st, 2027**. Equipment left in place after that date will be

confiscated. Equipment must be tagged with an official Mohonk Preserve hunting equipment tag. You can register for equipment tags when completing your hunting permit registration online.

Other Registration Materials: Your car parking placard and treestand/trail camera tags will be mailed out to registered hunters before the hunting season begins. Other materials such as these regulations and the hunting maps are available for download on the Mohonk Preserve Deer Management Program webpage: <https://www.mohonkpreserve.org/what-we-do/conservation-programs/conservation-science/deer-management-program/>.

No Land Modification: Land modification of any kind is prohibited on Mohonk Preserve land. This includes removal of any vegetation (trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants), trenching, digging, and blazing on trees. This also includes using permanent means, such as screws, to attach hunting equipment to trees.

Camping and Lodging: There are several campgrounds, motels, and hotels in the region, including the Samuel F. Pryor III Shawangunk Gateway Campground on Route 299 in Gardiner. The campground is open through mid-November. For more information and to book your campsite, visit <https://www.mohonkpreserve.org/visit/camping.html>. Camping and fires are not permitted anywhere on Mohonk Preserve property. For more information on lodging options in the area please visit <https://www.mohonkpreserve.org/visit/area-guide/>.

Please Remember: As the number of visitors to our natural area increases, the need for everyone to be a conscientious steward of the land also increases. In particular, we remind you that litter, such as shell-cases and field dressing gloves, remain in nature for years and bring discredit to reputable hunters. Please follow the “carry-in, carry-out” policy; what you bring into the forest ensure that you also take out.

Hunting privileges will be revoked by Mohonk Preserve staff if Mohonk Preserve and NYS regulations are not strictly obeyed. For more information on NYS DEC hunting rules and regulations please visit: <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting/deer-bear/regulations>.

Any questions regarding the Mohonk Preserve’s Deer Management Program can be addressed to deermgt@mohonkpreserve.org.

How does hunting help the Preserve?

To fulfill our mission of protecting the biodiversity of the Shawangunks, the Preserve must manage our unique habitats and natural resources. Long-term deer over-browsing has had

destructive consequences for the forests of the Shawangunks. Deer populations have grown due to several factors, including increasingly mild winters and development that creates lawns, gardens, and wooded edges that provide deer with plentiful food and habitat. Additionally, there is a lack of natural predators (like mountain lions and wolves) to check the deer population.

In our forests, deer are heavy consumers of saplings and other vegetation, and many areas of forest are simply not regenerating. Native plants like orchids and wildflowers, food sources of many animals, and critical nesting areas for birds like ruffed grouse, wood thrush, and warblers are all at risk of being impacted by heavy deer-browse.

Deer hunting is widely recognized throughout the Northeast as a useful tool for maintaining healthy forests that can regenerate and support diverse plants and animals. The Preserve's hunting and deer management policies are based on conservation goals and rooted in science, including more than 80 years of research on the ecology of the Shawangunks. By maximizing the harvest of antlerless deer instead of bucks, our hunters help us bring our deer population into better balance with the habitat.

Our program follows both New York State and our own permitting and safety regulations. Hunters are required to report their deer harvest and submit hunting logs, allowing researchers to collect information (for example age and sex) so that we can monitor and help maintain the delicate balance between forest health and deer populations over time. This is one of the research activities underway at the Preserve to understand and address the role of deer in the environment.