



# Rhode Isl and 2002-2003 season Deer Harvest information

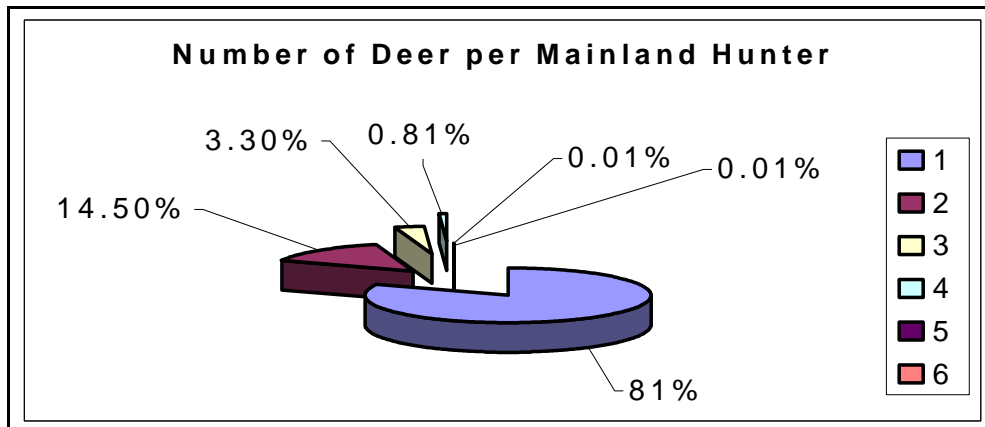
## Annual Season Totals

Year	ARCHERY		MUZZLE LOADER		SHOTGUN	
	Permits	Harvested	Permits	Harvested	Permits	Harvested
1977	654	62	0	0	2395	95
1978	751	78	54	0	2721	91
1979	889	93	95	1	2984	102
1980	998	72	100	4	3257	141
1981	1156	88	234	6	3783	149
1982	1158	104	251	8	3557	104
1983	1164	99	265	8	3380	115
1984	1160	109	545	14	4500	125
1985	852	112	639	24	3193	120
1986	895	126	675	63	3354	239
1987	1093	179	725	56	2567	196
1988	1627	125	1709	105	4631	218
1989	1722	169	2242	189	4571	280
1990*	2089	238	3888	390	5602	311
1991**	2769	291	3796	474	5362	376
1992	4088	417	4598	663	7754	382
1993	3669	378	5144	625	6520	313
1994	3951	355	5487	658	6857	383
1995	4426	415	5680	743	7130	603
1996	4110	474	5973	1114	7901	575
1997***	4058	299	7095	1044	7595	697
1998	3578	310	7863	771	6205	451
1999	3750	389	7290	1063	6999	591
2000	3868	472	7610	1107	6468	770
2001	4371	499	7769	1178	7338	572
2002	4772	525	7943	915	6249	591

\* Adjusted

\*\* Beginning 1991 the harvest total includes deer taken with second and additional tags

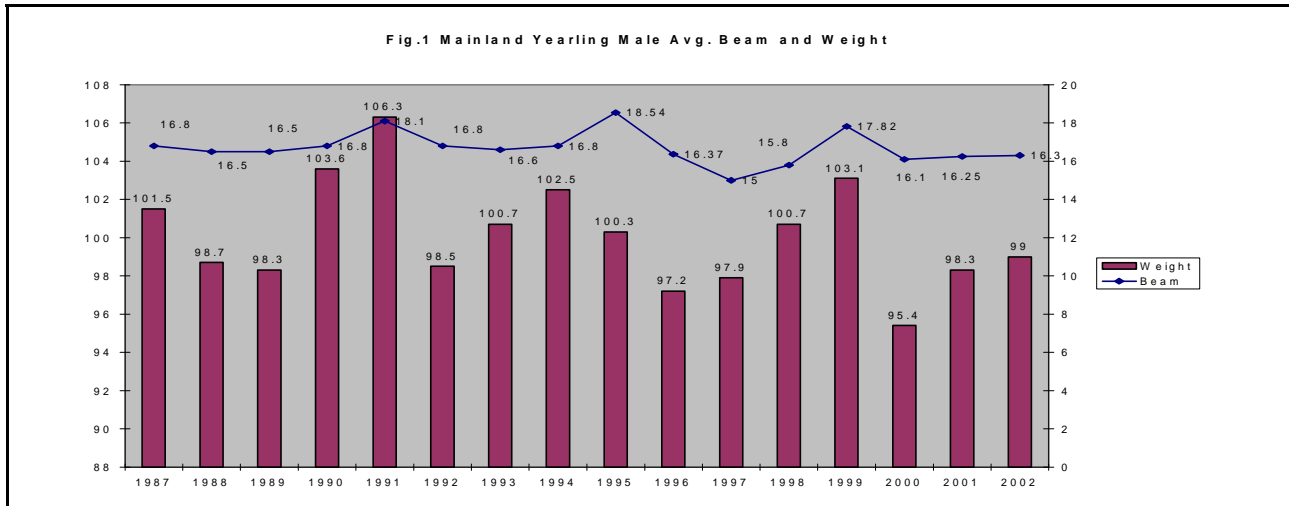
\*\*\* Beginning 1997 the harvest total includes special and Block Island seasons



During the Rhode Island 2002-03 hunting season 1,340 hunters harvested a total of 1,668 deer on the mainland, with archery, muzzle loader and shotgun permits. Most hunters took a single deer (81%).

## Herd Health, Beams, Weights and Records

The annual health of the herd can be assessed using average weights and antler beam diameters of the yearlings. High average weight and beam diameters indicate a healthy habitat with abundant food and nutrition. Beams and weights displaying a downward trend indicate increased numbers or reduced quality of habitat.



### 2002 - 2003

LARGEST DEER TAKEN - HOG DRESSED WEIGHT

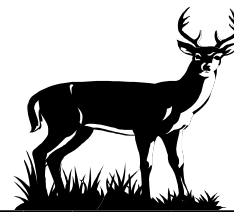
	Female/Location	Male/Pts/Location
<b>Archery</b>	150/Glocester	250/10/Scituate
<b>Muzzle</b>	150/W.Greenwich	206/8/Providence
<b>Shotgun</b>	135/Smithfield	195/6/Cranston

### 2002 - 2003

MAINLAND MEAN DRESSED WEIGHT

	Male (lbs.)	Female (lbs.)
<b>Fawn</b>	65.8	61.5
<b>Yearling</b>	99	92.2
<b>Adult</b>	133.1	110.9

averages based on shotgun data



### RECORD WEIGHT DEER

#### Heaviest Buck

274 lbs, hog - 8 points - 34.4 mm beam.  
Taken by Wendell Crothers off private land in Burrillville during the 1997 muzzleloader season.

#### Largest Doe

170 lbs, hog, from N Kingstown during the 1997 shotgun season.

#### Northeast Big Buck Club (1998)

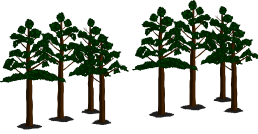
Archery, Score-159 3/8, by Peter Martufi of Washington County  
Muzzle, Score-142 4/8, by John Mann of Washington County  
Shotgun, Score-146 0/8, by Christopher Rondeau of Kent County  
For more information visit:  
[www.bigbuckclub.com](http://www.bigbuckclub.com)

### Harvest Ratios

Hunters tend to favor bucks over does on the mainland as shown by the 2002 season breakdown.

	Archery	Muzzleloader	Shotgun
<b>Males</b>	311	594	267
<b>Females</b>	226	317	321

Deer populations have the potential for rapid growth. Under normal circumstances, does two years or older produce twins annually, while yearling does typically produce single fawns. Removing only bucks from the population does little to change overall herd numbers, and overharvest of large males can reduce the genetic diversity of the herd. To influence herd growth, management techniques target doe harvesting. Antlerless seasons are instituted to keep herd numbers in balance with available habitat.



## Management Areas, Towns and Auto

HARVEST BY MANAGEMENT AREA

Management Area	Archery	Muzzle	Shotgun
Arcadia	7	33	25
Big River	8	25	13
Black Hut	0	6	7
Buck Hill	0	9	3
Burlingame	1	8	9
Carolina	1	6	0
Cocumscussoc	4	5	0
Durfee Hill	1	3	7
George Washington	1	13	15
Great Swamp	3	10	3
Killingly	1	3	0
Nicholas Farm	0	6	4
Prudence/Patience*	159	-	0
Rockville	0	0	2
Round Top	0	0	1
8 Rod Farm	1	1	0
South Shore	0	0	1
Wickaboxet	1	4	2
Woody Hill	1	8	5
Washington Grove	0	1	1
<b>Total Mgt. Area</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Other Areas</b>			
NW Coop**	0	0	4
Private	336	770	489
Unknown	0	4	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>591</b>

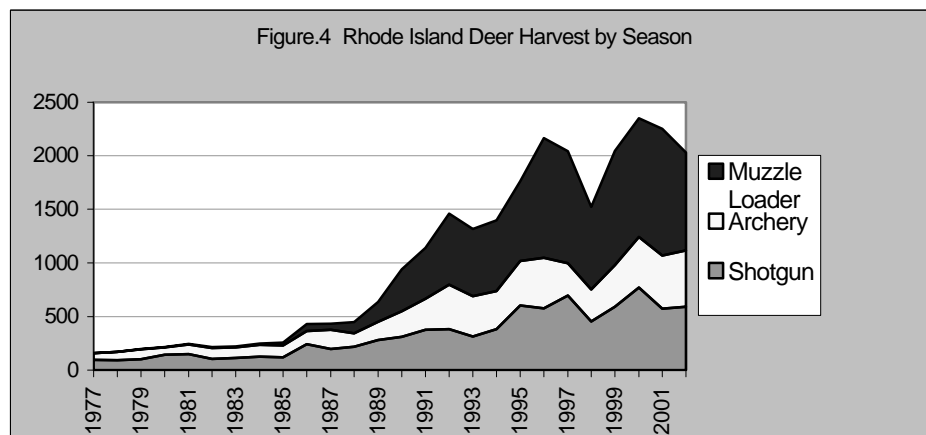
HARVEST BY TOWN

Town	Archery	Muzzle	Shotgun
Block Island	15	--	126
Burillville	9	78	49
Charlestown	18	30	30
Coventry	18	59	35
Cranston	2	5	2
E. Greenwich	4	3	2
Exeter	32	107	64
Foster	12	95	34
Glocester	11	89	51
Hopkinton	8	51	35
Jamestown	8	6	0
Johnston	1	5	2
Little Compton	20	15	0
N. Kingstown	27	29	6
N. Smithfield	5	24	9
Narragansett	8	1	0
Ports./Prud.*	227	0	8
Richmond	12	43	26
S. Kingstown	19	53	36
Scituate	16	38	14
Smithfield	5	32	7
Tiverton***	29	27	0
W. Greenwich	16	83	40
Westerly	3	35	21
Unknown	0	5	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>591</b>

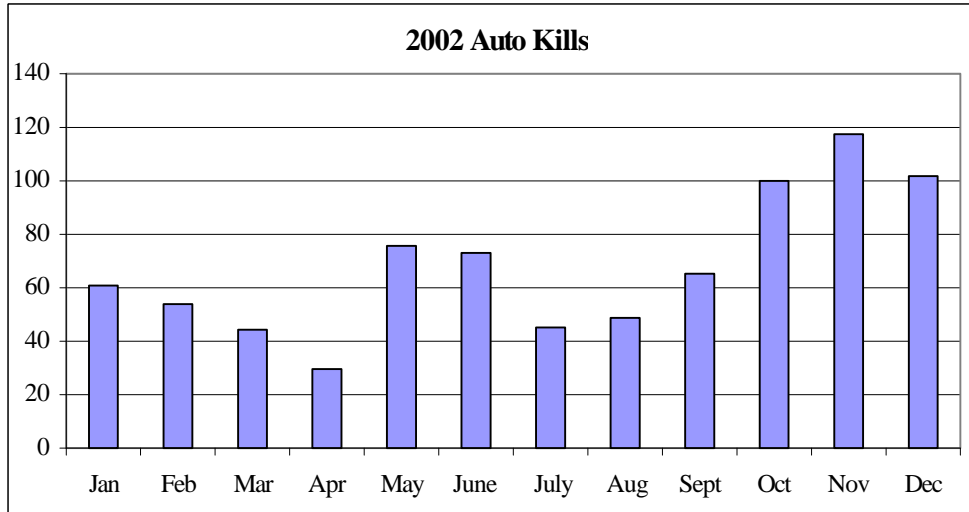
\* Limited to archery and special paraplegic shotgun season

\*\* Special permit only

\*\*\* No shotgun season



# Non-Seasonal Mortality



Deer overabundance often leads to a high frequency of deer/vehicle collisions, as well as excessive damage to commercial forests, agricultural crops, nursery stock and landscape plantings.



## Auto Kill by Town

Despite the cold winter there was not a large increase in the amount of deer damage to private property largely due to the abundant mast crop (acorns) last fall. Non-seasonal mortality for 2002 accounted for 816 deer. Auto strikes decreased 9.5% from 2001, totaling 645 for 2002, and were responsible for 79% of the non-seasonal take for the year. Deer strikes tend to be lowered during years of abundant mast because the deer are less likely to travel in search of food. Other non-seasonal deaths include: dogs, poaching, deer damage, and natural accidents.

### Kent County

Coventry	26
East Greenwich	39
W. Greenwich	33
W. Warwick	4
Warwick	27

### Washington County

Charlestown	27
Exeter	26
Hopkinton	19
N. Kingstown	45
Narragansett	24
Richmond	16
S. Kingstown	51
Westerly	23

### Providence County

Burrillville	16
Central Falls	0
Cranston	19
Cumberland	14
E. Providence	6
Foster	13
Glocester	19
Johnston	19
Lincoln	24
N. Providence	3
N. Smithfield	28
Pawtucket	0
Scituate	35
Smithfield	23
Woonsocket	0
Unknown	2

### Bristol

Bristol	2
Barrington	0

### Newport County

Jamestown	13
Little Compton	4
Middletown	5
Newport	1
Portsmouth	7
Prudence	4
Tiverton	23

**Total 645**

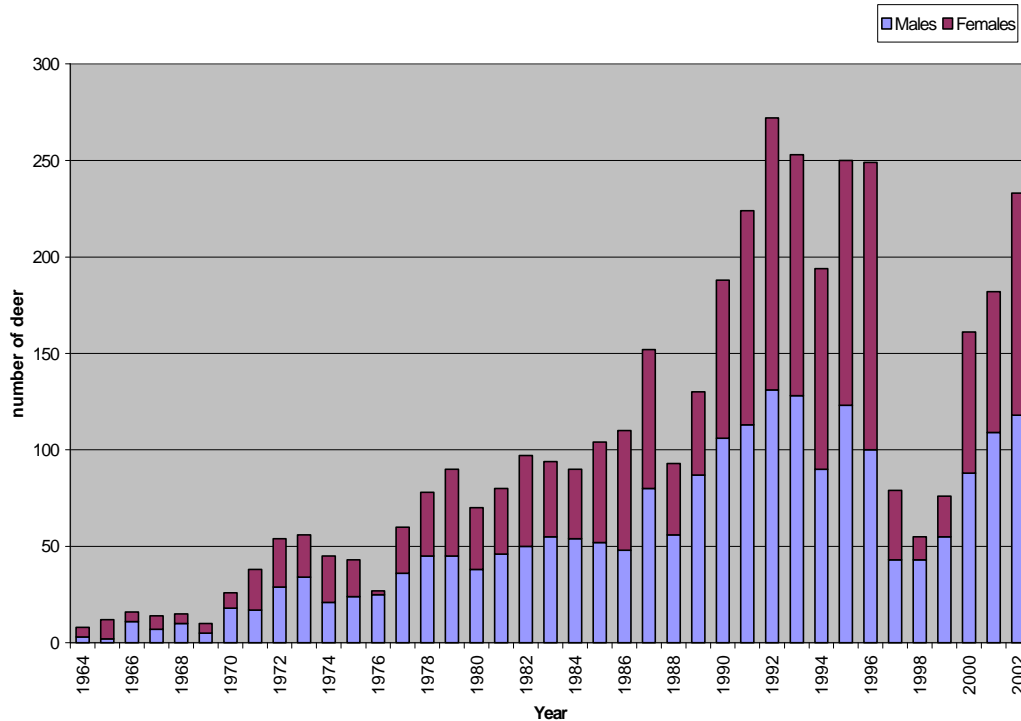


# Prudence Island Deer Information



Prudence Island has had one of the most concentrated white-tailed deer herds. Located in Narragansett Bay, Prudence Island, a part of the town of Portsmouth, has undergone many changes, both in terms of land use and deer population. Prudence Island was heavily farmed in the 1600's, bringing about deforestation and elimination of the deer herd. Laws to protect the deer followed soon thereafter. It was not until the early 1900's and the advent of the Industrial Revolution, that farms were abandoned and the Island reverted to forest. The deer herd rebounded, with additional recruitment from deer which swam across from the mainland. The land, again, underwent serious changes when the US Navy occupied the southern portion of the Island and stripped off the topsoil to reinforce bunkers and make roadways. By the late 1970's, deer population reached levels that exceeded the limited amount of habitat for the 5.5 square mile island, and the deer began to die of starvation. The Division of Fish and Wildlife was asked to assist the Island in developing a management plan to control the deer population. Restrictions against deer hunting were replaced with a limited bow hunting season, which continued for several years. Management now must be focused on again reducing the population has to be in balance with the available habitat. Unfortunately then planned prescribed burn did not take place this year due to unfavorable weather conditions. The division will continue to maintain openings utilizing whole-tree harvesting and brush cutting on the state management areas will continue in order to improve the habitat.

Fig. 5. Archery Deer Take on Prudence Island

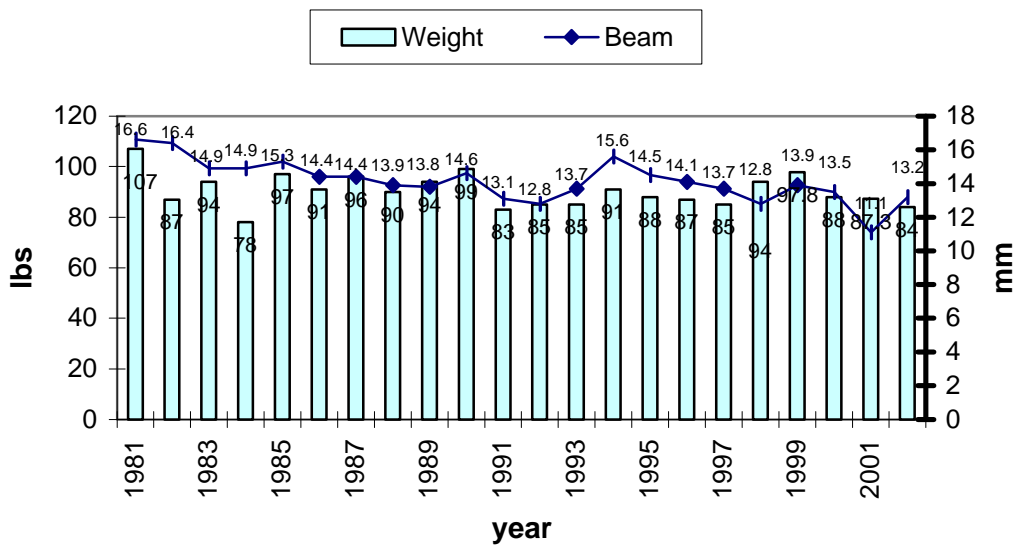


## Beams & Weights

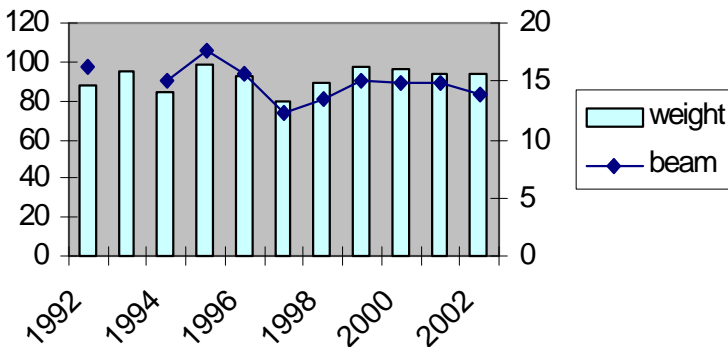
Yearling antler-beam diameters are the standards by which we measure deer health. Combined with the information that we have collected on dressed weights, these give us a good indication of the annual health of the herd. In a small population such as the P.I. herd, the variance between individuals can be very high and so averages may transmit an incomplete or unclear overall picture. However this is still an excellent management tool to gauge habitat and deer health.

Referring to the data on the previous page on the health of the deer, harvest objectives were set to control the size of the herd. As you can see in the chart below, the harvest was about the same for many years, but the herd was still growing, as evidenced by the decline in their health. The Division responded by increasing the harvest and allowing hunters to take a second deer. Bi-annual spotlight counts and health statistics indicated that the herd was still over carrying capacity, prompting the decision to continue the large harvest. Last year, the spotlight count increased in May and above the long term average in October. The harvest quota was increased to accommodate for the growth in the deer herd. The amount of enforcement will be increased to address poaching.

**Prudence Island Yearling Male Average Beam and Weight**



**Block Island Male Yearling Beam and Weight Averages**



Beam measurements for yearling in 1993 were unavailable.

**Block Island**

Deer were imported to Block Island in 1967 at the request of the town council at the time. The deer population continued to grow resulting in numerous complaints of deer damage as predators are lacking on the island and hunting was never permitted. Complaints were addressed through deer damage permits and the herd grew to 700 by 1994. In 1996 regulated season was initiated and a referendum was passed to drastically reduce deer herd. Residents are additionally concerned about lyme disease, but are equally concerned about public safety as a result hunting has been restricted to a small portion of the island. Also harvest limits were liberalized to increase the take and the population has been reduced to approximately 250 deer. Health parameters as measured by weights and mean yearling antler beams are still low despite the reduction of the herd.