

Kip's Korner



Hunting License Prices June 2010

What does it cost to spend a day at your favorite sporting or entertainment event? According to StubHub, an online market place for sports and live entertainment tickets, it will cost \$54 to \$7,530 to spend a day watching the Florida Gators play football this fall. It'll cost you \$54 to \$17,780 to watch the Yankees host the Red Sox the next time they're in town. It'll set you back \$90 to \$4,500 to watch George Strait, the King of country music, in concert, and \$88 to \$699 for a seat at a Larry-the-Cable-Guy show.

I haven't been to Yankee Stadium or the Swamp, but I have seen George and Larry. These were one-time events, and while they were worth the price of admission, I receive far more pleasure from a less expensive ticket - my hunting license. Depending on what state or province you live in, your adult resident license to hunt deer with a bow ranges from \$10 (HI) to \$109 (AZ). An 11-fold increase is quite a range but these are the extremes. In 2010, the average license costs about \$42. Given that it affords the opportunity to provide wholesome meat for your family and numerous days afield, it's the best deal you'll find all year.

While all agencies offer licenses at bargain rates, let's compare each state, province and region to see who is getting a good deal and who is getting a great one. States and provinces sell licenses with varying privileges and tags. Some include a buck tag and some do not. Some include multiple antlerless deer tags and some include none. To best compare "apples to apples", the following chart includes data provided by C.J. Winand and Bowhunter Magazine for the cost to archery hunt deer for an adult resident hunter in seven U.S. regions and eight Canadian provinces. I realize all deer hunters are not archers, but this analysis provides a solid comparison to state and provincial license prices.

The Southeast averaged the least expensive resident license at \$29.15 with a range of \$18 (SC) to \$56 (TN). That's quite a deal for SC residents as their deer season is 4.5 months long in some parts of the state. That equates to about 14 cents per day of the deer season. The Northeast has the next lowest price with an average of \$35.73. It ranges from \$22 in NH to \$50 in NY. The high-quality deer, bear and upland bird hunting in NH makes this license one of the top bargains in North America. The Mid-Atlantic states are next with an average of \$36.67 and

a range of \$30.50 in MD to \$54 in VA. Be sure to notice the most expensive license equals a one-day "cheap seat" in Gainesville or the Bronx. The Midwest follows with an average of \$36.68 and a range of \$15 in MI to \$60.50 in IA. Fifteen dollars for a MI license? That looks like a typo, but it is correct. The Pacific coast is next with an average of \$37.03 and a range of \$10 in HI to \$68.75 in CA. Hawaii doesn't have whitetails, but it does have some QDMA members along with blacktails and axis deer. Canada is next with an average of \$48.86 and a range of \$36 in Manitoba to \$74.37 in Alberta. Even at the upper end those big Alberta whitetails are a bargain. The West is next with an average of \$50.21 and a range of \$21 in MT to \$78 in Nevada. One day on the Milk River is worth \$21 let alone a whole season. Finally, the most expensive average resident license to archery hunt deer is in the Southwest at \$60.56. Licenses in this region range from \$30 in TX to \$109.25 in AZ. Arizona is the only state where a resident license cracks the \$100 mark, but with 60 days to hunt deer plus the other species opportunities, even this license is a good deal.

So, where does your state or province rank? Mine (PA) is just below the average for my region and nearly \$6 below the U.S. and Canada average. Maybe that is why my state agency has unfilled positions and had to cut programs and services during the past few years. Unfortunately, it's not alone. Many states are losing positions and operating funds. Whether you like your state agency or not, I hope you realize our natural resources suffer from underfunded agencies. The next time you buy your hunting license take a moment to realize how much you get for that special piece of paper. You may even consider adding \$1 or more to support wildlife and/or your local venison donation program.

REGION	STATE	PRICE (\$)		REGION	STATE	PRICE (\$)
Northeast	CT	41.00		Mid-Atlantic	DE	35.00
	ME	25.00			MD	30.50
	MA	32.60			NJ	31.50
	NH	22.00			PA	36.00
	NY	50.00			VA	54.00
	RI	42.50			WV	33.00
	VT	37.00			Average	36.67
	Average	35.73				
				Mid-West	IL	44.00
Southeast	AL	24.00			IN	24.00
	AR	25.00			IA	60.50
	FL	22.00			KS	52.30
	GA	19.00			KY	50.00
	LA	39.50			MI	15.00
	MS	33.85			MN	26.00
	NC	25.00			MO	19.00
	SC	18.00			NE	50.00
	TN	56.00			ND	34.00
	Average	29.15			OH	43.00
				SD	35.00	
West	CO	34.00			WI	24.00
	ID	50.75			Average	36.68
	MT	21.00				
	NV	78.00		Southwest	AZ	109.25
	UT	46.00			NM	58.00
	WY	71.50			OK	45.00
Average	50.21				TX	30.00

					Average	60.56
Pacific	AK	25.00				
	CA	68.75		Canada	AB	74.37
	HI	10.00			BC	47.00
	OR	42.00			MB	36.00
	WA	39.42			NB	38.42
	Average	37.03			NS	43.55
					ON	52.46
					QC	62.50
					(Anticosti Is.)	48.03
					SK	43.00
TOTAL COMBINED AVERAGE =					Average	48.86
\$41.86						

(Data provided by C.J. Winand and Bowhunter Magazine)

Kip's Korner is written by Kip Adams, a Certified Wildlife Biologist and Northern Director of Education and Outreach for the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA). The QDMA is an international nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA can be reached at 1-800-209-DEER or www.QDMA.com.