

## 2010 Black Bear Harvest

Arkansas black bear hunters harvested 451 bears during the 2010 season. This season was the second highest harvest on record.

### Season Framework

Arkansas's 2010 black bear seasons were:

Bear zone 1

- Oct. 1-Nov. 30            -- Archery
- Oct. 16-24               -- Muzzleloader
- Nov. 6-7                 -- Modern gun youth hunt
- Nov. 8-30                -- Modern gun

Bear zone 2

- Sept. 15-Nov. 30       -- Archery
- Oct. 16-24               -- Muzzleloader
- Nov. 6-7                 -- Modern gun youth hunt
- Sept 15-16, Nov. 8-30-- Modern gun

Bear zone 5 (Quota 35)

- Dec. 4-12                -- Modern gun

Bear zone 5A (Quota 15)

- Nov. 27-Dec. 12        -- Modern gun

As in previous seasons, the use of dogs to hunt bears was prohibited. Baiting was allowed on private land in zones 1, 2, 5 and 5A from 30 days before the opening of bear season until the end of bear season. Bear Zone 1 (including all WMAs within Zone 1) the quota was 200 bears total for all seasons combined. In bear zone 5 the quota is 10 bears and in bear zone 5A the quota is 5 bears. The season bag limit was one bear by any method.

### Results

A record 451 bears were legally harvested during the 2010 season. Two hundred fifty eight males (57%) and 193 females (43%) were harvested statewide. Most bears were harvested with archery equipment at 284 (63%) followed by modern gun 118 (26%) and muzzleloader 49 (11%).

Bear zone 1 produced 203 or 45 percent of the harvest (Table 1). Bear zone 2 provided 50 percent (226) of the total harvest. Bear zones 5 and 5A produced 4 percent and 1 percent of the harvest, respectively.

One hundred ten bears (24%) were killed on public land and 341 (76%) were killed on private land. The top five counties for bear harvest were: Polk, Scott, Madison, Newton and Logan (Figure 1).

Two hundred forty nine (55%) were harvested with using bait. However, since 76 percent of the harvested bears came from private land, the actual percentage of bears harvested over bait may have been much higher. Corn was the most commonly used bear bait, followed by dog food.

## **Discussion**

The 2010 statewide bear harvest is the second highest since modern-day bear hunting began in 1980. The high harvest was most likely due to low availability of hard mast making bears more susceptible to bait. Reported harvest over bait was much higher than previous years. Typically, about 30 percent of Arkansas bear hunters report harvesting their bear over bait; however, 50 percent reported using bait to harvest their bear in 2007 (another hard mast failure year). The high private-land bear harvest may lead to a reduction in future human-bear conflicts. Bait-station survey trends and reproductive trends suggest healthy and expanding or stable populations in the Ozark and Ouachita regions.

Bear zones 1 and 2 previously had harvest quotas of 200 and 150 bears to regulate harvest. Those quotas were lifted in 2006 after several years of harvest numbers that fell shy of the quota. However, during 2008 and 2009, bear zone 1 has consistently exceeded the previous quota causing some concern for possible overharvest. Possible overharvest coupled with a decline in reproduction over in 2007-2009 prompted the need for some reduction in harvest strategies for bear zone 1. For 2010 season 200-bear quota was re-instated.

Bear zone 2 has consistently shown lower than desired harvest numbers. In 2010, bear hunters in zone 2 were once again able to use modern guns during the first two days of the September season which accounts for Zone 2 harvesting 50% of the total statewide harvest.

**Figure 1. Arkansas black bear harvest by county, 2010.**

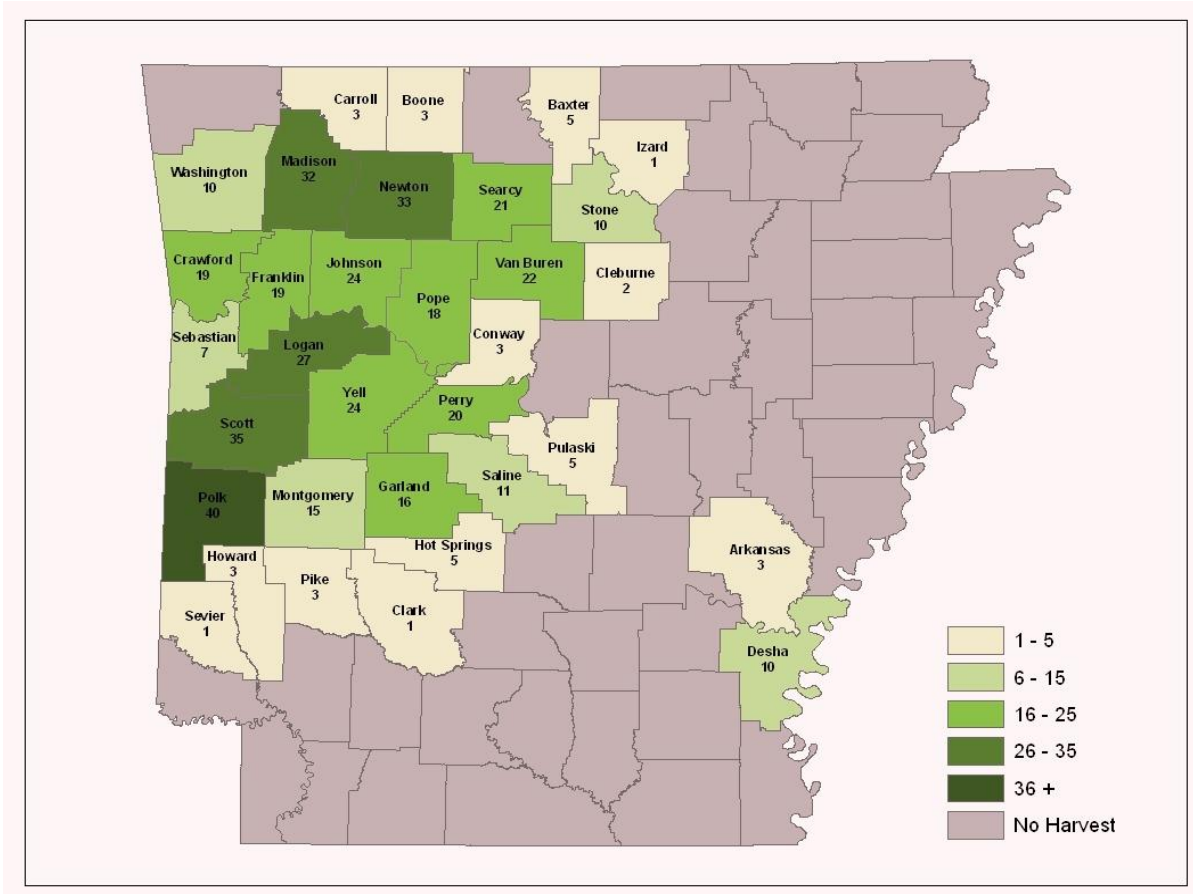
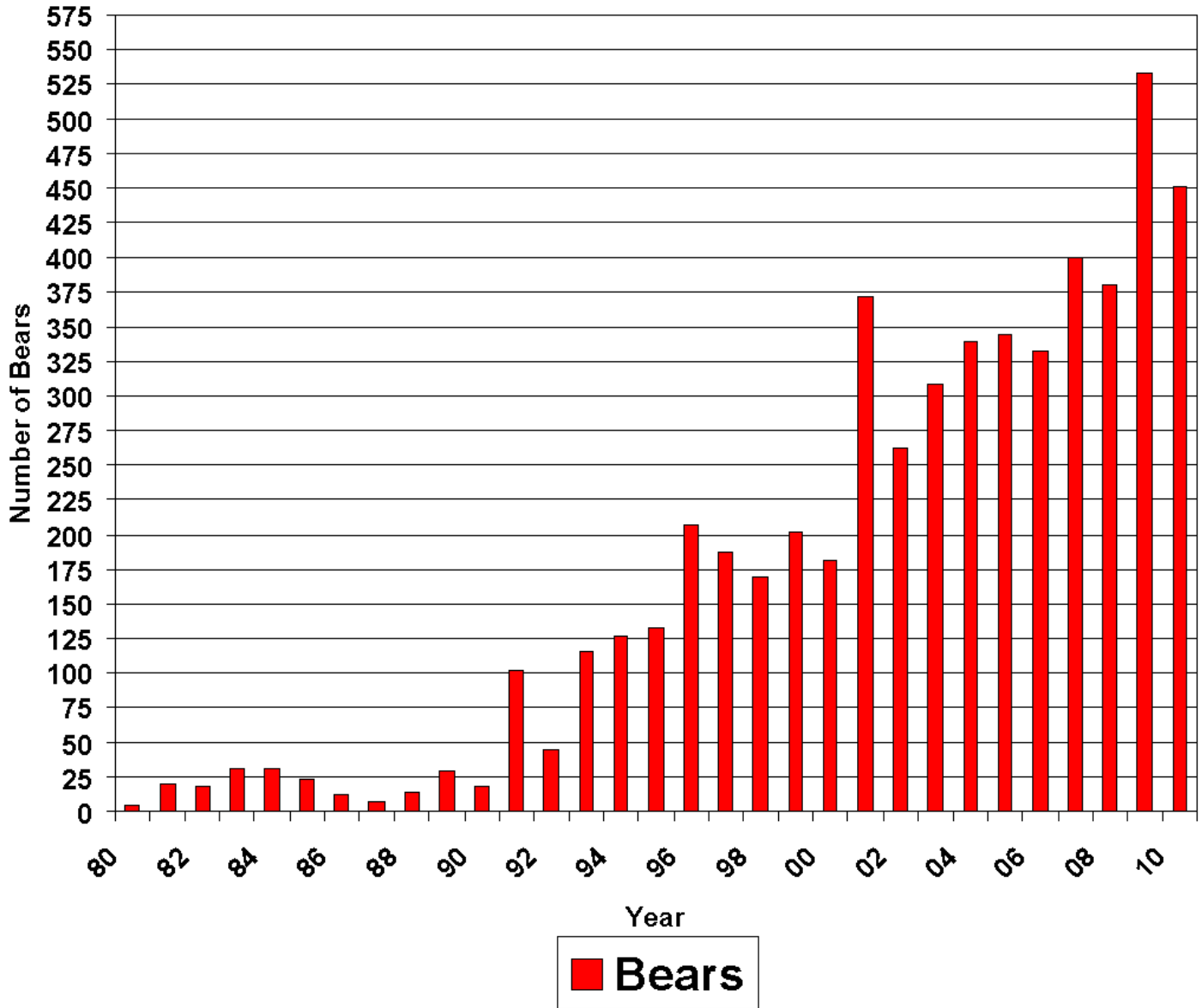


Figure 2. Arkansas black bear harvest, 1980-2010.



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**Table 1. Arkansas black bear harvest by bear zone, sex, and method, 2010.**

	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Archery</b>	<b>Crossbow</b>	<b>Muzzle-loader</b>	<b>Modern Gun</b>	<b>Bait Used</b>
<b>Zone 1</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>Zone 2</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Zone 5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Zone 5A</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

**Table 2. Arkansas black bear harvest by county, sex, and method, 2010.**

	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Archery</b>	<b>Muzzle-loader</b>	<b>Modern Gun</b>
<b>Arkansas</b>	7	4	3	0	0	7
<b>Baxter</b>	5	4	1	5	0	0
<b>Boone</b>	3	2	1	3	0	0
<b>Carroll</b>	3	3	0	2	1	0
<b>Clark</b>	1	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Cleburne</b>	2	1	1	1	1	0
<b>Conway</b>	3	2	1	2	0	1
<b>Crawford</b>	18	13	5	16	2	0
<b>Desha</b>	14	10	4	1	0	13
<b>Franklin</b>	18	10	8	12	3	3
<b>Garland</b>	15	7	8	5	1	9
<b>Hot Springs</b>	5	2	3	1	0	4
<b>Howard</b>	3	3	0	3	0	0

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Izard	1	0	1	1	0	0
Johnson	24	13	11	19	3	2
Logan	27	17	10	14	5	8
Madison	31	21	10	28	3	0
Montgomery	15	7	8	7	4	4
Newton	32	14	18	29	3	0
Perry	20	9	11	9	2	9
Phillips	1	1	0	0	0	1
Pike	3	2	1	2	1	0
Polk	39	23	16	19	3	17
Pope	18	11	7	14	4	0
Pulaski	5	3	2	1	0	4
Saline	11	5	6	3	1	7
Scott	35	16	19	17	1	17
Searcy	21	13	8	19	2	0

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<b>Sebastian</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Sevier</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>St. Francis</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Stone</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Van Buren</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Washington</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Yell</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

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