

## 2015 Hunt Summary

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge conducted the Refuge's first annual Big Game Archery Hunt, October 16-18, 2015. Thirty quota hunt permits were available for the 2015 hunt. Over 900 applicants applied for the available permits. The hunt was held on the north end of the refuge on over 5,000 acres that was divided into five zones. The size of the zone dictated the number of permits per zone. A total of 11 white-tailed deer (5 bucks, 6 antlerless) and 4 hogs were harvested during the hunt. Bucks averaged 118lbs and antlerless deer averaged 92lbs. The State average for this region is 125lbs and 95lbs respectively. All hunters saw deer and hogs during their weekend hunt and all five zones were successful.

Due to the success of this year's archery hunt, the number of hunt days and quota permits for the 2016 season will be increased. Two three day hunts with 30 permits per weekend will be available. Each quota permit will allow one youth under 16 years of age to accompany the permit holder. The hunt will be archery only. The Refuge staff thanks the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for their support and assistance with the permit process and the participating hunters for their comments and suggestions to improve the safety and quality of future hunts. For more information, contact our Wildlife Refuge Specialist Steven Trull at 861-2352.

<b>Zone</b>	<b># of permits</b>	<b># of animals harvested</b>
<b>1</b>	4	2
<b>2</b>	10	4
<b>3</b>	8	2
<b>4</b>	4	4
<b>5</b>	4	3
<b>Total</b>	30	15