

COTTONTAIL & SQUIRREL

The 2019 cottontail rabbit and tree squirrel seasons covered 1 September 2019 - 29 February 2020. Harvest surveys were sent to resident and nonresident hunters after the close of the pheasant season on 5 January 2020. It is assumed that this captured the majority of cottontail and squirrel hunting and harvest.

For cottontail, the daily limit was 10, possession 30, and the season was open statewide. For squirrel, the daily limit was 5, possession 15, and the season was open statewide. Residents holding small game, 1-day small game, adult, senior or junior combination, or youth small game licenses were eligible to participate in the season. Nonresidents were required to obtain either a small game or a youth small game license to hunt upland game.

In 2019, there were 78,355 resident and 67,442 nonresident licenses issued that allowed holders to hunt small game. Approximately 10% of residents and nonresidents were surveyed for the upland bird seasons. Survey response rates were 56% for residents and 58% for nonresidents.

Based on survey responses indicating at least one day of hunting cottontails, there were a projected 3,563 resident and 437 nonresident cottontail hunters. Based on survey responses indicating at least one day of hunting squirrels, there were a projected 2,542 resident and 81 nonresident hunters. An estimated 19,933 cottontails and 12,193 squirrels were harvested during the 2019 small game seasons.

When asked their satisfaction on the season, (1 being least satisfied, 7 being most satisfied), resident hunters reported an average satisfaction level of 4.95, while nonresidents reported a rating of 4.73.

Comparison of the 2010 - 2019 cottontail and squirrel harvests

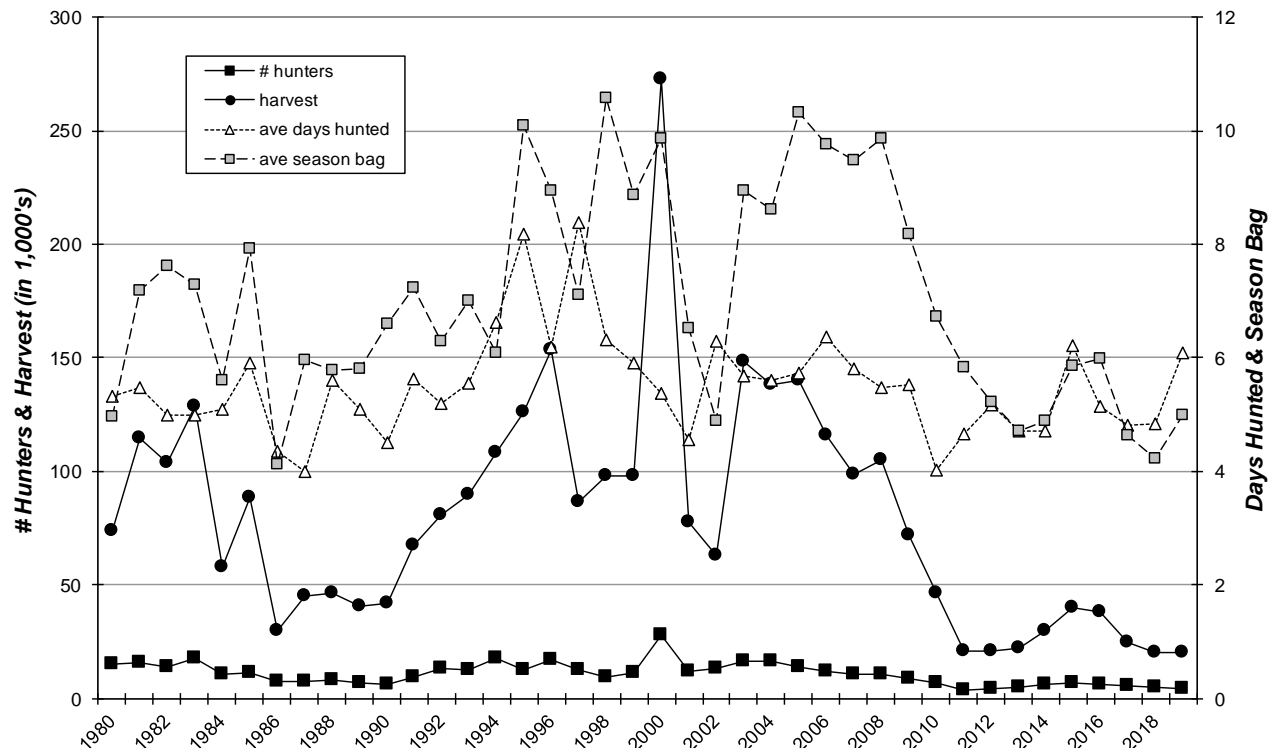
Year	Cottontails				Squirrels			
	Hunters		Harvest		Hunters		Harvest	
	Resident	Nonres	Resident	Nonres	Resident	Nonres	Resident	Nonres
2010	6,011	885	44,481	1,832	2,901	96	12,677	115
2011	3,019	529	19,835	845	1,547	78	6,806	146
2012	3,133	794	18,758	1,763	1,553	166	7,338	400
2013	4,199	516	21,682	846	2,911	116	10,962	61
2014	5,366	754	28,276	1,591	2,552	150	9,587	241
2015	5,779	1,020	37,407	2,397	2,870	171	13,311	180
2016	5,584	754	35,649	2,224	2,786	181	11,614	262
2017	4,628	607	22,711	1,561	2,571	87	9,850	260
2018	4,341	475	19,386	937	2,302	141	8,241	293
2019	3,563	437	19,329	604	2,542	87	12,077	116

Survey design changed in 2010 and 2014 and results may not be directly comparable to previous years.

UPLAND GAME HARVEST PROJECTIONS FOR 2019												
Last Revised: 14 Aug 2020							RESIDENT TOTALS BY LICENSE TYPE			NONRESIDENT TOTALS		
	Comb- ination	Junior Combo	Senior Combo	Small Game	Youth SmGm	Sum Estimates	Non Res Sm Game	Youth Sm Gm	Sum Estimates			
Licenses Sold	43,470	6,677	9,621	14,927	3,660	78,355	65,891	1,551	67,442			
Projected ACTIVE UPLAND GAME HUNTERS	2,374	627	289	648	403	4,340	405	32	437			
Number Sampled by Survey	4,920	755	0	1,705	410	7,790	7,766	180	7,946			
Number Responded to Survey	2,930	330	0	876	236	4,372	4,471	95	4,566			
% Responded and Participated in Season	5%	9%	3%	4%	11%	6%	1%	2%	1%			
Responded and Participated in Season	160	31	0	38	26	255	28	2	30			
Responded but DID NOT HUNT	2,770	299	0	838	210	4,117	4,443	93	4,536			
Survey Response Rate	59.6%	43.7%	0%	51.4%	57.6%	56.1%	57.6%	52.8%	57.5%			
No. Hunters Reporting Cottontail Days	129	27	0	30	22	208	28	2	30			
Sum Cottontail Hunted Days	813	166	0	203	119	1,301	156	5	161			
Average Days Hunted Cottontails	6.30	6.15	5.36	6.77	5.41	6.25	5.57	2.50	5.37			
Sum Cottontails Bagged	833	120	0	127	76	1,156	40	2	42			
Average Cottontail Bag for Season	6.46	4.44	4.80	4.23	3.45	5.56	1.43	0.80	1.40			
Projected Days Cottontail Hunting	12,062	3,359	1,340	3,459	1,846	22,065	2,257	80	2,337			
Projected No. Cottontail Hunters	1,914	546	250	511	341	3,563	405	32	437			
Projected Cottontail Bag	12,359	2,428	1,200	2,164	1,179	19,329	579	26	604			
TOTAL COTTONTAIL HARVEST =							19,933					
No. Hunters Reporting Squirrel Days	99	16	0	21	16	152	6	0	6			
Sum Squirrel Hunted Days	485	84	0	139	114	822	27	0	27			
Average Days Hunted Squirrels	4.90	5.25	5.87	6.62	7.13	5.41	4.50	0.00	4.50			
Sum Squirrels Bagged	518	65	0	77	76	736	8	0	8			
Average Squirrel Bag for Season	5.23	4.06	4.07	3.67	4.75	4.84	1.33	0.00	1.33			
Projected Days Squirrel Hunting	7,196	1,700	845	2,369	1,768	13,877	391	0	391			
Projected No. Squirrel Hunters	1,469	324	144	358	248	2,542	87	0	87			
Projected Squirrel Bag	7,685	1,315	586	1,312	1,179	12,077	116	0	116			
TOTAL SQUIRREL HARVEST =							12,193					
Mean Satisfaction Score *	4.86	5.26	0	4.86	5.27	4.95	4.96	1.50	4.73			

* Based on scale of 1-7 with 1="very dissatisfied" and 7="very satisfied"

SOUTH DAKOTA COTTONTAIL HARVEST, 1980-2019



SOUTH DAKOTA SQUIRREL HARVEST, 1980-2019

