



Tennessee Wild Turkey Management Program Status Report

TN-NWTF State Board Meeting
June 10, 2023

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Wildlife and Forestry Division

2023 Spring Turkey Season

- ~32,000 turkeys reported (preliminary estimate)
 - Up from last year (2022) and ~same as 2021
- Influences on harvest
 - Lots of 2-yr old birds (from strong hatch in 2021) – likely helped increase harvest
 - 2-bird bag limit – likely held total harvest lower
 - 2-week delay – ??
 - Very high harvest early in season (up 50% - 75%)
 - Tailed off quickly by mid-season
 - Finished about average (5-yr avg ~32,500)



Spring Harvest - Hunter Success (Preliminary)

# of Birds Harvested	Proportion of Successful Hunters	
	2023*	2018-2022 5-Yr Average
1	76%	64%
2	24%	22%
3+	0.2%	13%

* 2-bird bag limit



Take Home Message

- 2023 spring turkey season up from 2022
 - About on par with 5-year avg.
- 2-week delay does not appear to hurt early-season hunting
 - ??? Steeper drop off due to later season or limiting out
- Additional data being collected
 - Hunter harvest survey obtaining effort data, opinion, more...
 - Harvest rate study (gobbler banding project)



No Regulation Changes for 2024 Season

- Begin Saturday closest to April 15th
 - April 13 - May 26
- 2-bird bag limit
 - Only 1 jake



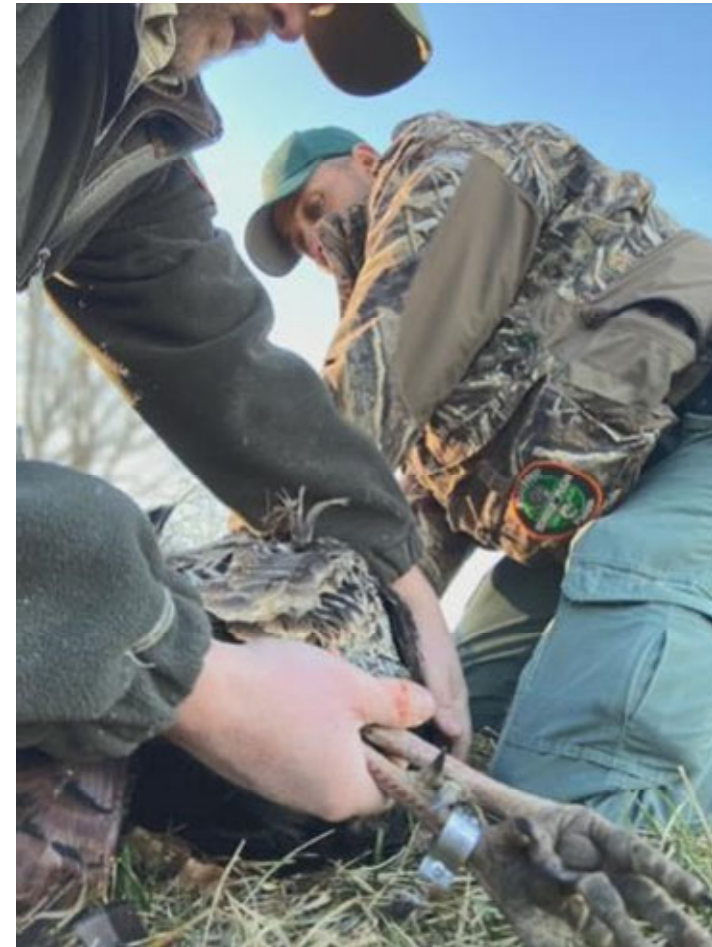
Post-season Hunter Harvest Survey – New Questions

- Satisfaction with the *timing* of the season
- Farthest distance feel comfortable shooting
- Gauge of shotgun used most often
- Use of various techniques and technologies
 - Decoys
 - TSS / heavier than lead shot
 - Fanning/reaping



Gobbler Banding Project

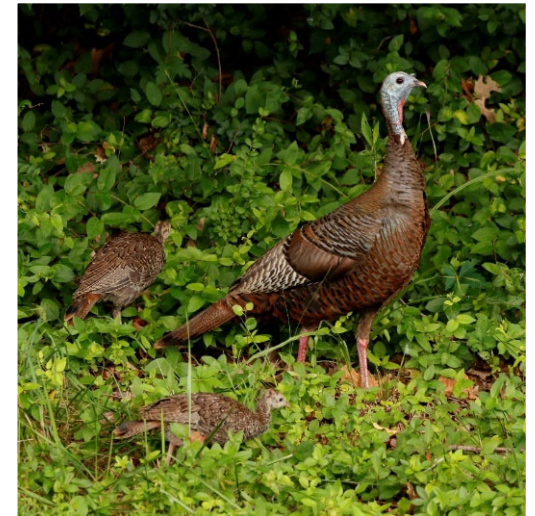
- 3rd year of 4-year project
- 676 Birds banded in 3 years
 - 366 Adults; 310 Jakes
- 205 Bands recovered in 3 years
 - 182 as Adults; 23 as Jakes



Wild Turkey Observation Survey

- Summer “Brood” Survey
 - But not just broods
- Submit observations online or via cell phone app
- Visit:

www.tn.gov/twra/turkeyobs



Thank you!!





Questions