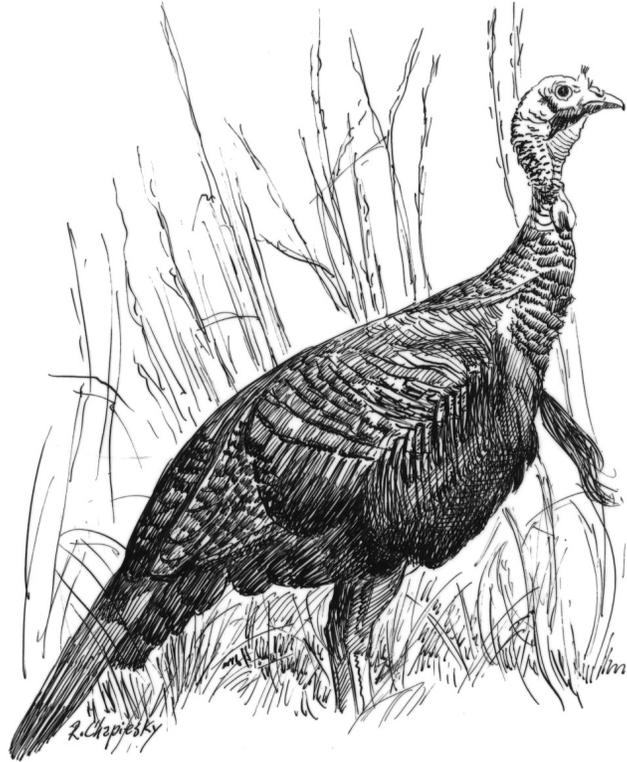


# 2009 SOUTH CAROLINA TURKEY HARVEST REPORT



## SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES TURKEY RESEARCH & MANAGEMENT PROJECT



**DNR**

Submitted by

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## INTRODUCTION

Ranking only behind the white-tailed deer in popularity among hunters, the Eastern wild turkey is an important natural resource in South Carolina. The 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey represents the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Wildlife Section's ongoing commitment to conduct pertinent research related to the state's wild turkey population. The primary objectives of this survey research were to obtain valid estimates of; (1) the statewide spring gobbler harvest in 2009, (2) the harvest of gobblers in the constituent counties of the state, and (3) hunting effort related to turkeys. Information on hunter's opinions of the turkey resource and other aspects of turkey hunting are also presented.

Due to the importance of turkeys as a state resource, DNR believes that accurately assessing the harvest of turkeys, as well as hunter participation in turkey hunting, is key to the management of this species. Proposed changes in turkey-related laws and regulations should have foundations in biology, therefore, the population dynamics associated with annual hunting mortality cannot be ignored. Similarly, when issues arise that do not involve biological parameters, it is important to have information related to turkey hunter activities afield because they too form an important basis for managing wild turkeys.

Since the inception of the Statewide Turkey Restoration and Research Project (Turkey Project) the methods used to document the turkey harvest have changed. Historically, turkey harvest figures were developed using a system of mandatory turkey check stations across the state. This system yielded an actual count of harvested turkey and was, therefore, an absolute minimum harvest figure. Shortcomings in this system included deterioration of check station compliance, complaints from hunters regarding the inconvenience of check stations, and costs associated with the check station system. The requirement to check harvested turkeys in South Carolina was eliminated following the 2005 season. Prior to eliminating the check-in requirement, DNR conducted surveys in order to document the rate of noncompliance, as well as, to determine the relationship between harvest figures obtained from check stations and those obtained from surveys. As would be expected, harvest figures obtained from surveys are higher than those from check stations due to lack of compliance with the check-in requirement.

## **Survey Methodology**

The 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey represented a random mail survey that involved a single mail-out. The questionnaire for the 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey was developed by Wildlife Section personnel (Figure 1). The mailing list database was constructed by randomly selecting 25,000 individuals who received a set of 2009 Turkey Transportation Tags which are required in order to hunt turkeys in South Carolina. Data entry was completed by Priority Data, Inc., Omaha, Nebraska.

Following the mail survey, a nonresponse bias test was conducted by Responsive Management of Harrisonburg, Virginia using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview program (CATI). Results from the mail survey were corrected for nonresponse bias using data collected from the telephone survey.

Statistical analysis was conducted using Statistix 7 (Analytical Software, Tallahassee, FL).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Turkey Harvest**

During the 2009 spring season it is estimated that a total of 13,546 adult gobblers and 2,598 jakes were harvested for a statewide total of 16,234 turkeys (Table 1). This figure represents a 9.4 percent decrease in harvest from 2008 (17,304) and a 36.3 percent decrease from the record harvest established in 2002 (16,348 check station, 25,487 estimated by survey). The reduction in harvest seen since 2002 can likely be attributable to one primary factor, poor reproduction.

Reproduction in wild turkeys has been poor six of the last seven years (Figure 2) and the spring harvest following each year of low recruitment has been down (Figure 3). Unlike deer, wild turkeys are much more susceptible to significant fluctuations in reproduction and recruitment and these measures of production have simply not been good recently. Lack of success is typically associated with bad weather (cold and wet) during nesting and brood rearing season.

Finally, habitats are continually changing in South Carolina. Although timber management activities stimulated the growth in South Carolina's turkey population in the 1980s, considerable acreage is currently in even-aged pine stands that are greater than 10 years old, a situation that does not support turkeys as well.

### **Harvest Per Unit Area County Rankings**

Comparisons can be made between turkey harvests from the various counties in South Carolina if a harvest per unit area is established. Harvest per unit area standardizes the harvest among counties regardless of the size of individual counties. One measure of harvest rate is the number of turkeys taken per square mile (640ac. = 1 mile<sup>2</sup>). When considering the estimated turkey habitat that is available in South Carolina, the turkey harvest rate in 2009 was 0.7 gobblers per square mile statewide (Table 2). Although the turkey harvest has been down the last few

years, this harvest rate should be considered good and is similar to other Southeastern states. The top 5 counties for harvest per unit area were Cherokee, Anderson, and Union each with 1.4 turkeys/mile<sup>2</sup>, followed by Fairfield and York with 1.3 turkeys/mile<sup>2</sup> (Table 2).

### **Turkey Harvest Rankings by County**

Total turkey harvest is not comparable among counties because there is no standard unit of comparison, i.e. counties vary in size and are, therefore, not directly comparable. However, some readers may be interested in this type of ranking. The top 5 counties during 2009 were Berkeley, Fairfield, Orangeburg, Colleton, and Williamsburg (Table 3).

### **Turkey Harvest by Week of Season**

Gobbling by male wild turkeys occurs primarily in the spring and is for the purpose of attracting hens for mating purposes. Therefore, spring turkey hunting is characterized by hunters attempting to locate and call gobbling male turkeys using emulated hens calls. With respect to both biology and effective hunting, the timing of the spring gobbler season should take into account three primary factors; peak breeding, peak gobbling, and peak incubation. Considering these factors, seasons can be set to afford hunters the best opportunity to hunt during the best time (i.e. peak gobbling) without inhibiting reproductive success.

South Carolina currently has two spring turkey season frameworks. Throughout most of the state (Game Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) the season is April 1-May1. This season is based on a recommendation from DNR following gobbling and nesting studies that were conducted in the 1970's. The other season framework is March 15-May 1 and is only in effect in Game Zone 6 (lower coastal plain). This season is socio-politically based.

If seasons are set appropriately, the greatest proportion of turkeys should be harvested during the first week of the season because hens should be nesting resulting in gobblers that are naïve and most responsive to hunter's calls. Harvest by week of season demonstrates that the timing of the April 1-May 1 season affords higher turkey harvests as most turkeys are harvested following the April 1 opening date (Figure 4). When broken-out by specific season framework the results are similar. In areas where the season begins March 15, only 28 percent of the total

harvest is accounted for during the first week of the season (Figure 5). This is likely due to the fact that late March is the time of peak breeding and males gobble less because “they are all henned up”. On the other hand, 40 percent of the harvest occurs during the first week of the season in areas where the season begins April 1 (Figure 6). This is due to the fact that by the first week in April, a significant number of hens have left the gobblers and begun continuous incubation. This lack of hens stimulates peak gobbling resulting in hunters being able to locate and call responsive birds. Comparing the first two weeks of each season format, we find that where the season opens March 15, 45 percent of gobblers are harvested while this figure is 65 percent where the season opens on April 1. Again, this is a reflection of fewer available hens due to nesting resulting in gobblers being more responsive to hunter’s calls.

### **Number of Turkey Hunters**

Even though all individuals receiving a set of Turkey Transportation Tags were licensed to hunt turkeys, only 42.6 percent actually hunted turkeys. Based on this figure, approximately 44,538 hunters participated in the 2009 spring turkey season, a 4 percent decrease from 2008 (46,365). Counties with the highest estimates for individual hunters include Fairfield, Berkeley, Laurens, Union, and Newberry (Table 4).

### **Hunter Effort**

For the purposes of this survey hunter effort was measured in days with one day being defined as any portion of the day spent afield. Turkey hunters averaged approximately 5.6 days afield during the 2009 season (Table 4), a figure nearly identical to that in 2007 and 2008 (5.7 days). Successful hunters averaged significantly more days afield (7.0 days) than unsuccessful hunters (4.5 days). Extrapolating to the entire population of turkey hunters yields a figure of 220,091 total days of spring gobbler hunting, down 3.1 percent from 2008 (227,034 days).

The number of days devoted to turkey hunting in South Carolina is significant and points not only to the availability and popularity of turkeys as a game species, but to the obvious economic benefits related to this important natural resource. Figures generated by a 2003 Survey by the National Wild Turkey Federation estimate that approximately 35 million dollars are added

to South Carolina's economy annually from turkey hunting. The top 5 South Carolina counties for overall days of turkey hunting during 2009 were Berkeley, Fairfield, Orangeburg, Newberry, and Colleton counties (Table 4).

### **Hunting Success**

For determination of hunting success only those individuals that actually hunted turkeys were included in the analysis and similarly, success was defined as harvesting at least one turkey. Overall hunting success in 2009 was 28.9 percent, down 4.4 percent from 2008 (30.2%). This is likely related to the declining trend in turkey reproduction that the state has experienced in recent years, i.e. fewer turkeys available for harvest. On the other hand, unlike deer hunting which typically has high success, turkey hunting can be an inherently unsuccessful endeavor, relatively speaking. As would be expected, the majority of successful hunters take one gobbler (Figure 7). However, the percentage of successful hunters who take two birds is quite high as well. This indicates that successful hunters had nearly the same chance of taking two birds as they did one bird.

The statewide bag limit in South Carolina is five gobblers. Obviously, most successful hunters harvest only one or two birds. However, it is interesting to note the relative contribution to the total harvest of turkeys by the few hunters that harvest multiple birds. Ironically, the percentage of hunters taking more than 3 birds was only 2.4%, however, this small percentage of hunters harvested 23% of the total birds taken in the state (Figure 8).

### **Hunter Opinion Regarding Turkey Numbers**

The 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey asked participants to compare the number of turkeys in the area they hunt most often with the number of turkeys in past years. Participants were given 3 choices; increasing, about the same, or decreasing. About half (46.5%) of hunters indicated that the number of turkeys in the area they hunted most often was about the same as in past years. Significantly more hunters (37.0%) believed that the turkey population was decreasing than increasing (16.6%). On a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 being increasing, 2 being the

same, and 3 being decreasing, the overall mean rating of 2.20 suggests that hunters viewed the turkey population as decreasing. The opinion among hunters that the turkey population has decreased in recent years is consistent with recent harvest trends and reproductive data.

### **Turkeys Shot but not Recovered**

Harvesting game signals the end of a successful hunt and although most hunters do a good job of preparing their equipment and mental state, it goes without saying that a certain percentage of game is shot or shot at and not killed or recovered. This point is no different when turkey hunting.

In order to estimate the prevalence of errant shots at turkeys, the 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey asked hunters to indicate the number of turkeys that they “shot but did not kill or recover during the 2009 season in South Carolina”. Approximately 10.2 percent of hunters indicated that they shot but did not kill or recover at least one turkey in 2009. There were approximately 44,538 turkey hunters in 2009 meaning that approximately 4,543 turkeys were shot or shot at and not killed or recovered. Therefore, approximately 22 percent of the total number of turkeys shot were not killed or recovered.

This data is certainly not indicative of “dead and unrecovered turkeys”, however, it is clear that some percentage of the 4,543 turkeys that were shot did eventually die. Although shot shells for turkeys have become increasingly sophisticated, accurate, and lethal it is a fact that the pattern of a shotgun is relatively broad and contains between 200 and 400 pellets. Therefore, a “clean miss” is not as clear-cut for turkeys compared to other big game like deer where there is typically a single projectile. Additional research is needed on this topic.

### **Turkey Call Preference**

Spring turkey hunting is characterized by attempting to call a gobbler into gun range and virtually all spring turkey hunters use some type of caller to mimic the sounds of wild turkeys. Although not a biological or management issue, the type or preference of callers used by hunters is important related to the sport of turkey hunting.

In order to gain a better understanding of the popularity of the various turkey callers, the 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey asked hunters to identify “the one type of turkey call that they prefer

to use when turkey hunting”. Figures for all individuals who received a set of Spring Turkey Transportation Tags indicate that the majority of tag recipients prefer a box call (40%) followed by slate (34.8%), diaphragm (20.7%), plain voice (3.1%), wing bone (0.7%), and tube/snuff can (0.7%). However, there appears to be differences in the type of turkey caller preferred based on whether the individual actually hunted and whether or not they harvested a turkey (Table 5).

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Table 1. Estimated statewide turkey harvest in South Carolina in 2009.

County	Acres*	Square Miles	Gobbler Harvest	Jake Harvest	Total Harvest	Percent Jakes	Harvest Rates	
							Ac/Turkey	Turkey/Mi. <sup>2</sup>
Abbeville	223,113	349	219	36	256	14.1	873.2	0.7
Aiken	500,546	782	219	30	249	12.0	2006.8	0.3
Allendale	216,455	338	219	30	249	12.0	867.7	0.7
Anderson	219,068	342	341	150	491	30.6	446.5	1.4
Bamberg	196,573	307	295	24	319	7.5	615.9	1.0
Barnwell	281,764	440	151	42	193	21.7	1457.3	0.4
Beaufort	147,441	230	76	30	106	28.4	1395.2	0.5
Berkeley	567,530	887	825	78	903	8.6	628.6	1.0
Calhoun	190,584	298	144	12	156	7.7	1223.3	0.5
Charleston	288,732	451	325	12	337	3.6	855.8	0.7
Cherokee	156,664	245	227	126	353	35.7	443.8	1.4
Chester	300,589	470	348	60	408	14.7	736.5	0.9
Chesterfield	372,478	582	227	36	263	13.7	1416.3	0.5
Clarendon	298,087	466	288	36	324	11.1	921.2	0.7
Colleton	502,666	785	590	84	674	12.5	745.5	0.9
Darlington	286,228	447	167	24	190	12.6	1502.6	0.4
Dillon	214,069	334	76	30	106	28.4	2025.9	0.3
Dorchester	302,717	473	341	42	383	11.0	791.3	0.8
Edgefield	246,543	385	250	66	316	20.9	780.9	0.8
Fairfield	384,607	601	651	114	765	14.9	502.9	1.3
Florence	397,888	622	333	30	363	8.3	1096.3	0.6
Georgetown	399,638	624	416	24	440	5.5	907.7	0.7
Greenville	294,257	460	166	60	226	26.5	1299.2	0.5
Greenwood	204,400	319	250	30	280	10.7	730.7	0.9
Hampton	324,840	508	371	42	413	10.2	787.0	0.8
Horry	533,336	833	341	42	383	11.0	1394.2	0.5
Jasper	309,889	484	280	36	316	11.4	980.7	0.7
Kershaw	360,485	563	310	42	352	11.9	1023.4	0.6
Lancaster	266,382	416	227	126	353	35.7	754.5	0.8
Laurens	317,916	497	310	138	448	30.8	709.3	0.9
Lee	220,106	344	136	12	148	8.1	1484.8	0.4
Lexington	280,742	439	38	6	44	13.7	6405.7	0.1
McCormick	212,021	331	219	66	285	23.1	742.6	0.9
Marion	216,907	339	106	18	124	14.5	1749.6	0.4
Marlboro	281,271	439	144	12	156	7.7	1805.4	0.4
Newberry	317,761	497	439	132	571	23.1	556.6	1.1
Oconee	284,348	444	204	12	216	5.6	1314.4	0.5
Orangeburg	504,516	788	620	132	752	17.5	670.5	1.0
Pickens	219,926	344	303	84	387	21.7	568.7	1.1
Richland	340,121	531	197	48	245	19.6	1389.5	0.5
Saluda	192,173	300	182	30	212	14.2	908.2	0.7
Spartanburg	265,939	416	371	72	443	16.3	600.6	1.1
Sumter	338,968	530	219	36	255	14.1	1326.8	0.5
Union	258,111	403	469	96	565	17.0	456.6	1.4
Williamsburg	513,851	803	598	60	658	9.1	781.1	0.8
York	276,650	432	318	150	558	26.9	495.8	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,028,896</b>	<b>21,920</b>	<b>13,546</b>	<b>2,598</b>	<b>16,234</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>864.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>

95% Conf. Interval for harvest

(+-) 1,754

\* Acreage shown represents the acreage of forested land and acreage of row crops considered to be significant turkey habitat within each county.

Table 2. County rankings based on turkeys harvested per unit area in South Carolina in 2009.

County	Acres*	Square Miles	Gobbler Harvest	Jake Harvest	Total Harvest	Percent Jakes	Harvest Rates	
							Ac/Turkey	Turkey/Mi. <sup>2</sup>
Cherokee	156,664	245	227	126	353	35.7	443.8	1.4
Anderson	219,068	342	341	150	491	30.6	446.5	1.4
Union	258,111	403	469	96	565	17.0	456.6	1.4
Fairfield	384,607	601	651	114	765	14.9	502.9	1.3
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Dorchester	302,717	473	341	42	383	11.0	791.3	0.8
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<b>Total</b>	<b>14,028,896</b>	<b>21,920</b>	<b>13,546</b>	<b>2,598</b>	<b>16,234</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>864.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>

Table 3. County rankings based on total turkeys harvested in South Carolina in 2009.

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Table 4. Estimated number of turkey hunters, average day hunted, and total hunting effort by county in South Carolina in 2009.

County	Total Harvest	Number Hunters	Avg. Days Hunted	Total Man/Days
Abbeville	256	1,238	5.1	5,606
Aiken	249	851	5.1	3,851
Allendale	249	609	6.3	3,399
Anderson	491	1,325	4.9	5,725
Bamberg	319	842	6.2	4,566
Barnwell	193	532	6.1	2,837
Beaufort	106	242	4.8	1,014
Berkeley	903	1,838	7.0	11,373
Calhoun	156	638	6.2	3,510
Charleston	337	1,132	5.7	5,691
Cherokee	353	774	6.2	4,234
Chester	408	1,354	5.3	6,347
Chesterfield	263	987	6.4	5,546
Clarendon	324	600	5.3	2,811
Colleton	674	1,364	7.3	8,715
Darlington	190	629	4.5	2,496
Dillon	106	281	5.0	1,227
Dorchester	383	822	6.5	4,737
Edgefield	316	1,064	5.1	4,762
Fairfield	765	2,186	5.6	10,700
Florence	363	958	5.1	4,277
Georgetown	440	803	5.2	3,646
Greenville	226	1,045	4.8	4,430
Greenwood	280	919	4.7	3,817
Hampton	413	977	5.7	4,933
Horry	383	909	5.4	4,319
Jasper	316	571	6.7	3,348
Kershaw	352	1,064	4.9	4,549
Lancaster	353	929	5.7	4,643
Laurens	448	1,509	5.0	6,637
Lee	148	532	4.9	2,283
Lexington	44	377	3.8	1,269
McCormick	285	996	6.1	5,316
Marion	124	522	4.5	2,087
Marlboro	156	474	5.4	2,258
Newberry	571	1,809	5.6	8,937
Oconee	216	697	6.3	3,885
Orangeburg	752	1,790	5.9	9,252
Pickens	387	1,093	5.7	5,529
Richland	245	871	4.8	3,714
Saluda	212	658	5.2	3,033
Spartanburg	443	1,209	5.3	5,682
Sumter	255	716	6.1	3,859
Union	565	1,354	6.0	7,148
Williamsburg	658	1,258	5.0	5,529
York	558	1,190	6.3	6,560
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,234</b>	<b>44,538</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>220,091</b>

Table 5. Percentage of turkey tag recipients who prefer various types of turkey callers in South Carolina in 2009.

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Slate</b>	<b>Diaphragm</b>	<b>Wingbone</b>	<b>Tube or Snuff Can</b>	<b>Plain Mouth</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Turkey Tag Recipients Who Did Not Hunt</b>	50.8	27.1	15.8	0.5	1.2	4.6	100.0
<b>Turkey Tag Recipients Who Did Hunt</b>	34.4	38.9	23.2	0.8	0.4	2.3	100.0
<b>Tag Recipients Who Harvested a Turkey</b>	26.8	40.0	30.3	0.5	0.5	1.9	100.0
<b>Total All Turkey Tag Recipients</b>	40.0	34.8	20.7	0.7	0.7	3.1	100.0

Figure 1. South Carolina Department of Natural Resources 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey.

May, 2009

Dear Sportsman:

Eastern wild turkeys are one of the most important game species in South Carolina. Therefore, it is important that this species be monitored for population status and harvesting activities. Wildlife resource managers require current and accurate information about wild turkey harvests to aid in successfully managing this important natural resource and to optimize future hunting potential. To obtain this needed data, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is conducting a survey of hunters who received a set of turkey tags during spring 2009.

You are one of a group of randomly selected hunters asked to participate in this survey. To draw accurate conclusions it is very important that you complete the survey and return it. Please take time to read each question. Even if you did not hunt wild turkeys this spring please indicate this by answering the appropriate questions and moving on to the next set of questions.

Please note that complete confidentiality will be given to you. Each survey form is numbered, but only so we can avoid costly repeat mailings to those survey participants who have not returned their survey.

Keep in mind that the purpose of the survey is to determine the wild turkey harvest in South Carolina and not to determine whether game laws are observed. By accurately answering the survey questions you will enable DNR biologists to better manage the Eastern wild turkey resource for you and other citizens of the state. Therefore, it is very important that you take a few minutes to complete this survey and mail it. Return postage is prepaid.

Results of this survey will be posted on the DNR web site once completed. The results from the 2008 survey can be found at: [www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/2008TurkeyHarvest.html](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/2008TurkeyHarvest.html)

Thank you for your assistance.

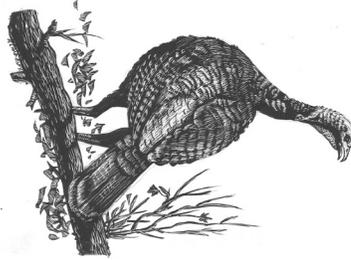
Charles Ruth  
Wildlife Biologist  
Deer/Turkey Project Supervisor

PLEASE MAIL YOUR SURVEY AFTER SEPARATING THIS HALF FROM THE SIDE ON WHICH YOUR ANSWERS HAVE BEEN ENTERED. NO POSTAGE IS NECESSARY.

If you have questions regarding this survey, please call 803-734-3886 or write 2009 Turkey Hunter Survey, SCDNR, P.O. Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, disability, religion or age. Direct all inquiries to the Office of Human Resources, P.O. Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202

09-6487



**TURKEY HUNTER SURVEY**  
**SC DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**PO BOX 167**  
**COLUMBIA SC 29202-9976**

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO 1371 COLUMBIA SC  
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE



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NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES

**2009 South Carolina Turkey Hunter Survey**

- Did you turkey hunt in SC this past season (2009)? **1. Yes 2. No**  
If you answered **No** to this question please **go to question # 7.**
- Did you harvest any turkeys in SC this past season? **1. Yes 2. No**
- Even if you did not harvest a turkey, please record the SC counties you turkey hunted and the number of days hunted in each county this past season (2009). If you harvested turkeys please record the number of adult gobblers and jakes taken in each county. A day of hunting is defined as any portion of the day spent afield. Please do not give ranges (i.e. 5-10), rather provide absolute numbers (i.e. 5). Provide information only for yourself - not friends, relatives, or other people you may have called or guided for. See the diagram below if you are unsure how to determine an adult gobbler or "longbeard" from a juvenile gobbler or "jake".

SC Counties You Turkey Hunted	# Days Hunted	Number Turkeys Harvested
1		Adult gobblers _____ Jakes _____
2		Adult gobblers _____ Jakes _____
3		Adult gobblers _____ Jakes _____
4		Adult gobblers _____ Jakes _____
5		Adult gobblers _____ Jakes _____

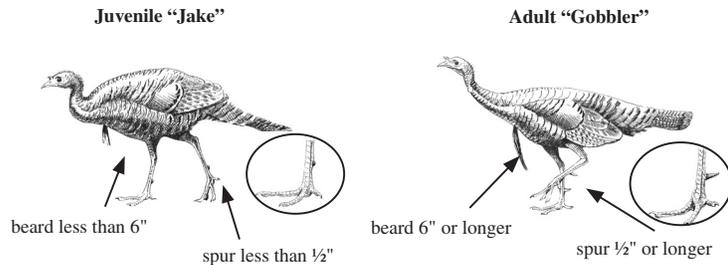
**If you did not harvest any turkeys this past season please go to question 5.**

- If you harvested turkeys in SC this past season, please indicate as best you can the number of turkeys killed by week of season.

Week of Season	# Turkeys Harvested	Week of Season	# Turkeys Harvested
1 March 15-22		4 April 8-14	
2 March 23-31		5 April 15-21	
3 April 1-7		6 April 22-May 1	

- How many turkeys did you shoot but not kill or recover in SC this past season? \_\_\_\_\_
- Compared to past years, how would you describe the number of turkeys in the area that you hunted most often this spring? **Circle one**  
**1. Increasing                      2. About the same                      3. Decreasing**
- Please circle the one type of turkey call you prefer to use when turkey hunting.  
**1. Box    2. Slate    3. Diaphragm    4. Wing bone    5. Tube/snuff can    6. Plain mouth**
- Are you a resident of SC? **1. Yes                      2. No**
- If yes, which county \_\_\_\_\_

**Separate and return this portion of the survey. Postage is prepaid. Please do not staple this form.**



**HELP MANAGE  
TURKEYS IN S.C.  
COMPLETE YOUR  
HUNTER SURVEY**

**DNR**



**TURKEY HUNTER SURVEY  
SCDNR  
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Figure 2. Summer wild turkey recruitment ratio in South Carolina 1982-2008. Note poor recruitment ratio 6 out of the last 7 years. Recruitment ratio is a measure of young entering the population based on the number of hens in the population.

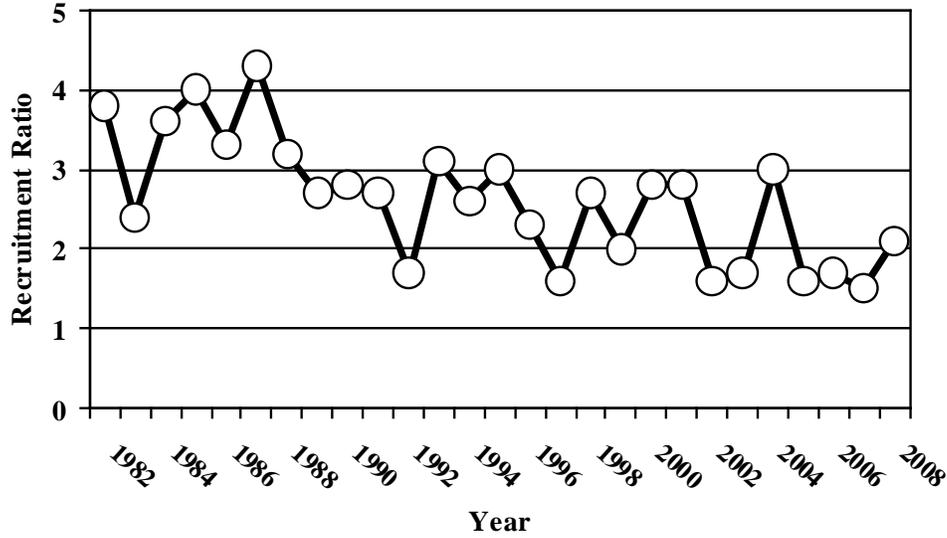


Figure 3. Spring wild turkey harvest in South Carolina 1982-2009. Note declines in harvest following years of poor recruitment that have occurred since record harvest in 2002.

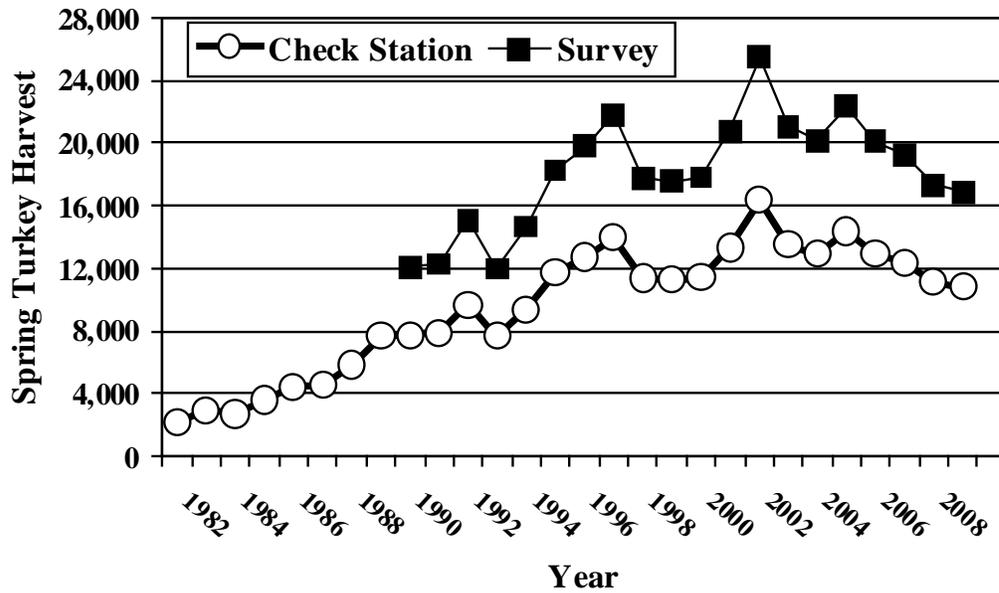


Figure 4. Percentage of gobblers harvested by week of season in South Carolina in 2009.

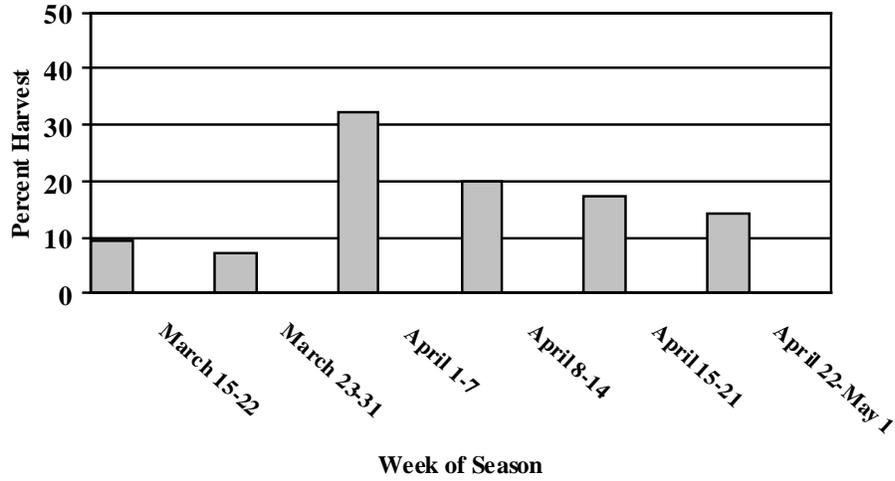


Figure 5. Percentage of gobblers harvested by week in areas with March 15-May 1 season.

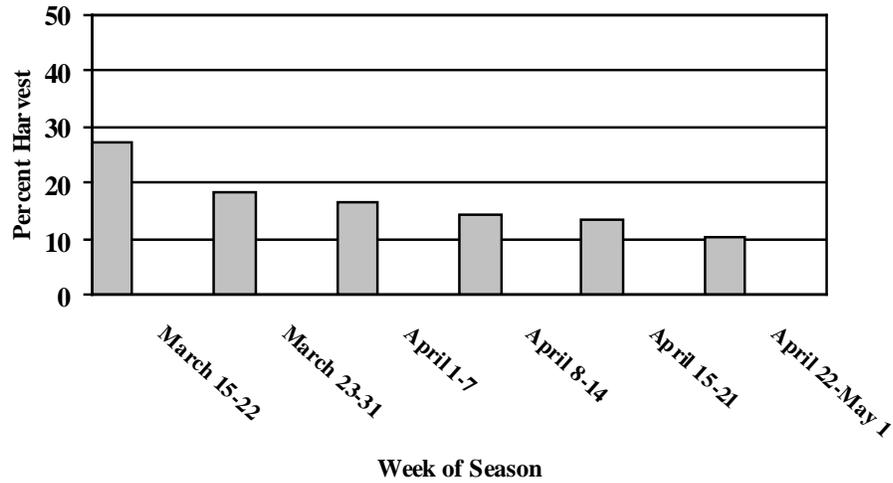


Figure 6. Percentage of gobblers harvested by week in areas with April 1-May 1 season.

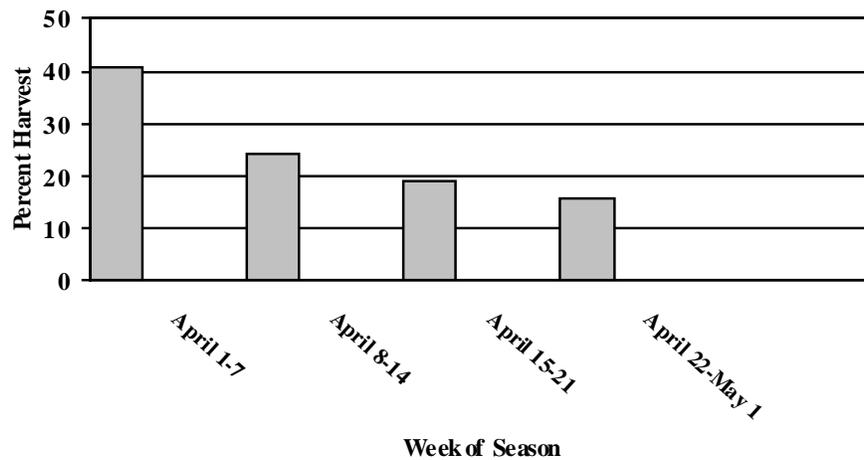


Figure 7. Hunter success during the spring turkey season in South Carolina in 2009. Overall success was 29 percent at harvesting at least one gobbler.

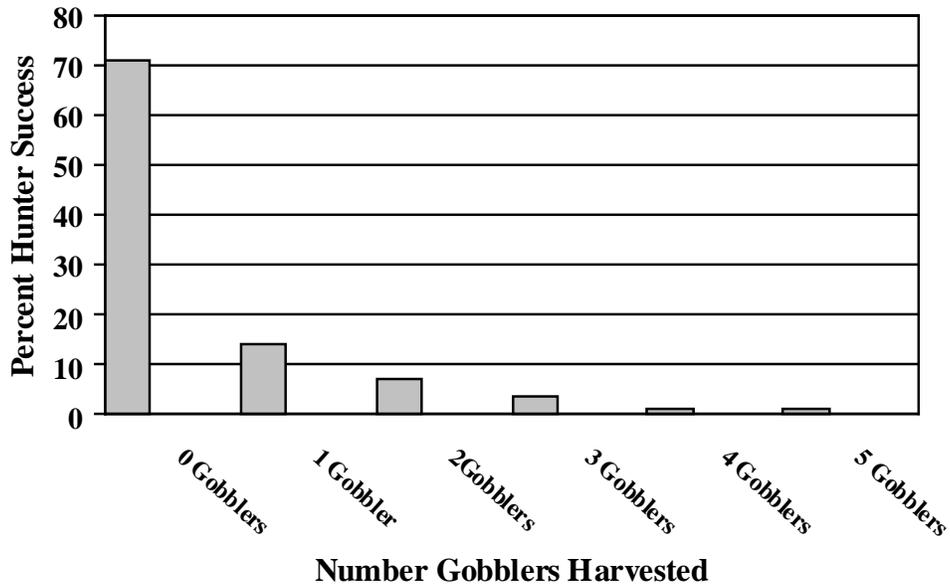


Figure 8. Relative contribution to the total turkey harvest by hunters taking between 1 and 5 gobbler in South Carolina in 2009. Hunters taking more than 3 birds accounted for 23% of total harvest.

