



Hunting News

Grafton Land Trust

Preserving Grafton's open spaces since 1958

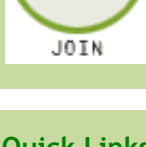
December 2012



EXPLORE



VOLUNTEER



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Submit Your Pics!

Got a cool photo from a recent hunting trip in Grafton? Send it to hunting@graftonland.org and we'll publish it in the "Photo of the month" section of *Hunting News*.



We are a member supported organization that relies on you - *hunters* - as well as hikers, equestrians and other recreational users to manage our lands. Please [become a member](#) today!

Dear Hunter,

RE: 2013 New Year's Resolution

As we approach mid-December and memories of the 2012-2013 season become part of our personal and collective hunting history it is prudent to reflect on how lucky we are to have so many great places to hunt in Grafton.

The Grafton Land Trust (GLT) has protected over 800 acres in town; that acreage, coupled with other huntable acreage, such as many parcels owned by the Town of Grafton, provides access to quality hunts close to home. These land resources are simply not available in many neighboring communities. But none of this happened by accident. The foresight and perseverance of those who came before us has left us with a rich land legacy. Their conservation mission is carried on today by the GLT. The collective efforts of our members and volunteers represents the best hope for the continuance of sound conservation efforts in the face of ever-increasing development pressures.

So how does this all tie into the New Year? So far this season, we have issued 80 hunting permits. Yet only 38% of permit holders are members of the GLT. Membership is not a requirement to use our properties, but if you have not previously been a member or perhaps allowed your membership to lapse, I ask that you add becoming a member of the GLT to your list of 2013 New Year's resolutions.

As hunters, we share a unique connection to the land. In order for our traditions to continue we must have a place to practice our craft. Please make a commitment to Grafton's natural landscapes and become a member of the GLT in 2013. Send in your [GLT membership application](#) today!

Sincerely,

Troy M. Gipps
Hunting Program Coordinator
Grafton Land Trust

Safety Tip

Hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts are encouraged to check out a new 5-minute video on the Effectiveness of Blaze Orange. The footage shows how wearing fluorescent "blaze" orange in the woods makes you highly visible to others. Watch the [video](#) today.



Be Safe. Be Seen. Go Orange.

Complete the Circle: Butcher Your Own Deer

Big game hunting can be described as days, weeks and sometimes years of waiting that culminates in a few minutes of excitement when all the pieces come together to allow for a successful hunt.

When we harvest an animal we accept responsibility for the act as well as the animal and although it is common practice for most hunters to bring their deer to a butcher for processing, performing this task yourself can add a very meaningful dimension to your hunt.

Beyond the practical reasons, such as cost savings, butchering services typically range from \$75 - \$150 per animal, controlling the cleanliness of the process from start to finish and the ability to package venison according to your family's needs, butchering provides a hunter with a unique opportunity to deepen his or her appreciation of the animal and to reflect on the hunt.

The process, although fairly straightforward, can be intimidating to those who have not assumed responsibility for this portion of the hunt. For this reason, one of the best ways to learn is to work alongside a fellow hunter or a butcher while he or she processes a deer. The Internet can also serve as an excellent secondary resource; countless YouTube videos provide step-by-step instructions on all phases of the butchering process.

If you are working alone, the process typically takes a full day to complete and can be physically taxing. Additional time may be required for making hamburger and/or sausage. But as you become more proficient, you will begin to look forward to this portion of the hunt. Butchering your own deer is an unequivocal statement of self-sufficiency. The act, along with all other aspects of the hunt, defines what it means to be a hunter.



Hunter Education in 2013

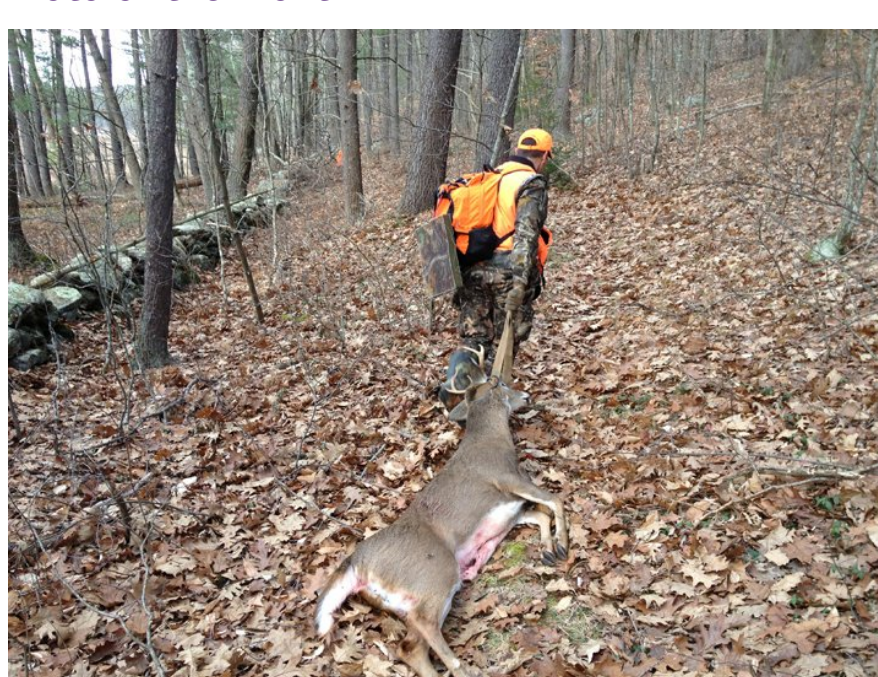
The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife is encouraging new and novice hunters of all ages to make a New Year's resolution to sign up for a free Basic Hunter Education Course in the winter or spring months of 2013.

Students who successfully pass the course will receive a Basic Hunter Education Certificate of Completion. All first-time hunters must have a government-issued Basic Hunter Education Certificate, in order to purchase a Massachusetts hunting or sporting license and it is also recognized for the purchase of hunting or sporting licenses in other states, Canada, and Mexico. In Massachusetts, the Basic Hunter Education Certificate of Completion also fulfills a training requirement that allows individuals 15 years or older to apply for a firearms license with their local police departments.

The Massachusetts Hunter Education Program offers courses from January through October, and January 2013 courses will be posted soon at [MassWildlife](#). Additional 2013 courses will be announced monthly and students who want to be notified about courses in their area are encouraged to complete and submit an [online form](#) requesting notification.



Photo of the month



This 6-point buck was harvested at a Wildlife Management Area in Central Massachusetts on opening day of the 2012 shotgun season. Shortly after tracking and locating the buck, the hunter heard leaves rustle and looked up to see a young bull moose standing just 30 yards away. (Photo by Troy M. Gipps)

What's in season this month?

- Deer (Primitive Firearms) ... Dec. 10 - 31, 2012
- Gray Squirrel ... Sept. 10 - Jan. 2, 2013
- Cottontail Rabbit ... Oct. 13 - Feb. 28, 2013
- Snowshoe Hare ... Oct. 13 - Feb. 2, 2013
- Coyote ... Oct. 13 - Mar. 8, 2013
- Fox (red or gray) ... Nov. 1 - Feb. 28, 2013
- Raccoon ... Oct. 1 - Jan. 31, 2013
- Opossum ... Oct. 1 - Jan. 31, 2013
- Crow ... Jul. 2 - April 10, 2013
- Ducks (Central) ... Dec. 17 - Jan. 5, 2013
- Canada Goose (Central) ... Dec. 17 - Jan. 5, 2013
- Snow & Blue Goose ... same as ducks
- American Coot ... same as ducks
- Mergansers ... same as ducks



The Grafton Land Trust is a private, member-supported, nonprofit organization that preserves, maintains, and advocates for open space in Grafton, and promotes environmental education and stewardship.

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