



Deer Hunter Observation Survey Results 2014-2016

Thank you to all the deer hunters from across the state that took the time to fill out the observation survey! We appreciate you taking an active part in the conservation of North Carolina's wildlife resources. This information helps biologists detect changes in wildlife populations and provides valuable data that can be used when evaluating hunting regulations.

The following is a summary of statewide results from the North Carolina Deer Hunter Observation Survey (DHOS) that was conducted during the 2014-2016 hunting seasons. The DHOS is a great way to monitor several game and furbearer species. The survey documents where species occur and can provide an index of how populations change (increase, decrease, or remain stable) over time. A few highlights from the first three years of the survey:

- Approximately 1,000 deer hunters each year recorded the wildlife they saw on ~73,000 hunting trips encompassing 205,000 observation hours.
- Hunters recorded an average of 19.7 hunts per year, averaging 3.5 hours per hunt.
- Deer and gray squirrels were the most commonly sighted species (see Table 1).
- Statewide, hunters averaged seeing 0.7 deer per hunting hour (see Figure 1, back page).
- Hunters recorded approximately 0.6 fawns for every doe. This varied widely between years and areas but on average is similar to ratios reported in other southeastern states.
- The observed gender ratio for deer was 1 antlered buck for every 2.6 adult does.
- Fox squirrels were observed in several counties across the state (see Figure 2, back page).
- Turkey were sighted in all 100 counties. The ratio of bearded turkeys to turkeys without beards will help us understand success of nesting and brood rearing each year.

If you have any questions, concerns, or know of another deer hunter that would like to participate, please contact us anytime. Please contact Ryan Myers by email at ryan.myers@ncwildlife.org, by mail at 1723 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699, or by phone at (919) 218-3376.

Table 1. North Carolina Deer Hunter Observation Survey, statewide observation rates, 2014-2016.

Animal Type	Animals seen per 1,000 hours	
All Deer (<i>including unknown age/sex</i>)	753.1	(±58.0)
Gray Squirrel	724.1	(±54.4)
Doe Deer	373.5	(±33.6)
All Turkey (<i>including unknown beard status</i>)	366.0	(±61.1)
Non-Bearded Turkey	181.5	(±31.1)
Fawn Deer	162.5	(±15.2)
Antlered Buck	147.9	(±11.8)
Bearded turkey	66.5	(±13.8)
Raccoon	26.3	(±6.1)
Coyote	20.0	(±9.2)
Fox Squirrel	17.9	(±6.3)
Adult Bear	11.6	(±5.8)
Gray Fox	8.6	(±1.8)
Juvenile Bear	5.9	(±3.1)
Red Fox	3.6	(±1.1)
Bobcat	3.3	(±1.0)
Swine	2.0	(±1.1)

Note: The statewide estimates were derived from 3-year county averages. Parentheses indicate a 95% confidence interval.

Deer Observation Rates

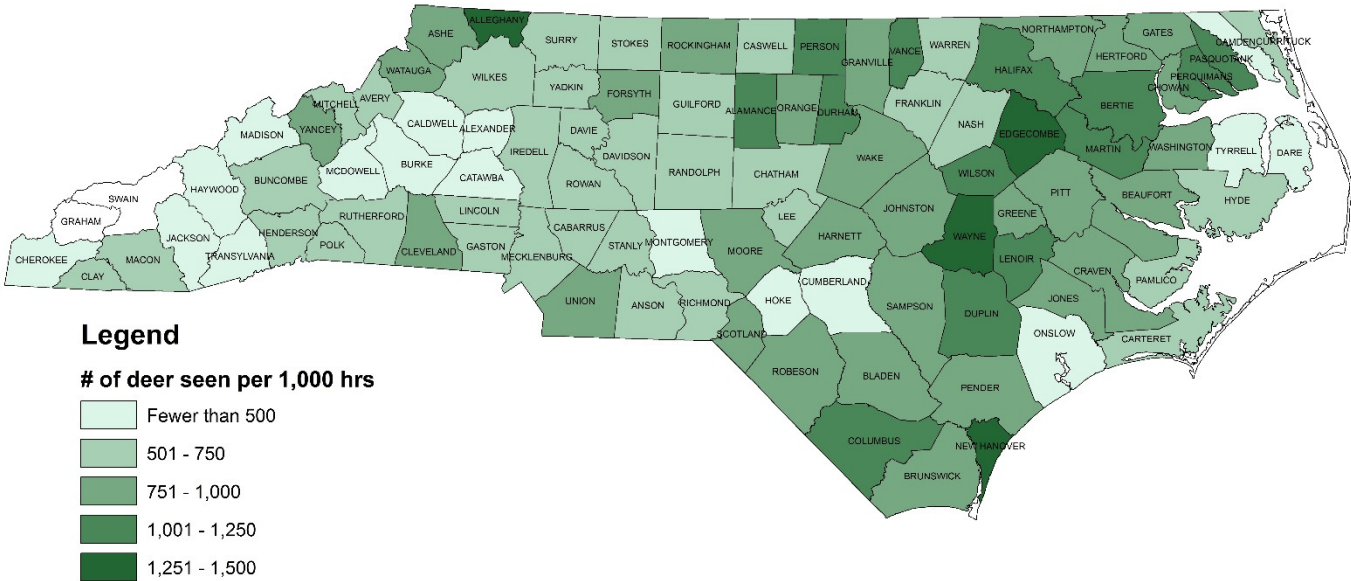


Figure 1. North Carolina deer observation rates by county (# of deer seen per 1,000hrs), Deer Hunter Observation Survey, 2014-2016. Note: Adequate sample sizes were not available for Graham or Swain counties.

Fox Squirrel Observation Rates

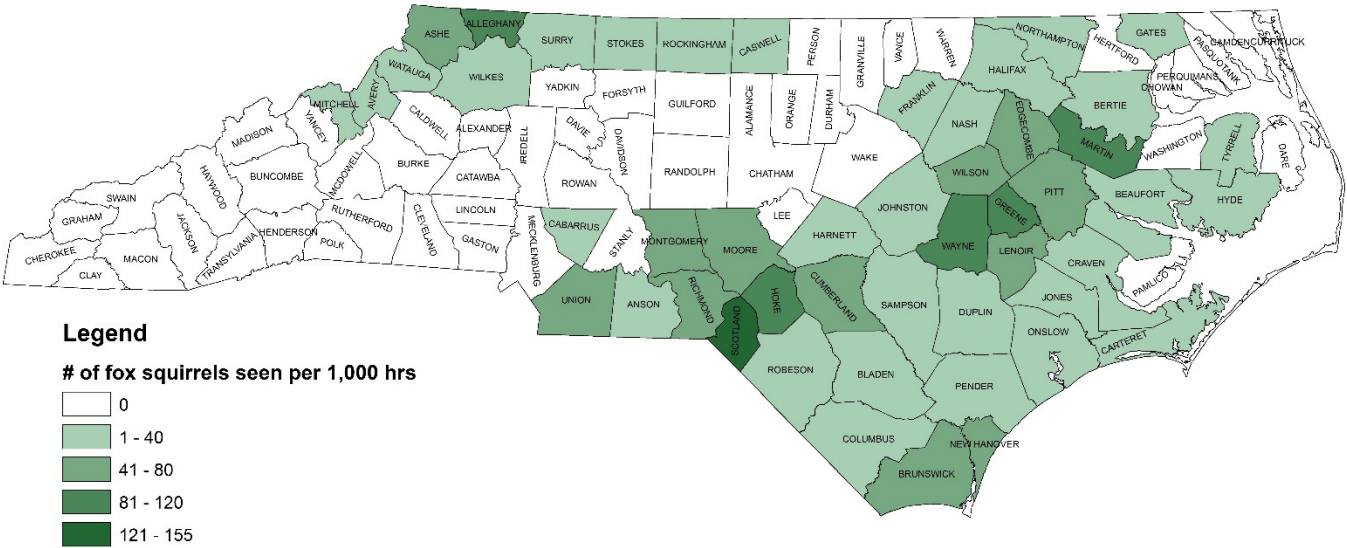


Figure 2. North Carolina fox squirrel observation rates by county (# of fox squirrels seen per 1,000hrs), Deer Hunter Observation Survey, 2014-2016.