



Tennessee Wild Turkey Management Program Status Report

TN-NWTF State Board Meeting
June 1, 2024

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Wildlife and Forestry Division

2024 Spring Turkey Season

- ~31,600 turkeys reported (*preliminary* estimate)
 - Down slightly from last year (31,802) & below 5-yr avg
- Influences on harvest
 - Not as many 2-yr old birds as in 2023
 - 2-bird bag limit – maybe held total harvest ~lower
 - 2-week delay – ??
 - Very high harvest early in season (up even from 2023)
 - Tailed off quickly by mid-season
 - Finished below average (5-yr avg ~33,200)



Spring Harvest - Hunter Success (Preliminary)

# of Birds Harvested	Proportion of Successful Hunters	
	2024*	2019-2023* 5-Yr Average
1	79%	67%
2	21%	23%
3+	0.3%	11%

* 2-bird bag limit began in 2023



Take Home Message

- 2024 spring turkey season very similar to 2023
 - Below the 5-year avg. (~33,000)
- 2-week delay does not appear to hurt early-season hunting
 - Steeper drop off due to later season or limiting out still unclear
- Additional data being collected
 - Hunter harvest survey obtaining effort data, opinion, more...
 - Harvest rate study (gobbler banding project)



Regulations for 2024-25 Season

- Begin 2nd Saturday of April (*new*)
 - April 12 - May 25
- 2-bird bag limit statewide (no change)
 - Only 1 jake
- No bearded hens (all hen harvest prohibited)(*new*)
 - Applies both fall and spring
- Fall season bag limit: 1 gobbler statewide (*new*)
 - 11 counties still closed



Post-season Hunter Harvest Survey – Keeping Last Year's 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

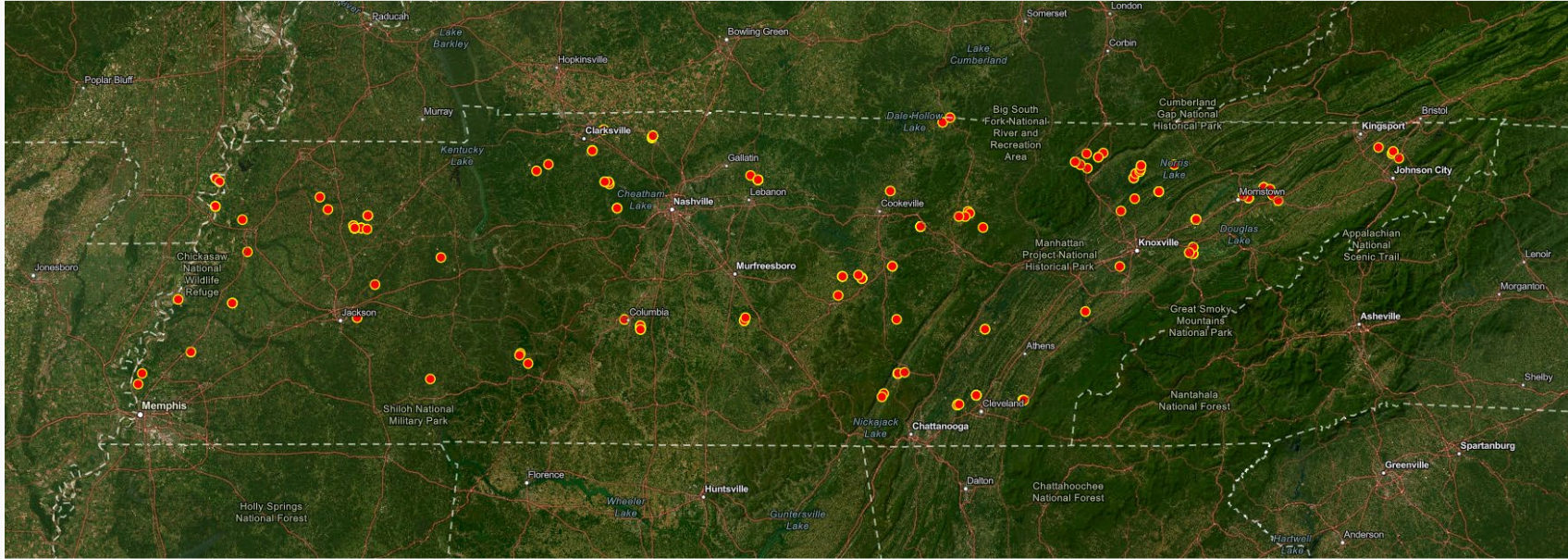


Gobbler Banding Project

- 4th year of 4-year project, but...
 - ...Extending 1 more year
- 857 Birds banded in 4 years
 - 449 Adults; 408 Jakes
- 304 Bands recovered in 4 years
 - 279 as Adults; 25 as Jakes
 - 99 reward bands



Gobbler Banding Sites



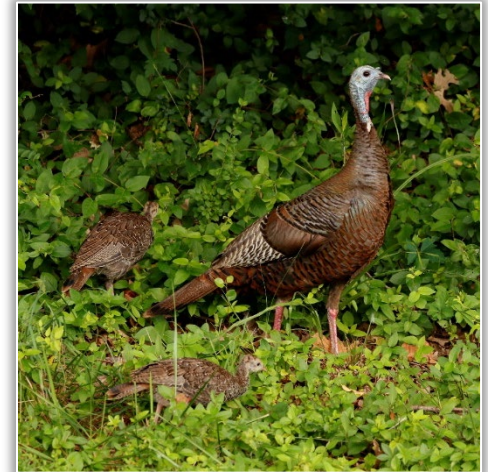
- 88 Capture locations (61 Private, 27 Public)



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



House Bill 2263

- Commissioners must participate in activities they regulate (i.e., hunting, angling, trapping and boating)
- The commission shall recognize the lawful taking of game (i.e., hunting, angling, trapping) as the preferred method of wildlife management and conservation within the state
- Signed March 27, 2024



House Bill 2882

- Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, requires schools to provide students with annual age-appropriate and grade-appropriate instruction on firearm safety
- The departments of education and safety, *in consultation with the Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission*, shall develop or approve a curriculum or program of instruction on firearm safety that meets the requirements of this section
- Signed April 23, 2024



Thank you!!





Questions