

158 Outdoors: Annual moose lottery is a hot ticket in Maine

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Mark Blazis Outdoors
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If you're a moose hunter, tomorrow is as big as NFL draft day — maybe bigger. In Greenville, Maine's Department of Fish & Wildlife will identify winners of its annual moose lottery. For 4,110 lucky hunters, being selected will be like winning *the* lottery.

Thousands of hunters annually entering the lottery have been waiting for more than a decade to win. Those who don't win accumulate more chances in forthcoming lotteries. To many, it seems unfair that every year a few first-timers luck out in the random selection system.

Having a big-racked moose population around 76,000 and a well-managed 79 percent hunter success rate, Maine is one of the best places in the world to hunt them. The application and license fees Maine receives each year are a valuable cash cow that greatly helps its wildlife program. Chances to enter the lottery are \$15 each. Blocks of 10 chances are \$55. Maine resident winners pay an additional \$52 fee, while nonresident winners pay an additional \$585 for their permit. The impact on Maine's service economy is huge, too.

Massachusetts would do well to proactively follow suit on an appropriately smaller, scientifically determined scale, helping its own financially challenged wildlife program (not state coffers!). We could wisely use funds to purchase vanishing open space, all while minimizing future vehicle-moose collisions and fatalities.

Maine's moose hunting is so good that a sealed-bid auction for 10 permits for 2013 has yielded between \$10,191.11 and \$11,734.56 for each. Regrettably, moose hunting is becoming more and more a rich man's sport. If you've got enough money, you don't need to rely on luck and patience. Next year, as long as our economy doesn't improve too much, you should be able to bid \$12,000 and almost assuredly be awarded a tag. Just remember to have your application in by the May 14 deadline. (I'll still be spending \$15 for my single chance.)

This year's auction winners can choose their area and season. Some will almost guarantee bagging an enormous moose by hiring a professional guide who has scouted the state and knows where a world-class 60-inch bull is residing — and has the means of hauling out the thousand-pound trophy. That service may cost the winning bidder an additional \$5,000, but the \$16,000 total (not counting tips, transportation, food, lodging licenses and taxidermy) is still substantially less than an Alaska/Yukon hunt (home of the world's biggest moose), which averages more than \$20,000 when the final bills are paid. Maine is still a relative bargain — especially if you win the lottery straight out without entering the auction.

Yesterday, professional guide and taxidermist Mark Dufresne of Nature's Reflections gave me his thoughts on hunting them. While most hunters seek a trophy bull with a 60-inch rack, Dufresne advises that a smaller moose tastes far better.

A 400-pound young cow or calf, for example, is mild and tender like beef. A 250-300-pound calf is even better, almost like veal. A 600-700-pound 2- or 3-year-old bull with a 30-inch rack is also tender and flavorful. These immature, nonbreeding satellite bulls are not run down and beaten up like the big old breeding bulls, which are tasty but tough. A big old cow can be very tough, too. Big is good for the wall — but seldom best for the table.

According to Dufresne, moose hunting in Maine is tougher today than it was in the 1980s, during the peak of massive clear-cutting practices, which provided vast areas of food for their population expansion.

"Regulations have changed for cutters," he said. "We don't have the enormous clear-cuts that we did in the '80s. As a consequence, although we still have a ton of moose, we don't see as many. Open clear-cuts are by far the easiest place to see them, and today clear-cuts are comparatively small 60-acre patches."

Because of this change in timber harvesting practices, Dufresne advises that the best hunting strategy is to select gated or washed-out roads — places where access is limited to the masses. There you'll find the big bulls, feeding in the safest, most nutritious habitat. That often means getting higher up in mountainous

country. Dufresne sees his best chances for a Boone & Crockett bull in very nutritious patches of vegetation that were optimally clear cut two to four years before.

Moose have the reputation of being stupid and easy to hunt. That can be true during the rut, when hormone-blinded bulls have only one thing on their mind. But if you've hunted them long enough, you know that big old bulls can be just as challenging as whitetails anytime outside the rut. You can fool their eyes and ears, but never their nose. And the firs and swamps they hide in can often prove impenetrable.

Choosing a week to hunt can be critical. You flirt with temperatures in September. When it's hot, the bulls hide in the shadows and don't move. But the beginning of September is the time for the most exciting moose hunt, when big bulls can be lured very close into a call.

If you shoot a bull and want it mounted, expect to spend about \$1,500 on taxidermy. Dufresne complains that the form alone costs him \$300. Somehow those costs don't seem much to a moose hunter who dreams of challenging the largest member of the world's deer family to enrich his wall, freezer and memory.

1. What are the fees to apply to the lottery or to get a permit if my name is drawn?

Applicants are only allowed to submit one application to the moose hunting permit lottery each year. The fees outlined below are for lottery entry only. If your name is selected, an additional fee of \$52 for Residents of Maine or \$585 for non-Maine-residents must be paid before you will receive your moose permit.

Resident (includes Maine Lifetime License Holders living outside of Maine):

- * One Chance - \$15.00
- * Superpack License Holders are eligible for one chance for free

Non-Resident and Canadian Resident Entry Fees:

- * One Chance - \$15.00
- * Three Chances - \$25.00
- * Six Chances - \$35.00
- * Blocks of Ten Chances - \$55.00 per block

Service Person Entry Fees (for Maine Residents permanently stationed out of Maine or Non-Maine residents permanently stationed in Maine):

- * One Chance - \$15.00
- * Superpack License Holders are eligible for one chance for free.

<http://www5.informe.org/online/moose/faq/>

Moose Application Information

Number of permits to be issued in 2013: 4,110 - No more than 10% of the permits in each district will be issued to nonresidents.

Everyone is strongly encouraged to help the Department in its efforts to save money by applying for the moose permit lottery using the online application process. The online application process is quick and easy. Applicants will get instant confirmation of their entry into the lottery.

If an applicant does not have access to a computer or the Internet at home, the Department has the following suggestions for applying online:

- Paper applications will be mailed to those customers who applied using a paper application the previous year.
- Use a computer at work during lunch or a break.
- Use a computer at your local library or Internet caf.
- Ask a friend or relative with a computer for help in applying.

If you have no way to apply online, the Department is offering the following options to apply for the moose permit lottery:

- Print out a paper application. (**Note: The deadline to apply with paper application is April 1, 2013**). You can then fill out the application and mail it to us with your payment.
- Come to our main office in Augusta where you can fill out a paper application.
- Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the address given below. Department personnel will mail you a paper application that you can then fill out and mail back to us with your payment.

Moose Permit Application Request
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
41 State House Station
284 State Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0041

Moose Application Deadline: You can apply online until 11:59 PM on May 14, 2013. If you use a paper application, it must be postmarked by April 1, 2013, or delivered to 284 State Street in Augusta by 5:00 PM on April 1, 2013.

Application Fees

Maine Residents

\$15.00 = One-chance (or bonus point only)

Nonresidents

\$15.00 = One-chance (or bonus point only)
\$25.00 = Three-chances
\$35.00 = Six-chances
\$55.00 = **Ten-chances

** Nonresidents may purchase multiples of 10 chances at \$55.00 each.
Example: 5 multiples of 10 chances would cost \$275.00 (5 x \$55.00 = \$275.00)

Receipt

Applicants who apply online will receive a confirmation number at the end of the online moose lottery application.

If you apply using a paper application (PDF) and want a receipt, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your application.

Bonus Points

Each bonus point accumulated gives the individual an additional chance in the drawing. Bonus points are accumulated as shown below:

0 - 5 years = one point per year
6 - 10 years = two points per year
11 - 15 years = three points per year
16+ years = 10 points per year

Count the number of years you have applied since 1998 without winning or skipping a year
(See chart below)

Example: If this is your 12th year of applying for a moose permit since 1998 without winning or skipping a year, you will have 21 bonus points this year. The maximum amount of points a person could possibly have without skipping a year as of 2013 would be 30 points.

1 year = 1 bonus point	10 years = 15 bonus points	19 years = 70 bonus points	28 years = 160 bonus points
2 years = 2 bonus points	11 years = 18 bonus points	20 years = 80 bonus points	29 years = 170 bonus points
3 years = 3 bonus points	12 years = 21 bonus points	21 years = 90 bonus points	30 years = 180 bonus points
4 years = 4 bonus points	13 years = 24 bonus points	22 years = 100 bonus points	31 years = 190 bonus points
5 years = 5 bonus points	14 years = 27 bonus points	23 years = 110 bonus points	32 years = 200 bonus points
6 years = 7 bonus points	15 years = 30 bonus points	24 years = 120 bonus points	33 years = 210 bonus points
7 years = 9 bonus points	16 years = 40 bonus points	25 years = 130 bonus points	34 years = 220 bonus points
8 years = 11 bonus points	17 years = 50 bonus points	26 years = 140 bonus points	35 years = 230 bonus points
9 years = 13 bonus points	18 years = 60 bonus points	27 years = 150 bonus points	36 years = 240 bonus points

Bonus points are tracked by the Department using the applicant's name and date of birth. Bonus points are not transferable.

To receive bonus points, please make sure to enter your correct name and date of birth on the application. Also, you need to indicate that you applied for the lottery last year. The online application will search our database for your name and date of birth, and indicate the number of bonus points you have. If you do not agree with the number of bonus points indicated, you should contact the Department.

For those who choose to apply using a paper application, please be sure to enter your correct name and date of birth, and indicate that you applied last year. Department personnel will make sure you get the correct number of bonus points.

Important - Bonus Points are forfeited if the applicant:

- fails to apply or purchase bonus points in any two (2) consecutive years;
- obtains a permit through the moose drawing;
- is selected for a permit and later declines and/or fails to meet the criteria for legally possessing that permit;
- is found to have not legally applied in the current year; or
- enters the incorrect name or date of birth on the application or fails to indicate that they applied for a permit last year.

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http://www.maine.gov/ifw/licenses_permits/lotteries/moose/index.htm#permitallocations

Tom Lehrer - The Hunting Song Lyrics

Artist: [Tom Lehrer](#)

Tom Lehrer
Miscellaneous
The Hunting Song
THE HUNTING SONG

I always will remember
Twas a year ago November

I went out to hunt some deer
On a morning bright and clear
I went and shot the maximum
The game laws would allow
Two game wardens, seven hunters and a cow

Read more at <http://www.songlyrics.com/tom-lehrer/the-hunting-song-lyrics/#H1TYffE6ddAy8hyx.99>