

By: Senator(s) Whaley, Blackwell, Seymour,  
McCaughn, Younger, Moran

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks

SENATE BILL NO. 2506

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 PROVIDE AN OPEN SEASON ON HARVESTING DEER WITH BOW AND ARROW ON  
3 THE LAST FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY OF SEPTEMBER, PROVIDED THAT  
4 ONLY LEGAL BUCKS MAY BE HARVESTED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
7 amended as follows:

8 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

9 (a) With bow and arrow:

10 (i) The last Friday, Saturday and Sunday of  
11 September, provided that only legal bucks as defined in paragraph  
12 (e) of this subsection may be harvested.

13 (ii) October 1 through the Friday prior to  
14 Thanksgiving.

15 (b) With guns and with dogs: from the Saturday prior  
16 to Thanksgiving through December 1.

17 (c) With primitive weapons and without dogs: December  
18 2 through December 15.



19           (d) With guns and without dogs: December 16 through  
20 December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting statewide  
21 or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may designate  
22 without dogs after the end of the last season for hunting deer  
23 with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal designated  
24 weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond January 31.

25           (e) The commission shall establish an extended season  
26 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from  
27 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway  
28 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any  
29 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this  
30 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For  
31 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer  
32 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside  
33 spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam length of  
34 thirteen (13) inches. The commission may regulate the taking of  
35 deer with antlers of four (4) points or less under this paragraph  
36 for the proper management of antlered deer. The commission may  
37 delay the opening date and change the length of bow and arrow  
38 season in paragraph (a) in this area.

39           (f) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through a  
40 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of  
41 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when  
42 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns  
43 and with dogs in paragraph (b).



44 (g) When the open season on deer ends on a Friday, the  
45 commission shall have the authority to extend the season until  
46 thirty (30) minutes after sunset on the following Sunday.

47 (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on  
48 wildlife management areas which it administers.

49 (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of  
50 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation  
51 of the executive director based upon good and substantial  
52 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that  
53 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

54 (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the  
55 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer  
56 during the deer season with guns and with dogs by a majority vote  
57 of the commission.

58 (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting  
59 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands  
60 under the deer management assistance program prescribed or  
61 approved by the executive director.

62 (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the  
63 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.  
64 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the  
65 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may  
66 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who  
67 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem  
68 wildlife.



69           (5) (a) During any open season on deer with primitive  
70 weapons after November 30, a person may use any legal weapon of  
71 choice on private lands only, if the person is:

72                       (i) The title owner of the land;

73                       (ii) The lessee of the hunting rights on the land;

74                       (iii) A member of a hunting club leasing the  
75 hunting rights on the land; or

76                       (iv) A guest of a person specified in subparagraph

77 (i), (ii) or (iii).

78           (b) If the person is required to have a hunting

79 license, the person must have a primitive weapon license,

80 Sportsman's License or a Lifetime Sportsman's License.

81           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
82 and after July 1, 2022.

