



## Deer Hunting in the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

It may come as a surprise to some visitors to learn that regulated hunting is permitted in the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. The legislation that created the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore provided for regulated hunting and trapping within lakeshore boundaries. Deer in the lakeshore are managed in cooperation with Federal, State and Tribal partners to preserve ecologically sound native biological communities which include both plants and animals; to provide for state regulated and treaty related harvest opportunities; and to safely integrate hunting with other visitor experiences.

Deer hunting on the Mainland Unit of the lakeshore offers a similar experience to that found on other federal lands on the mainland in Wisconsin. Hunting on the islands offers a very primitive experience that requires boat transportation and careful planning.

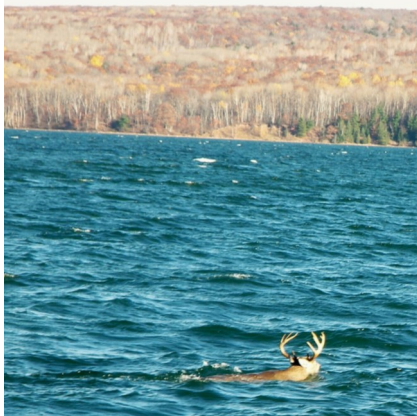
Deer hunting within the lakeshore generally follows state regulations, however, in some instances, there are differences and specific restrictions. For example, baiting is not allowed. Anyone who is hunting in the Lakeshore must have a valid Wisconsin license/permit, applicable to the weapon type and the location being hunted and follow park regulations.

A free access permit is required to hunt deer, bear and turkey or hunt/trap furbearers on all islands in the Lakeshore (except Long). A permit is not needed to hunt on the mainland unit of the Lakeshore, Long Island or to hunt small game and migratory birds.



This handout provides a brief overview of deer hunting in the park. Other hunting and trapping opportunities exist. More information, a downloadable request for an access permit, and a full set of park rules is available on the park website (<https://www.nps.gov/apis/planyourvisit/hunting.htm>)

### Hunting Opportunities



The Mainland Unit of the park is within the Bayfield County deer management unit. Long Island is within the Bad River deer management unit. Madeline Island is not part of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (see Wisconsin hunting regulations).

To provide a unique hunting experience on the islands within the Lakeshore, only primitive weapons (any Wisconsin legal archery or muzzleloader equipment) are permitted. The muzzleloader season is from October 1-31. The archery season is consistent with Wisconsin regulations with the exception that bow hunting is prohibited on the islands during the October muzzleloader hunt.

The park issues special Apostle Islands National Lakeshore carcass tags. These special tags are free and available at a rate of up to 2 permits per day per hunter. Each tag may be used to tag an antlerless deer or a buck deer following the harvest of an antlerless deer.

Another option is to use your state issued carcass tag - a Wisconsin gun buck deer tag can be used during the muzzleloader season and a Wisconsin archery buck or antlerless deer tag can be used during the archery season.

### Status of deer in the Islands

Deer populations in the Islands vary. Basswood, Oak and Stockton Islands have steady deer populations that reliably provide quality hunting experiences to park visitors. Other islands may have deer populations, including Sand, Rocky and Hermit Islands. Deer reach the islands by swimming or traveling over the ice. The population of deer on most islands is sparse, intermittent and difficult to hunt. Hunters may hunt on any islands they choose to with the exception of Gull and Eagle Islands.

In the past, deer became over-abundant on Sand and York Islands which resulted in damage to rare plants that inhabit those islands. Deer reduction efforts were largely successful and only a small population exists on Sand Island today. Resource management staff use browse, track and pellet surveys along with camera surveys to assess the status of deer in the islands. For more information, visit the park's website (<https://www.nps.gov/apis/planyourvisit/hunting.htm>) or contact us at (715) 779-3397 x1631.