Crossbow FAQ
(Updated August 2011)

Q. Who can hunt with a crossbow?
A. Any properly licensed hunter or licensed-exempt hunter, regardless of disability. See page 4 of the 2011-2012 Inland Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest for a description of license-exempt hunters.

Q. When can a properly licensed hunter use a crossbow?
A. Anytime bow-and-arrow is a legal method of take. For deer, that is any open deer season (i.e., archery, muzzleloader and gun). A crossbow can also be used to take any other game bird, game animal or nongame animal for which there is a season. See page 42 of the 2011-12 Inland Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest for more on hunting with crossbows. Crossbows may not be used to harvest migratory game birds on Sundays.

Q. Are there any restrictions on the type of crossbow I can use?
A. Crossbows must have a minimum draw weight of 150 pounds. Only bolts with a fixed minimum broadhead width of 7/8 inch or a mechanically opening broadhead with a minimum width of 7/8 inch in the open position may be used for taking bear, deer, wild boar or wild turkey. Blunt-type bolts may be used in taking small animals and birds, including, but not limited to, rabbits, squirrels, quail, grouse, and pheasants. Poisonous, drugged, barbed or explosive bolts may not be used for taking any game.

Q. Do I need a pistol permit to buy a crossbow?
A. No. In 2011, a bill removing the requirement to obtain a pistol permit for purchasing or transferring ownership of a crossbow was signed into law. Previously, state law required anyone buying or otherwise receiving a crossbow in North Carolina to have either a pistol permit from their local sheriff’s office or a concealed handgun permit.