

New England's Best Gun Bucks



Despite the growth in popularity of primitive weapons hunting (bow and muzzleloader), the majority of the Northeast's best bucks continue to fall to the region's shotgun and rifle hunters. In fact, for many of us deer hunting is synonymous with Benoit-style tracking in the snow, with gun or rifle at the ready, and fresh tracks up ahead! And many gun hunters have adopted bow-hunting tactics in elevated tree-stands, particularly in suburban areas and smaller pockets of cover. According to the Northeast Big Buck Club, the regions' record keeping and scoring organization, Gun hunters harvested more than 200 bucks that made the NBBC record book during the 2006 season (bucks that score 100" or better gross Boone & Crockett). In 2006, a new state record typical gun buck fell in New Hampshire, and 170-class or better bucks were taken in most northeastern states. Here is a roundup of the best bucks taken during the most recent seasons. And we have also included some good advice about where you should focus your hunt in 2007.

Jeff Savarese, 175 5/8" (gross), 163 2/8" (net) , CT, Non-Typical 12-Point

From The 2006 Season!

Best Counties For Your 2007 Gun Hunt!

by Jeff Brown

Northeast's Best Gun Bucks of 2006

It is important to note that all scores and rankings reflect Northeast Big Buck Club records only. All rankings are by gross B&C score (prior to deductions). What follows is the final tally of the best bucks from the 2006 gun seasons, at least as of the writing of this article (August 2007). It is also worth noting that we are including the states of Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York in this article. Although the NBBC scores deer from Pennsylvania and other states and Canadian Provinces, we will focus primarily on the Northeast in this particular article.

Let's take a look at 2006. According to the NBBC, the gross B&C scores for the biggest gun bucks taken during the 2006 season were:

As you can see from these scores, when viewed as a "region" the Northeast produced some very impressive bucks during this past gun season. And when looking at the previous season (2005) you can see that the top end bucks in each season are consistently reaching into the 170-class to over 200". Not only are the top end bucks outstanding, but the Northeast's gun hunters have recorded no fewer than 200 NBBC record book bucks in each of the last four seasons as follows: 2003 – 250 entries; 2004 – 255 entries; 2005 - 250 entries; 2006 – 200 entries. It should be mentioned that

2006

the number of entries for the most recent season is typically the lowest, given that it generally takes a year or two for the majority of the entries to "surface". You will notice that during the last two years five of the seven Northeast states have put bucks into the "top 10", proving that guns across the entire region are having great success when it comes to trophy bucks. It is also interesting to note that New York has produced more top gun bucks over the last two years (9 of the top 20) than any other state, continuing this state's long standing trend of producing many of the best bucks from the region!

Now that we have looked at the region, let's take a look at the state-by-state roundup of the best gun bucks from 2006!

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	Gross	Net	State	Rack	Hunter
1.	214 2/8"	209 1/8"	New York	Non-Typical 19-Point	Bob Cuozzo
2.	199 5/8"	187 2/8"	New Hampshire	Typical 15-Point	John Klucky*
3.	194 7/8"	187 0/8"	Massachusetts	Non-Typical 17-Point	Chris McKay
4.	187 2/8"	177 5/8"	New Hampshire	Non-Typical 15-Point	Blake Gowen
5.	185 0/8"	181 2/8"	Maine	Non-Typical 17-Point	Alan Ross
6.	183 2/8"	177 1/8"	New York	Non-Typical 17-Point	Stephan Bailey
7.	181 6/8"	176 7/8"	New York	Non-Typical 17-Point	James Doyle
8.	178 2/8"	170 2/8"	New Hampshire	Typical 10-Point	Alfred Bagley
9.	175 5/8"	163 2/8"	Connecticut	Non-Typical 12-Point	Jeff Savarese
10.	174 7/8"	162 0/8"	New York	Typical 12-Point	Charles Farney

Note: Entries with an (*) broke existing gun state records.

By way of comparison to the previous year, the gross B&C scores for the biggest gun bucks taken in the Northeast during the 2005 season were:

2005

	Gross	Net	State	Rack	Hunter
1.	201 6/8"	192 6/8"	New York	Non-Typical 17-Point	Andy Hall
2.	196 7/8"	186 1/8"	Massachusetts	Non-Typical 16-Point	Mary May Pratt
3.	187 1/8"	178 6/8"	New Hampshire	Non-Typical 13-Point	David Wilson
4.	182 6/8"	171 3/8"	Connecticut	Non-Typical 13-Point	Fred Jensen
5.	172 5/8"	164 2/8"	New York	Typical 10-Point	Donald Davenport
6.	171 7/8"	167 1/8"	New York	Typical 10-Point	Mitchell Baxter
7.	171 7/8"	165 2/8"	New York	Non-Typical 14-Point	Arthur Gilbert
8.	170 1/8"	161 5/8"	New York	Non-Typical 13-Point	Shane Sutton
9.	168 5/8"	156 2/8"	Maine	Non-Typical 14-Point	Jeff Carr
10.	167 3/8"	147 5/8"	Connecticut	Non-Typical 12-Point	Jesse Brennan

NE's Best Gun Bucks *continued from previous page*

Best Gun Bucks of 2006

NEW YORK – In recent years New York has out-distanced the rest of the Northeast in terms of trophy buck production during gun season. In 2006 alone the state recorded over 100 new NBBC gun entries, with more than 30 scoring over 150" gross B&C, and several getting up in the 180's or better. The biggest buck of the year was Bob Cuzzo's 214 2/8" gross 209 1/8" net B&C non-typical monster. This Chemung County 19-Point was the biggest gun buck from the Northeast in 2006, and ranks among NY's all-time best bucks in just about every record book! We featured a story on this great buck earlier this year. Other monster gun bucks include Stephan Bailey's 183 2/8" gross B&C non-typical 17-Point from Wayne County, and James Doyle's 17-Point non-typical from Oneida County that scored 181 6/8" gross B&C. The largest typical gun buck of the year fell to Charles Farney in Jefferson County. His great 10-Point scored 174 7/8" gross and 162" net B&C. There were too many 160-class bucks to list, but they came from every corner of the state including Steuben County (169 5/8" gross, Jeff Robinson), Broome County (168 2/8" gross, David Gorman), Monroe County (166 7/8", Marvin Vahue), and many more. New York is certainly one of the best places to track down a huge gun buck!



Bob Cuzzo, 214 2/8" (gross), 209 1/8" (net), NY, Non-Typical 19-Point

NY

Best Places To Gun Hunt In NY

Best County for Gun Trophies: Steuben (Best), Essex (2nd Best)
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Steuben (Best), Wayne (2nd Best)
 Biggest Gun Buck: Richard Wright, Steuben County, 1993, 219 4/8" Gross, 206 6/8" Net
 (NOTE: bigger bucks have been recorded by the NYSBBC—this is the largest in the NBBC records)



Chris McKay (in red shirt), 194 7/8" (gross), 187 0/8" (net) , MA, Non-Typical 17-Point

monster fell on November 29th, and was rutted out with a dressed weight of only 156 lbs. The brute had quite a rack however, with an inside spread of almost 20", and 8 abnormal points totaling over 36". The buck nets 187" B&C. Some other very impressive

bucks fell in 2006, including a 172 5/8" gross and 164 3/8" net B&C typical 10-Point taken by Patrick Cappella, also in Plymouth County. Brian Peary dropped a 10-Point in Worcester County that grossed 164 4/8" and netted 160 3/8" B&C. Both of these typicals made B&C minimums. A host of 140-class to 150-class bucks fell throughout the state, with good bucks taken in just about every county, from east to west, and north to south. There was little tracking snow in 2006, but we can expect more quality bucks in 2007 if the snow flies!

MA

Best Places To Gun Hunt In MA

Best County for Gun Trophies: Worcester (Best), Hampshire (2nd Best)
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Worcester (Best), Franklin (2nd Best)
 Biggest Gun Buck: Whitey Sovinski, Franklin County, 2002, 204 1/8" Gross, 193 3/8" Net

CONNECTICUT – This state is often responsible for producing some of the best bucks taken by the region's archers, but typically the gun hunters make some headlines as well. This past season brought us several very good top-end bucks. The largest was a 175 5/8" non-typical 12-Point killed by Jeff Savarese. This New Haven County monster was the 9th largest gun buck killed in the Northeast that season. Several other quality bucks fell in counties across the state, including a 165 1/8" typical 10-Point taken by James Christiano in New Haven County; a 163 6/8" typical 10-Point shot by Alex Rocchi in Fairfield County; and a 163 2/8" typical 9-Point in Hartford County for Dave Farley. This state produces big-bodied deer as well, including a 246 lb. buck taken by Mark Galligan in New London County and a 240 lb. brute taken by Ted Jadcak in Windham County. Many bucks with dressed weights over 220 lbs. were reported. So if you are looking for big racks and big bodies, this might be the place for you. However, state land hunting requires a lottery permit, and private land requires written permission, so advanced planning is important.

CT

Best Places To Gun Hunt In CT

Best County for Gun Trophies: Litchfield (Best), Windham (2nd Best),
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Litchfield (Best), Hartford (2nd Best)
 Biggest Gun Buck: Keith Dupke, Litchfield County, 1992, 206 4/8" Gross, 196 0/8" Net

NEW HAMPSHIRE - New Hampshire set a new state record for typical gun bucks in 2006 when John Klucky caught up with a Merrimack County monster! This great buck scored 199 5/8" gross, 187 2/8" net B&C as a 15-Point typical. That is a rarity – typicals of 14 scorable points or more are quite unusual. The Klucky buck currently stands as the 2nd largest gross scoring typical in the



John Klucky (in red shirt/yellow cap), 199 5/8" (gross), 187 2/8" (net) , NH, Typical 15-Point

Northeast – all-time! Several other monsters were taken in 2006 in the Granite State, with Blake Gowen’s 187 2/8” non-typical 15-Point next on our list. This huge buck was taken on 11/19/06 in Sullivan County. Another big typical fell to Alfred Bagley in Belknap County. The buck grossed 178 2/8” and netted 170 2/8” B&C as a 10-Point, and it dressed a whopping 230 lbs! Many other quality 150-class bucks were killed in many different counties. Two examples are Fred Doucette’s 154 3/8” 10-Point from Coos County and Howeina Lariviere’s 153 7/8” 10-Point from Cheshire County, and several others from Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties. As you can see, big bucks are taken in nearly every county across the state.

NH

Best Places To Gun Hunt In NH

Best County for Gun Trophies: Coos (Best), Cheshire (2nd Best)
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Cheshire (Best), Coos (2nd Best)
 Biggest Gun Buck: John Klucky, Merrimack County, 2006, 199 5/8” Gross, 187 2/8” Net

VERMONT – We all know that Vermont is trying to re-establish itself as the “trophy whitetail hotspot” that it was in years passed, and it certainly had a great reputation 20 to 30 years ago. While it is still not producing big bucks nearly as often as neighboring states, hunters do continue to harvest a few big-bodied, big-racked bucks each year. In 2006 the biggest gun buck scored by the NBBC fell in Chittenden County. This 155 7/8” non-typical 13-Point was taken by Marty Chicoine on November 18th. The buck had 5 abnormal points, and tines in excess of 10”, giving the rack a very impressive set of characteristics. The deer was big bodied, dressing out at 207 lbs. This is the largest gun buck taken in the state since 2004, when Charles Pronto took a 157 3/8” 10-Point in Essex County. Let’s hope this is just the start of Vermont’s resurgence as a strong producer of trophy bucks!

VT

Best Places To Gun Hunt In VT

Best County for Gun Trophies: Windham (Best), Essex (2nd Best)
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Washington (Best), Rutland (2nd Best)
 Biggest Gun Buck: Jack Szymanowski, Essex County, 1991, 186 0/8” Gross, 180 0/8” Net

MAINE – When we think of gun hunting tradition in the Northeast, most people immediately summon up thoughts of tracking huge whitetails in Maine’s Northwoods. No state in the Northeast can match Maine’s long-standing reputation as a prolific producer of 200 pound “Boone & Crockett caliber” trophy bucks. This state has more entries in the B&C record book than any other in New England. Each year many heavy racked and heavy bodied bucks are taken by Maine’s hunters, and it is generally a safe bet that most of the big bucks are taken during the November rifle season. Last season many huge bucks fell, with “Big Al” Ross shooting an impressive 185” gross and 181 2/8” net B&C non-typical 17-Point in Franklin County. Ross’s buck was the 5th largest from the Northeast last season. Franklin County also produced a great typical 10-Point for Kelvin Pillsbury that scored 161 6/8” gross B&C. Oxford County produced a 13-Point non-typical for



Alan Ross, 185 0/8” (gross), 181 2/8” (net), ME, Non-Typical 17-Point

Jeff Picard that scored 170” gross B&C. Of course, many hunters in Maine are more interested in dressed weight than rack score, and this state produces many bucks of 250 lbs. or more each year. While these big-bodied bucks come from all over the state, it is often the northern counties that produce these bucks the most often, like the 262 lb. Aroostook County 10-Point for Chad Green last year. Tough winters up north

took their toll in the early years of this decade, but big bucks are once again coming from all counties and the deer harvest is on it’s way back up!

ME

Best Places To Gun Hunt In ME

Best County for Gun Trophies: Aroostook (Best), Piscataquis (2nd Best),
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Aroostook (Best), Penobscot (2nd Best)
 Biggest Gun Buck: Jay McLellan, Penobscot County, 2002, 219 2/8” Gross, 206 5/8” Net

RHODE ISLAND – Muzzleloader hunters dominate the headlines in this state, as their season falls during the rut. Gun hunters take surprisingly few trophy bucks. In fact, Rhody is the only state in the Northeast in which muzzleloader hunters take more trophies each year than the gun hunters! The gun season comes after the rut (in December) and many of the good bucks are already taken, or scared! Rhody rarely puts a gun buck on the top 10 list, and 2006 did not produce anything of that caliber. In fact, no bucks over 140” have yet been recorded from this state’s 2006 season. Some very nice 130-class bucks were shot, such as David Imbriglio’s 135 3/8” 10-Point, and Todd Chatell’s 131 2/8” 8-Point. Both bucks came from Washington County. A 150” or better buck has not been shot during the Rhode Island gun season since 2004! Let’s hope 2007 produces some better bucks for this state’s gun hunters.

RI

Best Places To Gun Hunt In RI

Best County for Gun Trophies: Washington (Best), Providence (2nd Best)
 Most 150-Class or Better Gun Bucks: Tied: Providence and Washington
 Biggest Gun Buck: Benjamin Forziati, 1960, 197 2/8” Gross, 185 2/8” Net

2006 Summary, and the Outlook for 2007

The 2006 gun season in the northeast produced some outstanding trophies. It seems that each year brings us new state record bucks in this category even though the records seem out-of-reach at the start of each year. Given the growth of QDMA and serious trophy hunting across the region, and the success gun

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