

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Tribal Hunting Regulations for the 1836 Ceded Territory
2025-2026

The following are the abbreviated version for reference meant to highlight the General Rules, Seasons and Bag Limits for 2025 and 2026 Hunting and Trapping. For additional information please refer to Inland Hunting/Trapping/Gathering Regulations under the Regulations sections on the GTB NRD homepage.

[Natural Resources - Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians \(gtbindians.org\)](http://gtbindians.org)

Hunting Safety Rules

1. Be sure of your intended target.
2. Hunting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset except when hunting raccoon, opossum, coyote, fox, rabbit or hare at night.
3. Hunting deer with dogs is prohibited except when blood tracking wounded animals.
4. Hunting with full-automatic firearm(s) is prohibited.
5. No discharge of firearms within 450 feet of occupied buildings without occupant consent.
6. Hunter Orange Required when using a firearm for hunting Elk, Deer, Bear, and General small game.
7. It is unlawful to harass another hunter.
8. Landowner Permission is required to access Private Property.
9. Hunter Safety Course Required for anyone under 21 years of age.

Law Enforcement Officers specifically delegated with enforcement of Tribal hunting regulations are defined by the Grand Traverse Band Tribal Council as the Grand Traverse Band Conservation Department, Special Agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the definitions of their federal authority, and officers authorized by Grand Traverse Band Tribal Council.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians authorizes the biologists and technicians of the Grand Traverse Band Natural Resources Department to inspect and verify harvest in the field for obtaining information relevant to harvest, species harvested, and other information deemed appropriate for the management of the Tribal wildlife resources.

Whitetail Deer

(5 Deer Annual Limit) Not to Exceed Two Antlered Bucks with only one Buck to be harvested during Season 1 with a firearm. A deer with antlers over 3" will be considered a buck.

Bow/ Crossbow/ Edge-bladed Spear (Public, Tribal, and Tribal Owners/Lessee Land)

Day after Labor Day through Sunday of the First full Weekend of January.

Kent County season is extended through January 31st, 2025.

All Deer Tags can be used, only 2 may have antlers 3" or longer.

Firearm/Muzzleloader/Air Gun (Public, Tribal, and Tribal Owners/Lessee Land)

Season 1 - Day after Labor Day through October 31.

One deer with antlers 3" or longer and other deer have to be antlerless

Firearm Closed: November 1 through November 14 (per 2007 CD).

Season 2 - November 15 through January 11, 2026.

All remaining tags can be used, you cannot exceed 2 deer with antlers over 3".

Additional Firearm Hunt Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau

The Counties of Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau will be open to GTB Tribal Citizens with any legal weapon including modern firearms for deer hunting on private lands (other than CFA) **with owner consent** and on Tribal Lands from October 1 through November 10. This will be considered **Season 1.**

Public Lands are Closed to firearm, muzzleloader, or pellet guns to harvest deer from November 1 through November 14, 2025.

Firearm/Muzzleloader/Air Gun/Suppressed Firearm (Non-Tribal Private Land with Owner Consent)

Any firearm season open to state licensed hunters is open to GTB Tribal Citizens. These dates change year to year but they include the Michigan DNR Youth Hunt, Liberty Hunt and any other rifle hunts the Michigan State DNR allows in the 1836 Treaty Ceded Territory.

***Tribal elders and persons with physical disabilities, which may limit the ability to walk unaided by cane, crutch, or portable walker; may hunt from a non-moving vehicle. The vehicle engine may be running for purposes for personal comfort, however, the vehicle but remain stationary without running lights in operation.**

****The Tribes shall require hunting blinds of man-made materials on State, Federal and Tribal lands to legibly display, in letters at least 2" high, the name and an indication of Tribal membership of the owner. The Tribes shall not permit non-portable ground deer blinds utilizing man-made materials to be placed on State, Federal or Tribal lands before August 15. The Tribes shall require that deer blinds be removed within 10 days of the end of the last open day for Tribal firearm deer hunting.**

Wild Turkey

Bow/ Crossbow/ Centerfire/ Rimfire/ Muzzleloader/ Air Gun/ Suppressed Firearm

Season One: September 15 through November 15.

Harvest: 5 birds (either sex).

Season Two: April 15 through June 30.

Harvest: 3 birds with visible beard.

Black Bear

The Application Period for Bear will be May 1 to June 1 and all successful applicants will be mailed a bear hunting packet with seasons and other rules by July 31. The application will be available on the GTB NRD website, at the GTB NRD building, in the newsletter, and on hunt.gtbindians.org.

Elk

The Application Period for Elk will be May 1 to June 1 and all successful applicants will be contacted and will have an orientation set up for the elk hunt by August 31. The application will be available on the GTB NRD website, at the GTB NRD building, in the newsletter, and on hunt.gtbindians.org.

Furbearers

Hunting

Method: Bow/ Crossbow/ Centerfire/ Rimfire/ Muzzleloader/ Air Gun/ Suppressed Firearm

Bobcat, Red/Gray Fox, Raccoon

October 15 through March 31

Bobcat Bag Limit: 2 total hunting/trapping combined.

***Coyote, Red/Gray Fox, Raccoon, Cottontail Rabbit, Snowshoe Hare:** No Limit

May be hunted 24 hours a day

After sunset; methods restricted to rim fire rifle, air gun, handgun and/or shotgun with # 3 buckshot and/or smaller; bow and crossbow, or a centerfire rifle or centerfire pistol .269-caliber or smaller.

*Coyote open all year for hunting. Rabbit and Hare August 1 to March 31

Trapping

Bobcat, *Fisher, *American Marten

Season: October 25 through March 1

Season Limit: 2 per Species, *Fisher and Marten open in UP only.

Check in required after harvest to be sealed

Otter

Season: October 25 through March 31

Season limit: 4

Check in required after harvest to be sealed

Coyote, Red/Gray Fox, Raccoon, Mink, Badger

Season: October 25 through March 1

No Limit

Muskrat, Beaver

Season: October 25 through April 15

No Limit

Trapping Methods and Gear:

- Water Trapping for Beaver, Otter, Mink, Muskrat methods include: Conibear, Snares, Foot/leg hold, and Colony traps for Muskrat.
- Land Trapping: Leg-Hold (foot-hold), Snares, Conibears.¹
- Conibear traps may be used on land when set in a “box set” not to exceed 6” diameter, placed in a tree set or limb set or platform four feet above the surface of ground or snow. This regulation is to avoid a hazard to hunting dogs and non target animals as conibears are designed to be lethal.

Migratory Birds

Ducks

The general duck season will run from September 1, 2025 through January 20, 2026. The daily bag limit of 35 ducks includes no more than (8) pintails, (4) canvasbacks, (5) hooded merganser, (8) black ducks, (10) wood ducks, (8) redheads, and (20) mallards of which no more than 10 would be hens.

¹ Abbreviated GTB Hunting Regulations

Geese

The Canada goose and snow goose season will run from September 1, 2025 through February 15, 2026. For white-fronted geese, and brant; September 20 through December 30, 2025. The daily bag limit for Canada and snow geese will be (15) and the daily bag for white-fronted geese and brant would be five (5).

Sand-hill Crane

Sand-hill cranes season shall run from September 1 through November 14, 2025 by Special Use-Ceremonial Permit only.

Snipe and Rails

Snipe and Rails (includes sora and Virginia rails) shall run from September 1 to November 14, 2025. The daily bag limit shall not exceed (10) birds per species.

Mourning Doves

The mourning dove season shall run from September 1 to November 14, 2025 with a daily bag of (25).

Shooting Hours for Migratory birds are ½ Hour before sunrise to ½ Hour after sunset. All other regulations contained in 50 CFR part 20 including shooting hours and the required use of non-toxic shot indicated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service including steel, tungsten-iron, bismuth, heavy shot□ would apply. The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians will closely monitor harvest through game bag checks, patrols, and mail surveys.

Small Game

Method: Bow/Crossbow/Firearm/Suppressed Firearm/Muzzleloader, Air gun

Cotton-tail Rabbit, Snow-shoe Hare, Gray/Black/Fox Squirrel, Ruffed Grouse, Ring-neck Pheasant, Woodcock

Season: August 1 through March 31 No Bag Limit, except Sharp-tail Grouse: Limit 3 per day

Cotton-tail Rabbit, Snow-shoe Hare: May be hunted at night following Furbearer Hunting regulations

Porcupine, Woodchuck, Red Squirrel, Opossum, Feral Swine ("Wild Hogs")
Open all Year/No limit

Woodcock season shall run from September 1 to November 14, 2025 with a daily bag of (5) birds.