

*Human*Dimensions
Research Program



ILLINOIS
NATURAL
HISTORY
SURVEY



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Nonresident Hunters In Illinois: Results of the 2000 Nonresident Hunter Survey



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SUMMARY

A random sample of 2,000 nonresident hunters was selected for a mail survey conducted during late winter 2000. Of the 2,000 hunters selected for the sample, 196 were rejected due to incomplete addresses, deceased, living in Illinois, or other reasons. A total of 1,358 (75%) completed questionnaires were received. States of residence for the hunters in the random sample indicated that the majority (49%) of nonresident hunters in Illinois came from the surrounding states of Missouri (25%), Indiana (12%), and Iowa (12%).

More nonresidents (47%) came to Illinois to hunt with family and friends living in Illinois than any other reason, whereas 36% stated hunting trophy game as their reason for hunting Illinois, 12% did so for abundant game, 3% because of license fees, and 1% hunted while visiting Illinois on business. A majority of nonresident hunters (53%) hunted private land for free, and 20% paid a fee to hunt private land. A higher proportion of nonresident hunters (24%) hunt public land than Illinois resident hunters (13%). Less than 3% of nonresident hunters were enrolled in Access Illinois Outdoors. Hunting by nonresidents was with friends or family (43%), alone unguided (30%), with a party unguided (16%), or with a guide or outfitter (11%). Nonresident hunters participated in archery deer hunting (n = 552) more than any other type of hunting, followed by firearm deer hunting (n = 406), doves (n = 225), ducks, (n = 192), and geese (n = 161). The majority of nonresident hunters (71%) rated their hunting experience in Illinois as “Good” or “Excellent”.

Most nonresident hunters (58%) received information about hunting in Illinois from friends or family, and 15% received information from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Information from IDNR was rated as “Good” to “Excellent” by 88% of nonresident hunters (n = 792). Hunters stayed with family or friends while hunting (32%) more than any other lodging, although 31% did not stay overnight. Purchases by nonresidents while visiting Illinois included fuel (46%), hunting equipment (38%), ammunition (9%), meals (5%), and groceries (2%). Most hunters (59%) stated they do not visit Illinois for recreation other than hunting. The majority of nonresident hunters (88%) reported they planned to return to Illinois to hunt.

BACKGROUND

The intent of this study was to provide the Illinois Department of Natural Resources with information regarding the hunting habits and preferences of nonresident hunters in Illinois. This survey will enable the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to better understand nonresident hunter influences on resident hunters, wildlife resources, and license certification for federal aid programs. Further information allows an assessment of the contributions nonresident hunters make to local economies, outfitters, and tourism. The information gathered through this study will enable the IDNR to provide better services to hunters visiting Illinois.

STUDY METHODS

We randomly selected 2,000 nonresident hunters from nonresident habitat stamp purchases and deer hunting permit receipts. Beginning February 1, 2000 each participant received an 8-page survey questionnaire, cover letter explaining the study, and a stamped return mail envelope. Individuals who did not respond to the first mailing received a postcard reminder 2 weeks later. Two weeks after the postcard reminder, a second survey questionnaire, cover letter, and envelope were sent to individuals who did not respond to the first mailing or postcard. This second mailing was followed 2 weeks later by a second postcard reminder. Survey participants were informed in the second cover letter that completed questionnaires had to be returned by March 31, 2000. A total of 196 individuals were removed from the sample due to incorrect addresses, deceased, or other reasons. We received 1,358 (75%) completed questionnaires from the 1,804 delivered to survey participants.

RESULTS

Profile of Nonresident Hunters

The typical nonresident hunter in Illinois is a 41 year-old male living in Missouri, Iowa, or Indiana. He hunts Illinois with friends and family on private land to which he has free access, and has hunted as a nonresident in Illinois for 3 years. Game species most often sought are deer during archery or firearm seasons. Waterfowl is his second favorite type of hunting followed by doves. He likely stays with friends or family while hunting, or just as likely visits for a day and returns home at night. On his hunting trip, he usually purchases gasoline and often buys hunting equipment. The main reason he hunts in Illinois is to hunt with family and friends. He rates his Illinois hunting as good to excellent. The nonresident hunter's income and education differs from the average Illinois hunter. The average nonresident hunter has attended college, whereas the average Illinois hunter stopped school after graduating high school. The nonresident hunter has a slightly higher total household income than the Illinois hunter.

Types of Nonresident Hunters

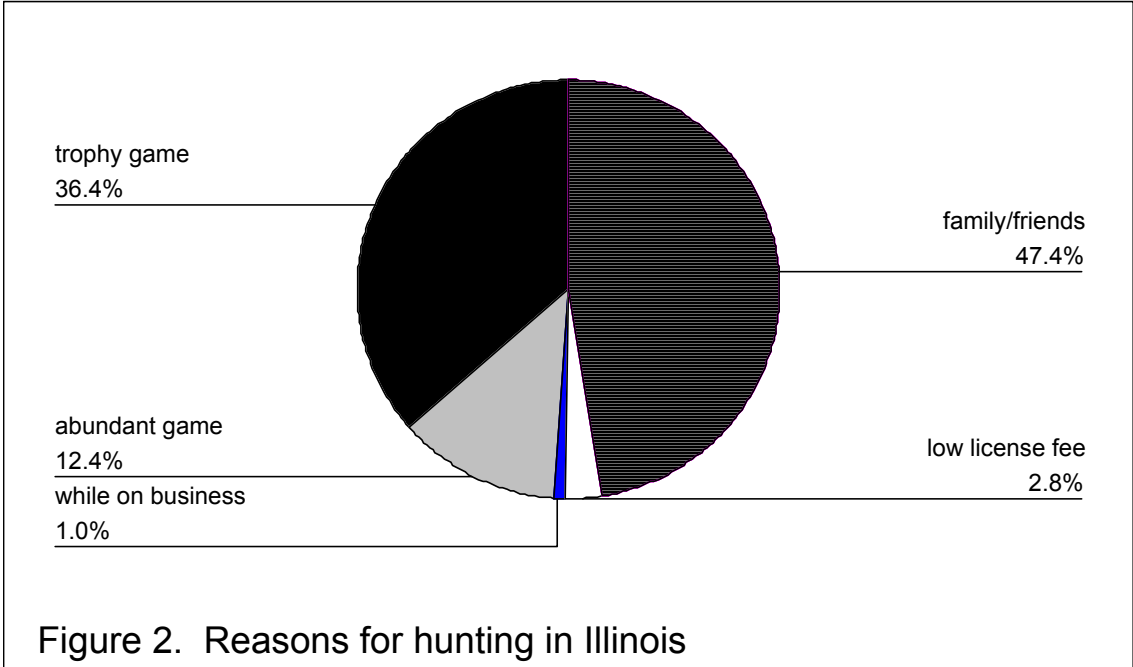
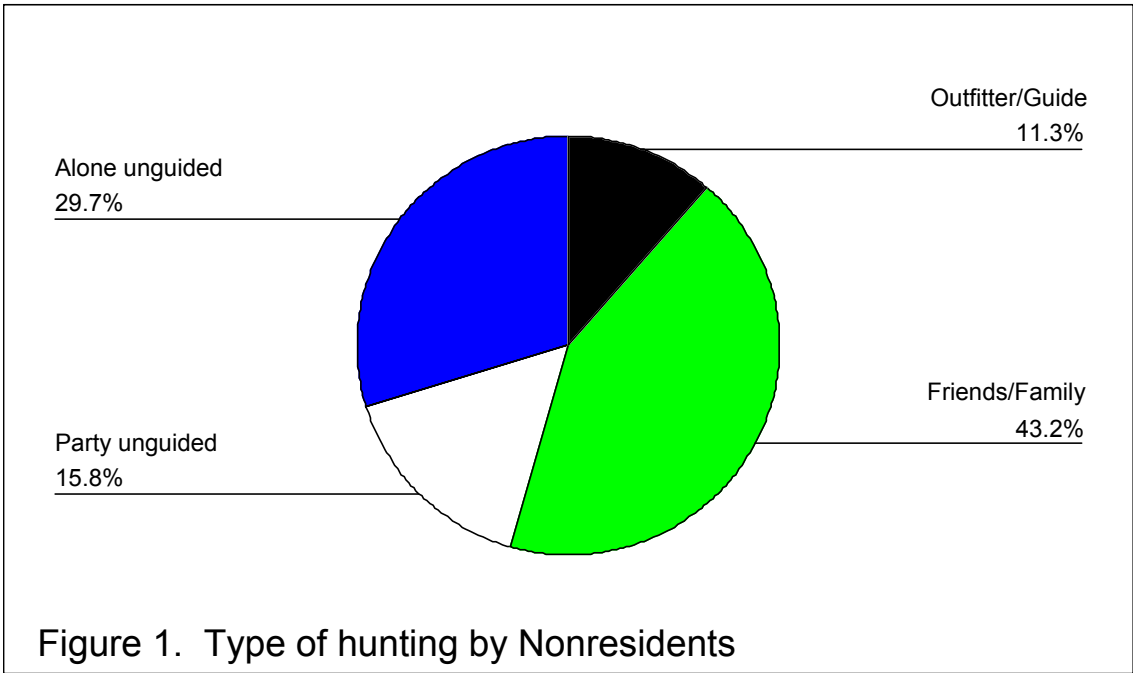
Hunters were asked how they hunted in Illinois: with guides or outfitters; with friends and/or family living in Illinois; in a party unguided; or alone unguided. Most hunters (43%) hunted with friends or family, with 30% hunting alone unguided, followed by 16% hunting with a party unguided. A minority of hunters (11%) hunted with guides or outfitters (Figure 1).

Reasons for Hunting in Illinois

Hunters indicated they were hunting in Illinois to hunt with family and friends living in Illinois (47%) more often than any other reason (Figure 2). The second reason given was to hunt trophy game not available in their home state (36%), followed by abundant game (12%), low license fees (3%), and hunting while visiting Illinois on business (1%). Reasons for hunting differed by type of nonresident hunter. Hunters hunting with family and friends (80%) stated their primary reason for hunting Illinois was to share the experience with family and friends (Figure 3). Nonresidents hunting with guides and outfitters gave trophy game as their most important reason (82%) for hunting in Illinois (Figure 4). A majority of hunters in a party unguided (63%) stated trophy game was the reason they hunted Illinois (Figure 5). Nonresidents hunting alone unguided (45%) gave trophy game as the reason for hunting in Illinois more than any other reason (Figure 6).

Game Species Hunted

Hunters hunted deer with a bow more than any other type of hunting (Figure 7). Deer hunting with a firearm was the second-most frequent type of hunting activity, followed by doves, ducks, and geese. Nonresidents hunting with friends or family living in Illinois hunted deer with a firearm more than other types of hunting (Figure 8). Nonresidents hunting with a guide or outfitter participated in archery deer hunting three times more than deer with a firearm (Figure 9). Archery deer hunting had a 2 to 1 participation rate over firearm deer hunting for both nonresidents hunting with a party unguided (Figure 10) or alone unguided (Figure 11).



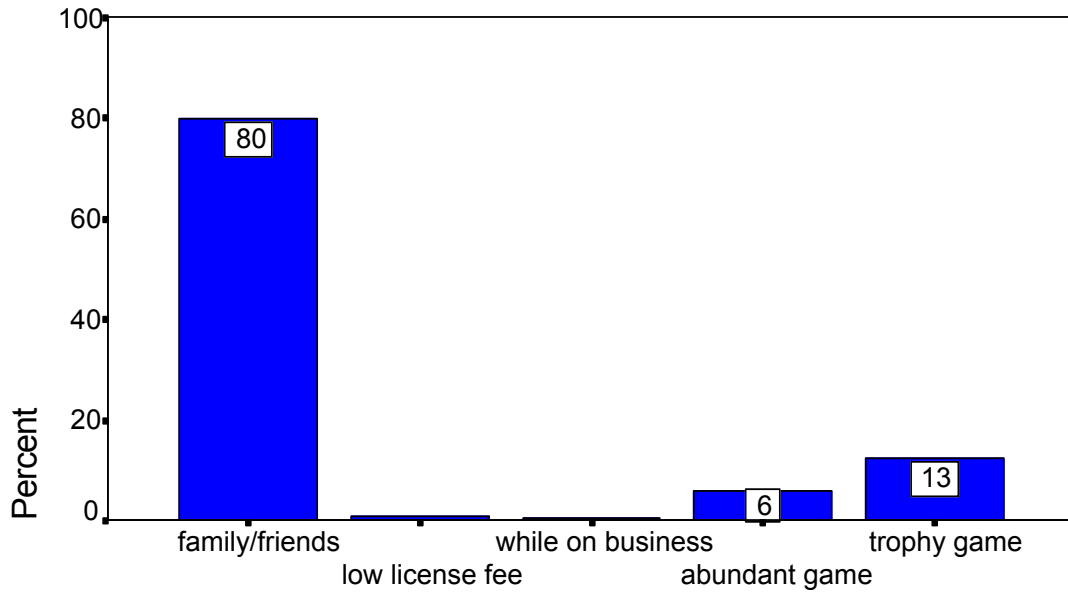


Figure 3. Reasons for hunting in Illinois:
Hunters with friends/family

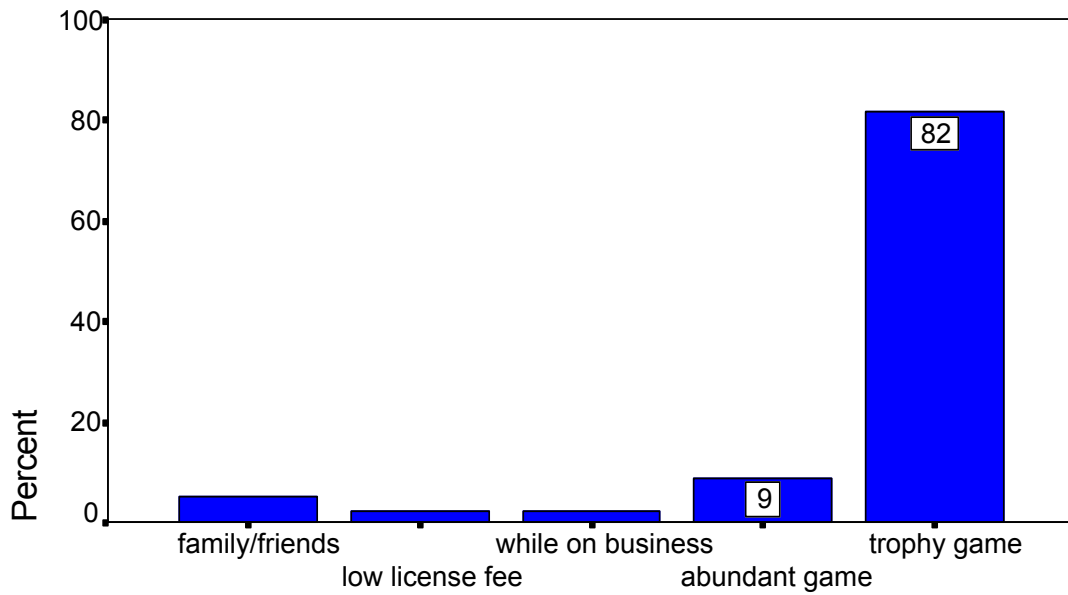


Figure 4. Reasons for hunting in Illinois:
Hunters with guides/outfitters

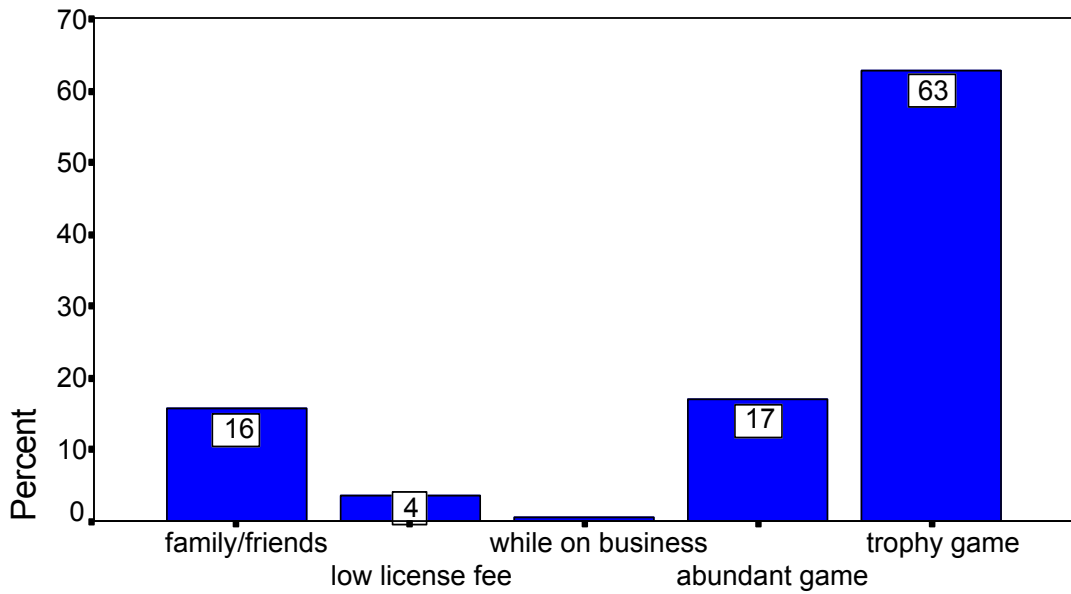


Figure 5. Reasons for hunting in Illinois:
Hunters with party unguided

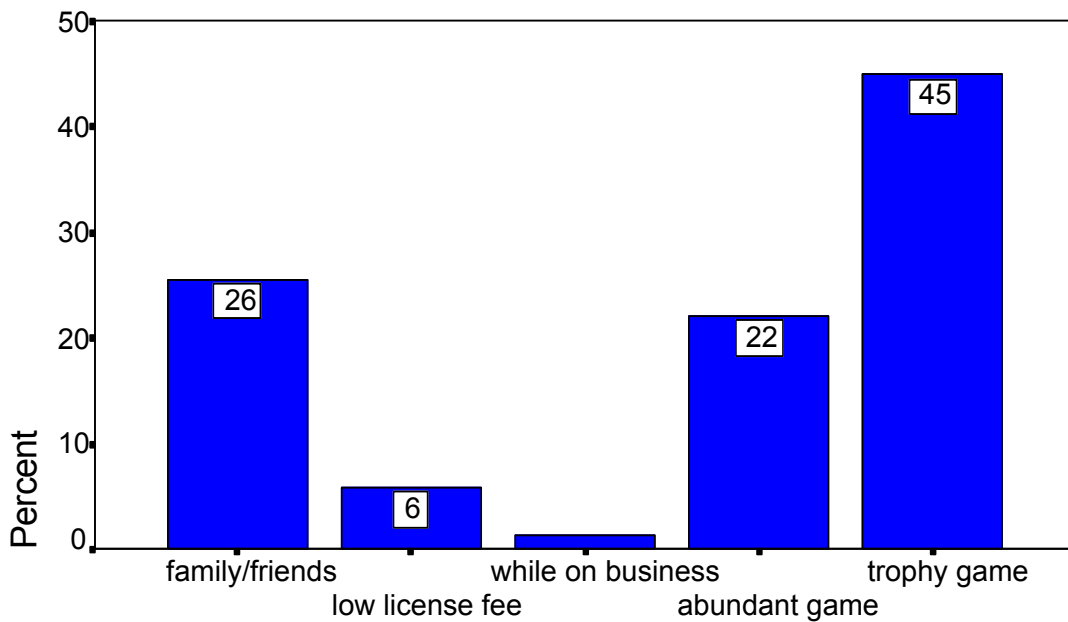


Figure 6. Reasons for hunting in Illinois;
Hunting alone unguided

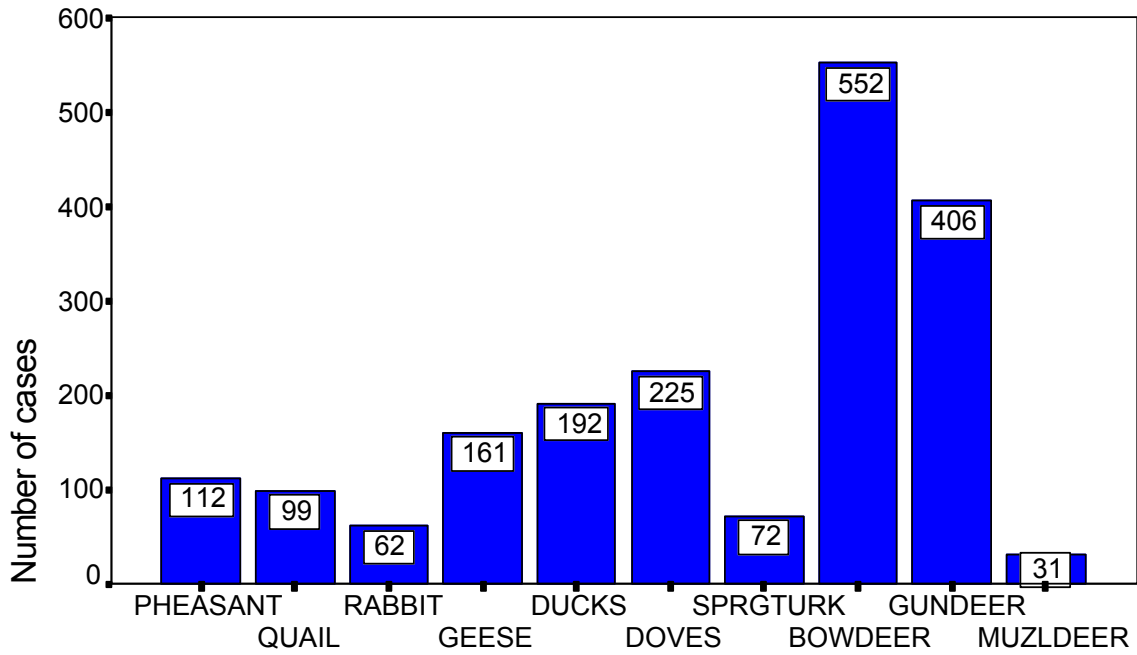


Figure 7. Game species hunted by nonresident hunters

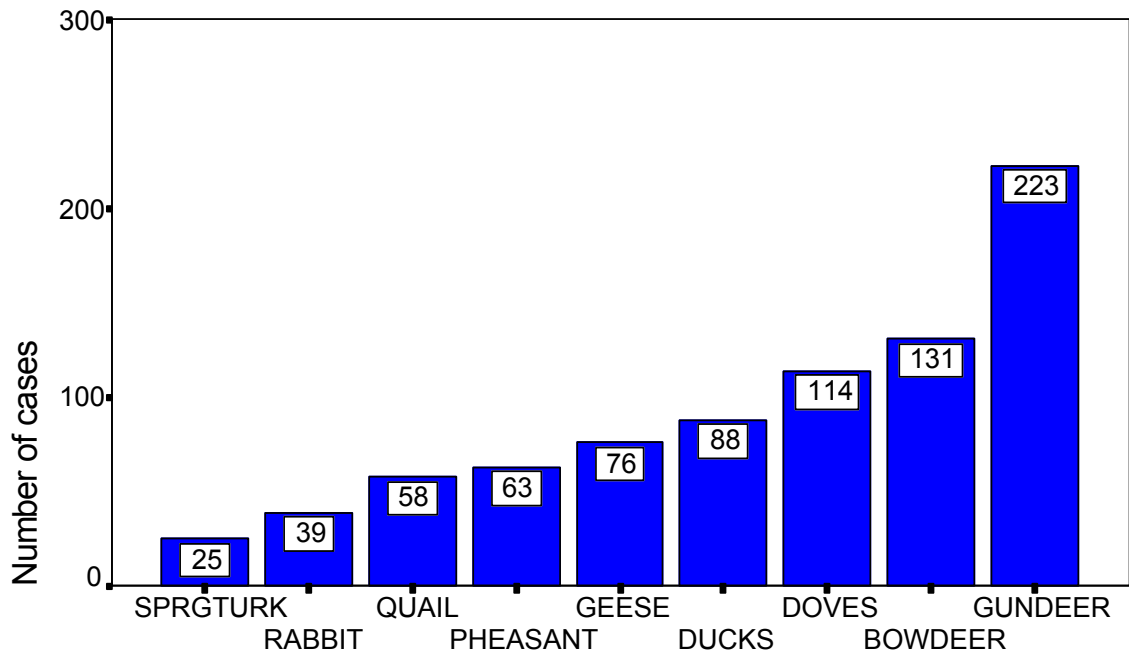


Figure 8. Game hunted - hunters with friends/family

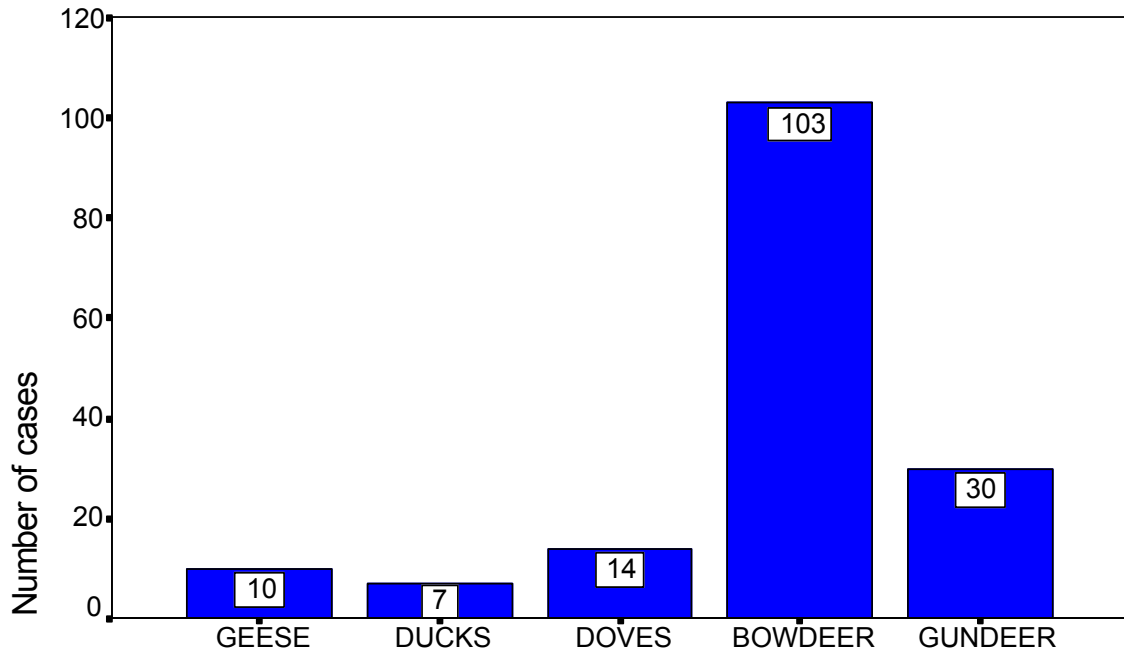


Figure 9. Game hunted - hunters with guides/outfitters

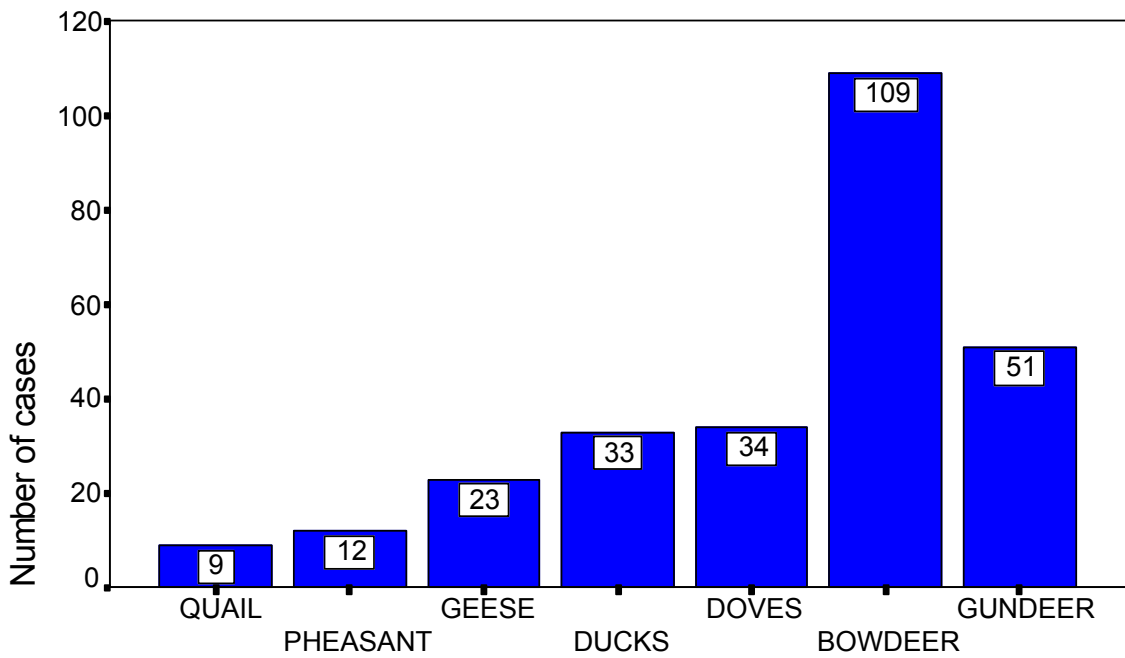


Figure 10. Game hunted - hunters with party unguided

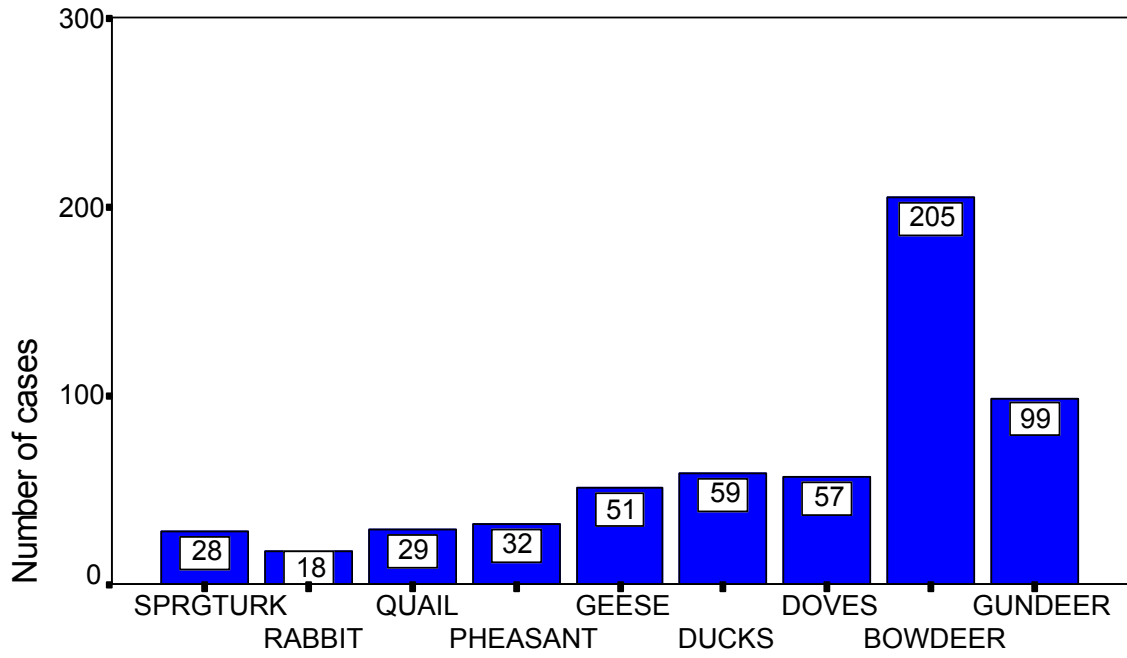


Figure 11. Game hunted - hunters alone unguided

Lands Hunted

Most nonresident hunters (53%) hunted private land with free access. Public land was hunted by 24% of nonresident hunters, whereas 20% of nonresident hunters hunted private land for a fee (Figure 12). By comparison, 87% of Illinois resident hunters hunted private land in 1998-1999 (data from 1998-99 Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey). Most nonresidents hunting with friends and family (73%) hunted for free on private land (Figure 13). The majority (71%) of hunters with guides and outfitters hunted on private land for a fee (Figure 14). Nonresident hunters in a party unguided hunted a greater variety of lands than other hunting groups: 33% hunted private land for free, 30% paid a fee to hunt private land, and 26% hunted public land with no fees (Figure 15). Hunters who hunted alone unguided hunted mostly on private land with no fees (52%) (Figure 16).

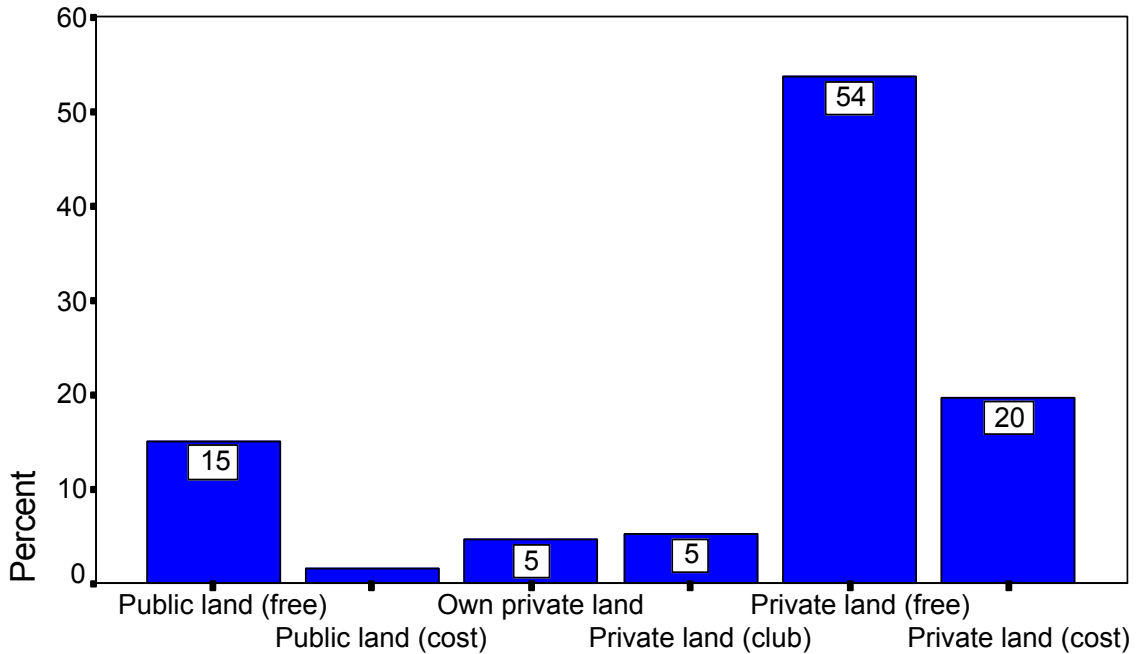


Figure 12. Lands hunted by nonresident hunters

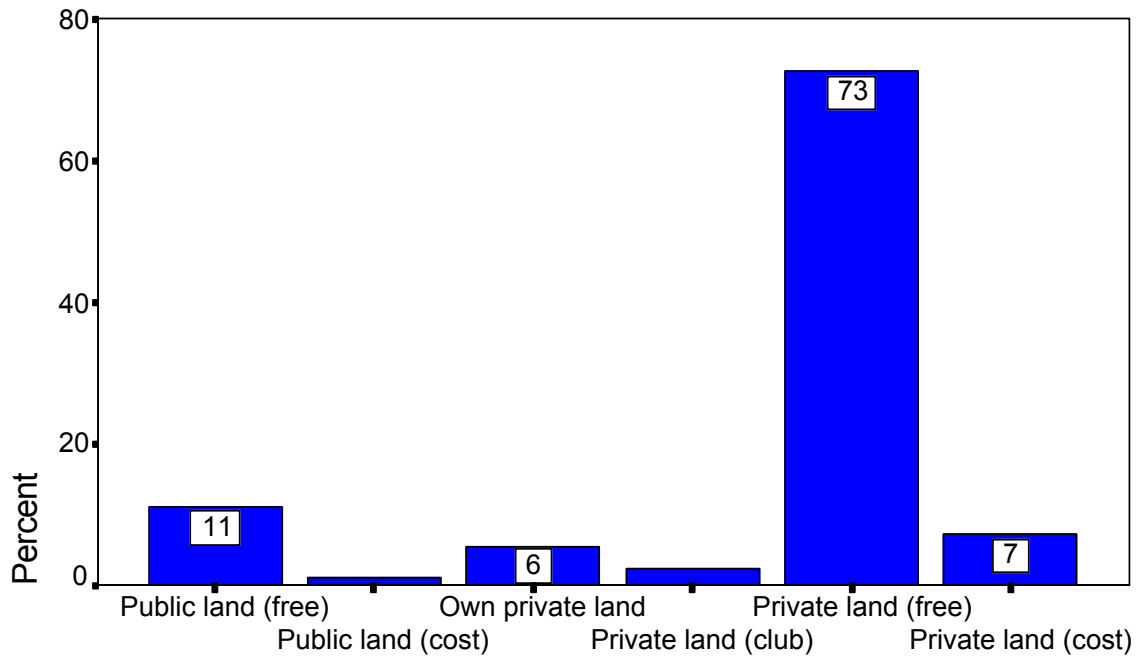


Figure 13. Land hunted - hunters with friends/family

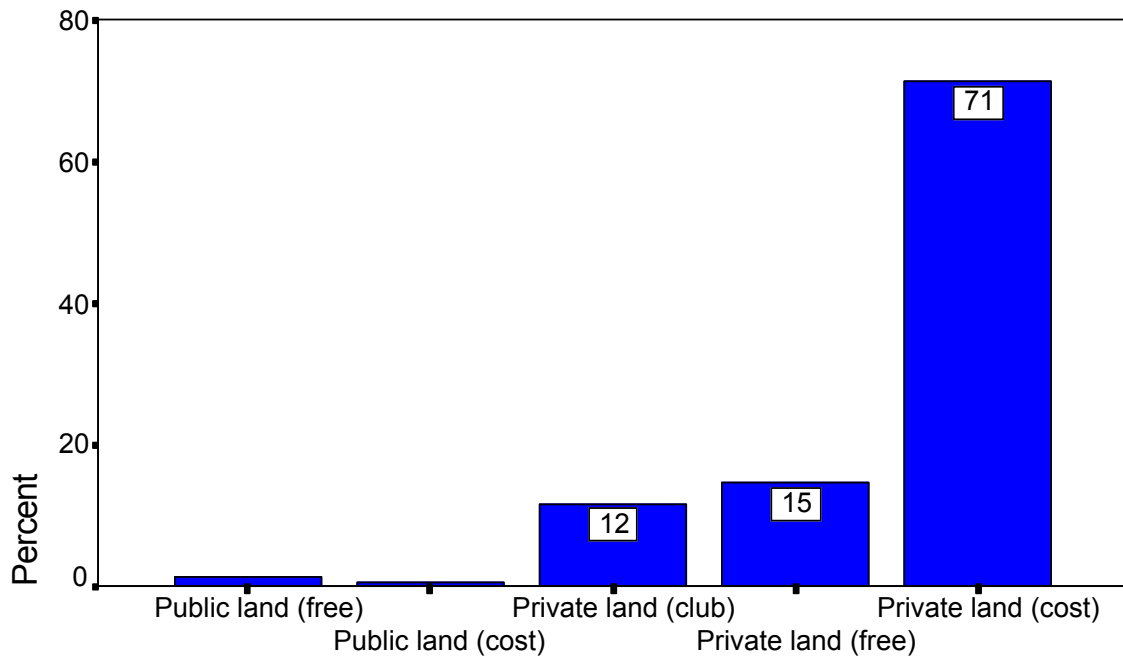


Figure 14. Land hunted - hunters with guides/outfitters

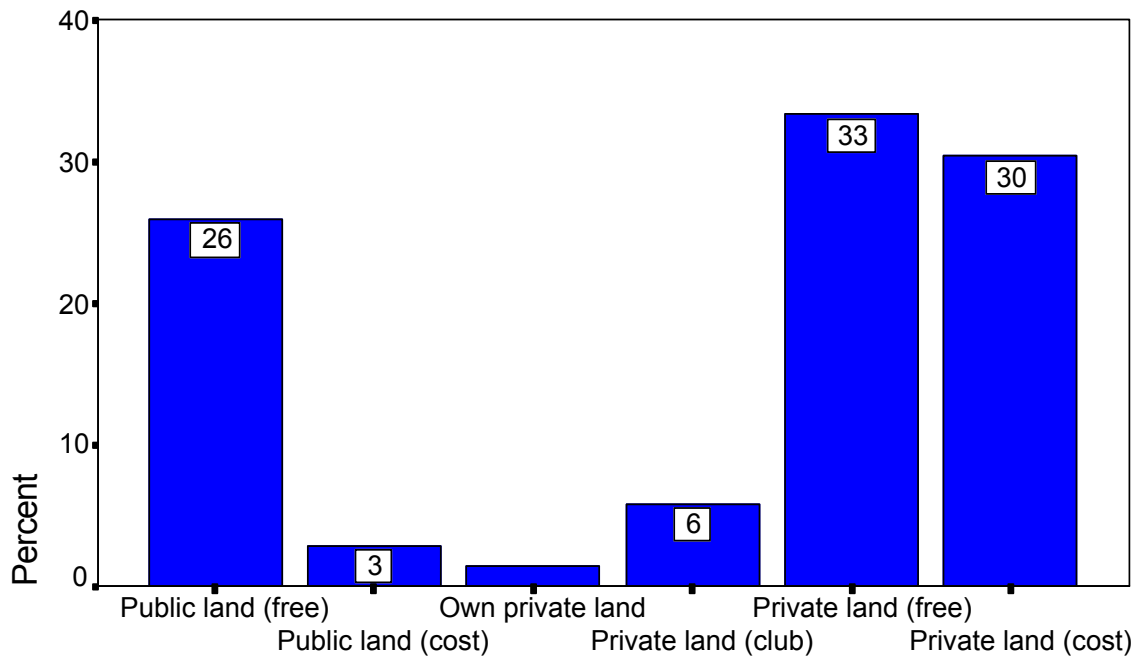


Figure 15. Land hunted - hunters with party unguided

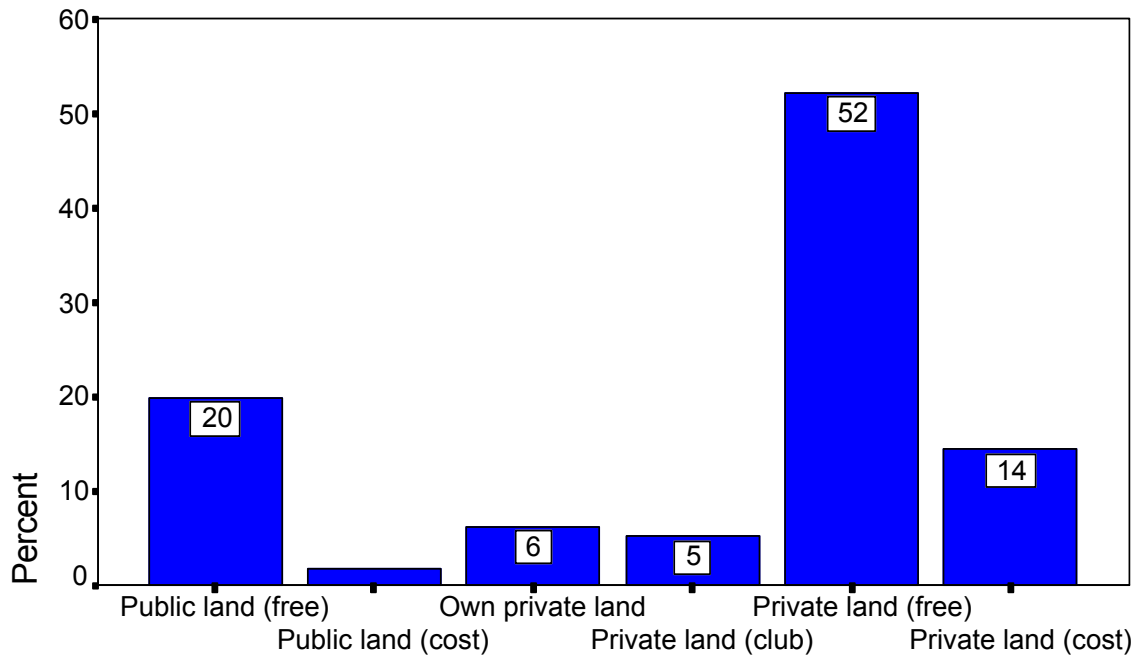


Figure 16. Land hunted - hunters alone unguided

Expenditures

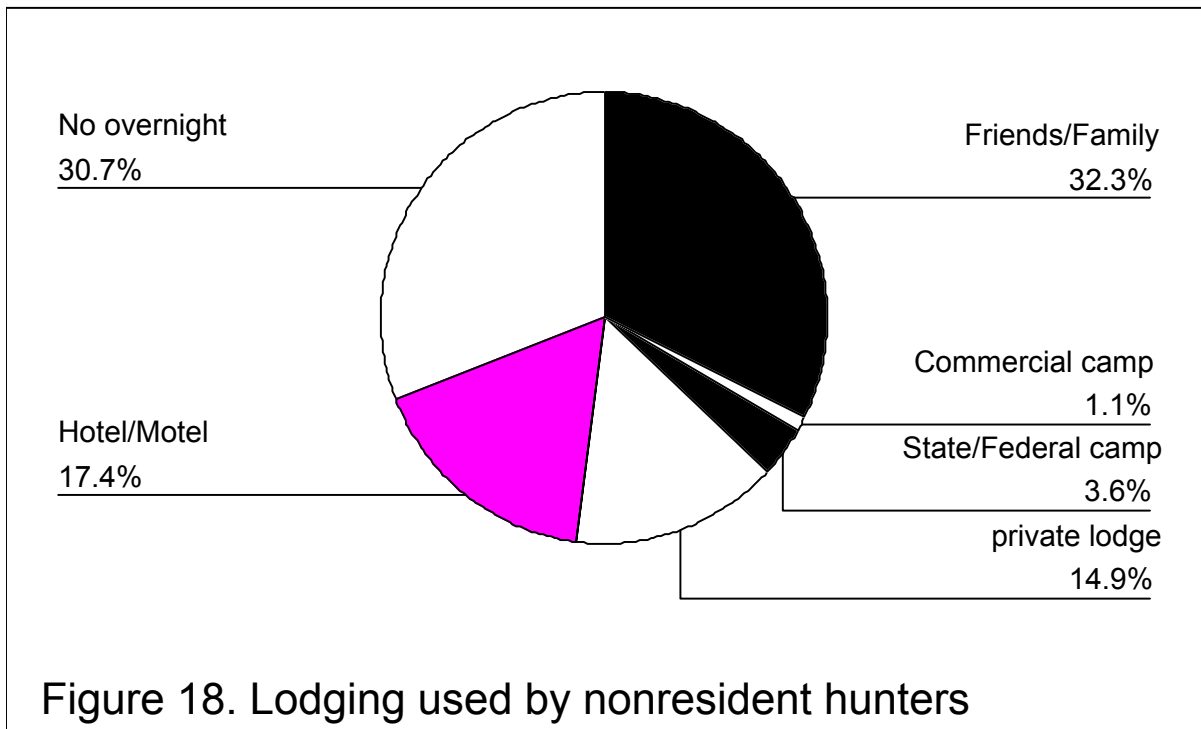
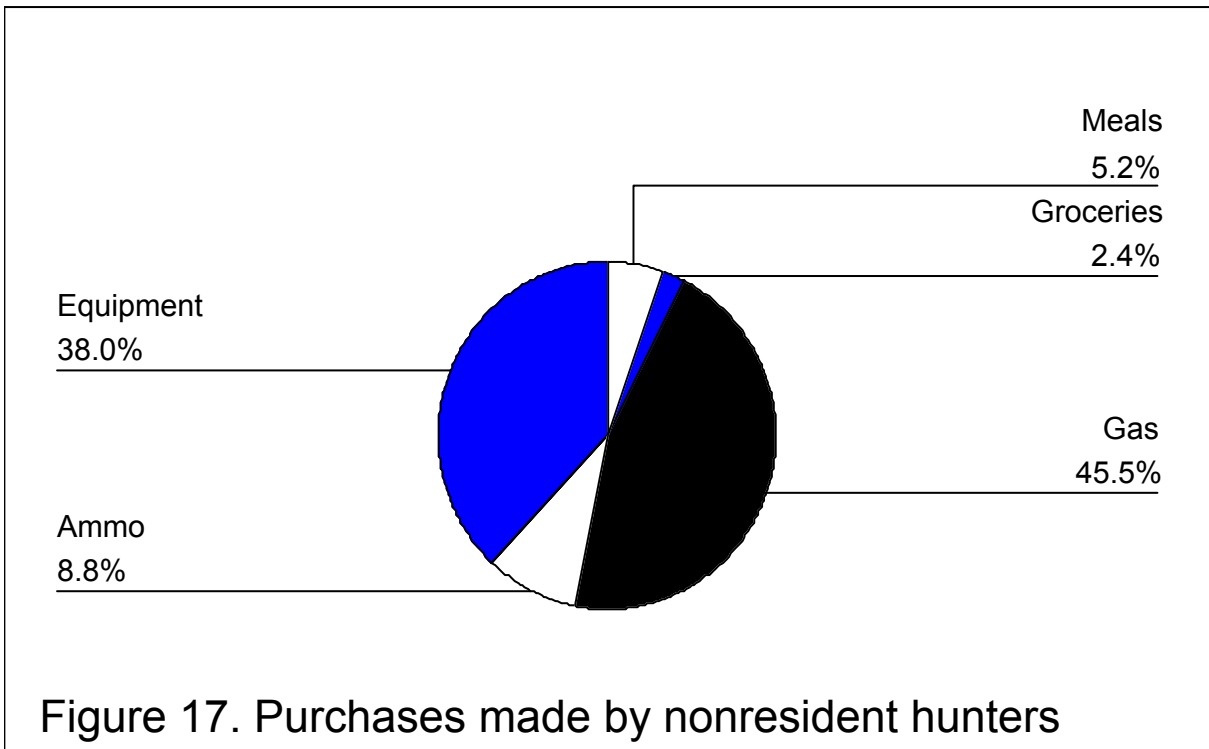
The purchases made most often by nonresident hunters were fuel (46%), hunting equipment (38%), ammunition (9%), meals (5%), and groceries (2%) (Figure 17).

Lodging

Nonresident hunters were almost evenly divided between staying with friends or family (32%) or not staying overnight (31%) when hunting in Illinois. Hotels and motels were used by 17% of nonresident hunters, commercial lodges accommodated 15%, and approximately 5% of nonresidents camped while hunting in Illinois (Figure 18).

Quality of Hunting Experience

Hunters were asked to rate the quality of their hunting experience in Illinois as “Poor”, “Fair”, “Good”, or “Excellent”. Most hunters (45%) rated their experience as “Good”, and 71% rated it as “Good” or “Excellent” (Figure 19).



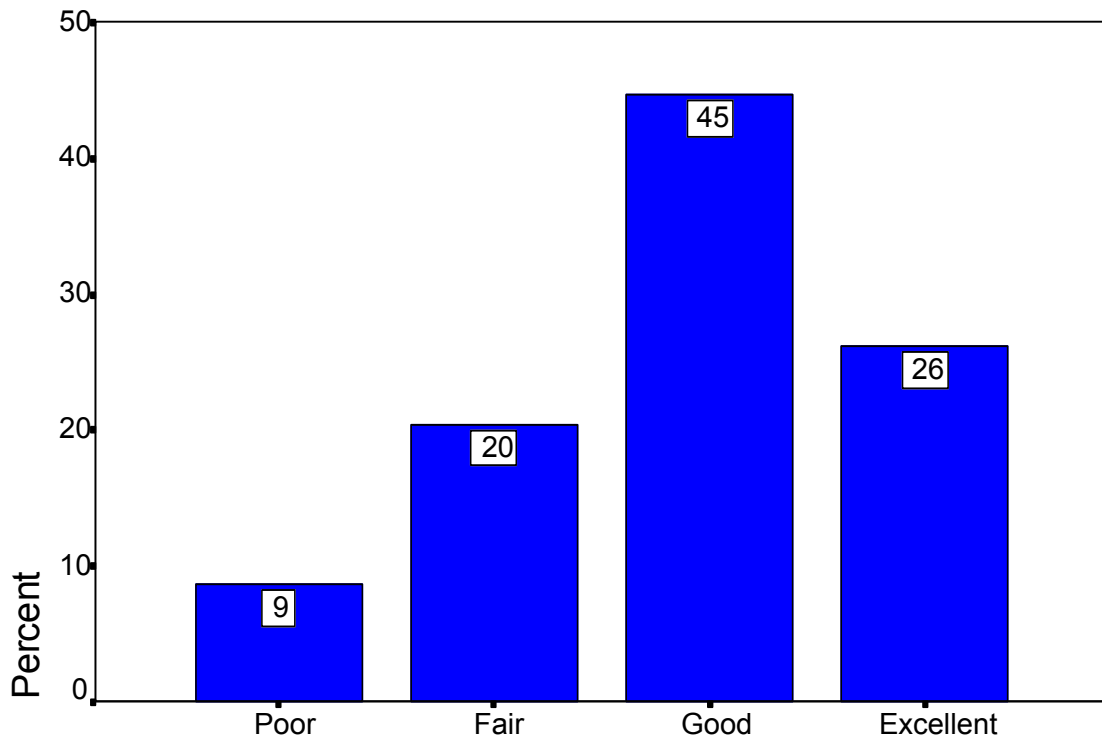


Figure 19. Nonresident hunter ratings of hunting experience

APPENDIX A
RANDOM SAMPLE OF HUNTERS BY STATE OF RESIDENCE

<u>STATE</u>	<u>Number in sample</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>Number in sample</u>
MO	498	CO	9
IN	249	NE	8
IA	230	WV	7
TN	125	MA	6
WI	100	KS	5
MI	91	NH	5
AL	68	SC	5
PA	64	ID	4
KY	56	WA	4
FL	54	CT	2
GA	48	NV	2
OH	44	UT	2
MS	40	NM	1
TX	40	OR	1
MN	36	SD	1
LA	35	VT	1
NC	33	AK	0
AR	32	DE	0
VA	18	HI	0
MD	16	ME	0
NY	15	MT	0
CA	14	ND	0
OK	12	RI	0
NJ	10	WY	0
AZ	9	IL	N/A