



SUMMARY OF THE
NUNAVUT HUNTING
REGULATIONS
2024 | 2025

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



I am delighted to introduce the Department of Environment's 2024-25 Hunting Regulations Guide.

Venturing into the wilderness is an excellent way to enjoy fresh air, unwind, and embrace Inuit culture. Hunting not only sustains our communities but also upholds our heritage.

Our government is firmly committed to preserving and managing wildlife in Nunavut for the long term. It is crucial to implement appropriate measures to ensure our ancestral knowledge and skills are preserved and passed on to future generations.

Please take a moment to review the contents of this guide as you prepare for your upcoming hunting endeavors. It includes comprehensive information on licenses, fees, maps, hunting areas, regulations, enforcement, and more.

Additionally, we provide a complimentary online course to enhance hunters' safety and knowledge. Enroll today at www.huntercourse.com/canada/nunavut/.

When you are ready to embark on your adventure, prioritize safety. Travel with a companion, inform others of your whereabouts, and consider borrowing a SPOT device from the wildlife or hamlet office for added security.

Wishing you a safe, successful, and enjoyable hunting season.

Warm regards,

Honourable Daniel Qavvik
Minister of Environment

Photos by M. Dumond

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- GENERAL INFORMATION4**
 - Nunavut Residency Requirements4
 - Age Requirements4
 - Guide and Outfitter Requirements5
 - Your Licence5
 - Fees6
 - Ethics6
 - Reporting Hunting Violations6
- REGULATIONS7**
 - General Prohibitions7
 - Aircraft8
 - Bow Hunting for Big Game8
 - Where to Attach Tags9
 - Tagged or Collared Animals9
 - Diseased Animals10
 - Problem Bears10
- PARKS AND CONSERVATION AREAS11**
 - Wildlife Sanctuaries and Preserves11
 - National and Territorial Parks11
 - Migratory Bird Sanctuaries11
- MIGRATORY BIRDS CONVENTION ACT12**
- FIREARMS INFORMATION12**
 - Firearms and Ammunition12
 - Non-Toxic Shot12
 - Federal Minor's Permit13
 - Importation of Firearms13

- OTHER INFORMATION14**
 - Plan for Safety14
 - Exporting Wildlife from Nunavut14
- BIG GAME HUNTING FEES, BAG LIMITS, SEASONS AND HUNTING AREAS15**
 - How to use the Hunting Tables and Maps15
 - Black Bear16
 - Polar Bear16
 - Grizzly Bear17
 - Barren-Ground Caribou17
 - Moose18
 - Muskoxen18
 - Wolf*19
 - Wolverine*19
 - Fox*19
 - Hare and Any Other Furbearer*20
 - Grouse and Ptarmigan*20
- BE BEAR AWARE!20**
- HUNTER HARVEST RECORDS24**



This summary is an overview of the 2022-2023 hunting regulations for Nunavut. Regulations can often change during the year, please contact a local Conservation Officer before hunting if you have any questions.

Ce guide est disponible en français sur notre site web au <https://gov.nu.ca/fr/environment/>

GENERAL INFORMATION

*Please note: The maps in this publication are not legal documents, but are included for reference to give a general outline of hunting areas. This booklet is not a legal document, nor a complete listing of the current hunting regulations, but a summary of the rules of hunting.

The regulations summarized in this booklet apply to hunters who require a harvesting licence to hunt. The hunting rights of Indigenous people in Nunavut are based on traditional use and land claim rights, and are different from other hunters.

Nunavut Residency Requirements

There are three classes of licensed hunters in Nunavut:

1. Nunavut Resident: a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant who has been living in Nunavut for at least three months.
2. Non-Resident: a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant who lives outside Nunavut or has not resided in Nunavut for at least three months.
3. Non-Resident Foreigner: an individual who is neither a Nunavut resident nor a Canadian Citizen.

Age Requirements

A person 12 years of age or older may be issued a licence to hunt small game. A person 16 years of age or older may be issued a licence to hunt big game. A person between the ages of 12 and 16 may be issued a licence to hunt big game if endorsed by their parent or guardian.

Guide and Outfitter Requirements

A person who is a non-resident or a non-resident foreigner can only hunt big game if they use the services of a licensed outfitter and are accompanied by a professional big game guide. The guide requirements for a Nunavut resident depend on how long the resident has held a harvesting licence, and on the availability of approved, licensed guides. The Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) in the community has the responsibility for approving individuals to be licensed as guides, and also has the authority to waive the guide requirement.

Upon qualifying as a resident in Nunavut, a person can hunt big game in the following circumstances:

- i. If they are accompanied by a licensed professional big game guide or community big game guide (community big game guides are only allowed to guide for Nunavut residents) approved by the HTO.
- ii. If the HTO waives the guide requirement.
- iii. If no guides have been approved by the HTO.
- iv. If it has been two years since they obtained their first harvesting licence.

Your Licence

You must have a harvesting licence to hunt small game. To hunt big game, you need a harvesting licence and species authorization tag(s).

Under the terms of the Nunavut Agreement, arctic foxes, hares and ground squirrels have been classed as furbearers, and can only be hunted by individuals approved by an HTO. A Conservation Officer will issue you a licence to hunt arctic foxes, hares and ground squirrels only if you provide evidence that the local HTO has approved it. This also applies to big game species that are also classified as furbearers, such as bears, wolves and wolverines.

Species authorization tags are issued for all big game species. The tags are part of your licence and must be attached to your harvested wildlife as soon as possible, but may wait until after the pelt or hide has been fleshed. Your harvesting licence and species authorization tags must be carried with you while hunting.

Licences and tags may be purchased from any Department of Environment Wildlife Office.

A licence is not valid until signed by the person to whom it has been issued and a Conservation Officer. Licences and tags are not transferable.

Licences and tags are valid for one year starting July 1 and ending June 30 of the following year.



It is a good idea to record the number of your licence and tag(s). If you lose your licence, you may report this loss to the Conservation Officer who will, after you have signed an affidavit, issue a replacement for a fee of \$10.00.

Find a licensed outfitter with Travel Nunavut:

<https://travelnunavut.ca/>

Plan your visit with Destination Nunavut:

<https://destinationnunavut.ca/>

1-866-686-2888 (toll-free within North America)

1-800-491-7910 (toll-free outside North America)

Fees

Licence/Tag Fees: for all classes of hunters, must be paid before you go hunting.

Ethics

Responsible hunting has an honourable history, great traditions and a code of ethical conduct that extends beyond hunting laws. If hunting is to continue as a respected and honourable activity, hunters must take ethics and responsibility seriously. The privilege to hunt carries with it a responsibility to other people, wildlife and the environment.

Reporting Hunting Violations

Any assistance you may be able to give by reporting activities that you feel are suspicious or perhaps illegal is greatly appreciated. Contact the nearest Wildlife Office as soon as possible. Provide as much information as you can about the situation, including: date, time, location, vehicle licence plate number, aircraft registration letters, boat registration number, and the nature of the incident.

REGULATIONS

General Prohibitions

No one may chase, harass or molest wildlife. Anyone who wounds wildlife must make every reasonable effort to retrieve it.

It is an offence to waste, destroy, abandon or allow to spoil: the meat of big game, other than bear, wolf or wolverine; and the raw pelt or hide of any fur-bearing animal, including bears. It is also an offence to feed the meat of big game, other than bear, wolf and wolverine, to domestic animals. The following are not considered waste if they are left behind with regards to ungulates: the head, the legs below the knee joint, the internal organs, the bones when stripped of meat, the parts of the carcass damaged by the harvesting method, and any part of a diseased animal that the harvester reports to a Conservation Officer.

No one shall hunt wildlife without due regard for the safety of other people and property. No person shall hunt from, or discharge a firearm from, a motorized vehicle (not including a snowmobile, boat or ATV). No person shall have in or on a vehicle a firearm which has any propellant powder, projectile or cartridge that can be discharged from the firearm, whether in the breech, firing chamber, or in a cartridge magazine attached to or inserted into the firearm.

No one shall discharge a firearm from, along or across a public road, trail, road or highway.

No one shall use or have in their possession while hunting, any recorded game calls, or any mechanically or electrically operated calling device of any description.

It is an offence to send any wildlife or wildlife parts to destinations outside of Nunavut unless you obtain an export permit (Note: other countries may have special restrictions if your destination is outside Canada). A Wildlife Export Permit is required for any wildlife or wildlife parts leaving Nunavut. These can be obtained at any Wildlife Office. If the wildlife or wildlife parts are leaving Canada, you may be required to obtain a C.I.T.E.S. (Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species) permit from Environment and Climate Change Canada. These are not issued by the Government of Nunavut, and it is up to the individual to obtain the permit.

It is important to note that some jurisdictions require an import permit for certain species as well. Marine species (such as seal, walrus, beluga and narwhal) require a federal Marine Mammal Transportation Licence, which can be obtained at any Wildlife Office.



Anyone picking up dead wildlife, or parts thereof, not killed under the authority of a licence, may be allowed to retain it if it is brought to and certified by a Conservation Officer. No one shall hunt a polar bear that is part of a family group; family group being defined as a group of two or more polar bears that includes a female polar bear accompanied by (a) a polar bear cub; (b) a yearling polar bear; or (c) a two-year-old polar bear.

Hunters who harvest male polar bears are required to submit evidence of sex (baculum/penis bone) to a Conservation Officer as soon as possible after a successful hunt.

The rules of hunting are designed to ensure that people hunt safely, and that wildlife will be preserved for future generations. Should any individual be convicted of an offence, they could be fined and/or receive a jail sentence. Firearms, equipment and wildlife seized from the person could be ordered forfeit and the person's licence could be suspended or cancelled.

If you want to report an offence against the Wildlife Act or Regulations, contact a Conservation Officer or the Regional Manager at the Regional Wildlife Office of the Department of Environment nearest you (numbers are listed in the back).

Aircraft

- a. Aircraft cannot be used for spotting wildlife for the purpose of communicating that information to others for hunting purposes, or to otherwise assist in harvesting. This also applies to drones.
- b. Fixed-wing aircraft may be used for transportation to and from a hunting location, but helicopters may not be used for transporting people, goods or wildlife for harvesting purposes.
- c. If you fly into an area using a chartered or personal aircraft for the purpose of hunting big game, you must wait 12 hours before beginning your hunt.

Bow Hunting for Big Game

Bow hunting for big game is permitted in Nunavut subject to the same regulations as hunting with a firearm. Draw weight must be at least 20 kg at 700 mm draw. Arrows must have a broadhead point width of at least 25 mm at the widest point or a barbless three-bladed bodkin head and must not contain any explosive.

Crossbow draw weight must be at least 68 kg at full draw or 45 kg for a compound crossbow. Quarrels must weigh more than 16.2 g and, if using a broadhead, it must be more than 2.22 cm at its widest point.

Where to Attach Tags

Tags are your authority to possess game. The tag must be attached until the harvested animal is consumed or processed. Tags cannot be reused.

Hunters are issued one tag for every animal they wish to hunt. This tag must be attached to the carcass of any big game killed except muskox, bear, wolf and wolverine. For these species, the tag must be attached to the raw pelt or hide as soon as practicable, but may be delayed until immediately after the pelt or hide is fleshed.

Tagged or Collared Animals

To better manage our resources, certain species of big game are being monitored and may have ear tags or a radio collar. Although it is not illegal to shoot these animals, try to avoid shooting these animals when possible. If an animal is taken wearing a radio collar, it is mandatory that you return the collar to the local Conservation Officer as soon as practicable. The return of ear tags are not mandatory, but should be turned over as well. We ask that you report any sighting





to the nearest Conservation Officer, giving them any information that they may require such as the condition of the animal, location, etc.

For information about animals being studied in your area, please check with a Conservation Officer.

Diseased Animals

Although most wild animals are healthy, diseases and parasites can occur in any wildlife population. Some diseases such as rabies and brucellosis in caribou occur regularly in Nunavut. Parasites such as tapeworm cysts and sarcocystis in meat and hydatid cysts in lungs are not uncommon in big game species. Some of these diseases can infect domestic animals or humans.

If you shoot a sick animal, take the following precautions. Do not cut into diseased parts. Wash your hands and knives when finished butchering. Do not feed the meat of infected animals to dogs. Reporting the occurrence of wildlife diseases is important. Turn in samples or report your observations to the nearest Conservation Officer. A Field Guide to Common Wildlife Diseases and Parasites is available at any Department of Environment Wildlife Office or by contacting the regional offices listed at the back of this booklet.

Problem Bears

In Nunavut, it is legal to shoot a bear in self-defence only when life or property is threatened. You must report the kill to the nearest Conservation Officer as soon as possible. In most cases, the Conservation Officer will come to the site and take possession of the bear. If a Conservation Officer is not immediately available, you should make every reasonable effort to return the hide to the nearest Wildlife Office. It is an offence if you do not report a defence kill to a Conservation Officer. The hide, complete with claws, and the skull should be turned in, if possible, to a Conservation Officer at the first opportunity.

PARKS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

Wildlife Sanctuaries and Preserves

Firearms may be carried for protection, however hunting is prohibited in a sanctuary or preserve.

Wildlife Sanctuaries: Bowman Bay, Twin Islands and Thelon.

Wildlife Preserves: James Bay.

National and Territorial Parks

Sport hunting is not permitted in national or territorial parks in Nunavut as prescribed in federal and territorial legislation.

Migratory Bird Sanctuaries

The hunting of federal migratory birds is not permitted in migratory bird sanctuaries. For a list of federal Migratory Bird Sanctuaries and regulations pertaining to them, contact:

Canadian Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 1870
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0
Office: (867) 975-4642
Fax: (867) 975-4645
www.ec.gc.ca



MIGRATORY BIRDS CONVENTION ACT

To hunt migratory birds (ducks, geese, coots, rails or snipe) you must first obtain a Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit and Habitat Conservation Stamp. These are available from any Canada Post office or online. Information on seasons, bag limits and fees is available from the Canadian Wildlife Service or outlined in a brochure which may be obtained from a post office.

FIREARMS INFORMATION

Firearms and Ammunition

When hunting big game in Nunavut, you must use 5.56mm (0.22 inches) or larger calibre ammunition. The empty cartridge case of the ammunition must be 38mm (1.5 inches) or longer in length.

For the purpose of hunting big game rim fire ammunition is illegal. If using a muzzle loader to hunt big game, it must be of .44 calibre or larger.

Ammunition containing non-expanding or steeljacketed bullets or tracer ammunition may not be used for hunting.

When hunting migratory game birds, no one may use a shotgun which holds more than three shells in the magazine and firing chamber combined.

Non-Toxic Shot

In 1999, the Canadian Wildlife Service implemented legislation that prohibits possession of toxic shot for the purpose of hunting migratory game birds. For more information contact the Canadian Wildlife Service or your local Conservation Officer.

Federal Minor's Permit

If a person is at least 12 years old and under 18 years and intends to possess a firearm (i.e. shotgun/ rifle) which is not prohibited or restricted, they must possess a Federal Minor's Permit.

To obtain a Federal Minor's Permit, contact the Area Firearms Officer in Iqaluit or call the Canadian Firearms Centre toll-free at 1-800-731-4000. The Federal Minor's Permit also applies to target shooters and instructors between 12 and 17 years of age.

Importation of Firearms

Certain firearms are classified under federal law as either "Restricted" or "Prohibited" weapons. Hunting is not allowed with restricted firearms in Nunavut nor can they be carried as personal protection except under exceptional circumstances or by an official of the RCMP. Prohibited weapons may not be imported into Canada. Complete information about importing firearms and ammunition, and about related subjects is available from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). Please contact the CBSA at your planned point of entry into Canada or through any Canadian Embassy or Consulate. Agencies and departments of the Government of Canada can all be accessed on-line at <https://www.canada.ca/>





OTHER INFORMATION

Plan for Safety

Before leaving on a hunting trip, plan carefully to include all necessary supplies and equipment. Never rely solely on a Global Positioning System (GPS) for survival because batteries can fail, screens freeze, or the device could get lost. Take a satellite phone, topographic maps, and other more traditional navigational aids with you for even the shortest trip. SPOT devices are available at all Wildlife Offices and HTOs in Nunavut free of charge, and you are encouraged to take one with you when travelling on the land. The land and weather in Nunavut can be very unforgiving. Always try to travel with an experienced person, and always tell someone where you are going.

Exporting Wildlife from Nunavut

You need a Wildlife Export Permit if you wish to export legally killed game (if more than 20kg), a gift of meat from a hunter (if more than 20kg), or legally purchased meat (if more than 20kg), untanned furs and raw hides, ducks or geese, antlers, skulls, teeth, bones or any other parts of wildlife.

Certification may be required before exporting wildlife or wildlife parts that have not been obtained under a valid licence (i.e. finding wildlife skulls on the land). A Conservation Officer must certify and attach a certification disc to any wildlife that has been obtained in this manner. Uncertified wildlife is illegal to take out of Nunavut.

Wildlife Export Permits are available at any Wildlife Office. There is no fee for a Wildlife Export Permit.

BIG GAME HUNTING FEES, BAG LIMITS, SEASONS AND HUNTING AREAS

All maps included in this brochure are for reference purposes only; they are not legal documents. More detailed topographical maps can be freely downloaded from: <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/>

Canada Map Office
 Department of Natural Resources
 2144 King Street West, Suite 010
 Sherbrooke, Quebec J1J 2E8
 Toll Free: 1-800-661-2638
 Phone: (819) 564-5698
 Email: geoinfo@NRCan.gc.ca

How to use the Hunting Tables and Maps

Nunavut is divided into two wildlife management units, designated N and O. Wildlife management unit N is further divided into three zones (N/1, N/2, N/3). Residents of Nunavut need to be careful not to cross over the NWT/Nunavut border while hunting or they may be in violation of wildlife legislation. Within the wildlife management units, species management areas for certain areas are represented by a two letter code and two digit number:

- PB polar bear
- GB grizzly bear
- BC barren-ground caribou
- MX muskox
- WF wolf

Maps of the hunting areas for different species in wildlife management units are also illustrated. Examples of how to interpret the coding of the different hunting area names:

- N Hunting is allowed in all of unit N for the specific animal
- N/3 Hunting is allowed throughout zone N/3 for the specific animal
- N/MX/02/05 You can hunt muskox in areas 02,03,04 and 05 of unit N



Black Bear

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON
Resident	10.00	25.00	No limit	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	20.00	200.00	1	
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	250.00	1	

Polar Bear

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON	HUNTING AREA
Resident	10.00	25.00	Any number of adult bears not accompanied by a cub* in accordance with the number of tags held	1 July – 30 June	N/PB**
Non-resident	20.00	1000.00			
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	1200.00			

* A cub is a bear that is less than one year old as determined by the number of growth rings in the post-canine tooth. The holder of a harvesting licence may only hunt a polar bear by dog team or on foot. Ammunition and firearms for a hunt must meet prescribed requirements. A successful hunter must turn in the lower jaw or undamaged post-canine tooth, any lip tattoos and ear tags present as well as provide evidence of sex (baculum/penis bone). An unsuccessful hunter must return unused tags to a Conservation Officer immediately after the hunt.

** Each of the areas identified on page 13, Unit N Polar Bear Areas, has a specific Total Allowable Harvest. Consult the local Conservation Officer or nearest Hunters and Trappers Organization for further information.

Grizzly Bear

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON	HUNTING AREA
Resident	10.00	25.00	Tags available to resident, non-resident, and resident foreigners: Kivalliq – 10 Kitikmeot – 15	1 July – 30 June	N/2 and N/3
Non-resident	20.00	1000.00			
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	1100.00			

*All bears are classified as furbearers. You will only be issued a licence to hunt these species if you have received the approval of the HTO.

Barren-Ground Caribou

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON
Resident	10.00	5.00	5	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	20.00	250.00	2	
Non-resident	50.00	250.00	2	
Foreigner				

There are currently Total Allowable Harvests for the Southampton Island, Baffin Island, Bathurst and Bluenose-East, and Dolphin and Union caribou herds. Consult the local Conservation Officer or nearest Hunters and Trappers Organization for further information.



Moose

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON
Resident	10.00	10.00	1	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	20.00	250.00	1	
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	250.00	1	

Muskoxen

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON	HUNTING AREA
Resident	10.00	10.00	1	1 July – 30 June	N/MX*
Non-resident	20.00	400.00	1		
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	500.00	1		

Note: When hunting muskoxen, a hunter must not knowingly approach on vehicle (including a snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle) any closer than 1.5 km of the muskox.

* Each of the areas identified on page 15, Unit N Muskox Management Units, has a specific harvest level – certain areas currently have a Total Allowable Harvest, while others do not. Consult the local Conservation Officer or nearest Hunters and Trappers Organization for further information.



Wolf*

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON
Resident	10.00	5.00	No limit	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	20.00	120.00	2	
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	120.00	2	

* Wolves are classified as furbearers. You will only be issued a licence to hunt these species if you have received the approval of the HTO.

Wolverine*

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	ANNUAL HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON
Resident	10.00	5.00	No limit	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	20.00	120.00	1	
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	120.00	1	

*Wolverines are classified as furbearers. You will only be issued a licence to hunt these species if you have received the approval of the HTO.

Fox*

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	SEASON
Resident	10.00	5.00	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	20.00	10.00	
Non-resident Foreigner	50.00	20.00	



Hare and Any Other Furbearer*

	TAG FEE	SURCHARGE	SEASON
Resident	10.00	5.00	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	10.00	10.00	
Non-resident Foreigner	20.00	20.00	

*Arctic fox, hares and ground squirrels have been classified as furbearers. You will only be issued a licence to hunt these species if you have received the approval of the HTO.

Grouse and Ptarmigan*

	DAILY HARVESTING LIMIT	SEASON
Resident	10; possession limit of 40	1 July – 30 June
Non-resident	5; possession limit of 10	
Non-resident Foreigner	5; possession limit of 10	

BE BEAR AWARE!

- Avoid areas where bears are evident.
- Look for tracks or droppings before making camp.
- Avoid locations where terrain may limit your view and might hide a bear.
- Do not sleep without a tent.
- Maintain areas of cooking, food storage, and cleaning fish about 50 m away from sleeping quarters.
- Latrines should also be some distance from the sleeping areas.
- Keep a clean camp. Wash utensils and eliminate any greasy smells which especially attract bears.
- Produce minimal food waste and pack food in airtight containers, such as coolers, plastic pails with lids or heavy plastic bags.
- Do not let garbage accumulate.
- Elimination of odours is essential. Burn garbage and bury the ashes a distance away from camp.
- Unburied garbage should be stored in airtight containers.
- Pack out all garbage when you leave so it is not a danger to future campers.
- Do not leave camp alone. Watch out for fresh tracks near camp.
- Never feed bears or other wildlife.

For more information, please visit: www.gov.nu.ca/environment





