

How to identify harvestable fallow deer in NSW Ecological Deer Management forests and jaw extraction guide

March 2018

Ecological Deer Management (EDM) programs are operating in four NSW State Forests to better manage the fallow deer populations. An EDM ballot operates in Maragle South State Forest to provide more equitable access for all NSW Restricted Game Hunting Licensed (R-Licensed) hunters. See the *Hunting in NSW Ecological Deer Management Forests* factsheet for more information on EDM and the special conditions that apply in these forests.

This factsheet explains how to identify deer you are able to harvest from these forests under the EDM program and how to remove the jawbone from harvested deer. Your participation in EDM contributes to ongoing research into the deer populations in these forests and overall deer management in NSW.

Harvestable fallow deer

The four EDM forests, Maragle South, Maragle North, Mannus and Green Hills State Forests, have special harvest restrictions for wild fallow deer.

- Each licence holder may harvest only one mature, fork-antlered buck in each EDM forest per deer hunting season (1 March to 31 October).
- No harvesting of bump or spike-antlered bucks.

The harvest of does during the legal hunting season is unrestricted.

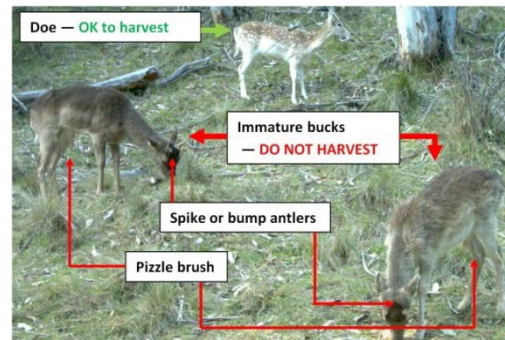
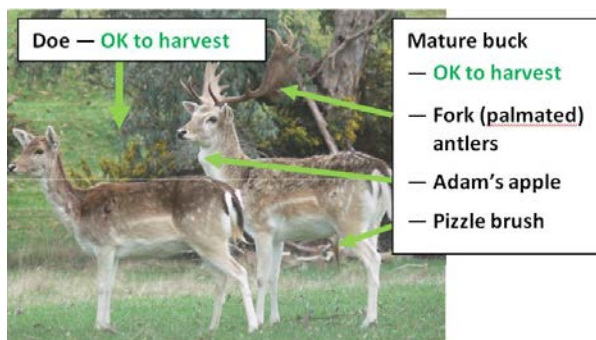
Licence holders must remove the jawbone from each harvested deer and deposit it, cleaned and packaged appropriately, in the designated box at the entrance to Maragle South State Forest (Hopetoun Park Access Road).

Jawbones may also be sent to the Game Licensing Unit if necessary (details below).

How to identify the age and gender of fallow deer

Mature bucks can be identified by a few distinguishing features such as a pizzle brush and mature antlers.

Mature buck	Bump or spike-antlered buck	Doe
✓ Ok to harvest	✗ Do not harvest	✓ Ok to harvest
A distinct pizzle brush	A distinct pizzle brush	None of these features
Fork or palmated antlers	Bump or spike antlers	
An Adam's apple		
A distinct, thickened neck during breeding season.		



Extracting jawbones from harvested EDM deer

Sterile surgical gloves and large plastic zip lock bags are supplied with your EDM kit to aid in jawbone removal. Extra gloves and zip lock bags are available from:

- Maragle South State Forest EDM jaw box (Hopetoun Park Access Road), or
- Tumbarumba Caltex Service Station, located on the corner of Bridge and Winston Streets.

Accurately determining the age of a fallow deer is important for proper deer herd management. Biologists use a technique for estimating the age by mandibular tooth replacement and wear which requires removal of the jawbone.

These instructions use a **Steel Jawbone Extractor** and **Jawbone Removal Shears**, which are available for purchase online. The extractor and shears provide a fast, easy way to remove the jawbone without causing damage to the cape; however you can also remove the jawbone using a knife.

Removing the jawbone will not affect the mount as taxidermists skin the cape from the head and stretch it over a mould – the actual jawbone and teeth are not used.

Step 1

Pry open the deer's mouth by inserting the smaller, rounded end of the extractor between the jawbone and cheek, then push down to break loose the membrane and muscle from the jawbone.

Step 2

Hold the deer's mouth wide open using the extractor. Insert the jawbone removal shears with the blade on the tongue side.

Tilt the handles of the shears toward the lower jawbone and then cut the jawbone, being careful not to cut the last molar cusp.

Step 3

Insert the smaller end of the jawbone extractor over the jawbone where the cut was made.

Hold the deer head down firmly and give a quick tug on the extractor. It should slide under the jawbone and break loose all remaining muscles, freeing the jawbone.

That side of the jawbone will separate from the opposite side, near or in the middle of the front teeth. It may also be cut using the shears. As only the premolars and molars are used, the front teeth usually have no value for this type of aging.

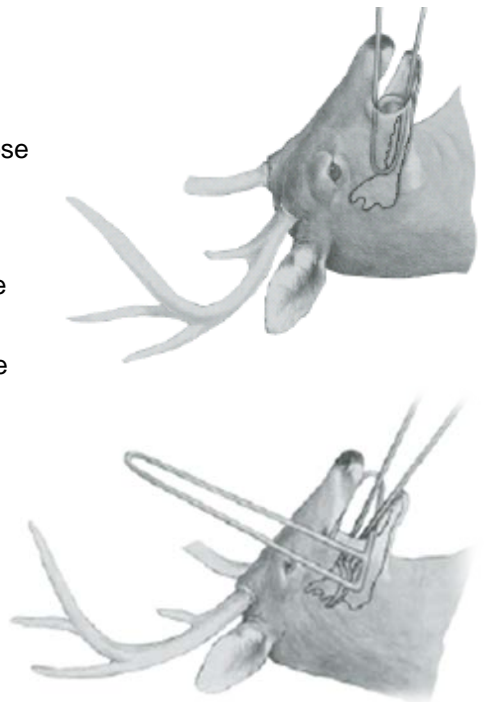
Step 4

Clean the jawbone by thoroughly removing all tissue, then boil and air dry.

Package the clean jawbone inside the zip lock bags and deposit it **with your EDM Harvest Return** in the Maragle South State Forest collection box (Hopetoun Park Access Road) or mail it to the Wildlife Management Team, Game Licensing Unit, 620 Macauley Street, Albury NSW 2640.

More information

For more information visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting or contact the DPI Game Licensing Unit on 02 6363 7650.



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