

Hunter-Covey Interactions using Pointing Bird Dogs

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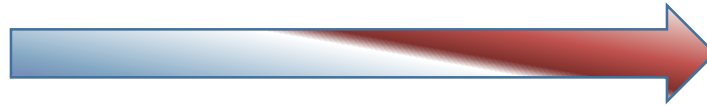




Introduction



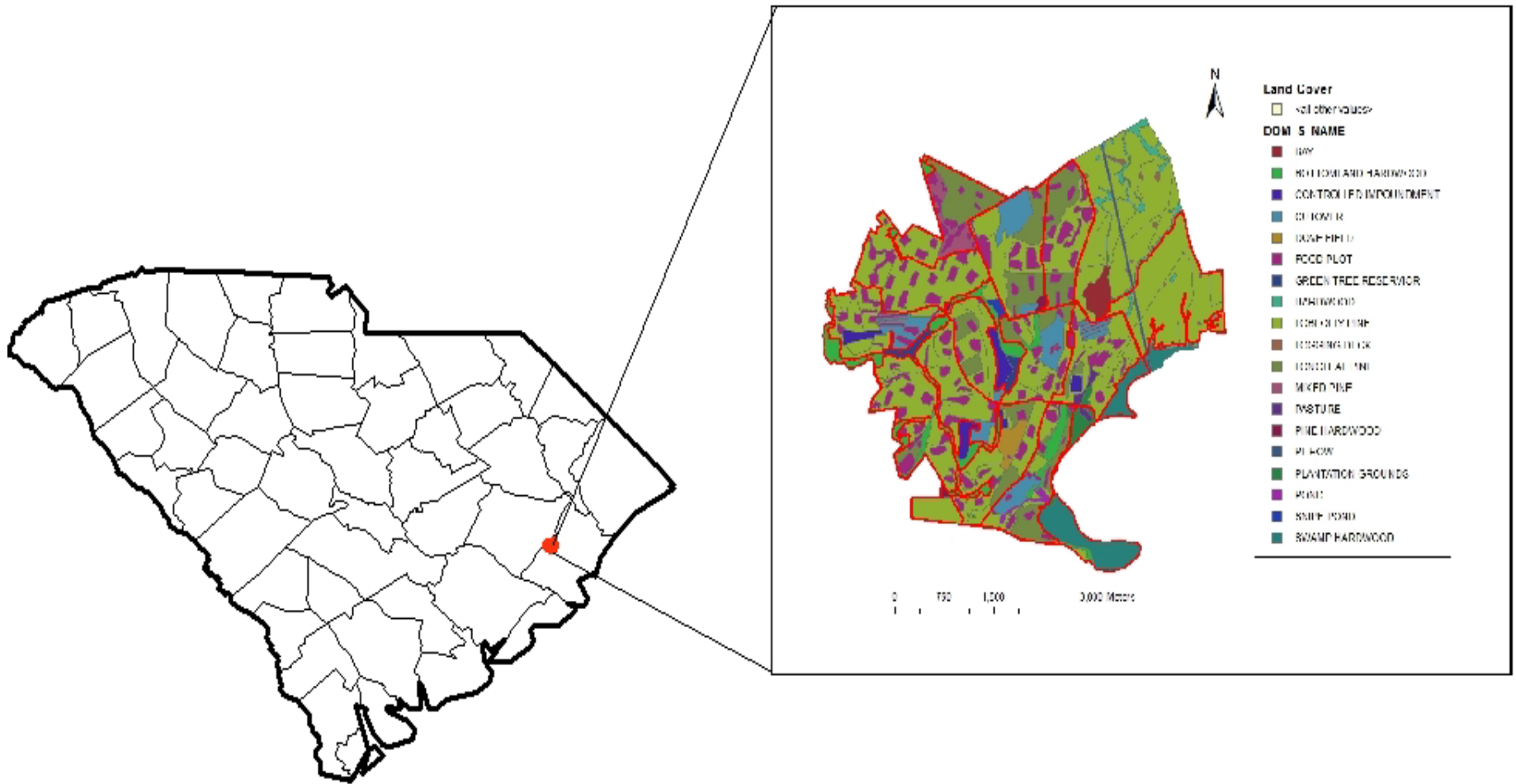
Low



High



Study Area



Private Plantation (~5,000 acres) located in Georgetown county, South Carolina



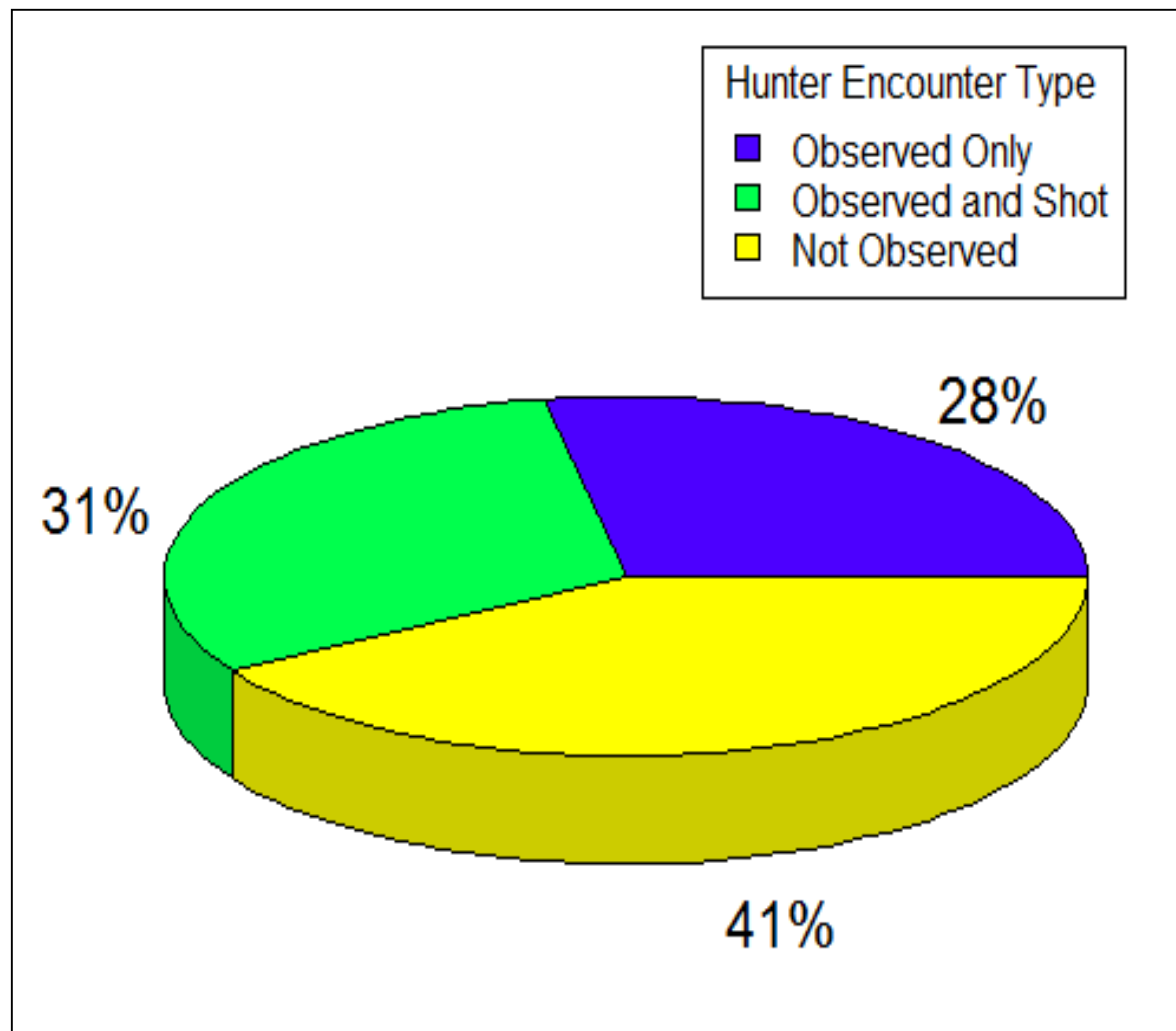
Methods

- Radio-tagged 30-35 individual coveys each year and 4-6 birds per covey
- Regular telemetry, Intensive telemetry and Hunt telemetry
- Conducted independent dog scent trials
- All dogs equipped with Garmin GPS collars



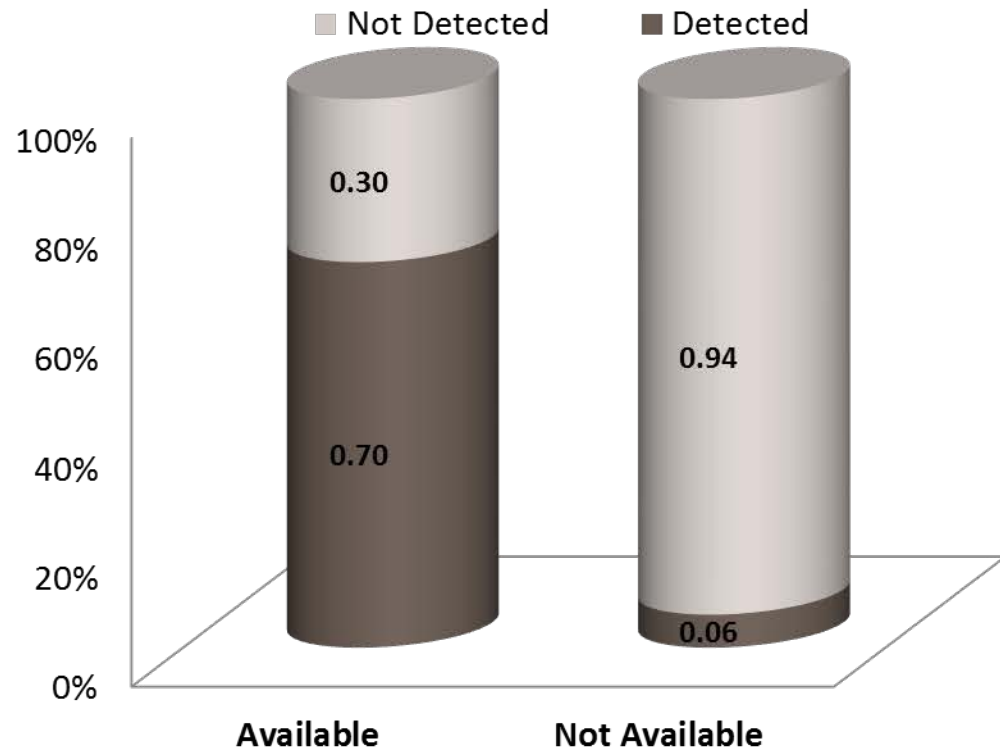
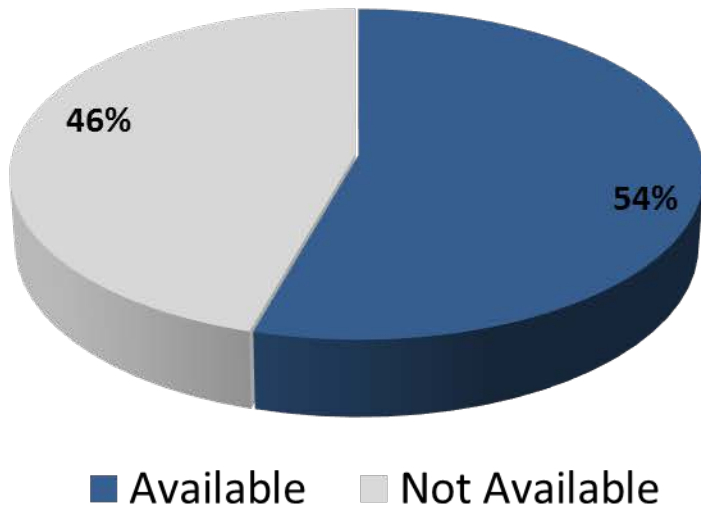


Results - Hunter-Covey Encounters





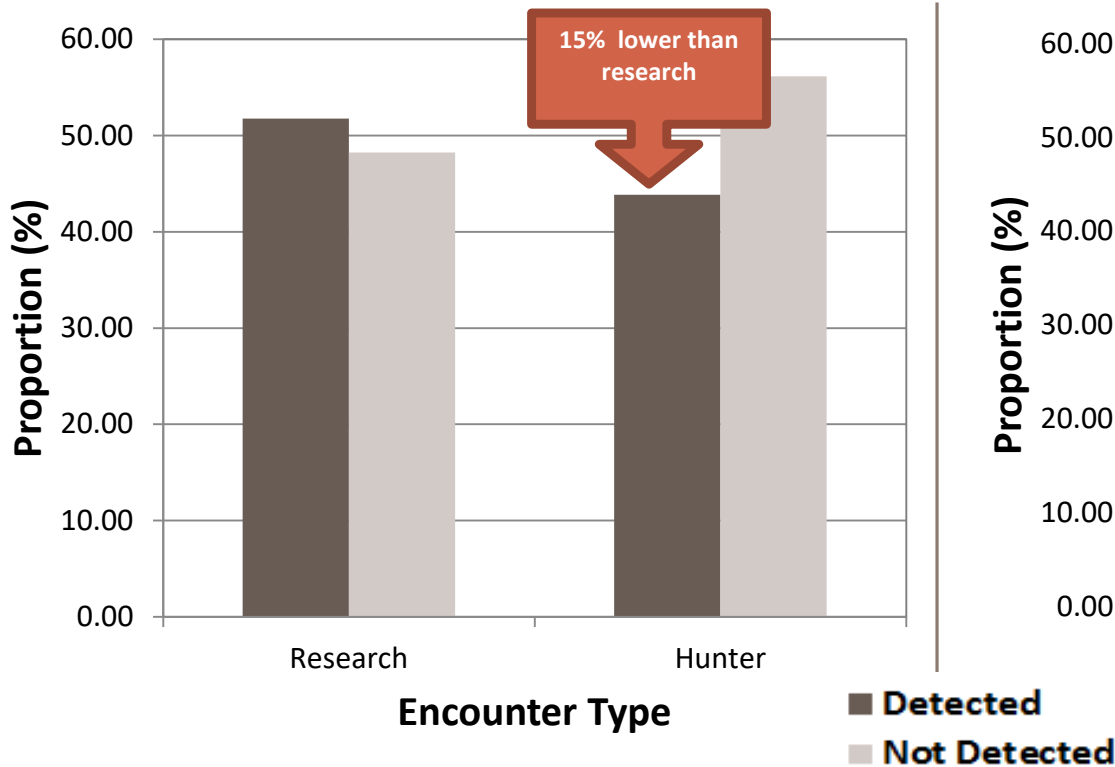
Detectability vs Availability



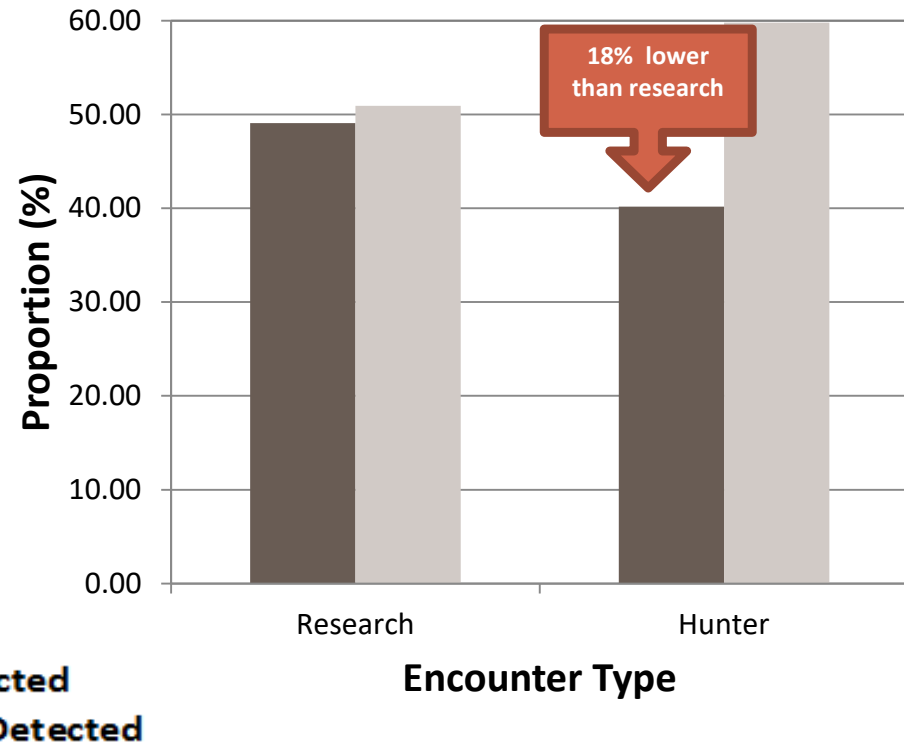


Observer Detection

Observer Detection



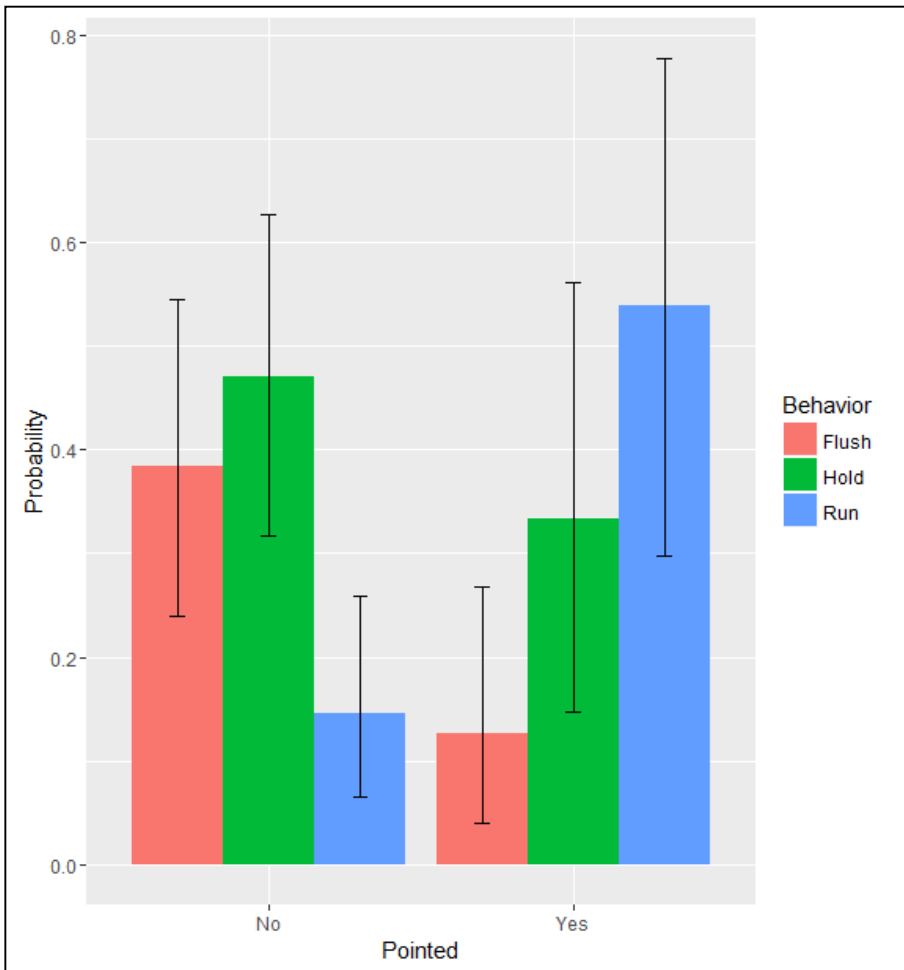
Observer Detection excluding Single Points



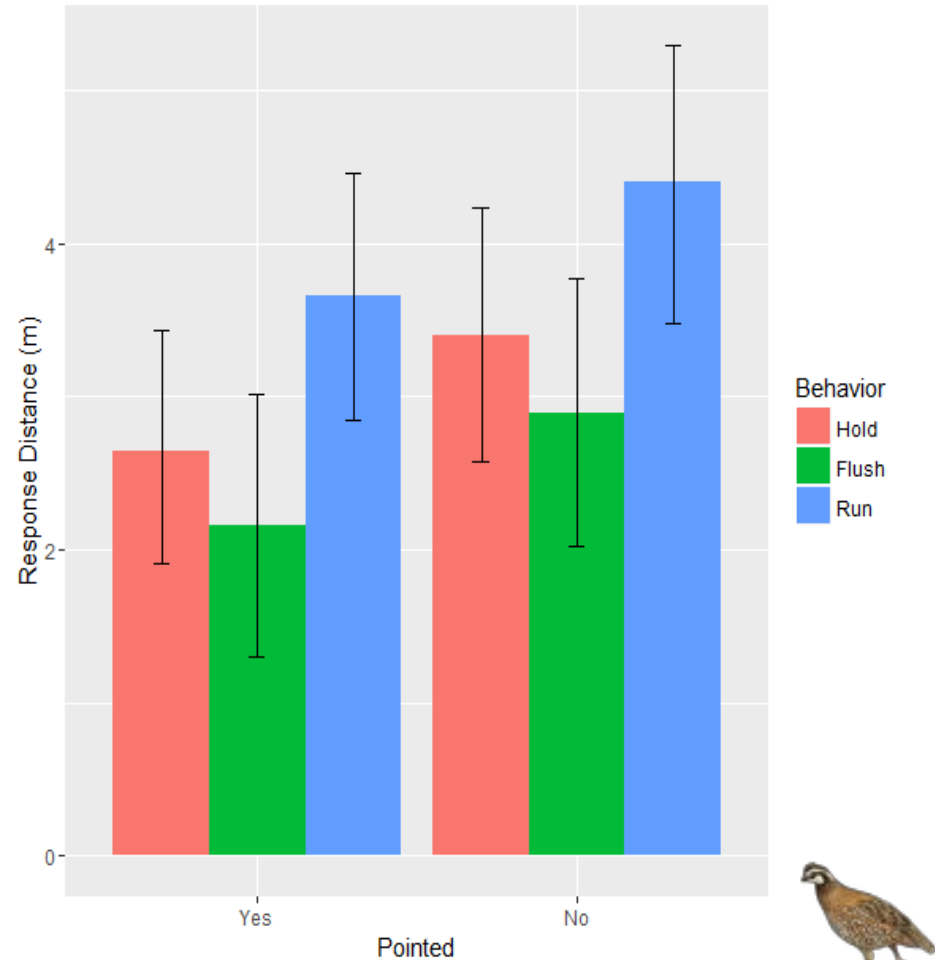


Results - Hunter-Covey Encounters

Approach Speed

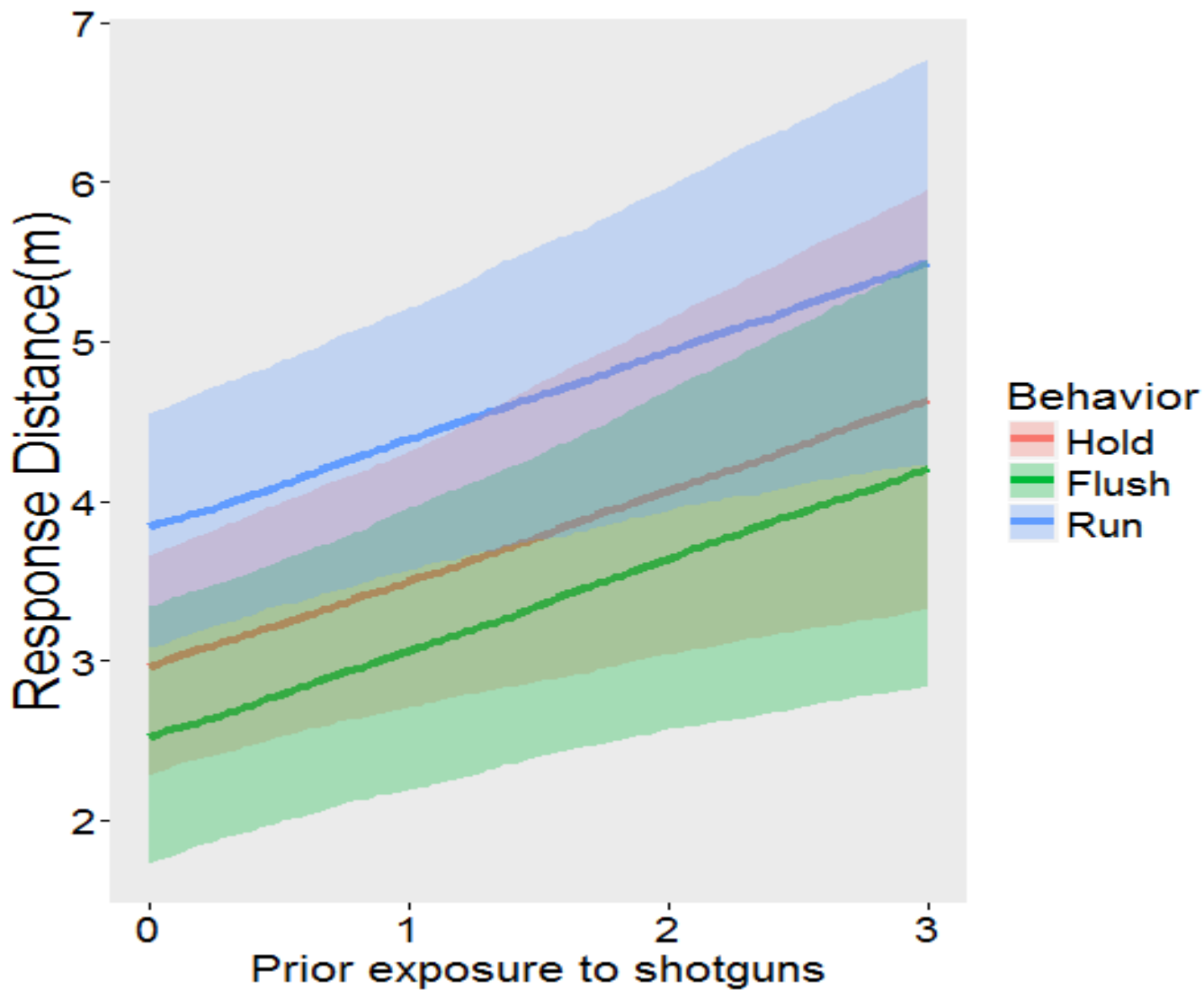


Response Distance



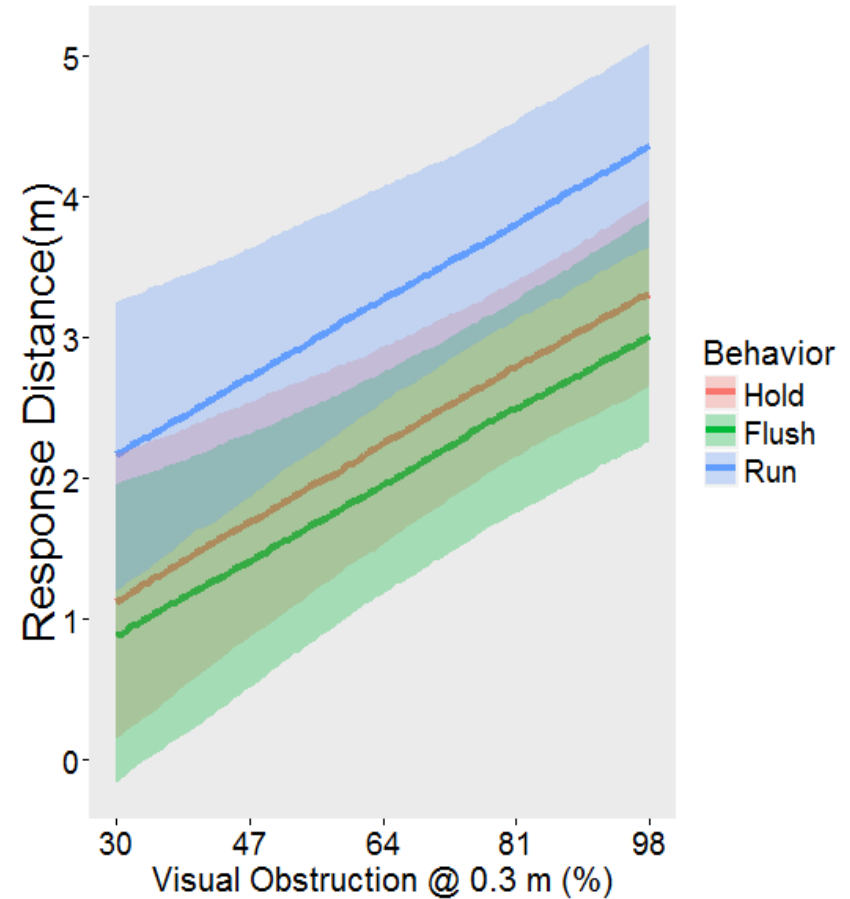
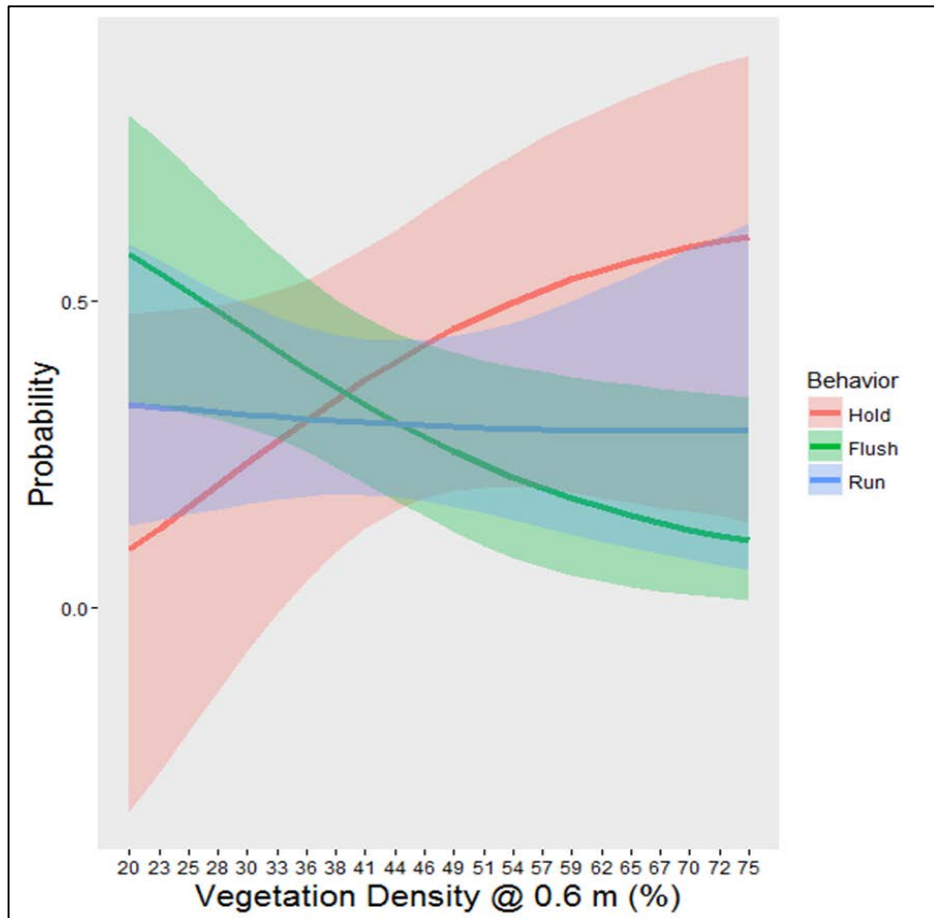


Exposure to Shotguns and Hunters



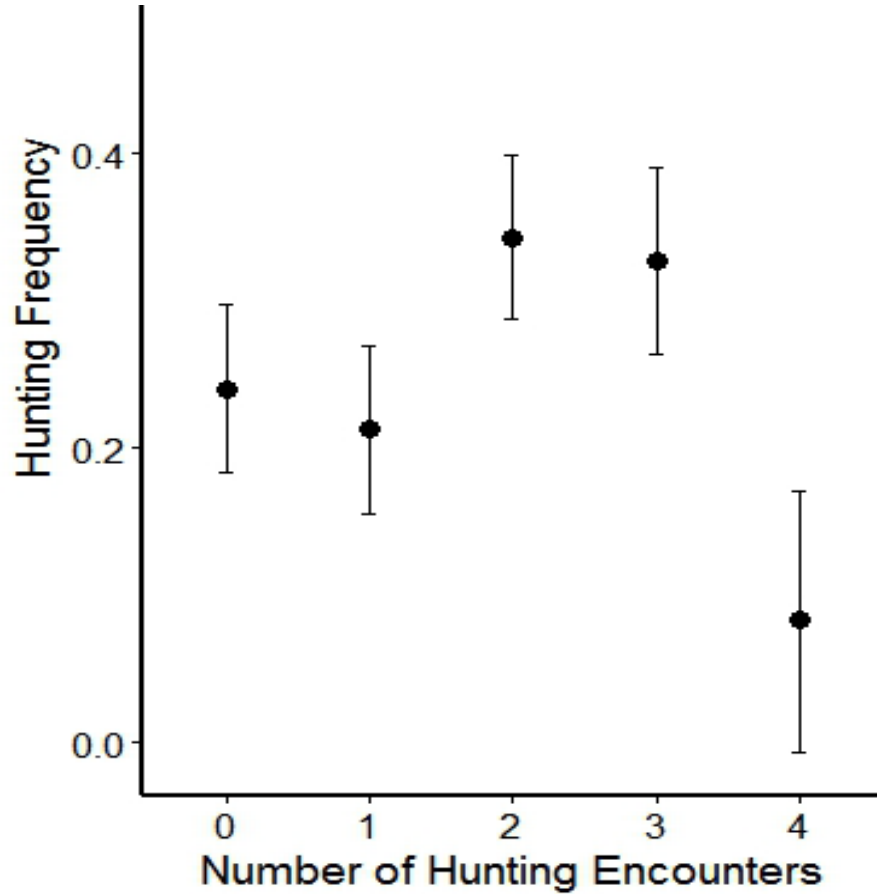


Vegetation Impacts on Covey Detection

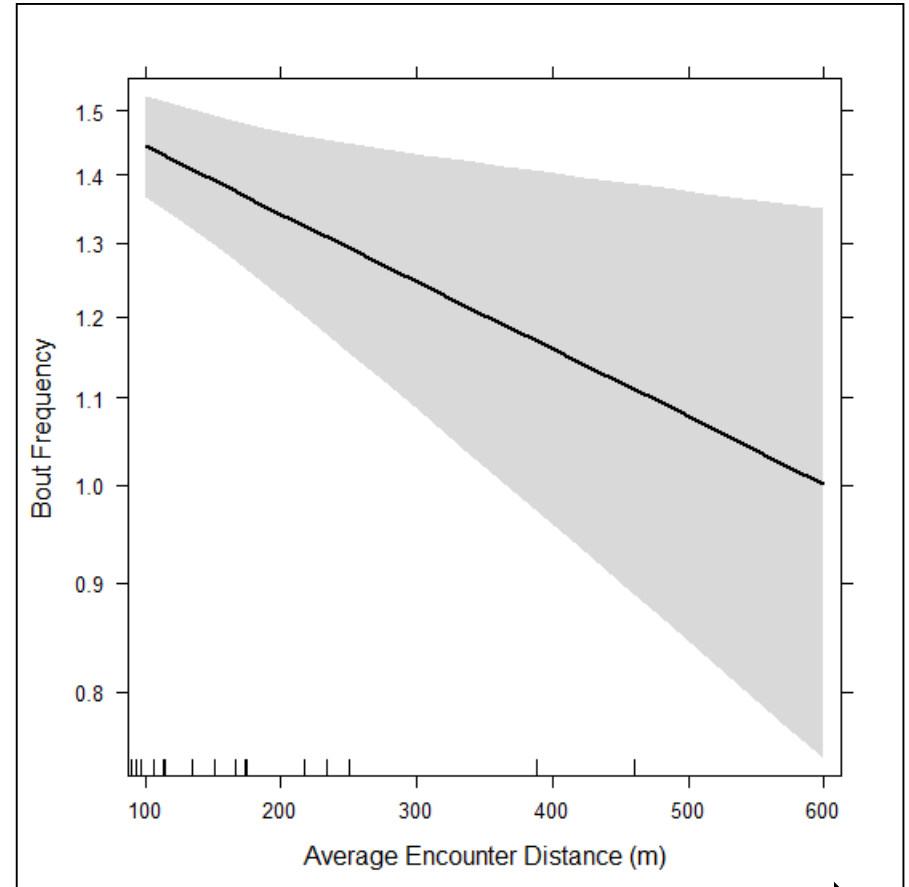




Foraging Behavior



Spatial Risk

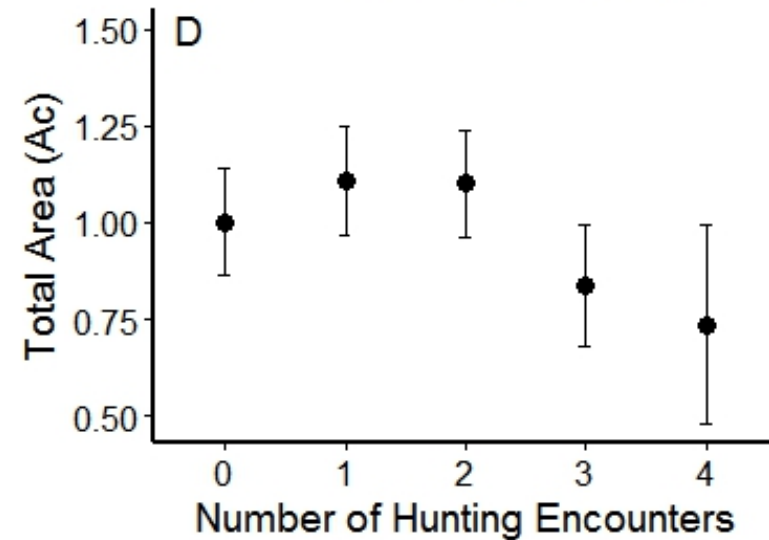
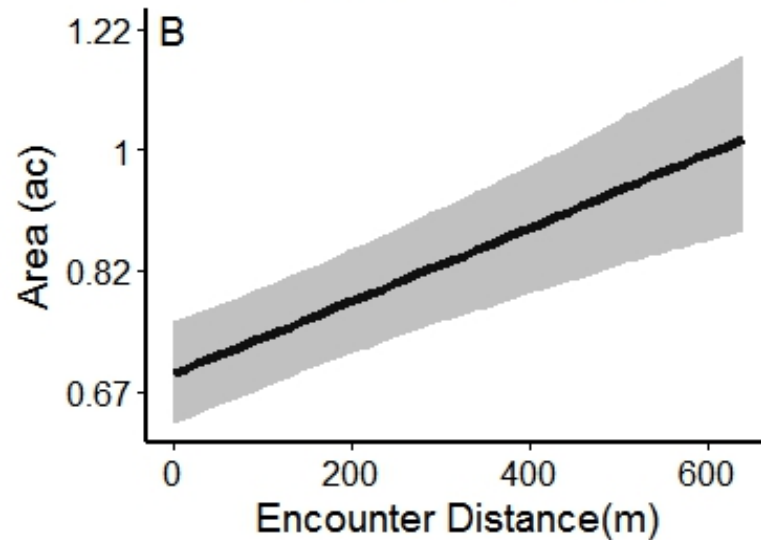
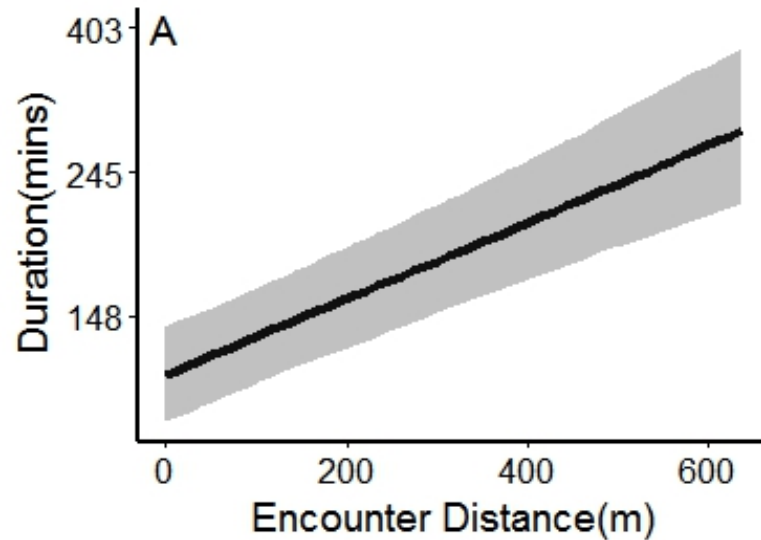


Decreasing Risk





Foraging Behavior





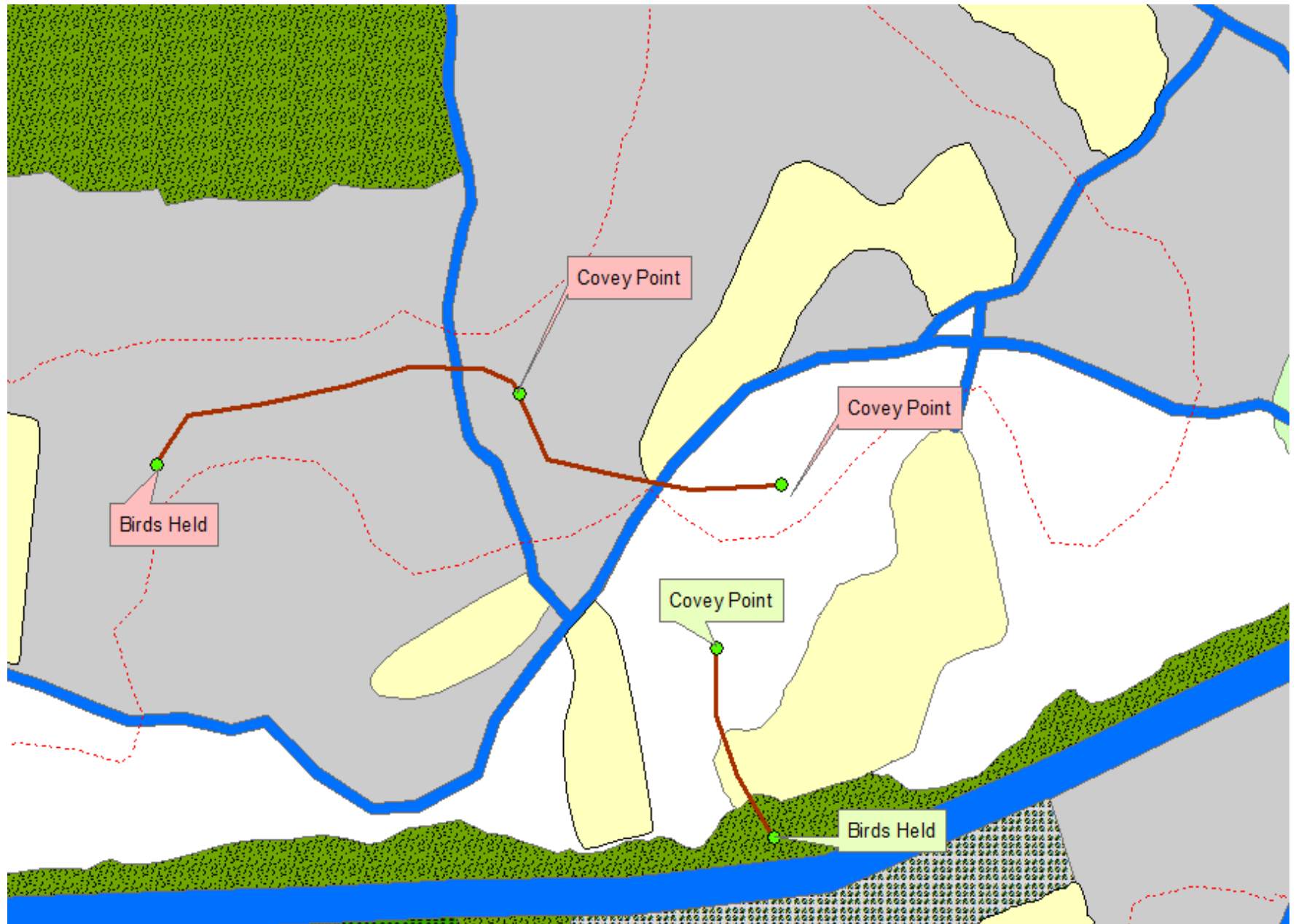
Bobwhite Covey Evasion Tactics

Commonly known strategies:

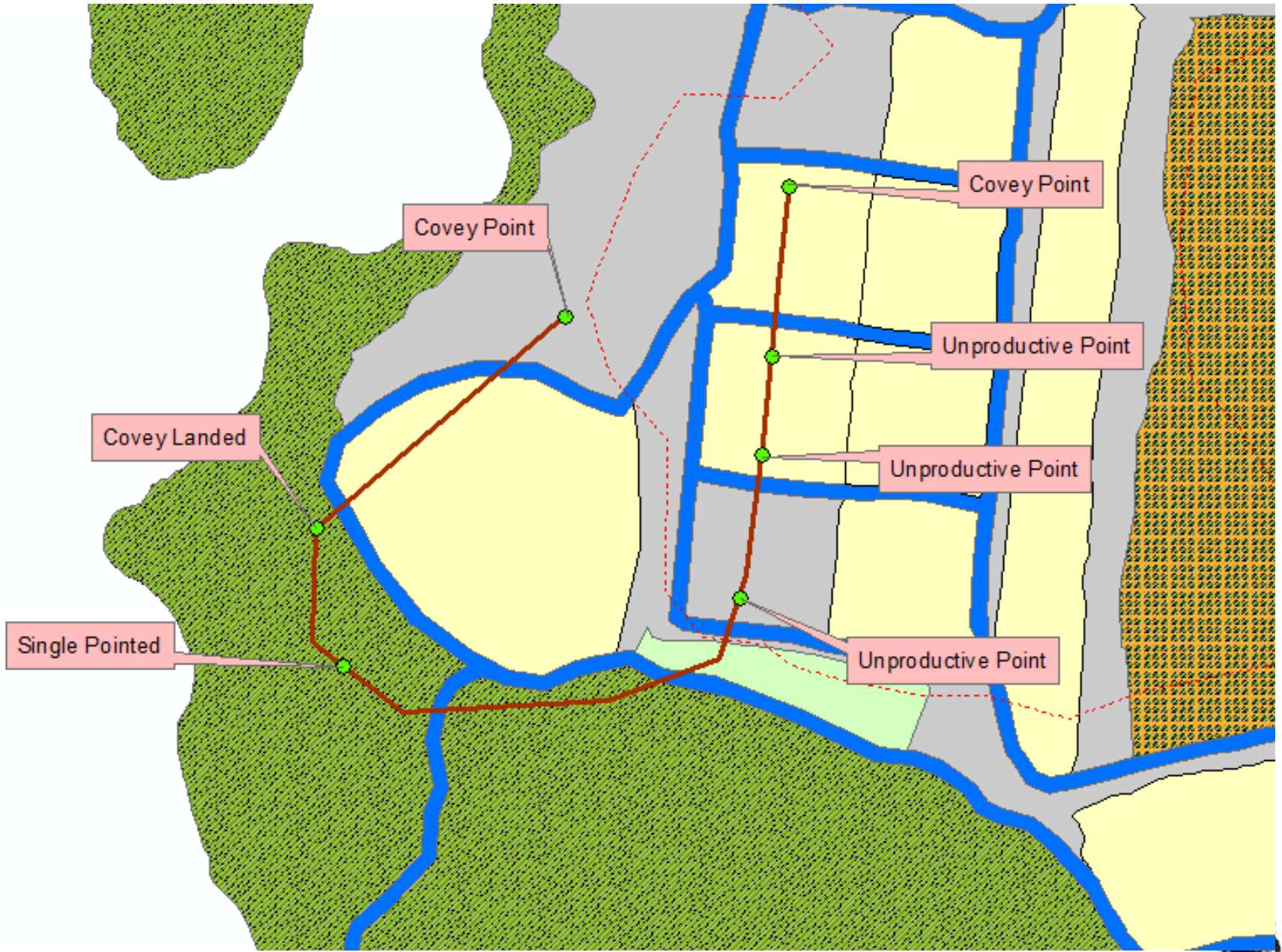
- Run (most common)
- Hold 😊 / ☹️
- Flush Wild (late season, age of birds)
- Combination of those (run, then hold, etc)



Where'd they go? ...



Evading Lane Green...





Bobwhite Covey Evasion Tactics

Commonly known strategies:

- Run (most common)
- Hold ☹️
- Flush Wild (late season, age of birds)
- Combination of those (run, then hold, etc)

Less Common Strategies:

- “Get out of Dodge”
 - Leave property entirely
 - Edge of hunting courses
- “Short Straw or Suicide Bird”
- “Ditch’ em”
- “Divide and Conquer”



Summary

- 🐾 Low overall probability of detection during hunts in both the RHs and low country ...
- 🐾 Bobwhites became more wary with increased exposure ...
- 🐾 Cover density impacted covey behavior
- 🐾 Bobwhites altered their foraging strategies to mitigate future risk from hunters ...



Skill in both dog and man constitutes the ideal combination, but of these two the skill in the man is more important. Indeed, it is our opinion that a truly skilled field man may make a better all-around “bird dog” than the dog itself, despite the fact that he does not have the dog’s ability to find birds by scent.

– Paul L. Errington (1936)





Questions???