

2019 Pheasant Season Outlook

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Ring-neck pheasant remain a popular upland game species among Oklahoma hunters with approximately 45,000 pheasant harvested in 2018. The ODWC monitors the pheasant population through two surveys; spring crow counts (Table 1) and summer brood surveys (Table 2). The data collected provides an index of the spring breeding population (crow counts) and what production How successful for that year (brood surveys). Traditionally, Alfalfa, Beaver, Cimarron, Grant, and Texas counties have had the highest pheasant numbers. These 5 counties have had spring crow surveys since 1973, and brood surveys since 1980. In 1998, the surveys were expanded to 13 counties including Ellis, Garfield, Harper, Kay, Major, Noble, Woods, and Woodward.

The spring 2019 crow count survey resulted in a lower number of calls hear per point than 2018 (Table 1). However, it is important to point out that these surveys as well as early nesting activity were severely impacted by heavy spring rains, which left routes non-driveable at times. But, some surveyors reported seeing more pheasant than they actually heard. The August brood surveys were up from 2018 with 0.027 broods/mile observed in the state compared to 0.013 in 2018 (Table 2). The 5 traditional counties were also up from 0.0 in 2018 to 0.05. The total number of pheasants observed also increased from 65 in 2018 to 93 in 2019. Heavy rainfall in the spring made early nesting difficult, but conditions did improve into the summer across northern Oklahoma for pheasants with plenty of vegetation and insects. It appears later nesting attempts had decent success. We are seeing increased pheasant numbers this year which means we should have a better season than 2017 or 2018. So go enjoy the Oklahoma Outdoors! Work some ground, trust your dog, and make a memory!

Pheasant season opens on December 1st 2019 and runs through January 31st 2020. Hunters are allowed to harvest two cock pheasants daily. Areas open to pheasant hunting are Alfalfa, Beaver, Cimarron, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kay, Major, Noble, Texas, Woods, and Woodward counties as well as the portion of Osage county west of State Highway 18, and portions of Blaine, Dewey, Ellis, Kingfisher and Logan counties North of State Highway 51. Seasons on public lands may vary from the statewide season. For more regulations and other information consult the Oklahoma Hunting Guide online at <http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/hunting/> or in print wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold.

Table 1: Pheasant crows heard per point

Pheasant Crows/Point

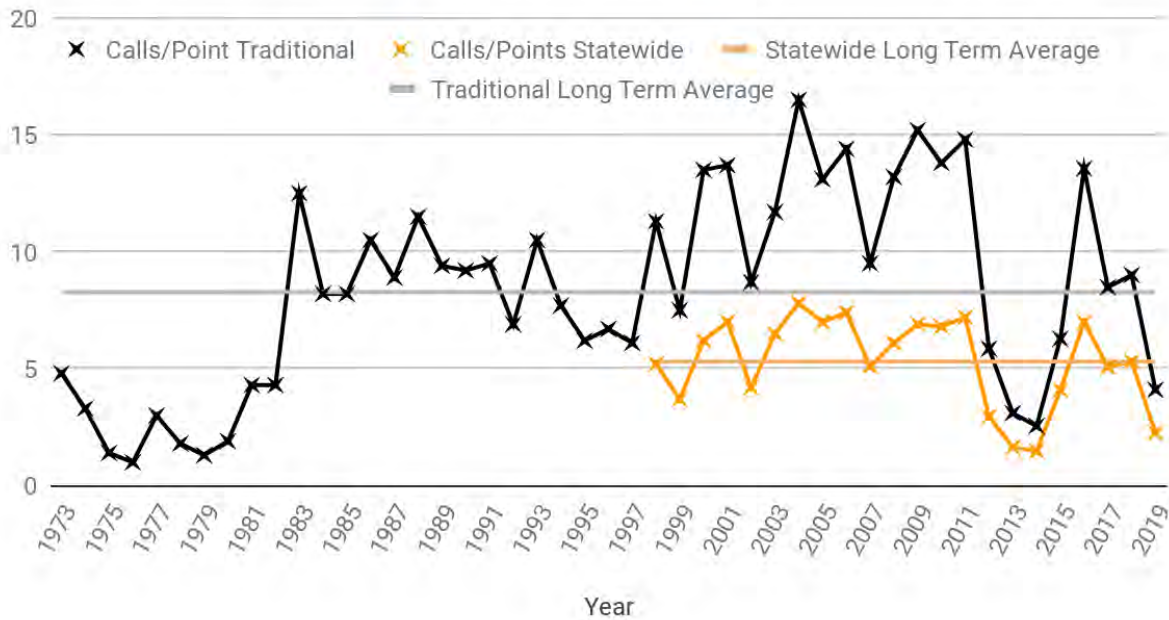


Table 2: Pheasant broods observed per 20 mile route

Pheasant Broods/20 Mile Route

