



EUROPEAN BOWHUNTING FEDERATION

Press release

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Finnish Study Puts Bow Hunting on Par with Rifle Hunting for White-tailed Deer

The initial results from a study in Finland were presented last week and confirm that hunting with a bow and arrow is just as effective as using a rifle. The detailed scientific study, which was conducted over a period of four years from early 2019 to early 2023, analyzed the comparative aspects of harvesting white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) with both bullets and hunting bows. The study was presented at the 2023 wildlife seminar in Jyväskylä, Finland, and it revealed that modern hunting arrows and bullets have similar, if not the same, effects on harvested deer. The project was led by veterinarian Mikaela Sauvala, who performs the analysis as a part of her PhD study.

The study, where 130 deer were harvested with the bow and arrow and 100 animals with a rifle, found that the average flight distances of non-immobilized deer differ by less than one meter between rifles and hunting bows. The results of this study demonstrate that hunting with a bow and arrow is not only effective but also in line with modern animal welfare standards.

The study's lead project manager, Antti Saarenmaa, said in a statement, "Our preliminary results show that these findings are similar to our experiences that hunting with a bow and arrow is comparable with other hunting methods. This is an important step towards the understanding of the use of bow and arrow in hunting. I am looking forward to analyzing the rest of the data and will answer many of the questions asked about hunting with bow and arrow and perhaps will encourage game managers to consider including bow and arrow as a valid hunting method in modern game management programs."

In addition to its effectiveness and animal welfare benefits, this study has important implications for legislators and politicians in European countries. The results of this study demonstrate that hunting with a bow and arrow is a viable alternative to hunting with a rifle. The use of bows in hunting can lead to quieter and a hunting practice on the nature's terms, which can help to reduce conflicts between hunters

and non-hunters. Moreover, the study findings can be used as evidence that bow hunting is a safe, responsible, and sustainable practice that should be considered for legalization in European countries. It is crucial that legislators and politicians take the findings of this study into account when making decisions about hunting regulations and laws in their respective countries.

Anders Gejer, the president of the European Bowhunting Federation, stated that "This study is a significant milestone in the hunting community, as it demonstrates in a scientific and well-controlled manner the effectiveness of a modern hunting bow. As a long-time hunter who has used both rifles and bows, I can attest to the accuracy of these findings based on my own experiences. The study also highlights the suitability of the bow and arrow for the regulation of wild boars, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas, due to the quiet nature of the bow and its short range, making it an extremely safe and effective method. The proposed urban wild boar management program aligns with the proven success of similar initiatives where bows and arrows are used, such as the urban wild boar regulations program that has been implemented in Madrid, Spain for over a decade and has since been adopted in multiple cities across Europe."

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