

The Hunting Seasons

—Time Elements of Wildlife Law—

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Hunting seasons are an important element of wildlife law : conserving game by regulating when to hunt or not to hunt. The timing and length of the seasons also reflect other interests in wildlife law such as resource allocation, rights, sports, safety, and culture. Therefore, legal hunting seasons must be consistent not only with wildlife ecology but also with socio-economic environment and the societies' historical and cultural values if they are to be successful.

This paper reviews Japanese law on hunting seasons through an historical analysis and comparison with English, German, and American hunting laws. The analysis demonstrates that current Japanese hunting seasons are relatively short and inflexible because they historically were set to provide maximum safety to agriculturists as well as game conservation. While this short hunting season may facilitate game recovery, it nevertheless has had significant problems, as it has been necessary to frequently employ off-season take permits to counter wildlife damage. The author recommends introducing an extended hunting season for organized resident hunters whose hunting activities would contribute to better wildlife management outcomes.