

2010 Virginia Spring Gobbler Season Survey

by

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Abstract: An annual survey of spring gobbler hunters in Virginia was conducted to monitor turkey population trends and hunter satisfactions. Cooperators ($n = 348$) reported data on 12,271 hours of hunting during 3,695 hunts in 98 Virginia counties and 2 cities. Cooperators heard more gobblers per hour in 2010 than 2009, but harvest rates remained essentially the same. Cooperators hunting in counties east of the Blue Ridge Mountains heard more birds (0.62 gobblers/hr) than those hunting in counties to the west (0.54 gobblers/hr). Gobbling rates varied by regions with the highest gobbling rate reported in the Tidewater Region (0.74 gobblers/hr) and the lowest in the Central Mountain Region (0.49 gobblers/hr). Gobbling rates and intensity were highest at the beginning of the season. Harvest rates generally declined through the season although there was an increase in early May, concurrent with the peak nest incubation. Several survey questions were posed to monitor cooperator profiles, expectations, satisfactions, and other field observations. Cooperator average age was 53 years and they had an average of 24 years of spring hunting experience. Nearly half (48%) of cooperators also hunted turkeys in the fall. Most (52%) cooperators felt coyotes were having a negative impact on turkey populations although others (32%) were not sure. Many cooperators reported finding dead deer (20%) or dead wild turkeys (10%), which may have been related to winter severity. Cooperators had and generally achieved high expectations for harvesting a spring gobbler. Opinions about the 2010 season were generally favorable as 59% rated the season good or excellent; however, 19% rated the season poor. Some (22%) cooperators felt their turkey populations were increasing; however, more indicated turkey populations were either stable (35%), or declining (41%). Despite the apparent winter turkey mortality, 2010 turkey population levels appear to be relatively stable based on similar gobbling and harvest statistics.

Spring gobbler hunting in Virginia is a popular sport with nearly 70,000 hunters spending an estimated 418,254 days hunting in 2007 (Jagnow et al. 2008). The number of spring gobbler hunters has increased almost 63% since 1993. An annual survey has been conducted since 1987 to monitor the status of the wild turkey population and assess characteristics, attitudes, and preferences of spring gobbler

hunters in Virginia. Results from these surveys help evaluate wild turkey season length and bag limits, which are the primary wildlife management tools used to affect desired population goals.

METHODS

Prior to the spring gobbler season, a self-administered mail-back questionnaire was distributed to Virginia residents who were members of the National Wild Turkey Federation and to previous survey respondents ($n = 352$). The 2-part survey requested information on daily hunts and hunter opinions. Cooperators were asked to record hunting information throughout the season and return their survey at the end of the season. Follow-up mailings were not attempted. Standard statistical methods were used to calculate means and standard errors (mean \pm SE) for most variables. Standard errors for variables expressed on a per hour and per hunt basis (e.g., gobbling/hr, hens seen/hunt) were calculated using ratio-estimators (Cochran 1977). Means and standard errors were calculated by post-stratified methods for the following variables: hunters seen, hunts with interference, and dogs observed.

Because daily variation in weather may effect gobbling, daily gobbling rates were calculated as 3-day moving averages. The moving average of gobblers heard per 100 hours of hunting (MG_t) on day t was calculated using:

$$\text{Moving Gobbling (MG)}_t = (G_{t-1} + G_t + G_{t+1}) / 3$$

where, G_t = ratio estimate of gobblers heard per 100 hours of hunting on day t . The moving average of gobblers killed per 100 hours of hunting (MK) was calculated with gobblers killed on day t using:

$$\text{Moving Kill (MK)}_t = (K_{t-1} + K_t + K_{t+1}) / 3$$

where, K_t = ratio estimate of gobblers killed per 100 hours of hunting on day t .

The 2010 regular season began on Saturday, April 10. Weekly time periods were considered Monday through Saturday. In addition to opening day, the weekly time periods were: Week 1, April 12-17; Week 2, April 19-24; Week 3, April 26-May 1; Week 4, May 3-8; and Week 5, May 10-15. Region boundaries were based on climatological and physiographic characteristics.

During the survey history, cooperators noted that they frequently hunt with others, and they suggested that we include data on the hunting success of their partners. Therefore, beginning in 1998, cooperators were asked to report information on their hunting partners' activities, specifically, if their partners killed a gobbler on one of their hunts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hunter Statistics

Hunting Effort and Economic Impacts. – Questionnaires were received from 364 individuals with daily records from 348 individuals. Cooperators reported data on 12,271 hours of hunting during 3,695 hunts in 98 counties and 2 cities. Hunters averaged hunting 10.6 days which was less than 2009 but comparable to 2008 (Table 1). Twenty-three percent of cooperators indicated they hunted fewer days in 2010 because of the recession. Cooperators averaged traveling 30 miles to their hunting destination. Many (44%) cooperators reported spending less money on hunting equipment in 2010 because of the economic impacts of the recession.

Afternoon Hunting. – During the last 2 weeks of the season when cooperators could hunt all day, 6% of hunts that started in the morning finished after noon, and 9% of hunts started after noon. Gobbling rates of hunts that began after noon were lower (0.16 gobblers/hr) than those that began before noon (0.43 gobblers/hr).

Hunter Success. – The number of birds cooperators saw, called in, and killed in 2010 were comparable to 2009 reports (Table 2). The highest gobbling rate reported in recent years was in 2006. Cooperators, or their partners, killed 8% of birds heard in 2010, which is comparable to the 7% rate reported in both 2008 and 2009. Approximately 32% of gobblers called-in were successfully harvested by the cooperator or their partner. Crippling loss was 0.2% per hunt in 2010. Previously crippling losses have ranged from 0.3 to 0.5% (Table 2).

Daily harvest rates were highest during the first few days of the season but generally declined into the second and third weeks of the season. Harvest rates then increased in the last 2 weeks of the season (Fig. 1). This pattern may suggest that gobblers are more vulnerable to hunting very early and later in the season. Early in the season gobblers may be more vulnerable to hunting as they are beginning the mating process and are searching for hens. Their vulnerability appears to decline during the mating process and then increases again as hens begin to incubate nests in late April and early May.

The 2010 season was the seventh year Virginia offered a youth spring gobbler hunt. Approximately 17% of cooperators accompanied young hunters on the youth day. The highest participation rate during the youth hunt by cooperators was during the first season (2004; 23%). Prior to the 2010 season, participation ranged between 14-15%.

Bear, Coyotes, Predation. – Cooperators reported seeing 48 bears in 2010 compared to 32 last year. This appears to be a significant increase from 0.9 bears seen per 100 hours in 2009 to 1.3 bears per 100 hours of hunting in 2010. The 2010 bear observation rate ties the previous high seen in 2006. Likewise there was a significant increase in the number of coyotes seen in 2010. Last year cooperators saw 70 coyotes

(2.0 per 100 hrs) whereas 127 (3.4 per 100 hrs) were seen in 2010. The 2010 coyote observation rate was by far the highest reported since cooperators were asked to report bear and coyote observations. The previous high coyote observation rate was in 2007 and 2008 (2.4 per 100 hrs). Most (52%) cooperators thought coyotes were impacting their local turkey populations, many 32% were not sure, and 15% thought they were not having an impact.

Gobbling Statistics

State, Regional.— In 2010, hunters heard 0.59 gobblers per hour (Table 4). The average number of gobblers heard per hour in recent years has been stable. The modest increase in the 2010 gobbling rate doesn't agree with the 9% decline in the statewide gobbler harvest, but there are other factors, namely participation that also affect gobbler harvest. Indeed, cooperator effort declined in 2010 and 23% of cooperators indicated they hunted fewer days because of the recession. Many (44%) cooperators also indicated the recession impacted the monies they spent on hunting equipment in 2010.

Gobbling and turkey populations are unfortunately not uniform across the state. In 2010 the highest gobbling rate was reported in the Tidewater Region (0.74 gobblers/hr). This is a remarkable increase from last year where the Tidewater gobbling rate was 0.61 birds per hour. Normally changes from year to year are relatively small; however, this rate suggests a significant change in the Tidewater turkey population. The Western Piedmont and Southwest Regions were tied for second highest region while the lowest gobbling rate was reported in the Central Mountain Region (Table 4). Turkey populations in the Central Mountain region have been declining for many years and the cause is unknown. Poor hunting quality in the Central Mountain region is a cause for concern.

Chronology. — Gobbling activity is thought to have 2 peak periods through the season. The first peak occurs in March as gobblers attempt to attract hens. Gobbling declines in late March through mid-April during peak mating. A second peak is expected in late April and early May as hens begin incubating nests.

Gobbling activity declined steadily through the season although there was an apparent increase in early May (Fig 1). The highest daily gobbling rate early in the season was seen on April 12 and during the latter part of the season the best gobbling day was May 6th. Gobbling patterns were generally similar between areas EBR and WBR (Fig. 2).

Intensity. — Gobbling intensity was grouped into 3 categories (no gobbling, poor gobbling, or fair-good). Good hunting conditions, as characterized by a higher percentage of hunts with fair-good gobbling declined steadily through the season (Fig. 3). The percentage of hunts where no gobblers were heard increased steadily through the season (Fig. 3). Variation in gobbling intensity rates are likely influenced by a number of variables including breeding and nesting chronology, harvest, hunting pressure, and age structure of the turkey population. Gobbling chronology discussed above is a primary driving factor. Hunting pressure also affects gobbling intensity as birds that are pressured tend to gobble less. Obviously birds that are harvested early depress gobbling rates and their removal may also alter the age structure and dominance of the gobblers remaining in a particular area. The interaction of these variables can be very complex and unpredictable.

Land Type. – In 2010, individuals hunting on private lands heard more birds (0.61 gobblers/hr) than those hunting on federal (0.49 gobblers/hr) or state lands (0.40 gobblers/hr). These results were identical to previous surveys where gobbling rates on private lands have been higher than public-owned lands. Higher gobbling rates on private lands may be indicative of better habitat conditions, but may also be the result of lower hunter pressure, which can dramatically impact gobbling rates. High hunting pressure may also move birds from public to private lands with less or no hunting pressure.

Hen Statistics

Cooperators averaged hearing 0.59, seeing 0.88, and calling in 0.24 hens per hunt during the 2010 season (Table 5). The rate of hens seen per hunt appears to be similar to recent years.

The number of hens flushed off nests per 100 hours peaked during Week 4 (May 3-8; Table 6). Research on wild turkey hens in Virginia indicated peak incubation normally takes place in late April and early May (Norman et al. 2000). The increase in hen flushing rates during early May coincides with peak incubation dates of radio-marked hens in Department research findings. A total of 32 hens were flushed from nests by cooperators during 3,695 hunts in 2010. On average, a hen was flushed on less than 1 percent (0.9%) of spring hunts. Hens that are flushed off their nest later in incubation are most likely to return to their nest.

Other

Several survey questions were posed to monitor cooperator profiles, expectations, and satisfactions. The average age of cooperators was 53 years and they have an average of 24 years of spring hunting experience. Cooperators have and generally achieve high expectations for harvesting a spring gobbler. Eighty-seven percent of cooperators expect to harvest a bird every year or two. They have by-in-large been able to meet those expectations as 87% killed at least one bird over the past 3 years and 22% harvested more than 5 birds over the past 3 years. Perhaps one of the more important questions in the survey dealt with hunter ratings of the 2010 season. Responses to that question were generally favorable as 59% rated the season good or excellent; however, 19% rated the season poor (Table 3).

Nearly half (48%) of cooperators also hunt turkeys in the fall. Those cooperators that hunt in the fall had an average of 23 years of fall turkey hunting experience. When asked their opinions about the length of the fall season available to them, most (41%) felt the season was long enough. However, about an equal number felt the fall season was either too short (15%) or too long (16%). Many (27%) had no opinion about the fall season length.

In 2010 the Department began requiring spring gobbler hunters to report their harvested bird using either the phone or internet. Most (72%) successful hunters found the electronic checking system convenient. Many (24%) had no opinion about the system and 4% found the system inconvenient. Ratings of the ease of use of the system mirrored the question about its convenience. Most (70%) found it easy, a few (7%) found it difficult to use, and many (23%) had no opinion. The electronic checking system has been in place for several years for deer hunters. Most successful spring hunters (79%) had used the system previously for deer.

Finally, cooperators were asked their opinions about the status of their turkey population. Some (22%) cooperators felt their turkey populations were increasing; however, more indicated their turkey populations were either stable (35%), or declining (41%).

Remarks

Cooperators provided a variety of comments on their observations, preferences and opinions on the 2010 season. A summary of these remarks is included in Appendix A. Remarks were not included if the name and address were not included on the survey.

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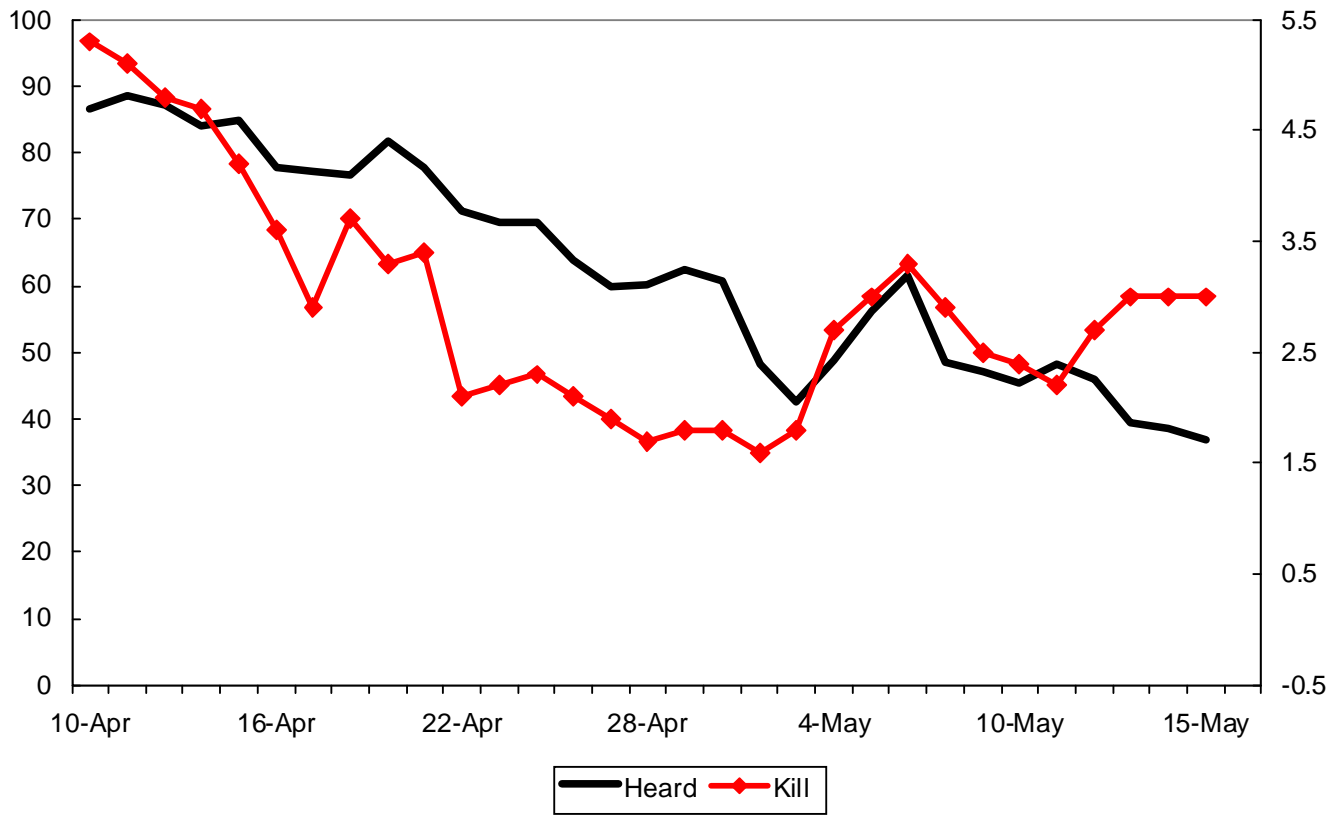


Figure 1. Statewide gobbling and harvest rates by day in Virginia, 2010.

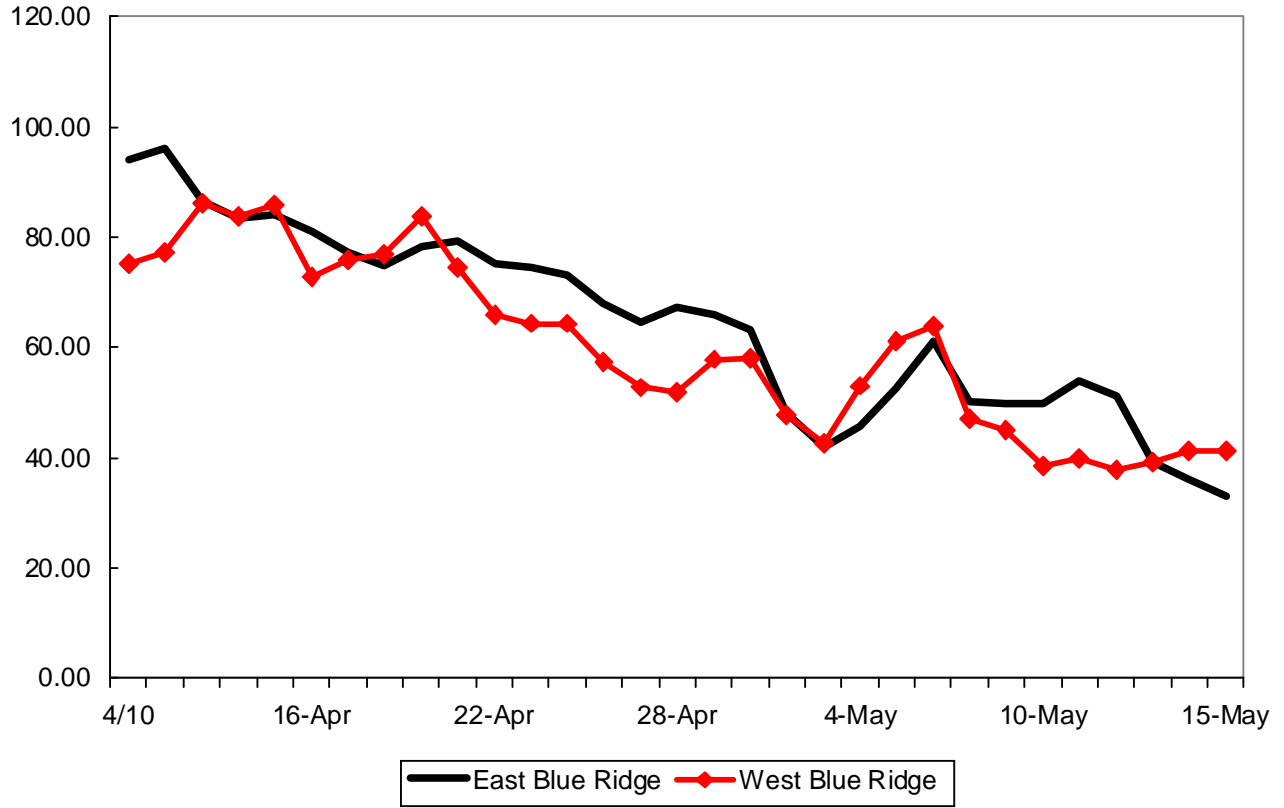


Figure 2. Daily gobbling rates by region in Virginia, 2010.

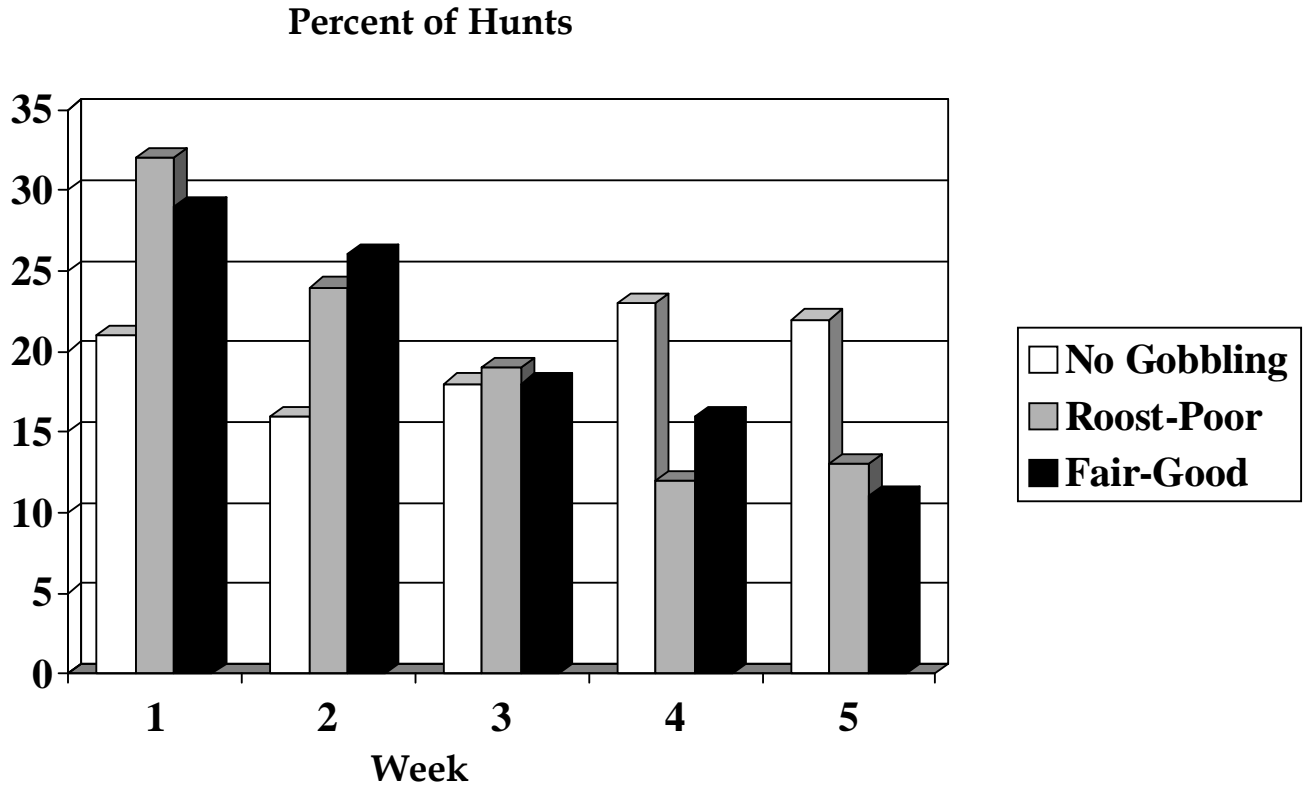


Figure 3. Gobbling intensity by week in Virginia, 2010.

Table 1. Hunting effort, scouting, and decoy use by cooperating wild turkey hunters in Virginia.

Year	Hunters	Hunting Days	Hunts/Season	Scouting Days
2005	345	4,303	9.0	4.3
2006	407	4,840	11.5	3.9
2007	272	3,314	12.0	3.1
2008	350	3,730	10.6	4.2
2009	326	3,543	12.1	4.2
2010	348	3,695	10.6	4.2

Table 2. Season gobbler statistics (per hunter) reported by cooperating wild turkey hunters in Virginia.

Year	Gobblers Heard	Gobblers Called	Gobblers Seen	Gobblers Killed	Gobblers Crippled ¹	Gobblers Missed ¹
2005	21.3	5.0	9.0	0.92	0.03	0.31
2006	24.7	5.1	9.1	1.07	0.05	0.29
2007	21.0	4.7	8.1	0.99	0.04	0.27
2008	20.4	4.9	8.5	1.05	0.03	0.25
2009	21.4	4.9	9.6	1.00	0.04	0.28
2010	20.6	4.9	8.4	1.04	0.02	0.24

Table 3. Percent of cooperators rating season in Virginia by category.

Year	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
2005	15	28	40	17	1
2006	29	36	21	12	1
2007	19	32	27	21	1
2008	17	34	27	21	2
2009	21	35	25	19	1
2010	25	34	22	19	0

Table 4. Region gobbling by hour for cooperating wild turkey hunters in Virginia.

Year	Gobblers Heard / Hour (<i>n</i>)						
	Tidewater	Southwest	Western Piedmont	Eastern Piedmont	Central Mountain	Northern	State
2005	0.51	0.57	0.57	0.46	0.42	0.47	0.51
2006	0.62	0.60	0.68	0.57	0.54	0.67	0.61
2007	0.49	0.50	0.57	0.45	0.47	0.53	0.50
2008	0.58	0.54	0.63	0.58	0.43	0.61	0.56
2009	0.61	0.60	0.66	0.55	0.46	0.49	0.57
2010	0.74	0.58	0.61	0.53	0.49	0.53	0.59

Table 5. Statewide hen observations by hunt for cooperating wild turkey hunters in Virginia.

Year	Average/Hunt		
	Hens Heard	Hens Seen	Hens Called In
2005	0.69	0.95	0.24
2006	0.70	0.86	0.22
2007	0.55	0.76	0.20
2008	0.61	0.85	0.20
2009	0.72	0.94	0.26
2010	0.59	0.88	0.24

Table 6. Flushing rates of nesting wild turkey hens by cooperating wild turkey hunters in Virginia.

Year	Hens flushed/100 hrs hunting (number flushed)						
	Day 1	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Season
2005	0.93 (8)	0.28 (8)	0.20 (5)	0.98 (18)	0.94 (23)	0.74 (16)	0.61 (78)
2006	0.65 (5)	0.21 (8)	0.60 (16)	0.50 (11)	0.39 (10)	0.46 (10)	0.42 (60)
2007	0.0 (0)	0.63 (14)	0.36 (7)	0.47 (8)	0.39 (7)	0.34 (5)	0.42 (41)
2008	0.43 (4)	0.25 (8)	0.62 (16)	0.64 (17)	0.57 (12)	0.81 (14)	0.56 (71)
2009	0.0 (0)	0.29 (9)	0.50 (12)	0.34 (7)	0.92 (18)	0.43 (8)	0.49 (61)
2010	0.38 (1)	0.84 (8)	0.65 (5)	0.81 (5)	1.26 (7)	1.04 (5)	0.87 (32)

Appendix A. Cooperator comments and remarks with cooperator ID number in parentheses. Comments without name and address were not included.

WEATHER

Bad or not very good: 3264, 9401, 3344, 1964, 6063, 0422, 3217, 7589, 7937, 5195

Good: 2626, 7045, 0753, 1831

Greened up early: 4821, 5245, 7937, 1339, 0332

GOBBLING

Poor: 5917, 4821, 5587, 9401, 7045, 4743, 5966, 0584

Good: 8041, 9400, 4892, 9142, 1158, 0753, 4408, 3508, 8854, 4465, 6195, 1627

Less than before: 6838, 9777, 3758, 8920, 8732, 8184, 8766, 9818, 1964, 0776, 8066, 7921, 8868, 0630, 9880, 6567, 3217, 2568, 5400

Worst: 2180, 1002, 4743, 8589, 3054, 9161, 6406

Did not respond or hard to call in: 2098, 8589, 1305, 7868, 6406, 5041, 6918

Gobbled on roost then not on ground: 9327, 7797, 8766, 8066, 7868, 9472, 5036, 0151, 3992, 2193, 3305, 2568

Gobbled before season or early in season: 2963, 1755, 5827, 4877

No pattern to gobbling, 1 day good, next day nothing: 7745, 4833

Gobbling was better later in the season: 0332, 3771, 6239, 9417

Gobbled better when the weather was good: 0206

Gobbled better in the morning: 3223

POPULATION

Lots of jakes: 6838, 9142, 0536, 6406, 6195, 9835, 8638

Few or no jakes: 5884, 9859, 0422

Large number of hens: 8041, 3493, 0206

Very few or not many hens: 8299, 8964, 0422, 3217

Population low: 4952, 8085, 5196, 4743, 2023, 1964, 0776, 0630, 2561, 6285, 1549, 6239, 9472

Population good to great: 2684, 1608, 3197, 4465, 5036, 8638

Gobblers were with hens: 3493, 5195, 2621, 3344, 8589, 3458, 8066, 1755, 6195

Gobblers were together: 2147

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Need column for jakes: 2051

Need to ask if you think turkeys gobble like they used to: 5400

Need question about dog interference: 1239

Question #12 is irrelevant; the kill should not be satisfaction to a true turkey hunter: 7945

Do not understand question #12: 6466

Add column for fog: 7725

The questions need to be more specific: 6586

Thanks for survey: 3547, 5196, 2215

LIKED SEASON OR NOT

Enjoyed the season: 3547, 2684, 4455, 5531, 7045, 3331, 4892, 9142, 5289, 8920, 4465, 7191, 3458, 0776, 4644, 0347, 0422, 4796, 0699, 0536, 6567, 5827, 6195

Terrible to bad: 7589, 9401, 1002, 3344, 8589, 9161, 6406

Difficult: 8184, 5966, 5587, 6918

Odd or unusual: 7233, 3054

POACHERS, HUNTER PRESSURE AND CHECK IN SYSTEM

Tired of people sneaking up on me: 6302

Adjacent landowner to tract I hunted would yell and shoot if he saw turkeys to scare them: 3244

Shot turkey out of roost tree above my head: 2684

It should be against the law for someone to sneak in between you & bird you are working then shoot it and run: 6302

A youth hunter & I called in several birds, another hunter shot one 25 yds in front of us with a 22-250 from 100 yds away. 4455

Some people have no respect for private land: 0611

Found baiting on National Forest: 4796

Another hunter snuck in and shot bird I was calling on public land: 9835

Not much hunting pressure: 5196, 0753, 5608, 7921

Lots of hunting pressure: 5041, 6918

Lots of turkeys are being killed and not checked with this new system: 5678

New check in needs tweaking: 0877

Telephone check in is too long: 3223

Telephone check in is too hard to do: 3266

Does not like system of notching: 6951

Go back to check station: 0753, 2578, 6128, 6466, 6203, 4993, 4948, 3879

New check in made criminals out of usually clean sportsmen: 3879

DOGS

Free roaming dogs are a problem: 9713, 9735, 5355, 3771, 0611, 9083, 4311, 6285, 9395

Deer dogs running out of season interrupted hunts: 1239

Shot dogs in Goochland: 5337

LENGTH OF DAY HUNTING AND SUNDAY

Yes to Sunday hunting: 8511, 8184, 8920, 2090, 6732, 9687, 9981

No to Sunday hunting: 9713, 2578, 3758, 4555

Likes all day hunting: 1504, 9846, 8511, 6128, 3508, 6956, 5339, 9835

Have all day at the beginning of season and one half days at the end: 2891, 3353

SEASON DATES

Open 1 week earlier: 7670, 2459, 8184, 0584

Start 1 week earlier and end 1 week earlier: 3771, 9611, 9580

Start 1 or 2 weeks earlier: 8920

Start season earlier: 4559, 9995, 9400, 4340

Season dates OK: 9713, 4555

Consider 1 week early bow after the youth day: 6956

Run season April 1 – 30: 4340

FALL SEASON

Shorten: 9160, 3021, 6631

Should start on a Saturday: 9639

Continue to allow hunting with dogs: 4499

Open 1 week earlier: 0253

Open late fall season in Buchanan County: 5218

Close in Buchanan and Dickenson: 9687

Close in deer season: 6975

Close fall season: 2959

Keep season as is: 7342

Should be open first 2 weeks of November not October: 8646

Need hen only tag for fall: 4874

Reduce number of hens allowed in fall: 1171

Need to add fall only tag: 9417

LIMITS AND LICENSE

Need hen only tag for fall: 4874

Reduce number of hens allowed in fall: 1171

Limit is good: 4555

Cut limit back to 2: 4952, 6975, 2050

Limit should be 2 gobbler in spring and 1 hen in fall total 3: 5339

Reduce to 2 birds in spring: 3771, 2023, 9981

Need to be able to take more than 1 bird per day: 6956

Limit should be 2 spring and 3 per license year: 5593

License is too expensive: 5218, 9401

Reduce limit to 2 or even 1 gobbler: 8128

Reduce limit: 8085, 7725

Should not kill jakes: 2578, 5339

Should only kill gobblers: 0957

Need sperate license for spring gobbler: 8718

WEAPONS AND SHOT

Do not allow rifles in spring: 0332, 9851, 4333, 7670, 8718, 1852, 5678, 8864, 4791, 4520, 4455, 1007, 4555, 7510, 5321, 8239, 1831, 8920, 1171, 9981, 7917

No rifles allowed for hunting turkeys: 9713, 6951, 9851, 9160, 6128, 9687, 2193

Rifles should be allowed in spring: 2050, 7725

Likes option of combination gun: 3801, 4756, 0151, 2621

Should not allow muzzleloader for harvesting turkey in fall season: 1171

Why can't steel shot be used for turkey: 8718

No buckshot: 1852, 2959

Number 2 shot or small for fall season: 2959

OTHER ANIMALS

Saw coyote ambush and kill hen: 3505

Lots of pressure from predators: 7797

Coyote and fox are causing gobblers to stop gobbling: 9445

Lots of coyotes, dog and fox: 9445

Called in coyote: 7827, 8646

Called in and shot coyote: 8732, 9880

Killed coyote: 7900, 3316, 1150, 4389, 0732, 9981

Too many coyotes: 9713, 6937, 7360, 9777, 1158, 8920, 8732, 1208, 5304, 4833, 3992, 3054, 3458, 0776, 9161, 7868, 4796, 4003, 2193, 0732, 9981, 3305, 6285, 2929, 1831

Observed more fox than usual: 0611

Eagle hovered over decoy: 1649

Watched twin fawns being born April 30: 8113

Saw my first bobcat: 3331

Found deer coyote and 20 lb dead bear cub: 1322

Increase in grouse drumming: 5321

Got picture of hen with beard in front of strutting gobbler: 3021

Saw 3 or 4 lb bear cub: 5023

Wild horse spooked turkey: 3054

Saw bear: 5023, 9602, 1831

Found 2 doe and 2 buck skeletons: 9472

Saw eagle: 1831

Believe bobcats are spooking: 2568

OPINIONS

Need ladies day: 9400

Gobbler killed is pending record book: 5934

Need to close quail and grouse season and open up hawk season: 4892

Make Buchanan County season the same length as surrounding counties: 3473

Too much baiting including food plots: 8085

Hens came to call: 6070

Gobbler had 3 beards: 6070

Best thing VDGIF did was close turkey during rifle season: 4892

Gobblers this spring weighed less: 0573

Turkeys were afraid to come in fields because of eagles: 4892

Does Forest Service controlled burns in March affect nesting: 9851

One morning I had 10 gobblers within 100 yards, that's got to be heaven: 3748

Current laws don't make sense biologically: 8511

Heard less than 10 shots in 13 days: 4743

Need more options to keep and hold turkeys on huntable land: 6847

I don't shoot unless pretty sure of the kill: 7233

Grouse population is increasing: 9818

Would like to see game patches maintained and plant sawtooth oak instead of loblolly pines: 3992

Need to get more young people involved: 7191

Watched 3 gobblers, 2 were fighting and one bred a hen that ran in between them: 2338

Bird had beard rot: 7917

Should not allow logging on Highland WMA during spring season: 0927

If coyotes are a problem then why do western states with high populations have good turkey numbers: 9395

Need more public land in central and eastern VA: 5400

Stop all vehicle access on all roads in public hunting areas during spring season: 5400

YOUTH DAY

Need more youth days: 0754, 4003

Extend youth days to 2 weekends: 4340

NESTING

Hens were already nesting: 6838

Saw hen with chicks May 13: 6961

THANK YOU

Thanks Gary Norman for good work: 9336, 0754, 2185, 9160, 1292, 5196, 8511, 6631, 0536, 6406, 5337, 4340

Thanks Gary Norman, VDGIF & NWTF: 3458

Thanks Gary Norman and VDGIF: 8732, 4499, 8239

Thanks VDGIF: 3547, 7827, 1831

Thanks Gary Norman and staff: 9735, 5289, 6956, 4833

Thanks for calendar: 7045, 9859, 2215