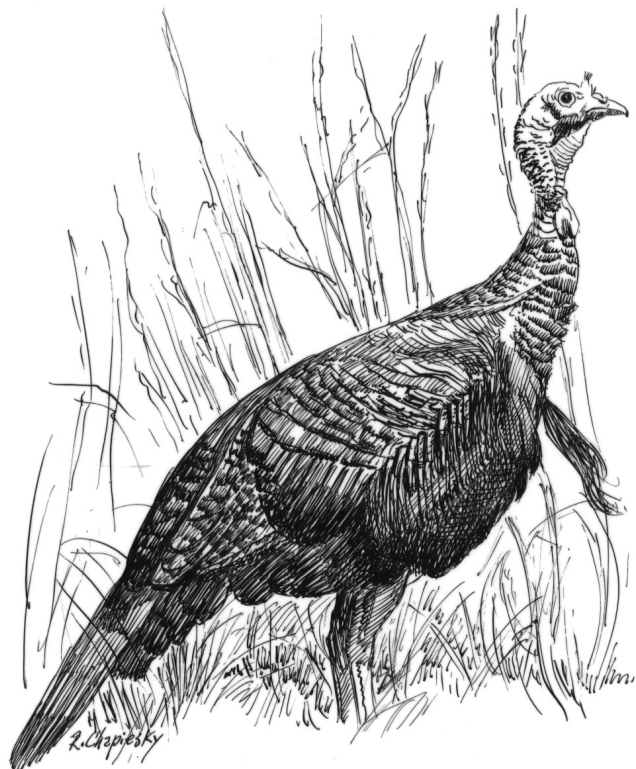


# 2010 SOUTH CAROLINA TURKEY HARVEST REPORT



## 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 2010 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 2010, (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 2010 Turkey Hunter Survey represented a random mail survey that involved a single mail-out. The questionnaire for the 2010 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 2010 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 2010 spring season it is estimated that a total of 14,516 adult gobblers and 2,408 jakes were harvested for a statewide total of 16,924 turkeys (Table 1). This figure represents a 4.1 percent increase in harvest from 2009 (16,234) and is the first increase in harvest since 2005. Although the harvest was up slightly in 2010, this harvest level still represents a 33.7 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 seven of the last eight years (Figure 2) and the spring harvest following each year of low recruitment has been down (Figure 3). Although still considered poor, reproduction in 2008 was up slightly resulting in a few more adult birds available for harvest in 2010. This point may explain the slight increase in harvest in 2010. Furthermore, the association between subtle changes in reproduction and its effects on harvest are rather remarkable in South Carolina's turkey harvest and reproductive data set.

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 2010 was 0.8 gobblers per square mile statewide (Table 2). Although the turkey harvest has trended 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 (1.8 turkeys/mile<sup>2</sup>), Anderson (1.7 turkeys/mile<sup>2</sup>), Union and Newberry each with 1.5 turkeys/mile<sup>2</sup>, and Bamberg and Abbeville each 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, Williamsburg, Newberry, Fairfield, and Colleton (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. For additional information on setting spring turkey season refer to: <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/springseason09.html>.

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 26 percent of the total harvest was 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, 46 percent of the harvest occurred 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.

Comparing the first two weeks of each season format, we find that where the season opens March 15, 45 percent of gobblers were harvested while this figure is 68 percent where the season opens on April 1. Again, this is a reflection of fewer available hens due to nesting and this lack of hens stimulates peak gobbling resulting in hunters being able to locate and call responsive birds. Finally, there is actually a higher percentage of turkeys harvested in the first week of the season in areas where the season opens April 1 (46%) than there is during the first two weeks of the season in areas where the season opens March 15 (45%). These results have been consistent since this type of data has been available.

### **Number of Turkey Hunters**

Even though all individuals receiving a set of Turkey Transportation Tags were licensed to hunt turkeys, only 39 percent actually hunted turkeys. Based on this figure, approximately 43,415 hunters participated in the 2010 spring turkey season, a 2.6 percent decrease from 2009 (44,538). Counties with the highest estimates for individual hunters include Fairfield, Newberry, Union, Berkeley, and Laurens (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 5.7 days

afield during the 2010 season (Table 4), a figure nearly identical to that in 2009 (5.6 days). Successful hunters averaged significantly more days afield (6.8 days) than unsuccessful hunters (4.4 days). Extrapolating to the entire population of turkey hunters yields a figure of 208,010 total days of spring gobbler hunting, down 5.5 percent from 2009 (220,091 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 2010 were Newberry, Berkeley, Union, Fairfield, and Williamsburg 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 2010 was 30.3 percent, up 4.7 percent from 2009 (28.9%). 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 2.6%, however, this small percentage of hunters harvested 22% of the total birds taken in the state (Figure 8). These results have been consistent since this type of data has been available.

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

The 2010 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 (49.8%) 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 (29.8%) believed that the turkey population was decreasing than increasing (20.4%). On a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 being increasing, 2 being the same, and 3 being decreasing, the overall mean rating of 2.1 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 2010 Turkey Hunter Survey asked hunters to indicate the number of turkeys that they “shot but did not kill or recover during the 2010 season in South Carolina”. Approximately 11.3 percent of hunters indicated that they shot but did not kill or recover at least one turkey in 2010 (10.2% in 2009). There were approximately 43,415 turkey hunters in 2010 meaning that approximately 4,935 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. Results for this figure were the same in 2009.

This data is certainly not indicative of “dead and unrecovered turkeys”, however, it is clear that some percentage of the 4,935 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 Harvest in the Morning VS. Afternoon**

The typical spring turkey hunt is characterized by attempting to locate a gobbling bird prior to or just after sunrise. Once a gobbler is located most hunters position themselves as close as they can to the gobbler without scaring it away. Various types of callers that mimic the sounds of wild turkeys are then used to attempt to call the gobbler into gun range. This technique of locating a gobbling bird, setting-up, and calling is repeated as necessary.

Traditionally, spring turkey hunting was primarily carried out during the first few hours of the day. As the popularity of turkey hunting has increased, many hunters now hunt in the afternoon as well. Gobblers are generally not as vocal in the afternoon but they can be stimulated to gobble using the various turkey calls, particularly late in the afternoon near areas where turkeys frequently roost.

In order to gain a better understanding of the distribution of harvest with respect to time of day, the 2010 Turkey Hunter Survey asked hunters to identify the number of birds harvested in the morning compared to the afternoon. Results indicate that approximately 78 percent of gobblers are harvested in the morning compared to 22 percent in the afternoon. This data may be useful if discussions arise concerning the relative importance of morning compared to afternoon harvest of gobblers in the spring.

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Table 1. Estimated statewide turkey harvest in South Carolina in 2010.

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	388	100	489	20.5	456.4	1.4
Aiken	500,546	782	195	37	232	15.9	2153.1	0.3
Allendale	216,455	338	238	6	244	2.6	885.4	0.7
Anderson	219,068	342	469	107	576	18.5	380.2	1.7
Bamberg	196,573	307	421	19	440	4.3	447.0	1.4
Barnwell	281,764	440	227	82	308	26.5	914.3	0.7
Beaufort	147,441	230	105	13	118	10.7	1251.8	0.5
Berkeley	567,530	887	866	44	910	4.8	623.7	1.0
Calhoun	190,584	298	105	25	131	19.5	1458.2	0.4
Charleston	288,732	451	299	50	350	14.4	825.8	0.8
Cherokee	156,664	245	340	94	434	21.7	360.9	1.8
Chester	300,589	470	348	75	423	17.8	710.1	0.9
Chesterfield	372,478	582	243	25	268	9.4	1390.3	0.5
Clarendon	298,087	466	316	19	334	5.6	891.2	0.7
Colleton	502,666	785	599	50	649	7.7	774.4	0.8
Darlington	286,228	447	97	13	110	11.4	2609.9	0.2
Dillon	214,069	334	162	6	168	3.7	1273.2	0.5
Dorchester	302,717	473	388	25	414	6.1	731.9	0.9
Edgefield	246,543	385	340	50	390	12.9	631.9	1.0
Fairfield	384,607	601	542	163	705	23.1	545.2	1.2
Florence	397,888	622	502	69	571	12.1	697.0	0.9
Georgetown	399,638	624	210	13	223	5.6	1792.0	0.4
Greenville	294,257	460	217	50	267	18.8	1100.8	0.6
Greenwood	204,400	319	162	19	181	10.4	1131.4	0.6
Hampton	324,840	508	437	19	456	4.1	712.6	0.9
Horry	533,336	833	259	44	303	14.5	1760.6	0.4
Jasper	309,889	484	291	31	322	9.6	961.1	0.7
Kershaw	360,485	563	170	88	258	34.1	1398.4	0.5
Lancaster	266,382	416	210	56	267	21.2	998.1	0.6
Laurens	317,916	497	421	132	553	23.8	575.2	1.1
Lee	220,106	344	243	13	255	4.9	861.9	0.7
Lexington	280,742	439	49	13	61	20.5	4594.4	0.1
McCormick	212,021	331	170	50	220	22.8	962.9	0.7
Marion	216,907	339	259	38	297	12.7	731.1	0.9
Marlboro	281,271	439	267	25	292	8.6	962.6	0.7
Newberry	317,761	497	575	176	750	23.4	423.5	1.5
Oconee	284,348	444	130	50	180	27.9	1582.5	0.4
Orangeburg	504,516	788	437	44	481	9.1	1048.9	0.6
Pickens	219,926	344	324	38	361	10.4	608.5	1.1
Richland	340,121	531	154	31	185	16.9	1837.1	0.3
Saluda	192,173	300	178	44	222	19.8	865.7	0.7
Spartanburg	265,939	416	324	63	386	16.2	688.1	0.9
Sumter	338,968	530	267	19	286	6.6	1185.4	0.5
Union	258,111	403	494	126	619	20.3	416.8	1.5
Williamsburg	513,851	803	761	75	836	9.0	614.5	1.0
York	276,650	432	316	82	397	20.5	696.4	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,028,896</b>	<b>21,920</b>	<b>14,516</b>	<b>2,408</b>	<b>16,924</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>828.9</b>	<b>0.8</b>

95% Conf. Interval for harvest

(+-) 1,814 (+-) 725 (+-) 1,988

\* 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 2010.

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	340	94	434	21.7	360.9	1.8
Anderson	219,068	342	469	107	576	18.5	380.2	1.7
Union	258,111	403	494	126	619	20.3	416.8	1.5
Newberry	317,761	497	575	176	750	23.4	423.5	1.5
Bamberg	196,573	307	421	19	440	4.3	447.0	1.4
Abbeville	223,113	349	388	100	489	20.5	456.4	1.4
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Edgefield	246,543	385	340	50	390	12.9	631.9	1.0
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Florence	397,888	622	502	69	571	12.1	697.0	0.9
Chester	300,589	470	348	75	423	17.8	710.1	0.9
Hampton	324,840	508	437	19	456	4.1	712.6	0.9
Marion	216,907	339	259	38	297	12.7	731.1	0.9
Dorchester	302,717	473	388	25	414	6.1	731.9	0.9
Colleton	502,666	785	599	50	649	7.7	774.4	0.8
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Saluda	192,173	300	178	44	222	19.8	865.7	0.7
Allendale	216,455	338	238	6	244	2.6	885.4	0.7
Clarendon	298,087	466	316	19	334	5.6	891.2	0.7
Barnwell	281,764	440	227	82	308	26.5	914.3	0.7
Jasper	309,889	484	291	31	322	9.6	961.1	0.7
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Dillon	214,069	334	162	6	168	3.7	1273.2	0.5
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Table 3. County rankings based on total turkeys harvested in South Carolina in 2010.

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Oconee	284,348	444	130	50	180	27.9	1582.5	0.4
Dillon	214,069	334	162	6	168	3.7	1273.2	0.5
Calhoun	190,584	298	105	25	131	19.5	1458.2	0.4
Beaufort	147,441	230	105	13	118	10.7	1251.8	0.5
Darlington	286,228	447	97	13	110	11.4	2609.9	0.2
Lexington	280,742	439	49	13	61	20.5	4594.4	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,028,896</b>	<b>21,920</b>	<b>14,516</b>	<b>2,408</b>	<b>16,924</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>828.9</b>	<b>0.8</b>

Table 4. Estimated number of turkey hunters, average days hunted, and total hunting effort by county in South Carolina in 2010.

<b>County</b>	<b>Total Harvest</b>	<b>Number Hunters</b>	<b>Avg. Days Hunted</b>	<b>Total Man/Days</b>
Abbeville	489	1,251	5.1	5,607
Aiken	232	753	5.1	3,071
Allendale	244	660	6.3	3,273
Anderson	576	1,379	4.9	6,455
Bamberg	440	892	6.2	4,859
Barnwell	308	660	6.1	3,293
Beaufort	118	359	4.8	1,374
Berkeley	910	1,599	7.0	10,082
Calhoun	131	475	6.2	2,283
Charleston	350	1,078	5.7	4,607
Cherokee	434	823	6.2	4,849
Chester	423	1,240	5.3	6,132
Chesterfield	268	811	6.4	4,142
Clarendon	334	614	5.3	2,758
Colleton	649	1,205	7.3	7,193
Darlington	110	440	4.5	1,829
Dillon	168	313	5.0	1,172
Dorchester	414	857	6.5	4,799
Edgefield	390	927	5.1	3,970
Fairfield	705	1,877	5.6	8,355
Florence	571	985	5.1	4,516
Georgetown	223	672	5.2	2,263
Greenville	267	950	4.8	3,607
Greenwood	181	1,043	4.7	4,890
Hampton	456	962	5.7	4,576
Horry	303	695	5.4	2,990
Jasper	322	579	6.7	2,859
Kershaw	258	904	4.9	3,778
Lancaster	267	765	5.7	4,465
Laurens	553	1,541	5.0	6,749
Lee	255	660	4.9	3,081
Lexington	61	382	3.8	960
McCormick	220	846	6.1	3,849
Marion	297	707	4.5	2,819
Marlboro	292	521	5.4	2,455
Newberry	750	1,865	5.6	10,092
Oconee	180	707	6.3	3,829
Orangeburg	481	1,471	5.9	6,900
Pickens	361	1,112	5.7	6,163
Richland	185	788	4.8	2,566
Saluda	222	730	5.2	3,192
Spartanburg	386	1,159	5.3	5,243
Sumter	286	718	6.1	3,223
Union	619	1,703	6.0	8,547
Williamsburg	836	1,483	5.0	7,405
York	397	1,251	6.3	6,890
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,924</b>	<b>43,415</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>208,010</b>

Figure 1. South Carolina Department of Natural Resources 2010 Turkey Hunter Survey.

May, 2010

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 South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) is conducting a survey of hunters who received a set of turkey tags during spring 2010.

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 SCDNR 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 SCDNR web site once completed. The results from the 2009 survey can be found at: [www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/2009TurkeyHarvest.html](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/2009TurkeyHarvest.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 2010 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

10-6925



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

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NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES**

**2010 South Carolina Turkey Hunter Survey**

1. Did you turkey hunt in SC this past season (2010)? 1. Yes 2. No  
If you answered **No** to this question please **go to question # 8**.
2. Did you harvest any turkeys in SC this past season? 1. Yes 2. No
3. 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 (2010). 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 6.**

4. 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	

5. How many turkeys did you kill in the morning \_\_\_\_\_ after 12:00 noon \_\_\_\_\_?
6. How many turkeys did you shoot but not kill or recover in SC this past season? \_\_\_\_\_
7. 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**
8. Are you a resident of SC? 1. Yes 2. No
9. If yes, which county \_\_\_\_\_

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

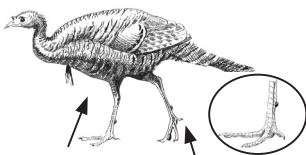


**HELP MANAGE TURKEYS IN S.C. COMPLETE YOUR HUNTER SURVEY**



**TURKEY HUNTER SURVEY  
SCDNR  
PO BOX 167  
COLUMBIA SC 29202-0167  
www.dnr.sc.gov**

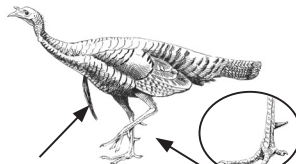
**Juvenile "Jake"**



beard less than 6"

spur less than 1/2"

**Adult "Gobbler"**



beard 6" or longer

spur 1/2" or longer

**PRESORTED  
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Figure 2. Summer wild turkey recruitment ratio in South Carolina 1982-2009. Note poor recruitment ratio 7 out of the last 8 years. Recruitment ratio is a measure of young entering the population based on the number of hens in the population.

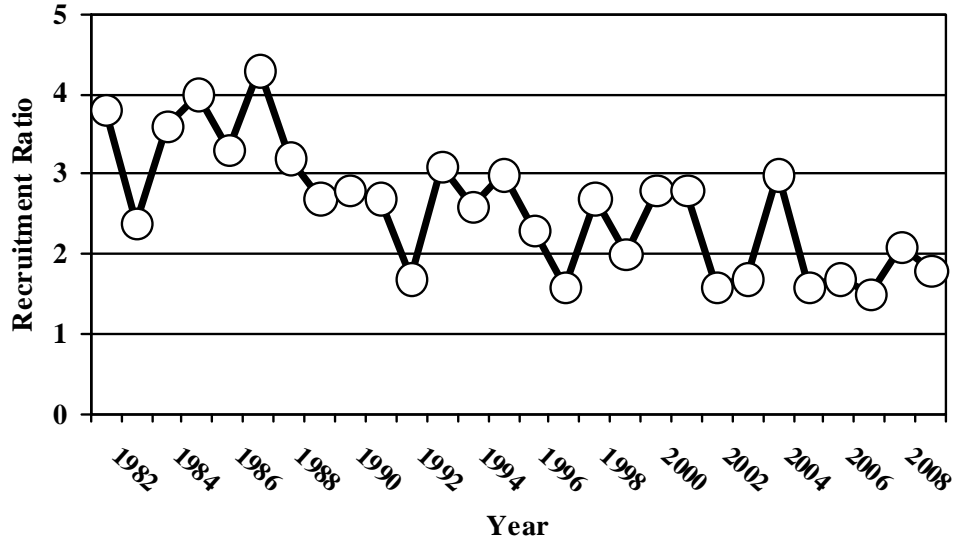


Figure 3. Spring wild turkey harvest in South Carolina 1982-2010. Note declines in harvest following years of poor recruitment that have occurred since record harvest in 2002.

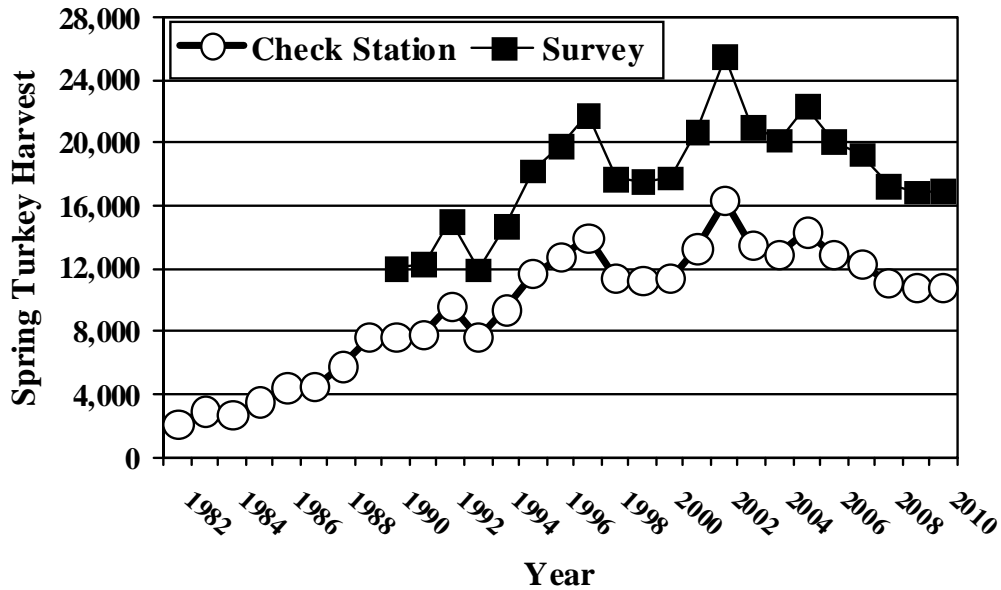


Figure 4. Percentage of gobblers harvested by week of season in South Carolina in 2010.

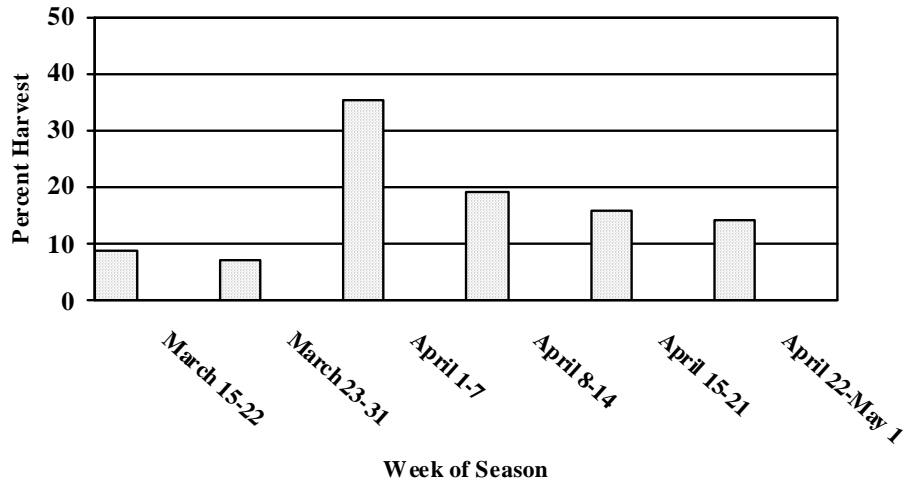


Figure 5. Percentage of gobblers harvested by week in areas with March 15-May 1 season.

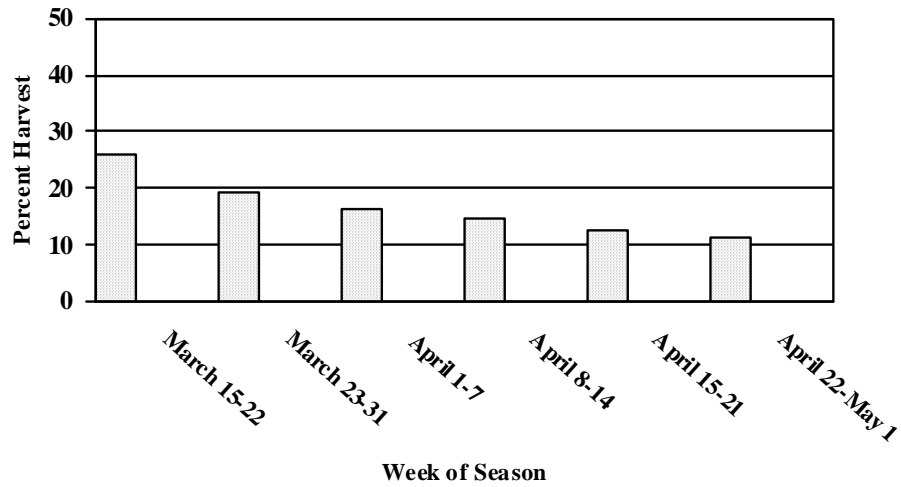


Figure 6. Percentage of gobblers harvested by week in areas with April 1-May 1 season.

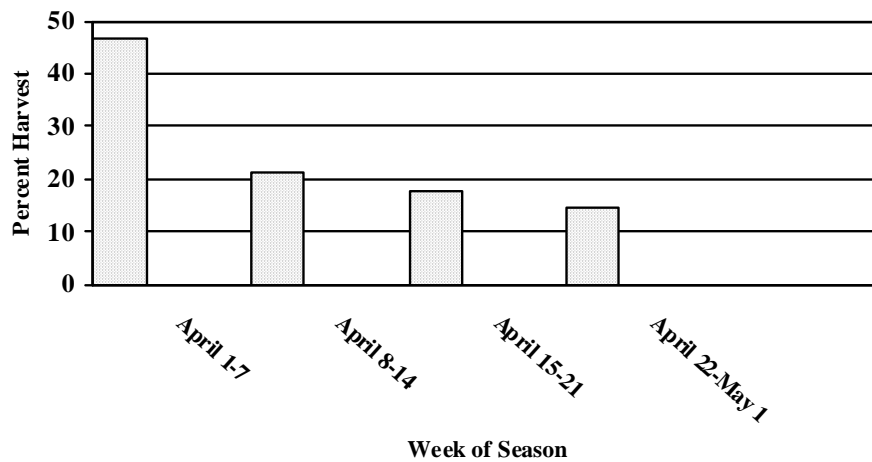


Figure 7. Hunter success during the spring turkey season in South Carolina in 2010. Overall success was 30 percent at harvesting at least one gobbler.

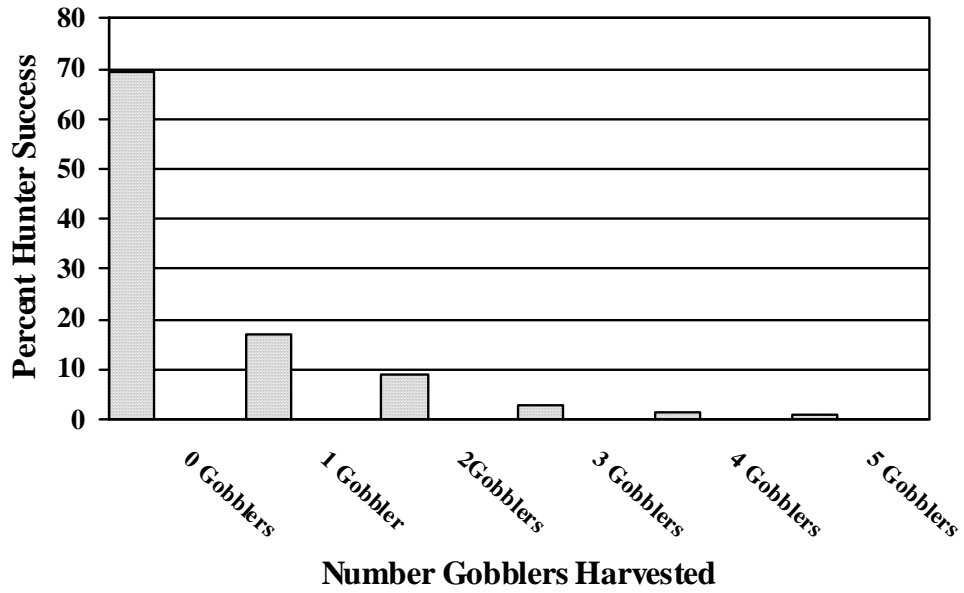


Figure 8. Relative contribution to the total turkey harvest by hunters taking between 1 and 5 gobbler in South Carolina in 2010. Hunters taking more than 3 birds accounted for 22% of total harvest.

