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| | Title | |
| | 2009 Spring Wild Turkey Harvest - Check Station Results | |

Abstract: Hunters harvested 12,993 wild turkeys in 88 of the 92 counties. The 2009 harvest was the second highest harvest in 40 years, exceeding the 2008 harvest by 789 birds (+6% increase). Estimated hunter success was around 22%. The majority of the birds were harvested in the early part of the season and the early morning hours. A total of 978 birds was taken during the youth-only weekend prior to the regular season (7.5% of the total statewide harvest). Juvenile and adult weights were up slightly compared to the mean weights of previous years. The proportion of juvenile turkeys in the harvest was 19% with 51% 2-yr-olds, and 30% \geq 3 yr-olds. The south-central and southeastern regions supported 51% of the harvest followed by northern Indiana at 20%.

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The 40th wild turkey hunt was held 22 April to 10 May 2009 with harvest data collected at 342 check stations throughout the turkey range. Hunters harvested 12,993 wild turkeys in 88 of the 92 counties during the 19-day season. The 2009 harvest was the second highest harvest exceeding the 2008 harvest by 789 birds (+6% increase). Counties with high kills (>350 birds harvested) were Switzerland (530), Harrison (511), Jefferson (447), Dearborn (397), Franklin (355), and Perry (352) (**Table 1; Figure 1**).

Approximately 54% of the regular season's harvest occurred during the first 5 days with 38% occurring on weekends (**Figure 2**). A total of 978 birds was taken during the youth-only weekend (4/18 & 4/19) prior to the regular season (7.5% of the total statewide harvest). Approximately 70% of the harvest occurred by 1000 hrs and 80% by noon with 16% occurring after 1500 hrs (3 pm) to sunset (**Figure 3**). Unlicensed landowners/active military personnel accounted for 9% of the harvest. Based on spur measurements taken at check stations, juvenile gobblers (1 yr-old birds commonly referred to as "jakes") made up 19% of the 2009 harvest; 2 yr-olds (51%); \geq 3 yr-olds (30%) (**Table 2; Figure 4**). Juvenile and adult mean weights were up slightly (~ +0.5 lbs) compared to previous years. The low proportion of juveniles in the harvest probably reflects low production during the 2008 summer. Indiana has experienced below normal production the last 4 summers in the major portions of the turkey range. While the proportion of juveniles in the harvest doesn't necessarily reflect low production since it can also reflect hunters selection for an adult gobbler, hunters have reported encountering fewer jakes the last couple of years.

The south-central and southeast regions accounted for 51% of the harvest followed by the north region at 20% of the total harvest (**Figure 5**). The north region harvest continues to increase both in total numbers and proportionally as turkey numbers increase (**Table 3**). The north region (the largest region) surpassed the west-central region which was the only region of the state showing a net decline in harvest from 2008.

Reasons for the increased harvest (+6%) reflect a combination of general turkey population growth around the state, especially in some northern counties, and the continual increase in hunter numbers. There were some notable shifts in the top 20 county harvests with the primary trend being a decreased harvest in some west-central counties. Flooding in the west-central region the past few spring/summers, especially 2008, may have temporarily depressed local turkey populations. The total number of hunters in the field over the 19-day season was estimated at around 59,000 with an estimated hunter success of 22% (**Table 4**).

Special thanks go to Roger Hunter, Mitchell office, who put together the check station materials and to Steve Burcham and Becky Wilson who handled various aspects of the data entry. Acknowledgment also goes to the 342 volunteer check station operators for their cooperation.

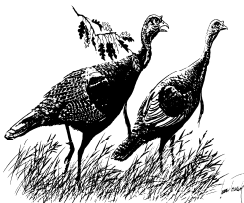


Table 1. Indiana wild turkey harvest by county, spring 2008 and 2009.

| County | 2008 Reported* Harvest | Percent of Harvest | 2009 Reported* Harvest | Percent of Harvest | Difference from prior year | Percent Change |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Adams | 5 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.1% | 4 | 80% |
| Allen | 15 | 0.1% | 21 | 0.2% | 6 | 40% |
| Bartholomew | 105 | 0.9% | 136 | 1.0% | 31 | 30% |
| Benton | 10 | 0.1% | 10 | 0.1% | 0 | 0% |
| Blackford | 5 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.0% | -3 | -60% |
| Boone | 2 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.0% | 0 | 0% |
| Brown | 205 | 1.7% | 175 | 1.3% | -30 | -15% |
| Carroll | 12 | 0.1% | 12 | 0.1% | 0 | 0% |
| Cass | 34 | 0.3% | 34 | 0.3% | 0 | 0% |
| Clark | 307 | 2.5% | 293 | 2.3% | -14 | -5% |
| Clay | 134 | 1.1% | 114 | 0.9% | -20 | -15% |
| Clinton | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | --- |
| Crawford | 247 | 2.0% | 312 | 2.4% | 65 | 26% |
| Daviess | 109 | 0.9% | 113 | 0.9% | 4 | 4% |
| Dearborn | 353 | 2.9% | 397 | 3.1% | 44 | 12% |
| Decatur | 51 | 0.4% | 64 | 0.5% | 13 | 25% |
| DeKalb | 116 | 1.0% | 157 | 1.2% | 41 | 35% |
| Delaware | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | --- |
| Dubois | 213 | 1.7% | 263 | 2.0% | 50 | 23% |
| Elkhart | 56 | 0.5% | 92 | 0.7% | 36 | 64% |
| Fayette | 48 | 0.4% | 58 | 0.4% | 10 | 21% |
| Floyd | 87 | 0.7% | 102 | 0.8% | 15 | 17% |
| Fountain | 156 | 1.3% | 141 | 1.1% | -15 | -10% |
| Franklin | 297 | 2.4% | 355 | 2.7% | 58 | 20% |
| Fulton | 81 | 0.7% | 105 | 0.8% | 24 | 30% |
| Gibson | 131 | 1.1% | 126 | 1.0% | -5 | -4% |
| Grant | 6 | 0.0% | 5 | 0.0% | -1 | -17% |
| Greene | 358 | 2.9% | 343 | 2.6% | -15 | -4% |
| Hamilton | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | --- |
| Hancock | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.0% | 1 | --- |
| Harrison | 428 | 3.5% | 511 | 3.9% | 83 | 19% |
| Hendricks | 9 | 0.1% | 9 | 0.1% | 0 | 0% |
| Henry | Not Open | Not Open | 2 | 0.0% | --- | --- |
| Howard | 7 | 0.1% | 9 | 0.1% | 2 | 29% |
| Huntington | 33 | 0.3% | 44 | 0.3% | 11 | 33% |
| Jackson | 277 | 2.3% | 293 | 2.3% | 16 | 6% |
| Jasper | 77 | 0.6% | 64 | 0.5% | -13 | -17% |
| Jay | 7 | 0.1% | 6 | 0.0% | -1 | -14% |
| Jefferson | 464 | 3.8% | 447 | 3.4% | -17 | -4% |
| Jennings | 304 | 2.5% | 326 | 2.5% | 22 | 7% |
| Johnson | 32 | 0.3% | 33 | 0.3% | 1 | 3% |
| Knox | 103 | 0.8% | 93 | 0.7% | -10 | -10% |
| Kosciusko | 63 | 0.5% | 86 | 0.7% | 23 | 37% |
| Lagrange | 89 | 0.7% | 139 | 1.1% | 50 | 56% |
| Lake | 10 | 0.1% | 15 | 0.1% | 5 | 50% |
| LaPorte | 197 | 1.6% | 242 | 1.9% | 45 | 23% |
| Lawrence | 301 | 2.5% | 295 | 2.3% | -6 | -2% |

* Harvest totals from check station reports. Table 1 continued next page.

Table 1. Indiana wild turkey harvest by county, spring 2008 and 2009 *cont.*

| County | 2008 Reported* Harvest | Percent of Harvest | 2009 Reported* Harvest | Percent of Harvest | Difference from prior year | Percent Change |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Madison | 1 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | -1 | --- |
| Marion | 4 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | -4 | --- |
| Marshall | 255 | 2.1% | 310 | 2.4% | 55 | 22% |
| Martin | 241 | 2.0% | 235 | 1.8% | -6 | -2% |
| Miami | 23 | 0.2% | 26 | 0.2% | 3 | 13% |
| Monroe | 239 | 2.0% | 215 | 1.7% | -24 | -10% |
| Montgomery | 62 | 0.5% | 60 | 0.5% | -2 | -3% |
| Morgan | 86 | 0.7% | 83 | 0.6% | -3 | -3% |
| Newton | 86 | 0.7% | 99 | 0.8% | 13 | 15% |
| Noble | 53 | 0.4% | 61 | 0.5% | 8 | 15% |
| Ohio | 188 | 1.5% | 174 | 1.3% | -14 | -7% |
| Orange | 290 | 2.4% | 297 | 2.3% | 7 | 2% |
| Owen | 246 | 2.0% | 231 | 1.8% | -15 | -6% |
| Parke | 302 | 2.5% | 278 | 2.1% | -24 | -8% |
| Perry | 320 | 2.6% | 352 | 2.7% | 32 | 10% |
| Pike | 274 | 2.2% | 322 | 2.5% | 48 | 18% |
| Porter | 25 | 0.2% | 21 | 0.2% | -4 | -16% |
| Posey | 123 | 1.0% | 143 | 1.1% | 20 | 16% |
| Pulaski | 94 | 0.8% | 121 | 0.9% | 27 | 29% |
| Putnam | 150 | 1.2% | 151 | 1.2% | 1 | 1% |
| Randolph | 6 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | -6 | -100% |
| Ripley | 234 | 1.9% | 266 | 2.0% | 32 | 14% |
| Rush | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.0% | 2 | --- |
| St. Joseph | 170 | 1.4% | 178 | 1.4% | 8 | 5% |
| Scott | 194 | 1.6% | 207 | 1.6% | 13 | 7% |
| Shelby | 1 | 0.0% | 4 | 0.0% | 3 | 300% |
| Spencer | 275 | 2.3% | 311 | 2.4% | 36 | 13% |
| Starke | 266 | 2.2% | 285 | 2.2% | 19 | 7% |
| Steuben | 299 | 2.5% | 323 | 2.5% | 24 | 8% |
| Sullivan | 303 | 2.5% | 265 | 2.0% | -38 | -13% |
| Switzerland | 533 | 4.4% | 530 | 4.1% | -3 | -1% |
| Tippecanoe | 40 | 0.3% | 46 | 0.4% | 6 | 15% |
| Tipton | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0% |
| Union | 56 | 0.5% | 75 | 0.6% | 19 | 34% |
| Vanderburg | 19 | 0.2% | 34 | 0.3% | 15 | 79% |
| Vermillion | 154 | 1.3% | 120 | 0.9% | -34 | -22% |
| Vigo | 189 | 1.5% | 193 | 1.5% | 4 | 2% |
| Wabash | 56 | 0.5% | 49 | 0.4% | -7 | -13% |
| Warren | 139 | 1.1% | 130 | 1.0% | -9 | -6% |
| Warrick | 269 | 2.2% | 347 | 2.7% | 78 | 29% |
| Washington | 314 | 2.6% | 275 | 2.1% | -39 | -12% |
| Wayne | 28 | 0.2% | 41 | 0.3% | 13 | 46% |
| Wells | 7 | 0.1% | 7 | 0.1% | 0 | 0% |
| White | 34 | 0.3% | 51 | 0.4% | 17 | 50% |
| Whitley | 12 | 0.1% | 16 | 0.1% | 4 | 33% |
| Totals | 12,204 | 100.0% | 12,993 | 100.0% | 789 | 6% |

* Harvest totals from check station reports.

Figure 1 2009 Spring Turkey Harvest

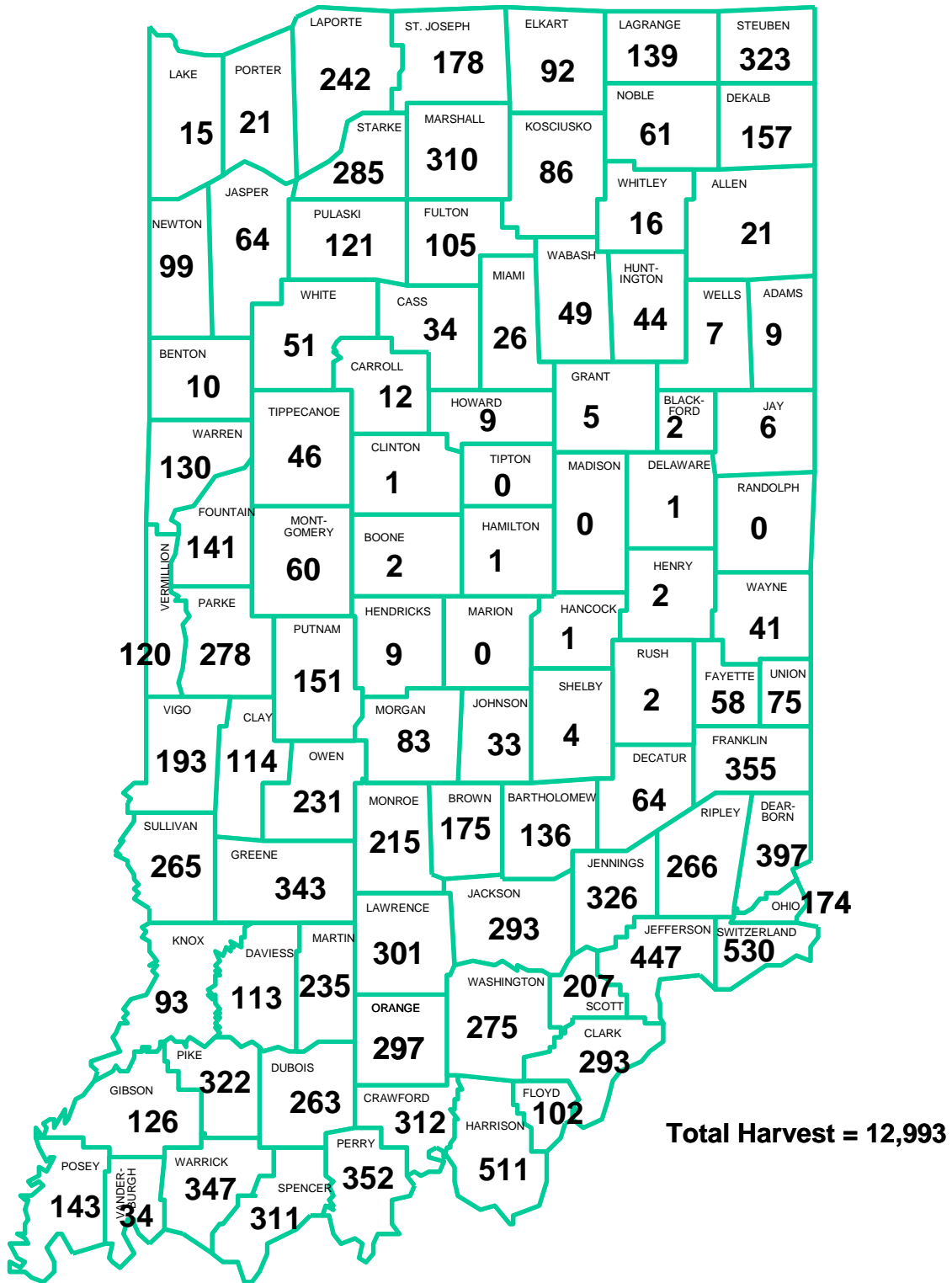


Fig. 2. Harvest by Day of Season

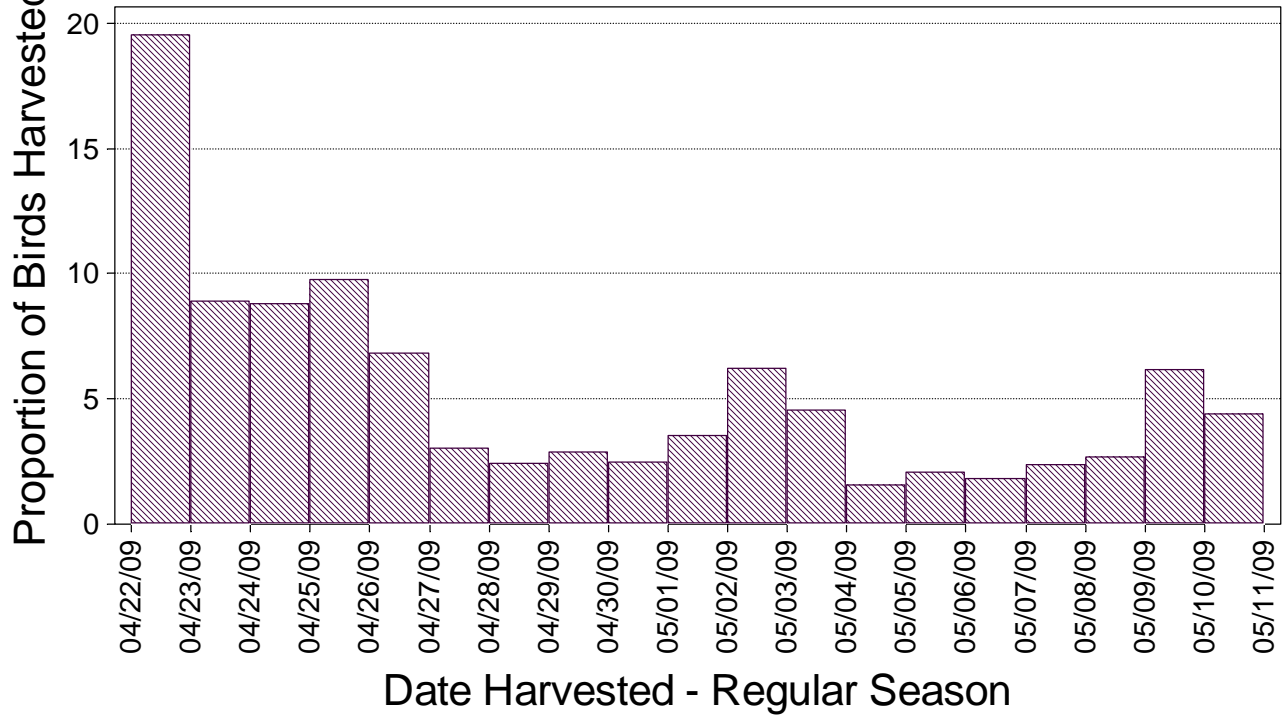


Fig. 3. Harvest by Time of Day

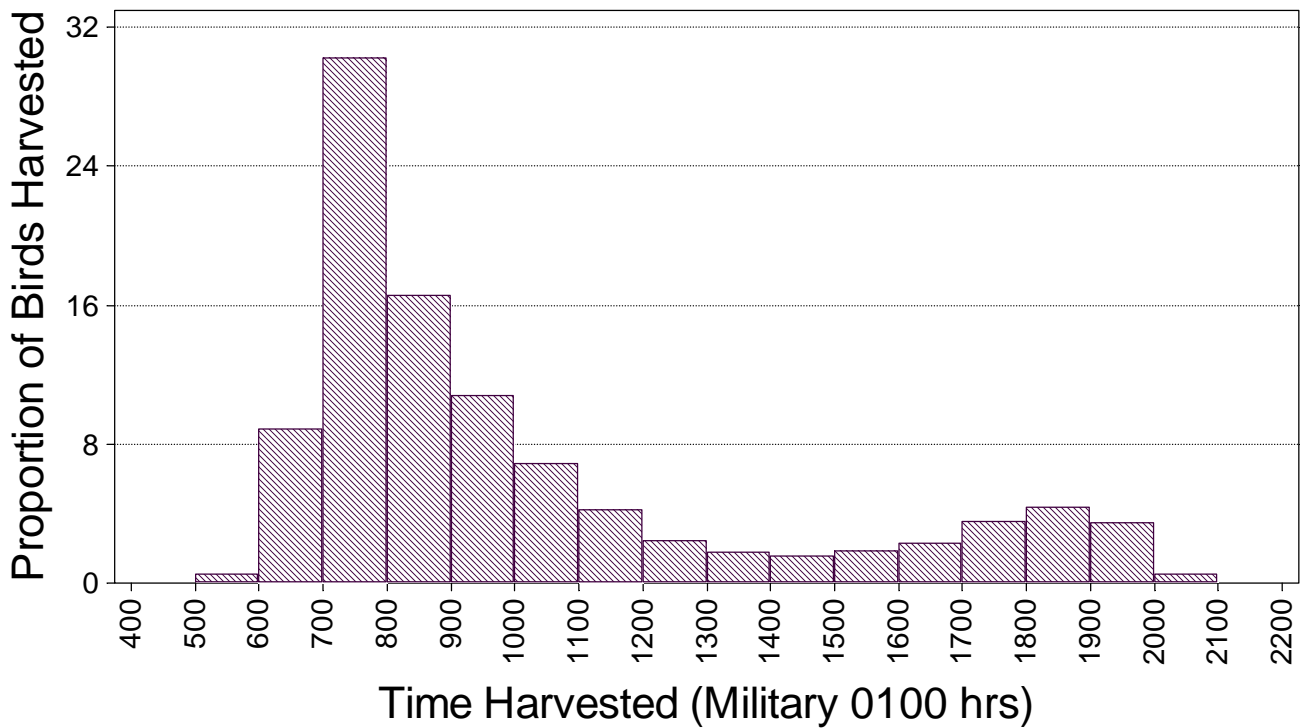


Table 2. Composition of Indiana's spring gobbler harvests, 1988-2009.

| Year | Reported Harvest | Age Class Percentages* | | | Mean Weights (lbs) | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| | | 1Yr | Wt. | 2Yr | Wt. | 3+Yr | Wt. |
| 1988 | 905 | 45% | 15.4 | 39% | 20.7 | 16% | 21.8 |
| 1989 | 1,359 | 20% | 15.5 | 63% | 20.7 | 17% | 22.2 |
| 1990 | 1,505 | 31% | 15.2 | 41% | 21.0 | 28% | 21.9 |
| 1991 | 2,318 | 25% | 15.5 | 53% | 21.1 | 22% | 22.2 |
| 1992 | 2,531 | 38% | 15.1 | 43% | 20.8 | 19% | 22.2 |
| 1993 | 3,500 | 18% | 15.9 | 60% | 20.9 | 22% | 22.4 |
| 1994 | 3,741 | 41% | 15.2 | 37% | 21.2 | 22% | 22.4 |
| 1995 | 4,706 | 28% | 15.6 | 55% | 20.6 | 18% | 22.1 |
| 1996 | 4,859 | 24% | 15.6 | 53% | 21.6 | 23% | 22.7 |
| 1997 | 5,790 | 21% | 15.7 | 56% | 21.5 | 24% | 22.7 |
| 1998 | 6,384 | 22% | 15.5 | 51% | 21.1 | 28% | 22.5 |
| 1999 | 6,548 | 25% | 15.5 | 49% | 21.1 | 26% | 22.6 |
| 2000 | 7,822 | 27% | 15.2 | 44% | 20.7 | 28% | 21.9 |
| 2001 | 9,975 | 26% | 15.7 | 50% | 20.1 | 24% | 22.1 |
| 2002 | 10,575 | 27% | 15.7 | 47% | 21.3 | 27% | 22.5 |
| 2003 | 10,366 | 24% | 15.3 | 49% | 21.3 | 28% | 22.4 |
| 2004 | 10,765 | 24% | 15.8 | 49% | 21.4 | 27% | 22.8 |
| 2005 | 11,159 | 33% | 14.9 | 44% | 20.9 | 23% | 22.3 |
| 2006 | 13,193 | 14% | 14.5 | 67% | 20.7 | 19% | 22.1 |
| 2007 | 11,163 | 22% | 15.5 | 42% | 21.5 | 26% | 22.6 |
| 2008 | 12,204 | 22% | 16.0 | 52% | 21.7 | 26% | 22.9 |
| Previous Years' Means ** | | 24% | 15.4 | 49% | 21.1 | 25% | 22.4 |
| 2009 | 12,993 | 19% | 16.0 | 51% | 21.7 | 30% | 22.9 |

* Based on longest spur measurement

** Mean percents and weights based on previous 10 years.

Figure 4
Harvest Age Structure 1988-2009

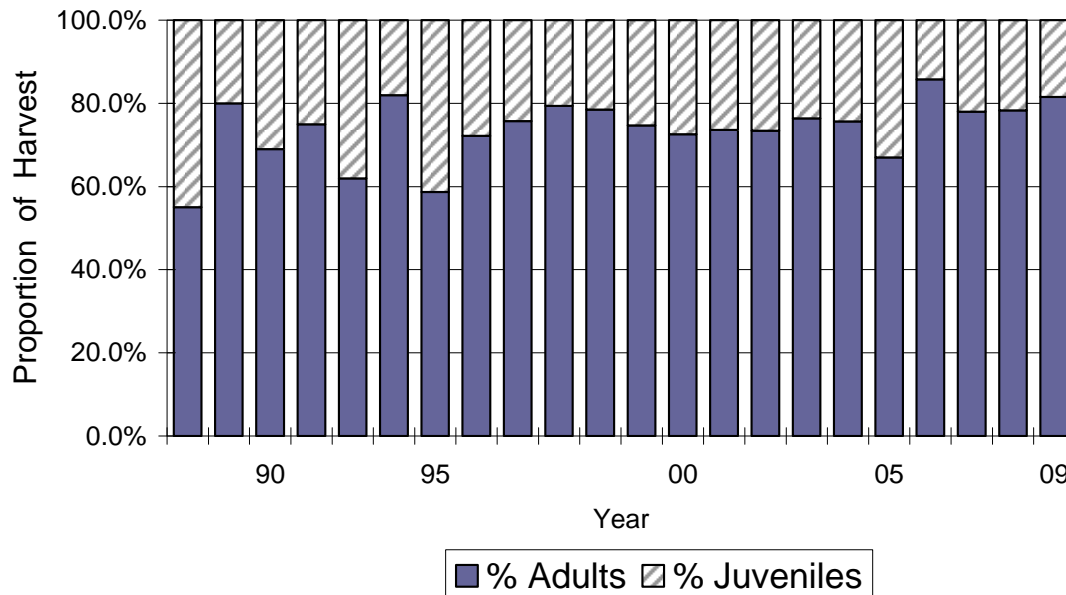


Fig. 5. 2009 Spring Wild Turkey Harvest by Regions

Table 3. Regional spring turkey harvest and age structure in Indiana, 2004 to 2008.

| | Region | | | | | | Statewide |
|--------------------|--------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | North | East-central | West-central | South-central | Southeast | Southwest | |
| <u>2004</u> | | | | | | | |
| Harvest | 1,303 | 18 | 2,074 | 3,125 | 2,681 | 1,511 | 10,765 |
| % of Total Harvest | 12% | 0.2% | 19% | 29% | 25% | 14% | --- |
| Juvenile % | 37% | 28% | 24% | 22% | 23% | 20% | 24% |
| <u>2005</u> | | | | | | | |
| Harvest | 1,346 | 21 | 2,076 | 3,277 | 2,945 | 1,480 | 11,159 |
| % of Total Harvest | 12% | 0.2% | 19% | 29% | 26% | 13% | --- |
| Juvenile % | 37% | 48% | 38% | 33% | 26% | 30% | 34% |
| <u>2006</u> | | | | | | | |
| Harvest | 1,533 | 23 | 2,566 | 3,946 | 3,458 | 1,667 | 13,193 |
| % of Total Harvest | 12% | 0.2% | 20% | 30% | 26% | 13% | --- |
| Juvenile % | 34% | 9% | 12% | 10% | 13% | 13% | 14% |
| <u>2007</u> | | | | | | | |
| Harvest | 1,758 | 51 | 2,104 | 2,919 | 2,831 | 1,500 | 11,163 |
| % of Total Harvest | 16% | 0.5% | 19% | 26% | 25% | 13% | --- |
| Juvenile % | 32% | 38% | 23% | 18% | 18% | 22% | 22% |
| <u>2008</u> | | | | | | | |
| Harvest | 2,166 | 60 | 2,233 | 3,172 | 3,057 | 1,516 | 12,204 |
| % of Total Harvest | 18% | 0.5% | 18% | 26% | 25% | 12% | --- |
| Juvenile % | 34% | 25% | 22% | 19% | 18% | 18% | 22% |
| <u>2009</u> | | | | | | | |
| Harvest | 2,561 | 61 | 2,072 | 3,314 | 3,233 | 1,752 | 12,993 |
| % of Total Harvest | 20% | 0.5% | 16% | 26% | 25% | 14% | --- |
| Juvenile % | 27% | 22% | 16% | 25% | 25% | 14% | 19% |

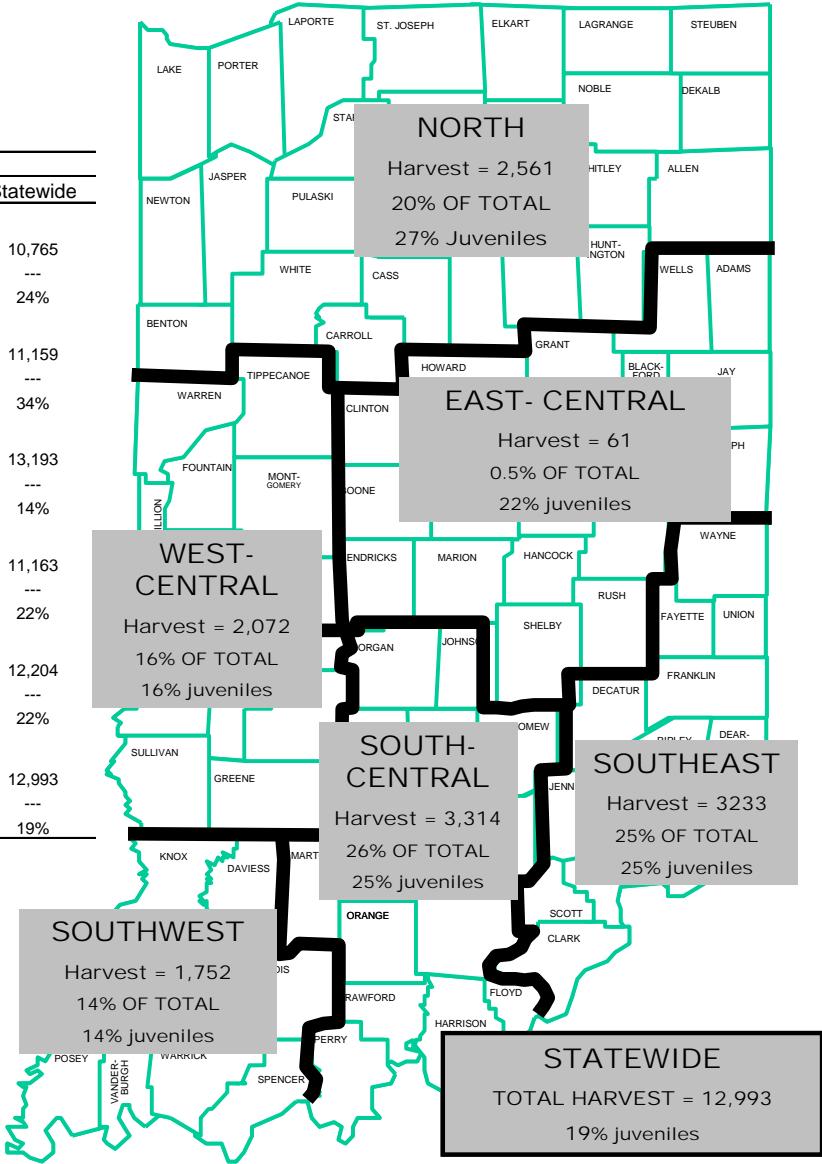


Table 4. Indiana's spring wild turkey hunting seasons, 1970 to 2009.

| Year | Regular Season Dates | Season Length (Days) | No. of Counties | No. of Permits Sold* | Est. No. of Hunters** | Reported Harvest | Hunter Success |
|------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1970 | 5/2-5/5 | 4 | 3 | 75 | 62 | 6 | 9.7% |
| 1971 | 5/1-5/5 | 5 | 9 | 298 | 224 | 11 | 4.9% |
| 1972 | 4/26-4/30 | 5 | 9 | 585 | 422 | 12 | 2.8% |
| 1973 | 4/25-4/29 | 5 | 11 | 625 | 503 | 27 | 5.4% |
| 1974 | 4/24-4/28 | 5 | 11 | 665 | 496 | 26 | 5.2% |
| 1975 | 4/29-5/5 | 7 | 11 | 722 | 501 | 15 | 3.0% |
| 1976 | 4/29-5/5 | 7 | 13 | 666 | 500 | 32 | 6.4% |
| 1977 | 4/28-5/5 | 8 | 16 | 668 | 520 | 46 | 8.8% |
| 1978 | 4/26-5/7 | 12 | 18 | 852 | 619 | 33 | 5.3% |
| 1979 | 4/25-5/6 | 12 | 19 | 932 | 860 | 48 | 5.6% |
| 1980 | 4/23-5/4 | 12 | 17 | 706 | 670 | 54 | 8.1% |
| 1981 | 4/22-5/3 | 12 | 18 | 922 | 814 | 90 | 11.1% |
| 1982 | 4/21-5/2 | 12 | 18 | 1,125 | 696 | 73 | 10.5% |
| 1983 | 4/20-5/1 | 12 | 18 | 1,218 | 984 | 93 | 9.5% |
| 1984 | 4/25-5/6 | 12 | 18 | 1,320 | 1,205 | 104 | 8.6% |
| 1985 | 4/24-5/5 | 12 | 25 | 1,882 | 1,302 | 255 | 19.6% |
| 1986 | 4/23-5/4 | 12 | 25 | 2,523 | 1,648 | 293 | 17.8% |
| 1987 | 4/22-5/6 | 15 | 33 | 3,348 | 2,619 | 741 | 28.3% |
| 1988 | 4/27-5/11 | 15 | 33 | 10,894 | 4,677 | 905 | 19.4% |
| 1989 | 4/26-5/10 | 15 | 39 | 11,442 | 6,068 | 1,359 | 22.4% |
| 1990 | 4/25-5/9 | 15 | 39 | 14,379 | 7,860 | 1,505 | 19.1% |
| 1991 | 4/24-5/8 | 15 | 43 | 16,387 | 9,643 | 2,318 | 24.0% |
| 1992 | 4/22-5/6 | 15 | 43 | 18,735 | 13,110 | 2,531 | 19.3% |
| 1993 | 4/28-5/16 | 19 | 48 | 21,078 | 15,673 | 3,500 | 22.3% |
| 1994 | 4/27-5/15 | 19 | 48 | 23,357 | 18,622 | 3,741 | 20.1% |
| 1995 | 4/26-5/14 | 19 | 52 | 28,858 | 20,861 | 4,706 | 22.6% |
| 1996 | 4/24-5/12 | 19 | 52 | 28,733 | 21,442 | 4,859 | 22.6% |
| 1997 | 4/23-5/11 | 19 | 74 | 32,703 | 23,085 | 5,790 | 25.1% |
| 1998 | 4/22-5/10 | 19 | 74 | 32,889 | 22,876 | 6,384 | 27.9% |
| 1999 | 4/21-5/9 | 19 | 74 | 38,730 | 27,285 | 6,548 | 24.0% |
| 2000 | 4/26-5/14 | 19 | 74 | 40,801 | 28,615 | 7,822 | 27% |
| 2001 | 4/25-5/13 | 19 | 74 | 43,815 | 36,103 | 9,975 | 28% |
| 2002 | 4/24-5/12 [†] | 19 | 90 | 44,333 | 37,919 | 10,575 | 28% |
| 2003 | 4/23-5/11 | 19 | 90 | 48,857 | 40,110 | 10,366 | 26% |
| 2004 | 4/21-5/9 | 19 | 90 | 50,839 | 41,996 | 10,765 | 26% |
| 2005 | 4/27-5/15 | 19 | 88 | 50,839 | 49,684 | 11,159 | 22% |
| 2006 | 4/26-5/14 | 19 | 88 | 67,290 | 50,880 | 13,193 | 26% |
| 2007 | 4/25-5/13 ^{††} | 19 | 91 | 69,861 | 53,402 | 11,163 | 21% |
| 2008 | 4/23-5/11 | 19 | 91 | 71,052 | 55,022 | 12,204 | 22% |
| 2009 | 4/22-5/10 | 19 | 92 | 75,161 | 59,000 | 12,993 | 22% |
| 2010 | 4/21-5/9 | 19 | 92 | | | | |

* After 1986, totals include lifetime licenses. After 1987, total includes youth licenses sold from Jan-May.

** No. of hunters includes those permit holders who hunted ≥ 1 day and since 1986 has been adjusted for non-licensed landowners or military hunters

[†] "All-day" turkey hunting initiated; 1/2 hr prior to sunrise to sunset.

^{††} Beginning with the spring 2007 season, a special 2-day youth-only season is held the weekend prior to the regular season opening.

Bold italics = preliminary estimates based on projecting previous years' trends or means