2003 Black Bear Hunting Season Proves to be a Successful Management Tool

As the sun rose on the opening day of New Jersey's first black bear hunting season in 33 years, Garden State bear hunters were greeted with a blanket of new snow. Although the snow and the subfreezing temperatures seemed a hindrance at first, the weather actually improved hunters' success by providing better sighting and tracking conditions.

During the hunt, held Dec. 8–13, 5,450 hunters harvested 328 bears; both the total and the six percent hunter-success rate were on target with Fish & Wildlife's biologists' projections. Also, it proved to be a safe hunt, in part, because every bear hunter had successfully completed a mandatory black bear hunting seminar.

Bears were harvested in five of the seven New Jersey counties open to black bear hunting *(see Table 1)*.

An average of 0.21 bears per square mile were harvested within the land area open to hunting, well below the pre-hunting season density of about 2.5 bears per square mile calculated by Fish & Wildlife's black bear population research. Hunters reported bear harvests in 36 of the 105 municipalities open to black bear hunting. Vernon Township, Sussex County, tallied the most; 38 bears were taken. More than 80 percent of hunters used a shotgun to harvest their bears, and the majority of bears were taken on private or state land *(see Table 2)*.

Photo by Ken McKenzie, NJ Fish and Wildlife

This 578 pound male black bear inhabited Ringwood State Park.

Photo by Tom Denny

George Soltis of Athens, Pennsylvania.

The bear harvest sex ratio (209 females to 119 males) and the age distribution (35% juvenile/ 65% adult) matched those of bears captured during research and control activities. Fish & Wildlife's bear population analysis before the hunt, combined with information collected at mandatory bear-check stations, confirms that the current black bear population can support regulated hunting without endangering the species' viability in New Jersey. The biological data on bears and demographic data on hunter success will help refine future management actions.

Since 1980, Fish & Wildlife has used an integrated approach to managing black bears. Today, this strategy includes:

- Monitoring the bear population
- Educating New Jersey residents to reduce bear/human conflicts
- Responding to complaints about nuisance bears to protect public safety and property
- Using other appropriate control measures, including a regulated hunt in 2003

With careful management, a healthy black bear population can continue to thrive and safely coexist with New Jersey residents while providing recreational opportunities such as wildlife watching and wildlife photography.

For more information on the results of the 2003 bear hunting season, visit www.njfishandwildlife.com.

Patrick Carr, Supervising Biologist

Photo by Wade Graham, Sr.

Wade Graham of Canton, PA.

Table 1. New Jersey 2003 Black Bear Harvest By County

County	Total Harvest	Percentage of Harvest	Area: mi²	Bears Harvested per square mile
Sussex	233	71 %	537	0.43 / mi²
Warren	48	15 %	363	0.13 / mi²
Passaic	26	8 %	126	0.21 / mi²
Morris	20	6 %	429	0.05 / mi²
Bergen	1	0.3 %	35	0.03 / mi²
Hunterdon	0	0	219	0 / mi²
Somerset	0	0	74	0 / mi²
Total	328		1558	Average 0.21 / mi²

Table 2. New Jersey 2003 Black Bear Hunting Season Harvest by Land Ownership

	Number of Bears	Percent of Total Harvest
Private Property	137	42
State Land	117	36
Federal Land	50	15
County or Municipal Land	24	7

Living with Beavers—A Look at Damage Management

Though the restoration of New Jersey's beavers *(Castor canadensis)* is one of the state's wildlife success stories, their increasing population has caused some conflicts with residents.

During the past three years, complaints about beavers damaging property averaged about 135 calls per year statewide. When one envisions the damage beavers can do, their best-known habits likely come to mind: beavers' seemingly insatiable desire to gnaw and their equally pressing need to create ponds. It's no surprise then, that more than 95 percent of all complaints about beavers involve these two activities.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish & Wildlife employs a unit of technicians and biologists who specifically are trained and skilled in dealing with wildlife damage. This 11-member team works primarily on damage problems associated with New Jersey's larger wildlife species: white-tailed deer, black bears, coyotes, beavers and wild turkeys. As with all wildlife-damage situations, the Fish & Wildlife team uses an integrated strategy to tackle beaver problems. Several approaches, such as education, exclusionary devices and trapping can be used together to produce a maximum effect. But there are no silver bullets in wildlife damage control—particularly with ambitious beaver.

Beavers chew trees both to feed themselves and to obtain the building materials they need to construct dams and lodges. In the process, they may cut down trees that are valuable to landowners. They also may inadvertently fell trees on dwellings, structures and utility wires. Beavers' gnawing can affect the agricultural community, too, by damaging nursery stock and felling or girdling orchard trees.

Wire mesh wrapped around the base of a tree to thwart beavers.

The building of dams by beavers is the most common source of damage. Beavers flood areas for two primary reasons: to create adequately deep water so they can swim and feed during the winter and to flood woodlands to reach food and create an easy pathway to float logs from one end of their habitat to another. In doing so, they often create problems for homeowners by flooding property and occasionally causing septic systems to back up.

Farmers incur damage to crops when fields are flooded. Roadways can be made impassable by beavers' dam-building activity. In some cases, flooding has threatened endangered plants. Some species, like bog turtles, cannot remain in a wetland that beavers have flooded. However, beavers also are excellent at creating beneficial habitat for a variety of species such as waterfowl, mink, otters, herons and warm-water fishes.

Fish & Wildlife responds to reports of damage by gleaning as much information as possible from the caller. Oftentimes, the callers do not want the beavers trapped or removed, and a few simple steps can be taken to minimize the impacts of the flooding or gnawing.

Homeowners, farmers and businesses requiring assistance with beavers damage should contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (908)735-8793.

Frequently, all that is needed to solve beaver-related problems is some technical advice for the caller. In most cases, the simple use of fencing can protect valuable trees, or save trees beavers have begun to eat. Hardware cloth is ideal for this purpose, since beavers cannot chew through the metal wire. It need only be applied to the tree's base; beavers are not good at climbing.

Some situations, however, require more than just advice. When roads and crop fields are flooded or when septic systems fail, it is often necessary to trap the beavers that are causing the problem. Beavers in New Jersey are caught using three types of traps: Conibear traps, Hancock traps and snares. Conibear traps are set under the water surface and are designed to kill beavers quickly. Hancock traps act like clamshells that live-trap the beaver. Snares are loops of wire that catch beavers around the neck without harming the animal.

Beaver caught in a snare.

The use of snares and Hancock traps allows the beavers to be transported if a suitable release site exists. Unfortunately, these trapped beavers often are euthanized because there are few places for release where they will not cause problems. And, as many trappers will attest, it is very difficult to recapture a beaver once it has been trapped and released.

In some situations, a flume, or water leveler, can be installed in the dam so that water continues to flow through the dam. The flume pipe extends approximately 15 feet into the impounded water body, thus making it difficult for a beaver to determine the cause of the lowered water level as it searches for a breach in the dam. At sites where this technique can be used effectively, the beavers are able to remain in their habitat without impacting adjacent roads or homes, since the water can be kept at an acceptable level.

Whenever the particular situation permits, complaints received during the summer months are referred to trappers who catch the beavers during the winter recreational trapping season. This option solves many beaver problems. Recreational trapping is a responsible use of the wildlife resource, and trappers use the beavers they catch. Recreational trapping also helps to control the beaver population and reduce the number of complaints.

Fish and Wildlife technicians installing a "flume" at Silver Lake Wildlife Management Area.

Although beavers' behavior may create conflicts with people, their beneficial activities far outweigh the damage they cause. Their habitat-modification activities provide diverse wildlife habitats, store water for aquifer recharge, improve water conditions for warm-water fishes, stabilize stream flows and control erosion. And, of course, beavers offer recreational opportunities for wildlife watchers and trappers.

Through its integrated strategy to manage the state's beaver population, Fish & Wildlife will continue working to reduce conflicts between beavers and people to ensure beavers remain a fascinating part of New Jersey's fauna.

— Tony McBride, Principal Biologist

New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Conducts Pintail Satellite Telemetry Study With Partners

As I walked to the top of the dike in the chilly, pre-dawn darkness last March, I could hear the clamor of squeals, quacks and honks as hundreds of green-winged teal, pintails, black ducks and Canada geese gabbled in the pond below. It sounded as though the birds already were close to our rocket-net capture site.

We were in Oldmans Township, Salem County, and I was becoming concerned that ambient light from the Wilmington, Del., factories just across the river would disclose my presence to the wary birds. The trick was to slip into the blind - *undetected*. Once inside the blind, I'd have better control of the situation. Although I was dressed head to toe in camouflage, there was virtually no cover between the blind and me, so I crawled slowly on my belly across the top of the dike and down to the blind. A pair of Canada geese in the pond only 150 feet away spotted me and sounded the alarm.

Adult females were equipped with 20-gram, backpack-style satellite transmitters to track their movements.

Despite the ruckus, the green-winged teal and pintails in the pond were not distracted from feeding on the 20 pounds of millet, cracked corn and barley scattered as bait directly in front of the rocket net on the edge of the pond. By the time I reached the blind and wired up the rocket net detonator, the teal covered the bait like fleas on a neglected dog.

Although I was only 200 feet from the rocket net, the pre-dawn light made it difficult to see the target birds—female pintails—mixed in with hundreds of teal. After what seemed like an eternity, some of the pintails headed for the bait while many of the teal drifted away. When I was confident that at least four pairs of pintails were in front of the net, I pushed the detonator's plunger, sending the rocket net roaring over the feeding ducks.

As dozens of ducks, mainly green-winged teal, struggled under the net, I searched for the female pintails I knew were in there—*somewhere*. The first one I pulled out was hefty, just the kind of specimen we needed. A quick check of the middle covert feathers on her wings confirmed she was an adult. This bird in hand was the sixth and final specimen needed for our study and represented a bittersweet ending to time-consuming work that included several frustrating failures. At last we had completed New Jersey's portion of the capture phase in a large-scale, multi-partner study of pintails wintering in the Atlantic Flyway. But the work and the learning had only just begun.

Although pintails are still abundant in North America, their numbers have declined markedly since the mid-1970s. In the past, duck populations in mid-continental North America have waxed and waned in response to periods of precipitation and drought. When the prairies experienced a period of wet years in the late 1990s, most duck populations expanded well above their long-term averages. In fact, some species, including mallard, gadwall and shoveler, experienced record-high populations during that period.

Pintails, however, did not respond with the population increase expected under these ideal conditions. Their poor response was especially troubling, given the large pintail-population growth during previous periods of abundant, wet prairie habitat in the 1950s and 1970s.

Like population declines observed in many other species, the problem with pintails appears to be complex and multi-faceted. Some kinds of habitat constraints, both on key breeding and wintering areas, primarily in the West, likely are to blame for the pintails' decline.

Waterfowl hunters in the Atlantic Flyway have long regarded pintails as trophy birds. Such status can be attributed to the pintails' striking plumage, their exceptional wariness and difficulty in decoying, exceptional quality as table fare, and their relatively small numbers compared with other more common ducks (for example, black ducks) in the East. Also, the opportunity to observe these handsome birds in their natural habitats makes pintails particularly popular with birdwatchers.

Yet, relatively little is known about the status of pintails wintering in the Atlantic Flyway. Although the pintails' breeding range extends across the Arctic from Labrador to Alaska, the heart of the breeding range lies within the prairie-pothole region of North America. The majority of pintail banding data is from that mid-continental region; from 1966 to 1999, fewer than four percent of all pintails banded in Canada and fewer than eight percent of all pintails banded in the United States were harvested in the Atlantic Flyway.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Male (left) and female pintails are one of North America's most handsome ducks.

The small proportion of band recoveries in the East called into question the relationship between pintails wintering in the Atlantic Flyway and the core mid-continental population. For mallards, banding studies have revealed that only a small portion of the mid-continental population is recovered in the Atlantic Flyway,

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New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Conducts Pintail Satellite Telemetry Study With Partners

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particularly in northern states. Would it be plausible to assume the same applied to pintails?

To learn more about pintails wintering in the Atlantic Flyway, 39 adult female pintails were marked with satellite telemetry transmitters last winter. Pintails also were marked throughout their eastern wintering range from New Jersey to Florida. Partners in the study included the U.S. Geological Service's New York Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at Cornell University, as well as the state wildlife agencies of New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida. Several U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service national wildlife refuges, including the Cape May National Wildlife Refuge, provided key logistical support. The study's objectives are to:

- Assess the breeding ground affiliations of pintails wintering in the Atlantic Flyway.
- Describe the chronology of pintail migration.
- Identify important spring and fall staging areas used during migration.

Since females are more inclined to return to natal breeding areas than males, females were chosen to be telemetered with 20-gram, backpack-style transmitters, which will emit a signal once every six days for 10 months. Satellites receive the signals, which are downloaded by computer to provide weekly locations of the birds.

In New Jersey, six pintails were telemetered. New Jersey's participation in the research project is funded by the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project and the state Fish & Wildlife's Hunter and Angler Fund. The New Jersey Waterfowlers Association also purchased one of the transmitters used in the study.

Once completed, the study will provide some of the missing data to improve understanding of pintail ecology. Study results may clarify whether 30-day pintail hunting season restrictions are warranted for the Atlantic Flyway. Much work remains to be done. Long-term research is needed across the pintail breeding range to understand factors affecting pintails that would enhance the development of pintail conservation programs and harvest management strategies.

— Ted Nichols, Principal Biologist, Waterfowl Ecology and Management Program

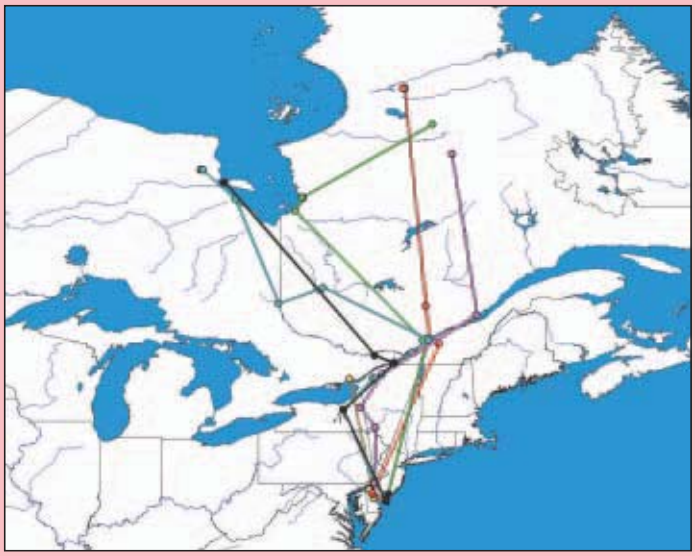
Radio Locations of Pintails Marked in the Atlantic Flyway

Pintails are one of the earliest nesting ducks in North America, and their presence in New Jersey during late winter is a sure sign that spring is on the way. While the fall migration is drawn out, the northward, spring migration is condensed into the weeks between late February and mid-March.

During this time, pintails concentrate primarily in tidal freshwater marshes that drain into the Delaware River and Bay. As many birders know, the marshes of the Maurice River, Mannington Meadow and the numerous tidal, freshwater creeks from Pedricktown to Woodbury are the best places to observe pintails heading north during spring. During an aerial survey conducted last February by Fish & Wildlife's Waterfowl Program, nearly 30,000 pintails were counted in these marshes.

The marshes serve as critical areas for gathering, resting and feeding before migration. Birds congregate to feed on the seeds of wetland plants, particularly wild rice, and numerous invertebrates found in the mud—all of which supply the precious calories pintails need to continue their spring migration. As they move north to their breeding grounds, female pintails must consume high-protein invertebrates essential for egg development later.

Tracking the movements of birds marked in this study has been fascinating so far. Several of the five birds marked at Cape May National Wildlife Refuge appeared to move to the impoundments at Fish & Wildlife's Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area before moving to tidal marshes on both sides of Delaware Bay for the remainder of the spring. In addition, many pintails marked in southern states, particularly those from North Carolina and Virginia, staged in New Jersey's tidal, freshwater marshes. Oldmans and Raccoon Creeks in particular clearly were important staging sites for Atlantic Flyway pintails. Marshes at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge near Auburn, N.Y., as well as Ottawa River Valley marshes in southern Ontario and Quebec, were used heavily by pintails during the spring migration, including those marked in New Jersey.



Nathan Zimpfer, NJ Fish and Wildlife.

Movements of satellite telemetered pintails from wintering sites in New Jersey to breeding locations in eastern Canada. The map shows movements between February and June 2004. Given the fascinating information obtained from the spring migration to the breeding areas, pintail-study partners are eagerly awaiting the fall migration.

Update: In 2004, spring arrived very late in the eastern Canadian arctic. Inuit in the Ungava Bay region of northern Quebec commented that ducks (including pintails) arrived later in 2004 than they had in more than 20 years. The late spring was evident given the movements of telemetered pintails, as they did not arrive on final nesting areas until late June. Pintails marked during winter in New Jersey finally settled onto breeding sites near the eastern and western shores of James Bay as well as the boreal forest of central Quebec.

Maps of the movements of the telemetered pintails marked in New Jersey are available at www.njfishandwildlife.com/pintail/pintail_sat2.htm, and are updated two or three times each month. Updates are expected to be available through autumn.

Northern Bobwhite Decline in New Jersey

It has been 15 years since I moved to the border of New Jersey's Pinelands region, an area where a mixture of small farms, woodlots and the occasional weedy field nurtured a healthy population of northern bobwhite. Over the years, the clear, two-note calls of the bobwhite could be heard, drifting from the farm across the street. Sometimes, bobwhite broods would scamper across the road.

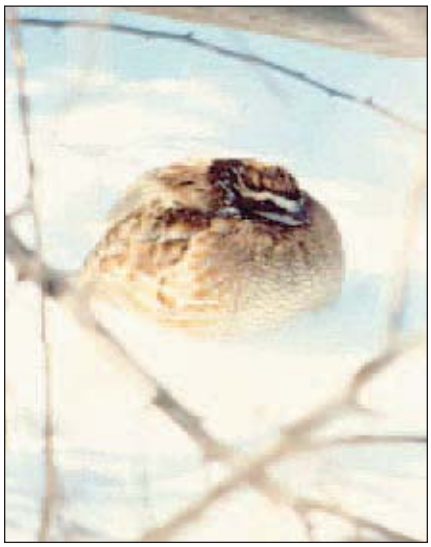


Photo by Joe Garris, NJ Fish and Wildlife

Northern Bobwhite *(Colinus virginianus)*

These small birds appeared to have habitat that provided everything they needed to survive and prosper, while also allowing hunters to harvest a portion of them each fall. Yet it has been six years since we have heard the bobwhite's distinctive calls. That last year they began calling in early June, but after the farmer mowed the grassy strip along the road and sprayed herbicide under the fence, the bobwhite were heard no more. More important, the weedy field beyond the swamp was sold and most of it was developed. In the small portion left undeveloped, young trees are growing. Now, I fear my local covey of bobwhite may never return because their habitat is gone.

Bobwhite thrive in early successional habitats like grasslands, shrubby areas and open oak-pine forest savannas. Naturally occurring fires historically kept these habitats from progressing into woodlands by preventing many trees from becoming established. Today, however, fires are strictly controlled. As the bobwhite habitat grows into mature forest, its value to these birds is lost.

Photo by Andrew Burnett, NJ Fish and Wildlife

Housing development replaces bobwhite habitat.

Agricultural fields can sustain bobwhite if they have some brushy, weedy edges, but modern farming is clean farming. Weeds and insects that would provide shelter and food, respectively, for bobwhite usually are controlled with herbicides and pesticides.

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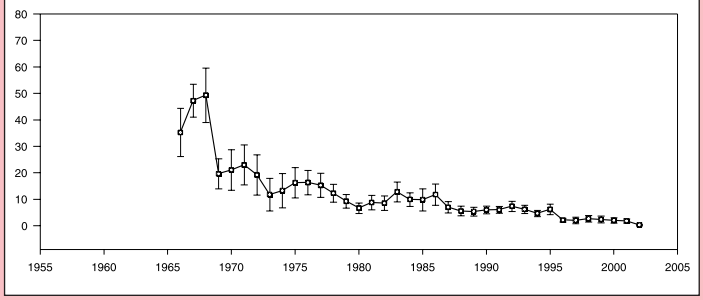
What is New Jersey doing for bobwhite?

- Fish & Wildlife is working to create, conserve, improve and connect grasslands and other early successional habitats on many wildlife management areas (WMAs). Last year at Buckshutem WMA in Cumberland County, 125 acres were cut selectively to thin out the forest, simulating a traditional fire-maintained ecosystem. This year, 205 acres of grasslands will be created by planting native, warm-season grasses, and 184 acres will be treated to maintain early successional stage shrublands. This work will occur on nine WMAs within bobwhite range and also will benefit other species that need these habitats to survive, including bobolinks and butterflies. This year, Fish & Wildlife also initiated a program to educate landowners near WMAs about grassland habitat management techniques.

Mean number of northern bobwhite observed per route in New Jersey during the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey, 1966–2002.



- To track the bobwhite population, Fish & Wildlife biologists annually review the Breeding Bird Survey and the Christmas Bird Count Survey. In 2003, Fish & Wildlife biologists also resumed traveling a series of New Jersey bobwhite survey routes, a project previously conducted from 1972–83. All three surveys conclude that the bobwhite population is low and has been declining over several decades. Fish & Wildlife biologists are working to estimate the actual number of bobwhite and other grassland birds in New Jersey. A statewide grassland bird survey is planned for 2005 in partnership with the New Jersey Audubon Society.
- Fish & Wildlife biologists have collected bobwhite-sighting locations and are overlaying these sites on habitat maps to create a computer-generated habitat model. The model will be compared with the statewide habitat map to predict where bobwhite exist or should exist.
- Fish & Wildlife has improved the bobwhite hunter harvest survey. After the hunting season, biologists will review the survey to determine if current hunting regulations remain appropriate for New Jersey's bobwhite population level. Stocking pen-reared bobwhite also will be reassessed. In other states, stocking bobwhites has been reported to increase the mortality of native quail and to confound assessments of wild bobwhite populations. Stocking also raises genetic concerns about the interbreeding of pen-raised with native bobwhites and the potential for disease transmission.

What can sportsmen and sportswomen do for bobwhite?

- Report seeing or hearing bobwhite in New Jersey to Fish & Wildlife by using the upland game bird report form available at www.njfishandwildlife.com/pdf/upgamebrdrpt.pdf.
- Contact the Bureau of Wildlife Management to participate in the upland gamebird harvest survey (see adjoining box), if you hunt bobwhite.
- Substitute stocking pen-raised bobwhite with ring-necked pheasants or chukar partridges to eliminate most of the negative impacts on native bobwhite, while retaining the advantages of stocking.
- Begin a habitat improvement program. Habitat management information is available online at www.njfishandwildlife.com/whipart04.htm or by writing to New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife, P.O. Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625.

Northern Bobwhite Decline in New Jersey

(continued)

New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation, with development continuing at a rapid rate. Housing developments and shopping centers are replacing bobwhite habitat.

Being on the northern edge of their North American range, New Jersey bobwhite occasionally are subjected to harsh weather; snow and low temperatures can cause winter kills. Marginal habitats exacerbate these winter losses.

When bobwhites do not produce enough young to offset annual losses, the population declines. If a local population occupies a patch of land surrounded by unsuitable habitat, such as mature forest or a housing development, continued decline can lead to local extinction of these game birds. Local bobwhite extinction in isolated habitats is especially detrimental because bobwhite seldom move more than two miles. Therefore, habitat patches farther than two miles from the nearest bobwhite population have only a small chance of being re-colonized.

Early successional habitats are among the most threatened. As grasslands decline, bobwhite decline. This problem is not unique to New Jersey; bobwhite have declined sharply throughout most of their range. Working together, the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Fish & Wildlife, sportsmen and women, bird watchers and other wildlife enthusiasts can address the challenges facing the bobwhite and help restore their population in the Garden State.

Paul Castelli, Supervising Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Wildlife Management

ATTENTION Upland Gamebird Hunters

If you hunt bobwhite, ruffed grouse, woodcock, ring-necked pheasant or chukar and are willing to participate in a Fish and Wildlife survey of gamebird hunters, please provide us with your name, mailing address, e-mail address and telephone number. Submit this information through our Web site at:
www.njfishandwildlife.com
or mail to:
Andrew Burnett, Principal Wildlife Biologist,
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife,
Nacote Creek Research Station,
P.O. Box 418, Port Republic, NJ 08241-0418
Fax: (609) 748-2057
E-mail: Andrew.Burnett@dep.state.nj.us

Upland Game Bird Occurrence Report Form

Send to: N. J. Division of Fish and Wildlife
Bureau of Wildlife Management
Upland Game and Furbearer Research Project
Nacote Creek Res. Sta., P.O. Box 418, Port Republic, NJ 08241

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Phone: ( ) _____

GAME BIRD SPECIES:
(Please check one)

- ☐ Bobwhite
- ☐ Ring-necked pheasant
- ☐ Ruffed grouse
- ☐ Woodcock

TYPE OF OBSERVATION:
(Please check one)

- ☐ Audio (Call heard: quail, pheasant; Drumming: grouse)
  Number of individuals heard
  (enter number) _____
- ☐ Visual (bird was seen)
  Number of birds seen
  (enter number)_____
- ☐ Mortality (non-hunting—e.g., predator, roadkill, etc.)

Specific location: _____

_____

Nearest intersection: _____

_____

Township: _____

County: _____

OPERATION GAME THIEF

STOP WILDLIFE CRIME
(800) 222-0456

Operation Game Thief aims to increase the public's participation in apprehending violators of New Jersey's wildlife laws. Concerned citizens can make anonymous reports to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Fish and Wildlife by calling the toll-free number (800) 222-0456. If the information leads to the apprehension and conviction of a violator, the caller may receive a cash reward of up to $2,000. Also, arrangements are made to enable an anonymous caller to collect a reward without disclosing his or her identity to anyone.

Operation Game Thief is a partnership between DEP and the New Jersey Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, and depends upon charitable contributions from individuals and conservation organizations to promote the program and to pay rewards. Since its inception in 1983, Operation Game Thief has generated thousands of calls to Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Law Enforcement, resulting in numerous convictions in a variety of cases. Last year alone, the Operation Game Thief program received 49 tips about illegal activity, leading to 29 apprehensions.

The wide use of cell phones is dramatically improving the frequency, quality and timeliness of information provided to lawmen through Operation Game Thief. Sportsmen and women should consider taking along a cell phone when they go afield. Not only are cell phones valuable in emergency situations, they also can be a critical link between hunters and conservation officers working to protect wildlife resources.

Operation Game Thief recently generated several successful prosecutions. The following case illustrates how a tip from a concerned citizen can lead to the apprehension of a wildlife violator.

The Big Buck

An anonymous caller reported that a man with an unusual last name had unlawfully taken a large buck without first taking a doe. The caller was uncertain about the correct spelling of the name and could offer no other details about the incident.

With only sketchy information, the Central Region Law Enforcement Office launched an investigation, inspecting local deer-check stations, taxidermists and butcher shops to determine if a large deer had been brought in by anyone with a similar last name. No such deer was located, and additional leads that would further the investigation failed to surface. Investigators then searched several computer databases available only to law enforcement agencies and eventually focused on a particular suspect.

Conservation Officer Greg Szulecki headed to the suspect's residence to attempt to question him. While approaching the front door of the residence, the officer noticed a small amount of blood and deer hair on the driveway. The suspect, however, evidently was not at home.

Returning to the residence later that evening, Officer Szulecki was able to question the suspect who eventually admitted he had, in fact, shot the eight-point buck without first taking a doe. The man also had failed to tag the deer and to take it to a check station, as required by law. Officer Szulecki recovered the trophy buck and cited the man for numerous violations. He later pled guilty and paid his fines.

Remember, you can help protect New Jersey's wildlife resources by anonymously reporting violators to Operation Game Thief. For more information on the program, visit www.njfishandwildlife.com/ogt.htm.

Perpetual Sunrise & Sunset, Trenton, New Jersey

	JAN.		FEB.		MAR.		APR.		MAY		JUNE		JULY		AUG.		SEPT.		OCT.		NOV.		DEC.	
Day	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.
01	0722	0443	0709	0517	0632	0551	0542	0624	0458	0655	0431	0723	0433	0732	0457	0713	0527	0630	0556	0541	0629	0456	0703	0434
02	0722	0444	0708	0518	0631	0552	0541	0625	0457	0656	0431	0723	0434	0732	0458	0712	0528	0629	0557	0539	0630	0455	0704	0433
03	0722	0445	0707	0519	0629	0553	0539	0626	0456	0657	0431	0724	0434	0732	0459	0711	0529	0627	0558	0537	0631	0454	0705	0433
04	0722	0446	0706	0521	0627	0554	0538	0627	0455	0658	0430	0725	0435	0732	0500	0709	0530	0625	0559	0536	0632	0452	0706	0433
05	0722	0447	0705	0522	0626	0556	0536	0628	0453	0659	0430	0725	0436	0732	0501	0708	0531	0624	0600	0534	0634	0451	0707	0433
06	0722	0448	0704	0523	0624	0557	0534	0629	0452	0700	0430	0726	0436	0731	0502	0707	0532	0622	0601	0533	0635	0450	0707	0433
07	0722	0449	0702	0524	0623	0558	0533	0630	0451	0701	0430	0727	0437	0731	0503	0706	0533	0620	0602	0531	0636	0449	0708	0433
08	0722	0450	0701	0526	0621	0559	0531	0631	0450	0702	0429	0727	0437	0731	0504	0705	0534	0619	0603	0529	0637	0448	0709	0433
09	0721	0451	0700	0527	0620	0600	0530	0632	0449	0703	0429	0728	0438	0730	0505	0703	0535	0617	0604	0528	0638	0447	0710	0433
10	0721	0452	0659	0528	0618	0601	0528	0633	0448	0704	0429	0728	0439	0730	0506	0702	0535	0615	0605	0526	0639	0446	0711	0433
11	0721	0453	0658	0529	0616	0602	0527	0634	0447	0705	0429	0729	0440	0729	0507	0701	0536	0614	0606	0525	0641	0445	0712	0433
12	0721	0454	0657	0530	0615	0603	0525	0635	0446	0706	0429	0729	0440	0729	0508	0700	0537	0612	0607	0523	0642	0444	0712	0433
13	0721	0455	0656	0532	0613	0604	0523	0636	0445	0706	0429	0730	0441	0728	0509	0658	0538	0610	0608	0522	0643	0444	0713	0434
14	0720	0456	0654	0533	0612	0605	0522	0637	0444	0707	0429	0730	0442	0728	0510	0657	0539	0609	0609	0520	0644	0443	0714	0434
15	0720	0457	0653	0534	0610	0606	0520	0638	0443	0708	0429	0730	0442	0727	0511	0656	0540	0607	0610	0519	0645	0442	0715	0434
16	0719	0458	0652	0535	0608	0607	0519	0639	0442	0709	0429	0731	0443	0727	0512	0654	0541	0606	0611	0517	0646	0441	0715	0434
17	0719	0459	0650	0536	0607	0608	0517	0640	0441	0710	0429	0731	0444	0726	0512	0653	0542	0604	0612	0516	0647	0440	0716	0435
18	0719	0500	0649	0537	0605	0609	0516	0641	0440	0711	0429	0731	0445	0725	0513	0651	0543	0602	0613	0514	0649	0440	0717	0435
19	0718	0502	0648	0539	0604	0610	0514	0642	0439	0712	0429	0732	0446	0725	0514	0650	0544	0601	0614	0513	0650	0439	0717	0436
20	0718	0503	0646	0540	0602	0611	0513	0643	0439	0713	0430	0732	0447	0724	0515	0648	0545	0559	0615	0511	0651	0438	0718	0436
21	0717	0504	0645	0541	0600	0613	0512	0644	0438	0714	0430	0732	0447	0723	0516	0647	0546	0557	0617	0510	0652	0438	0718	0437
22	0716	0505	0644	0542	0559	0614	0510	0645	0437	0715	0430	0732	0448	0722	0517	0646	0547	0556	0618	0509	0653	0437	0719	0437
23	0716	0506	0642	0543	0557	0615	0509	0646	0436	0716	0430	0732	0449	0721	0518	0644	0548	0554	0619	0507	0654	0437	0719	0438
24	0715	0507	0641	0544	0555	0616	0507	0647	0436	0716	0431	0733	0450	0721	0519	0643	0549	0552	0620	0506	0655	0436	0720	0438
25	0714	0509	0639	0546	0554	0617	0506	0648	0435	0717	0431	0733	0451	0720	0520	0641	0550	0551	0621	0505	0656	0436	0720	0439
26	0714	0510	0638	0547	0552	0618	0505	0649	0435	0718	0431	0733	0452	0719	0521	0639	0551	0549	0622	0503	0657	0435	0720	0440
27	0713	0511	0636	0548	0550	0619	0503	0650	0434	0719	0432	0733	0453	0718	0522	0638	0552	0547	0623	0502	0659	0435	0721	0440
28	0712	0512	0635	0549	0549	0620	0502	0652	0433	0720	0432	0733	0454	0717	0523	0636	0553	0546	0624	0501	0700	0435	0721	0441
29	0711	0513	0634	0550	0547	0621	0501	0653	0433	0721	0432	0733	0454	0716	0524	0635	0554	0544	0626	0459	0701	0434	0721	0442
30	0710	0515			0546	0622	0459	0654	0432	0721	0433	0732	0455	0715	0525	0633	0555	0542	0627	0458	0702	0434	0721	0442
31	0709	0516			0544	0623			0432	0722			0456	0714	0526	0632			0628	0457			0722	0443

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Evan F. Nappen, Esq.

"the gun law guru"

Evan F. Nappen, Esq., "the gun law guru," is an attorney dedicated to defending constitutional liberties. His extensive technical knowledge of guns, knives, weapons and an in-depth comprehension of NJ law allows him to advise honest citizens of their rights, how to save their possessions and stay out of jail.

Mr. Nappen's website at www.evannappen.com features daily gun news with new headlines and article links continuously updated. From his office in Eatontown, NJ, he provides legal assistance to gun owners from Sussex to Cape May. In addition to being a member of the NJ and PA Bar, Mr. Nappen is admitted to the United States Supreme Court.

Mr. Nappen is a well-known author for his books on New Jersey Gun, Knife and Weapon Law. His current book, *Nappen II: New Jersey Gun, Knife and Weapon Law*, is available at most gun stores (for a dealer listing—check the website). This book explains over 150 topics in an easy-to-read question and answer format with special comments from Mr. Nappen's 15 years of experience handling firearm and weapon cases. His recent articles have appeared in *Blade* magazine concerning knife law and in *Knives 2002* and *Sporting Knives 2003*, published by Krause Publications. His first book, *Nappen on New Jersey Gun Law*, sold out the first printing of over 5,000 copies. Many honest citizens have contacted, confided to and thanked Mr. Nappen that the information helped to save them from what could have been a disaster in their lives and liberty.

The NJ Courts have declared: *"When dealing with guns, the citizen acts at his peril."* Because of this, law-abiding gun, knife and weapon owners must know and exercise their rights. To protect oneself, Mr. Nappen has created a system in which your basic constitutional protections are summed up as three simple rules. These three rules are explained thoroughly in *NAPPEN II*. It's a must read for any gun, knife or weapon owner in NJ.

Mr. Nappen is a Life Member of the National Rifle Association and is a certified instructor in Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun and Home Safety. An avid hunter and fisherman, he and his family have spent many weekends target shooting, boating, fishing and hunting. His oldest son, Ethan, earned his New Jersey Hunting License for both shotgun and bow at the age of 10. His 6-year-old son, Nathanael, loves to catch lunker bass and outfishes everybody in the family.

The Law Firm of Evan F. Nappen, Attorney at Law is a professional corporation, which is dedicated to helping their clients in all aspects of gun, knife and weapon law, including legal representation for any and all crimes in any and all courts. Professional services are also offered for issues concerning Fish and Game law, Domestic Violence, gun seizures and forfeitures, licenses and permits, NICS purchase denials and expungements (clear your record).