



Wildlife Legislation relevant to Deer & Forestry for SIF

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So What is relevant to you as a Forest Manager

- ▶ Wildlife Act – context written originally as a game preservation law – needs overhaul to be come less dependent on primary legislation – more by Regs like Forestry Act.
- ▶ All Deer are protected – Schedule of WA - so for 1st decades of WA FWS/NPWS main emphasis was on protection!
- ▶ All Deer are protected – Schedule 4 & 5 of WA
- ▶ So Deer must be hunted/controlled under licence
- ▶ Sika and Fallow now invasive – what will that mean? Plan – SAP?

Section 29 Licence – Standard Deer Hunting Licence

- ▶ Deer Hunting during daylight under the Open Season Order
- ▶ 2023/24 6486 DHLs Issued
- ▶ New Online Portal since 2024 <https://portal.heritage.gov.ie/>
- ▶ Now Declarations – Firearm – Land etc.
- ▶ Mandatory Competency Training (3 providers) since 2021 for FTAs – Min 16yrs
- ▶ Licence Valid from 1st August until following 31st July
- ▶ OSO – Male - 1st August – 30th April & Female – 1st Nov – 31st March – Red* – Sika – Fallow *except Kerry – all extended in 2024
- ▶ Muntjac – Male & Female Year Round
- ▶ Annual Return must be made 2023/24 – 69,541 Nationally 18,541 WW
compare – 2015/16 - 32,901 Nationally 12,972, WW *

When Deer Are Causing Serious Damage outside Scope of OSO

- ▶ The owner/occupier may apply for a licence to control damage to woodlands/forestry/crops/flora – Section 42 Licence – who may appoint nominees.
- ▶ Can specify – period of control, hunting at night – use of lamps, N/V Thermal spotters, NV Thermal Rifle Scopes, numbers to be shot, use of vehicles.
- ▶ Can't issue a Sec 42 for TB sampling/surveillance – Sec 23 Education/Science
- ▶ NPWS as recommendation of Nat Deer Mgt. Strategy are standardising Sec 42 Issuing Policy (to match WW) –site visit – hot spots -
- ▶ Download form <https://www.npws.ie/licencesandconsents/disturbance/stop-damage-flora-and-fauna-wild-animals> likely to go on-line in 2026
- ▶ Application must include – OSI/DAFM map – competency cert - additional info for night/use of NV/Thermal, request of vehicles etc. Return from previous licence
- ▶ Issued for 4 months with simple extension process (x2) anytime of year, no bag limit – gender and species not specified. Addition conditions – for night – notice to NPWS – AGS (AGS FC)
- ▶ In recent years WW accounts between 50% & 42% of licences issued but numbers issued elsewhere is increasing in recent years

Sec 42s issued 2023

County	Number of	Total Number of	Number of Male Deer	Number of Female Deer
Clare	25	189	125	64
Cork	59	360	235	125
Cavan	1	0	0	0
Carlow	11	13	7	6
Donegal	33	58	48	10
Dublin	41	271	151	120
Galway	101	515	300	215
Kildare	13	23	11	12
Kerry	52	531	225	306
Kilkenny	6	30	22	8
Laois	32	171	168	3
Leitrim	6	6	6	0
Longford	4	60	22	38
Louth	6	9	6	3
Limerick	11	61	40	21
Mayo	28	43	26	17
Meath	19	58	31	27
Monaghan	1	6	5	1
Offaly	35	168	130	38
Roscommon	6	33	19	14
Sligo	16	152	21	131
Tipperary	156	1,577	870	707
Waterford	118	1,471	849	622
Wicklow	608	6,791	2,701	4,090
Westmeath	1	1	0	1
Wexford	25	31	11	20
Total:	1,414	12,628	6,029	6,599

Thank You

