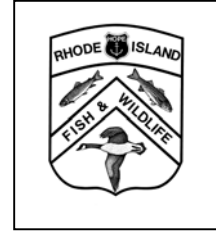




RIDEM - DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
TURKEY SEASON RESULTS SPRING 2009



Brian C. Tefft, Principal Wildlife Biologist
 Great Swamp Field Headquarters, West Kingston, RI 02892

The 2009 Rhode Island spring turkey season was held April 25 to May 26, 2009 and was the State's twenty-fourth season since the spring season was initiated in 1986. Turkey hunters harvested 206 birds, a 2% increase over a harvest of 203 birds taken during the 2008 season (table 1). The harvest includes 8 birds taken during the early junior hunter and paraplegic hunter seasons held April 25 and 26. The hunter success rate was 17%. The harvest consisted of 57 juveniles (28% of harvest) and 149 adults (72% of harvest), a 0.38 to 1 juvenile to adult ratio in harvested birds. The 2009 season was a safe season with no hunting accidents occurring.

The restoration of the wild turkey has been a major success story in R.I. with turkey hunters enjoying excellent hunting opportunities. This year's slight increase in harvest with relatively constant hunter effort is positive; however, is due in part to below average reproductive success in the past two summers. Turkeys were harvested in 19 of 39 towns around the state. The top five towns in harvest were Exeter (29), Smithfield (17), North Kingstown (15), Scituate (15) and Richmond (13). Private land accounted for a majority of the harvested birds (83%); however, 32 birds were taken on eleven different state wildlife management areas. Arcadia WMA in Exeter and Big River WMA in Coventry were the top producing state land areas. The first week of the season accounted for 56% of the harvest (113 birds), 23% were taken during second week, 7% during the third week and 14% were taken during the fourth week.

Several large gobblers were harvested during the season including 72 birds that weighed in at over 20 pounds. The average live weight for juveniles was 14.5 pounds and the average live weight for adults was 18.1 pounds. The largest bird weighed was a three-year old 24¼ -pound gobbler with 1-inch spurs and 1 ¾ - inch beard harvested on private land in Smithfield. The state record is a 25.5-pound gobbler taken in 2001 in Exeter. Four multi-bearded birds were harvested. Resident hunters took 87% (180) of the birds compared to 13% (26 birds) for non-resident hunters.

Table 1 Rhode Island Spring Turkey Season Results

Town	2009 (4/25-5/26)	2008 (4/30-5/26)	2007 (4/26-5-28)	2006 4/27-5/29)	2005 (4/28-5/26)	2004 (4/29-5/27)	24-Year total 1986-2009
Burrillville	13	11	12	20	14	19	230
Charlestown	9	7	14	7	8	14	136
Coventry	13	15	8	16	12	15	172
Cranston	4	2	2	2	2	0	30
E. Greenwich	3	0	5	3	1	0	19
E. Providence	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Exeter	29	20	25	30	28	39	441
Foster	6	14	9	10	10	9	136
Glocester	13	20	17	18	17	20	197
Hopkinton	11	9	14	15	15	9	160
Johnston	0	2	3	7	3	2	30
Little Compton	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Lincoln	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Middletown	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Narragansett	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
N. Kingstown	15	9	10	15	6	6	87
N. Smithfield	13	10	9	4	6	13	86
Richmond	13	11	9	17	17	9	253
Scituate	15	11	7	19	18	18	194
S. Kingstown	10	21	17	14	18	13	130
Smithfield	17	15	11	7	8	12	128
Tiverton	7	5	4	4	3	0	26
Westerly	2	6	5	12	2	6	60
W. Greenwich	11	11	13	14	18	16	199
TOTAL	206	203	194	234	207	220	2721