



Tennessee Wild Turkey Management Program Status Report

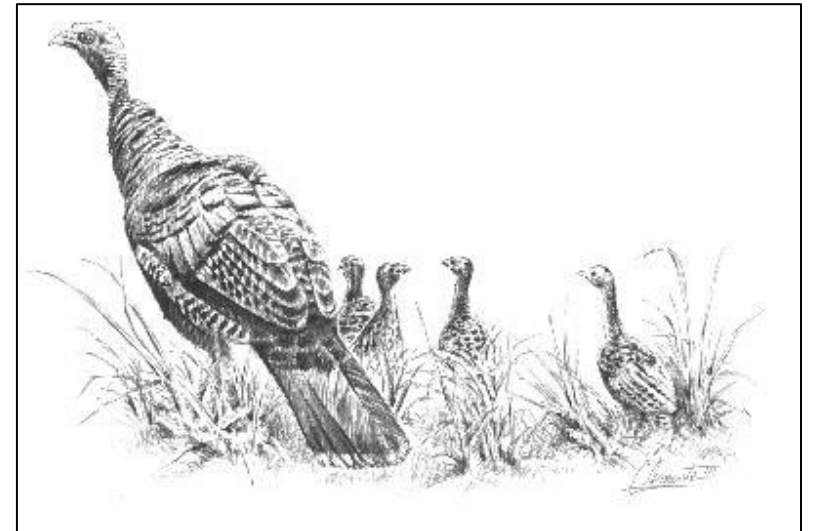
TN-NWTF State Board Meeting
January 18, 2025

Roger Shields
Wild Turkey Program Coordinator
Wildlife and Forestry Division

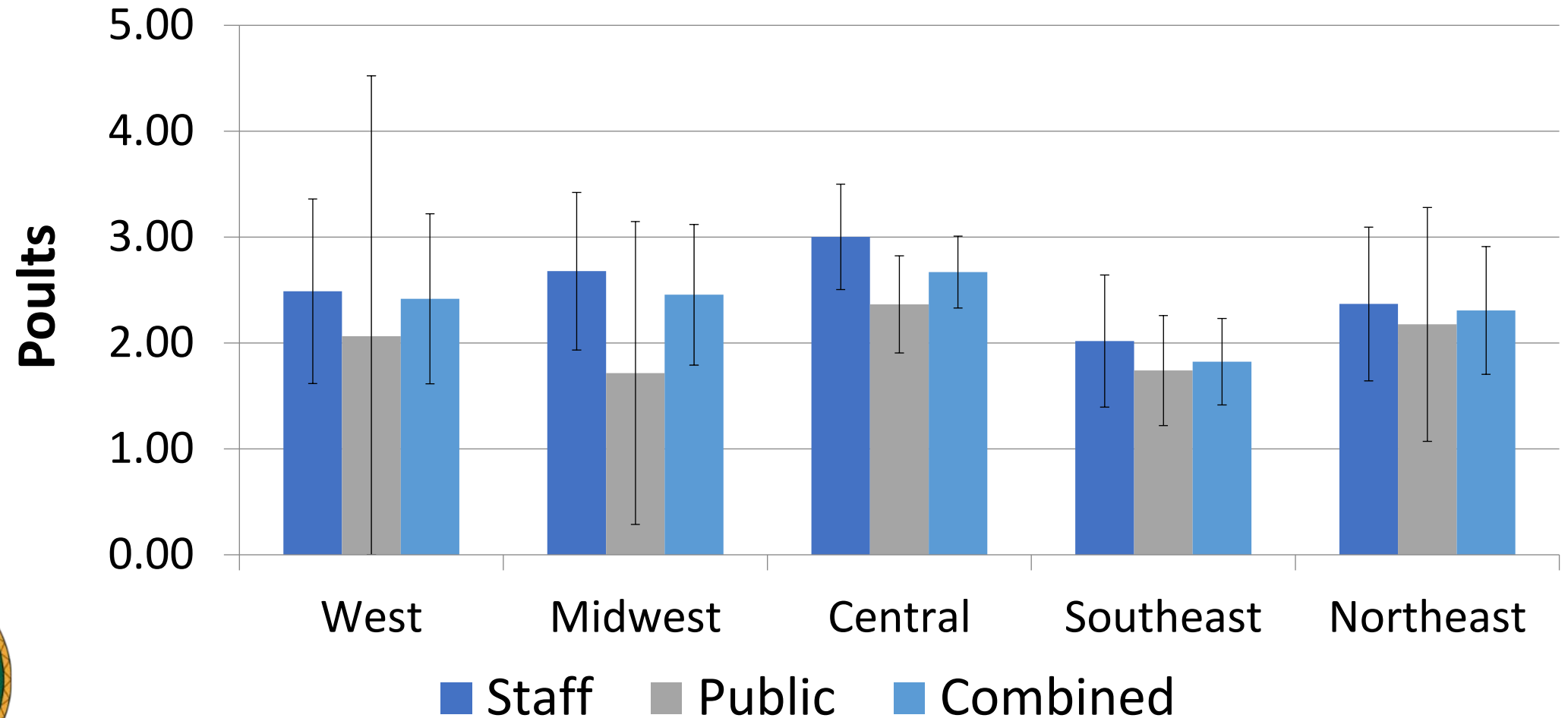
2024 Summer Wild Turkey Survey

- Public participation up some from last year
 - ~1,418 unique public observers (vs 742 in '23 & 2,786 in '22)
 - 2,457 observations (vs 1,333 in '23 & 4,217 in '22)
 - From 92 counties
- Staff
 - 152 unique observers
 - 1,328 observations
 - From 85 counties
- Estimates* fairly similar

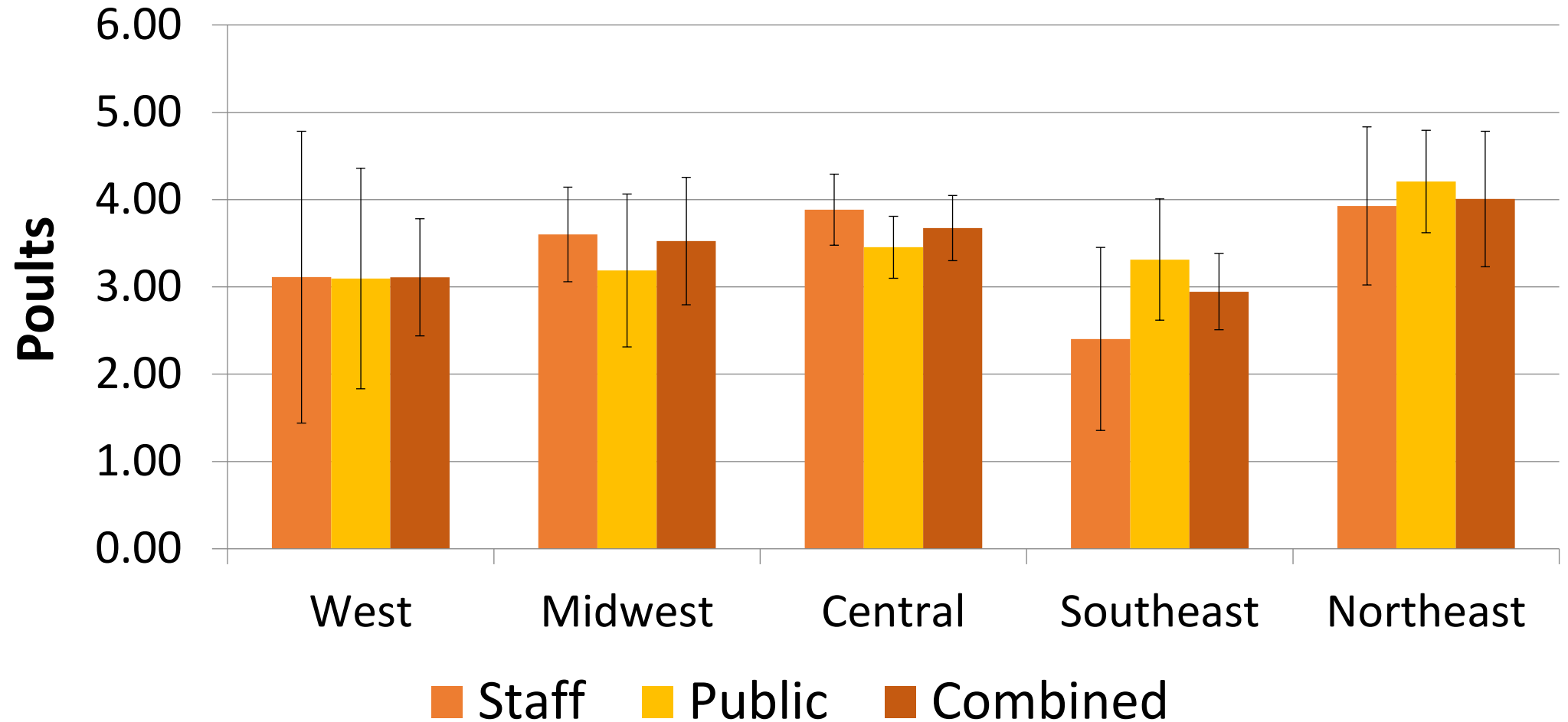
*Based on new calculation method



Regional PPH Ratio, 2024



Regional PPB Ratio, 2024



2024 Statewide Wild Turkey Productivity

- Overall an average year
 - 2.4 PPH*
 - 3.6 poult per brood*
 - 69% of hens with broods
- Fairly similar regionally
 - SE unit still struggling
- 13-yr Cicada hatch (brood XIX)
 - No effect (2.3 pph vs 2.5 pph)

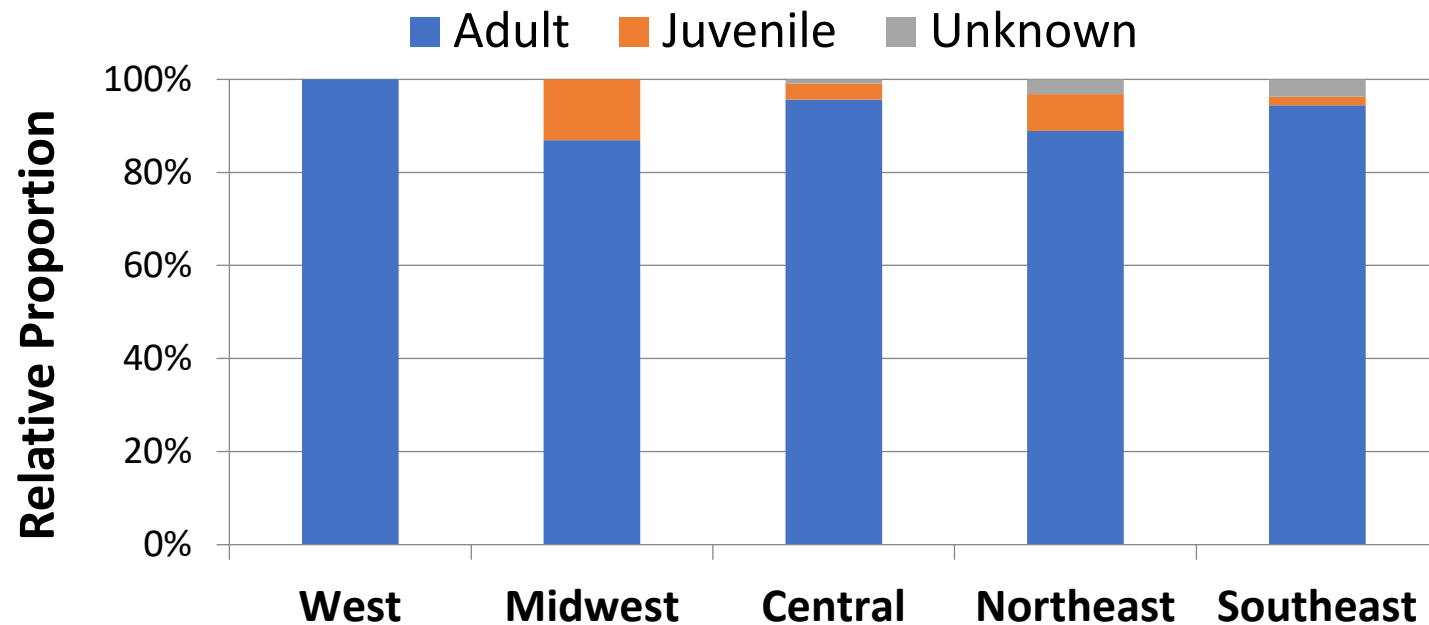


*Based on new calculation method



Fall Turkey Harvest 2023

- 257 birds; down 13% from 2023
 - Only 13 birds on WMAs
- Jakes accounted for 5% of the total harvest
 - Highest in the Midwest unit (13% of harvest)

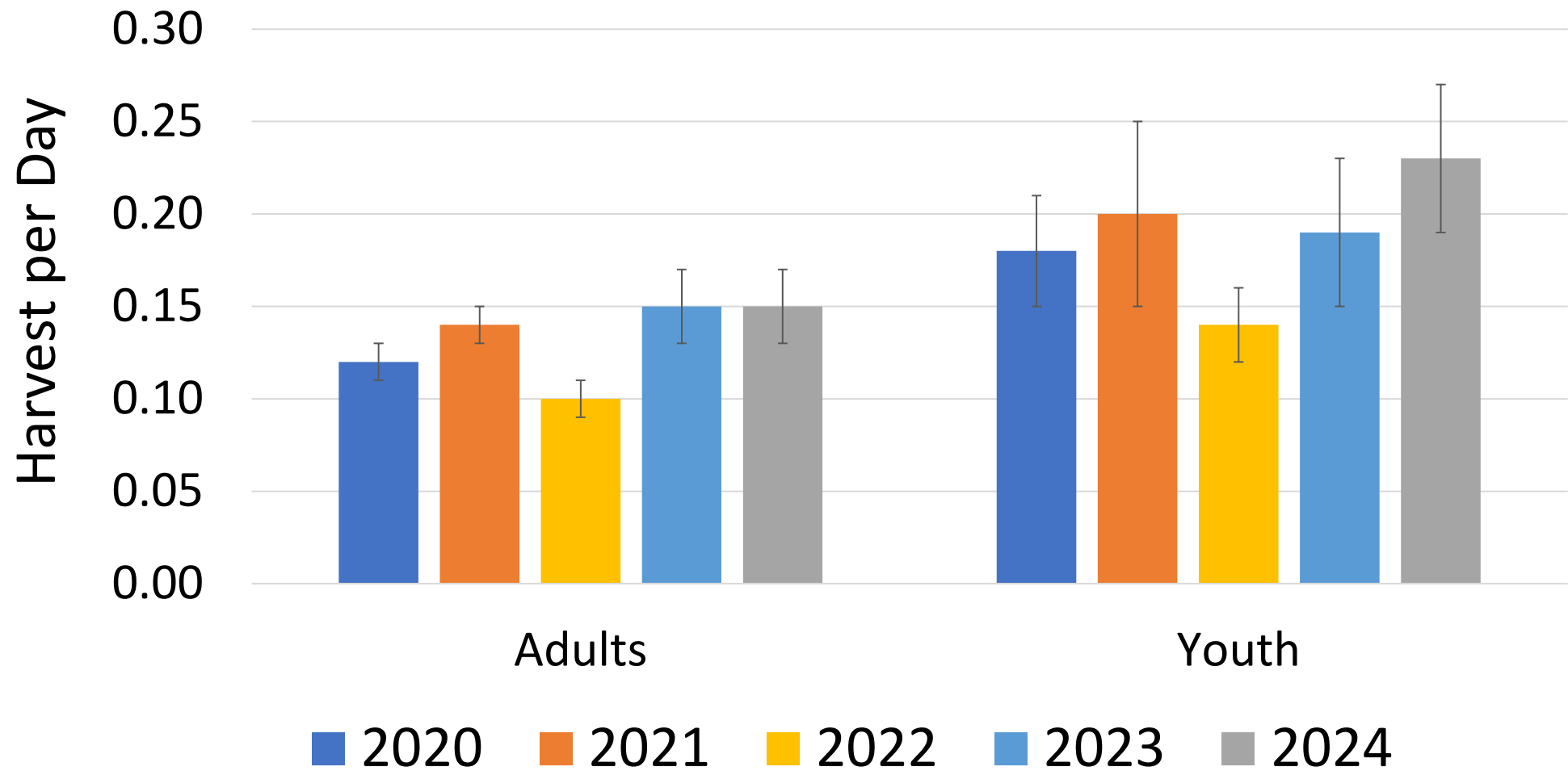


Post-season Hunter Harvest Survey, 2024

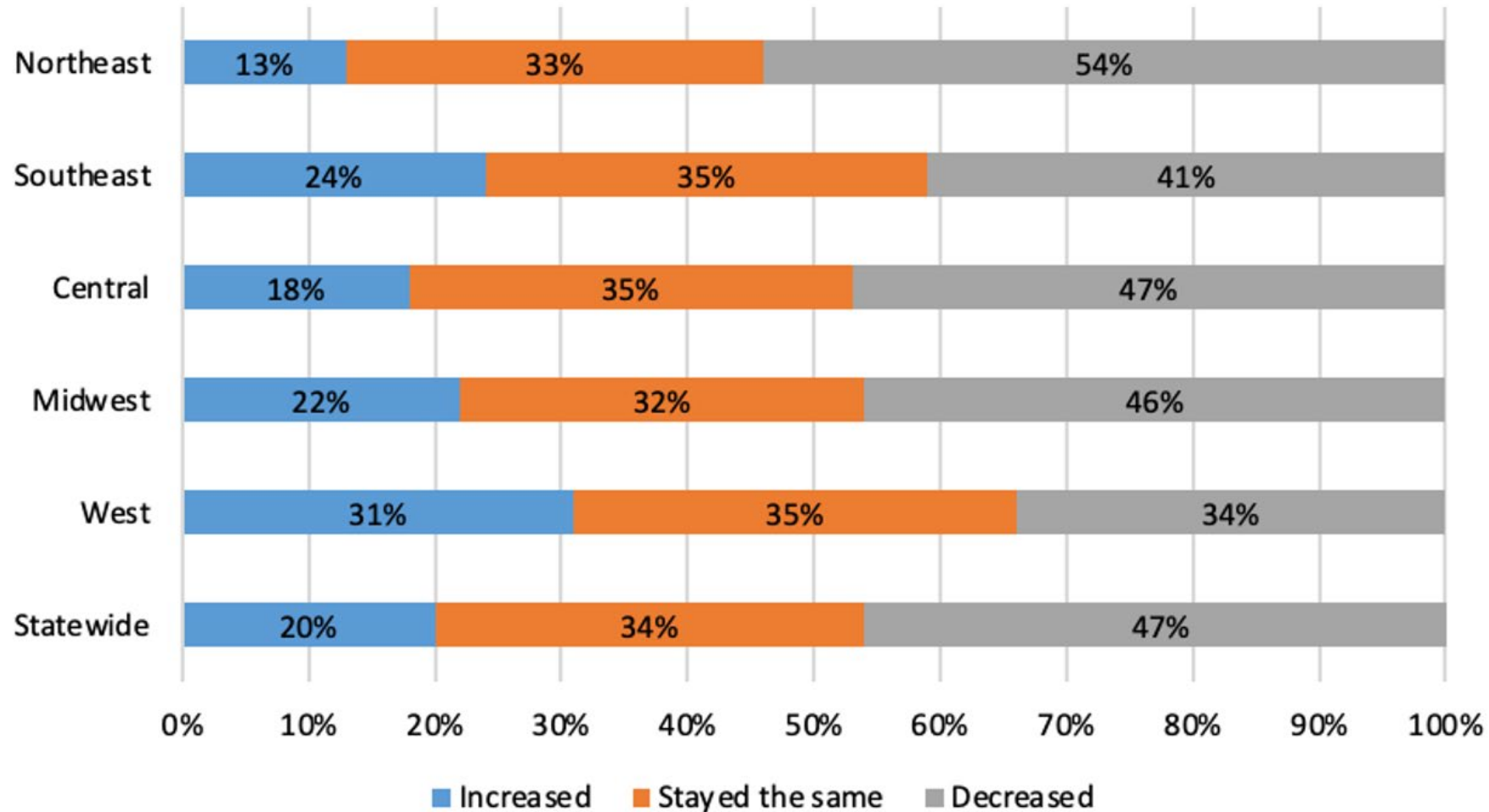
- 3,570 responses
- Overall, 51% of adults and 42% of youth harvested ≥ 1 turkey
- Average days afield down slightly from last year
 - Days afield averaged 7.5 (adults) and 3.7 (youth)
- Harvest rate same as last year
 - 0.15 birds/day for adult hunters; 0.23 for youth



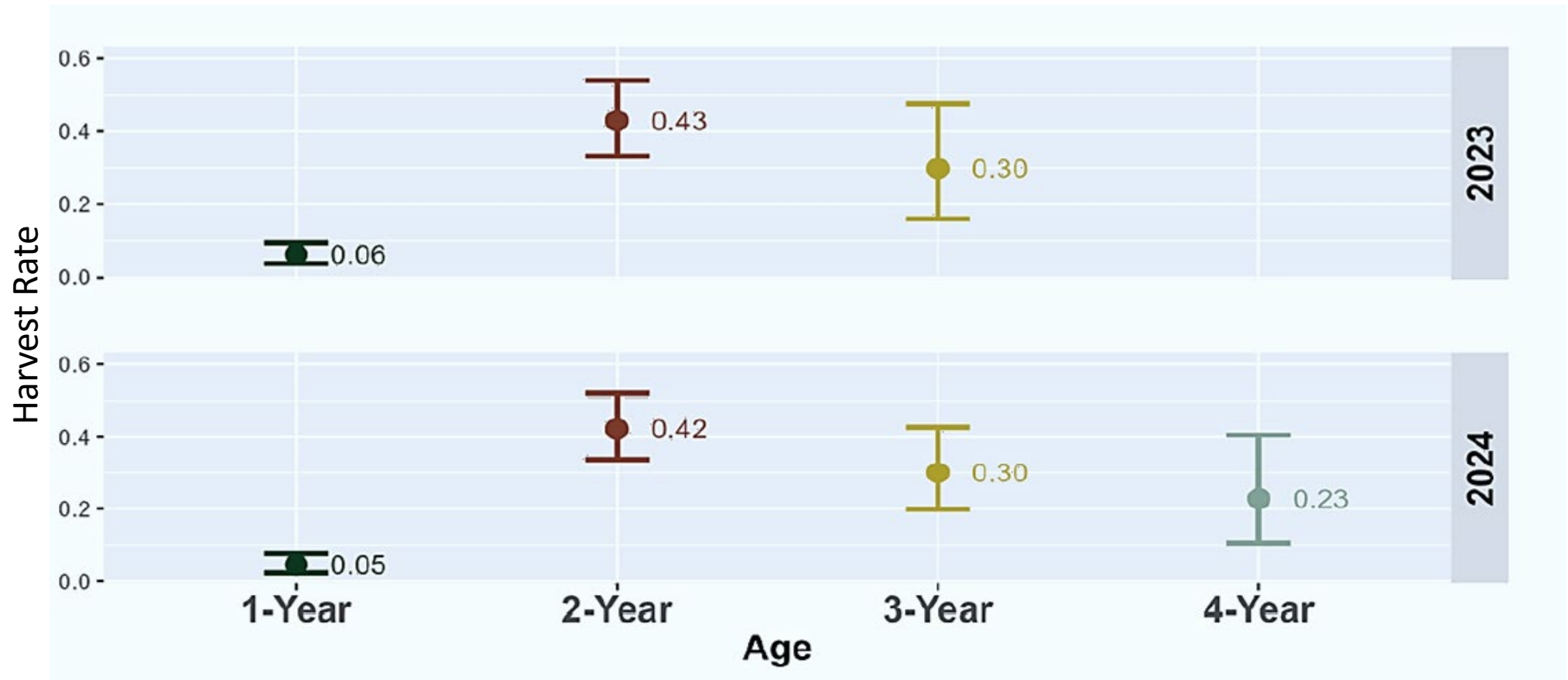
Harvest Rate, 2020-2024



Post-season Hunter Harvest Survey – Perceived Change in Population



Harvest Rates by Age Class



Adult Harvest Rates

	Bag Limit	Start Date	Season Length (Days)		Bag Limit	Start Date	Season Length (Days)
2021	3	April 3	44		2	April 17	23
2022	3	April 2	44		2	April 16	23
2023	2*	April 15	44		2	April 15	23
2024	2*	April 13	44		2	April 13	23
TENNESSEE				KENTUCKY			

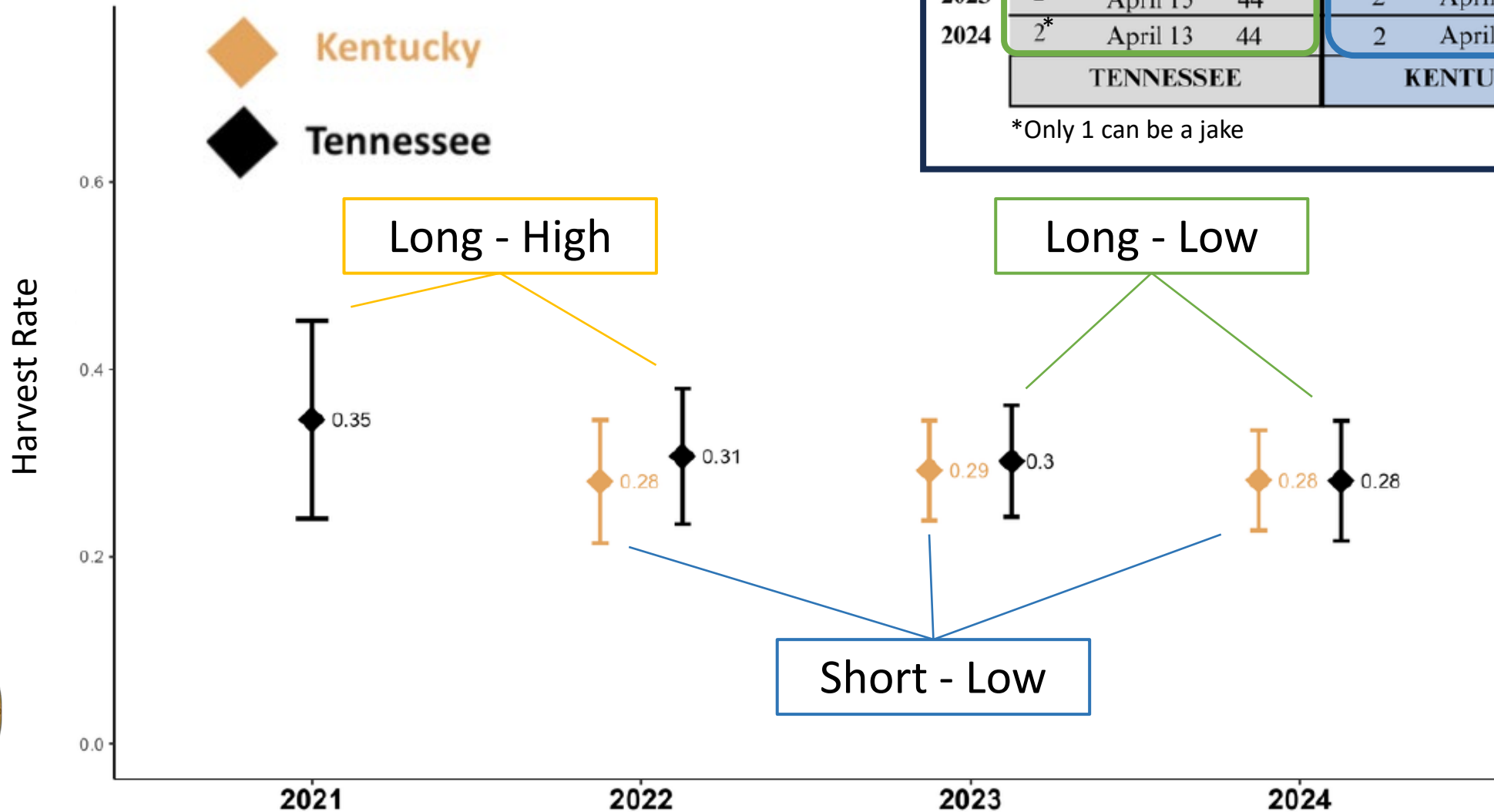
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TENNESSEE				KENTUCKY			

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TN Wild Turkey Research Outreach



- UT Extension Publication W1250 – “Tennessee cooperative wild turkey project: summary of key results and recommendations”
- NWTF “Turkey Season” podcast w/ Paul Campbell
 - UT’s Dr. Buehler and Dr. Harper, TTU’s Dr. Cohen (and me)
 - How research is used to direct policy and affect populations
 - <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/state-of-the-state-tennessee/id1710318222?i=1000669479157>



2025 NWTf Joe Kurz Excellence in Wildlife Management Award

- TWRA's Damon Hollis
 - Forestry biologist in east TN
 - Turkey Management Team



2025 SE Wild Turkey Working Group Mtg

- Turkey managers from the 15 SE States
- Hosted in TN this year
- May 19-22 @ Norris Dam SP





Questions