



## 2026 Archery Deer Hunting Regulations Loud Thunder Forest Preserve

Species  
Deer/Archery

Season  
**11/2-01/17**  
**Closed:**  
**11/20 - 11/22,**  
**12/3 - 12/6**

Hunting Hours  
IL DNR Regulations

Bag Limit  
Must harvest antler-less deer  
before harvest of antlered deer,  
same rule applies for any  
consecutive deer harvested, all  
other IL DNR regulations apply.

### Rock Island County Forest Preserve District Archery (Deer) Hunting Regulations

1. Archers are **required** to apply for a site permit. Applications may be obtained in person at the Loud Thunder Forest Preserve Office. Applications may also be downloaded from [www.ricfpd.org](http://www.ricfpd.org). Applications will be available 8/1/26 to 8/31/2026 to Rock Island County Residents **Only**. All applications have to be received **No later than August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026 at 4:00 pm at Park Office**.
2. Each application will have ONE (1) Youth Hunter option for an additional permit. Youth Hunters must be under 18 years of age, and will hunt within supervising adult's eyesight at all times.
3. Fifty (50) permits will be issued for Loud Thunder Forest Preserve/Martin Conservation Area. In the event that more than 50 applications are received, a drawing will be held, and hunters will be notified of a successful drawing by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Preference will be given to unsuccessful applicants who have applied in previous consecutive years.
4. Loud Thunder Forest Preserve and Martin Conservation Area will be divided into 6 hunting zones. Hunters have 6 zone options 1 being most desirable and 6 their last choice. **Applicants must choose all 6 on application form.**
5. The permit fee will be \$100.00 payable after notification of receiving a permit. Youth hunter permit fee will be \$25.
6. Archers will be required to harvest an **ANTLER-LESS** deer before harvesting an antlered deer. Hunters must harvest a **SECOND ANTLER-LESS** deer before harvesting a second antlered deer.
7. A map of Loud Thunder Forest Preserve and Martin Conservation Area as well as the hunting zones will be provided.
8. Transfer of permits to another person will **Not** be allowed.
9. **Site permits must be displayed on the rear-view mirror of vehicle at all times while hunting.**
10. Tree stand hunting is allowed; however **only portable tree stands are permitted**. Tree stands may be left in place and must be identified with the hunter's permit number at all times and shall be visible from the ground. **Only one (1) tree stand may be left in the woods**. No nails, screws, or screw in steps, will be allowed. Tree stands may be put up 1 day before the season begins on **11/01/2026**, and must be taken down and removed within 5 days after the season closes. **Any stands not removed within 5 days after the season closes will become the property of Rock Island County Forest Preserve, and will not be returned under any circumstances to original owner. Gates will close 12/14/26 and will not be opened for stand removal.**
11. Hunters must **sign-in daily prior to hunting**, and **sign-out daily after hunting**, at the check stations provided and record their hunting activities as requested.
12. All deer harvested must be checked in at sign in locations. Refer to page two of the rules for proper deer check in procedure.
13. **Closed areas**: hunters will be required to stay at least 25 yards away from any picnic area, campground, roadway, building, or other improved area. This 25 yard closed area also includes all Forest Preserve boundary lines.
14. ATV's or motorized vehicles will not be permitted.
15. All Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources hunting regulations apply.
16. **Season will be closed 11/20 – 11/22, 12/3– 12/6/26, and Ends 1/17/2026.**
17. In the interest of safety, all hunters should be aware that the forest preserve is open to the public during the archery deer season. You may encounter various park users such as; hikers, bikers, or horseback riders during the archery season.
18. Regular routine maintenance of the park will continue i.e. running of equipment, saws.
19. Park Rangers and/or Conservation Police Officers may check hunters for compliance at any time. Penalties for violation may be fines and/or revocation of hunting permit, or forfeiture of participation in program indefinitely.
20. A waiver of liability must be signed before a permit will be issued. Minors must have a parent or legal guardian sign their form.
21. Selected applicants must show state of Illinois Drivers License, hunting license, and Archery either-sex tag.
22. Access to hunting zones will be restricted when weather requires road closures. **Gates will not be opened for stand removal, and will be closed 12/14/26.**



Notice: Gates will close 12/14/26 and will not be opened for stand removals.

Permits must be displayed hanging from vehicle's rear-view mirror.

## **Deer Check in Procedure**

All hunters must check in and check out on designated sign in sheets, and report harvested deer on these sheets.

**Hunters must harvest an antlerless deer prior to taking an antlered deer.**

**Successful Hunters must also send two text messages to (309) 317-6202**

1. First Text will be Hunter #, sex of animal, and Confirmation # provided by the state at time of registration.
2. Second Text will be the tagged animal with check-in post visible in the background of picture.

This is the only way to record your harvest, **DO NOT** try to record them at the park office as we have in the past.

**Any person caught in violation of these rules will forfeit their right to participate in the Loud Thunder Archery Hunt indefinitely.**



## 2026 Loud Thunder Forest Preserve Archery Deer Permit Application

**Note: Only fully completed applications will be entered into the drawing.**

**Section 1.** (Please print legibly. There will be a \$100 participation fee upon selection)

Applicant's full name \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Day time phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_

**Zone Preference: Number 1 being first choice and 6 your last choice; one Must rank all 6.**

Zone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Zone 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Zone 5: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone 6: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2.** (Complete only if requesting a permit for the youth hunter option \$25.00 per youth hunter)

Youth hunter name \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Youth hunter signature \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby declare that the above information is true and correct. Providing false information will void your permit application.

**Applicant's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applications must be completed and returned by August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2026.**

Return to: Loud Thunder Forest Preserve  
19406 Loud Thunder Road  
Illinois City, IL 61259  
Phone 309-795-1040

Successful applicants will be notified by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.