

# 2005 Quail Season Outlook

By

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While Oklahoma's quail hunters are likely still relishing in last years quail hunting seasons they may soon have another memorable year. Reports from the field and the annual roadside counts suggest this year should be as good as last. Many landowners and sportsman from across the state have reported "seeing good numbers of quail this year" with numbers "as good if not better than last".

This is the 16<sup>th</sup> year of roadside surveys and the statewide quail index is up 32% from the previous 15-year average (Table 1). The increase is reflected in all regions with exception of the Northeast and South-central that reported decreased averages of 62% and 33%, respectively.

The 2005 statewide index increased 44% over the 2004 index. Only in the South-central and Southeast regions did quail sightings decline from 2004 numbers (Figure 1).

**Table 1. Average quail seen/20 mile route during the August & October roadside surveys.**

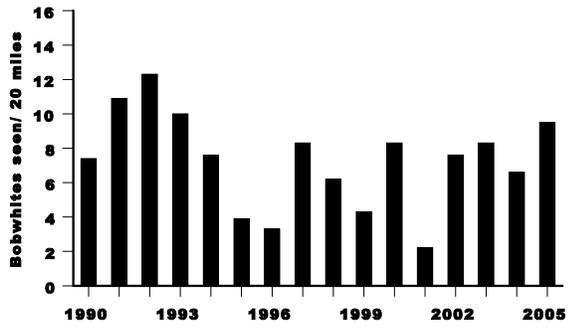
Region	Previous 15 yr. average	2004	2005
Statewide	7.2	6.6	9.5
Northwest	10.7	13.2	18.2
North-central	3.7	1.6	4.5
Northeast	4.5	0.7	1.7
Southwest	15.1	13.0	20.2
South-central	3.0	2.3	2.0
Southeast	6.9	10.0	7.9

The survey indicates this summer's weather was favorable for quail production. Early season production was good-excellent as evidenced by a 72% increase in the statewide August surveys. Extended nesting was also evident as 29% of the coveys encountered during October consisted of bird not fully grown. Likewise, landowners and biologists reported a good early hatch and continue to see young broods.

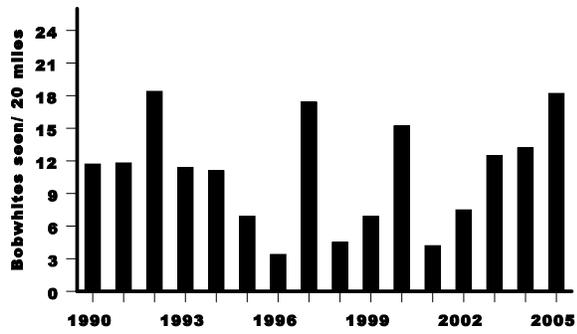
With the vast expanses of native habitat the Northwestern and Southwestern portions of the state continue to lead in quail numbers and August rains have provided adequate cover. Populations in Southeast seem to be responding favorably to timber harvest practices. Both biologist and sportsmen have reported seeing a number of quail in clearcuts and young plantations on Honobia and Three Rivers WMAs.

We still need to keep our eye to the sky and fingers crossed. Weather not only dictates production it has an enormous effect on hunting success. Bird are there in good numbers this year but we still need good scenting conditions in order to make this a memorable season.

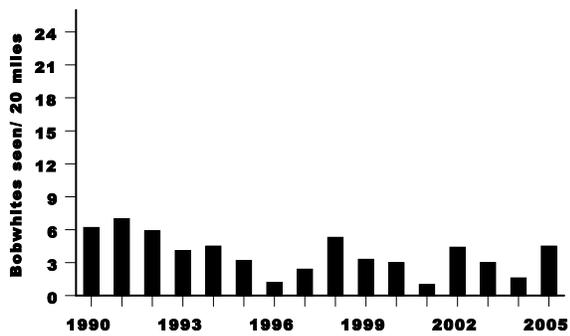
### Statewide



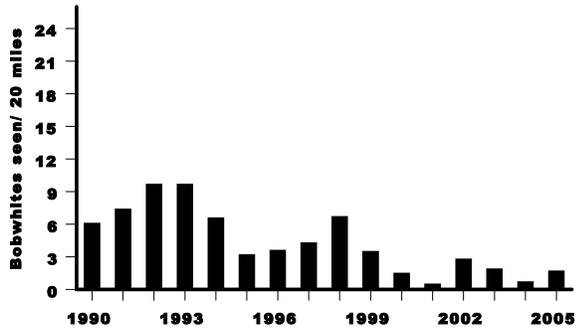
### Northwest



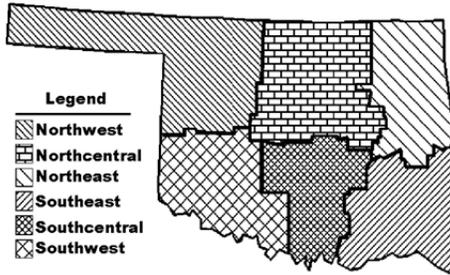
### Northcentral



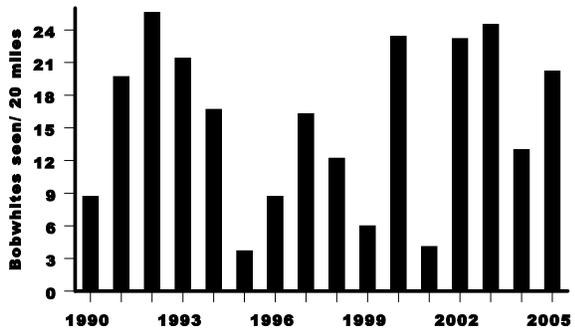
### Northeast



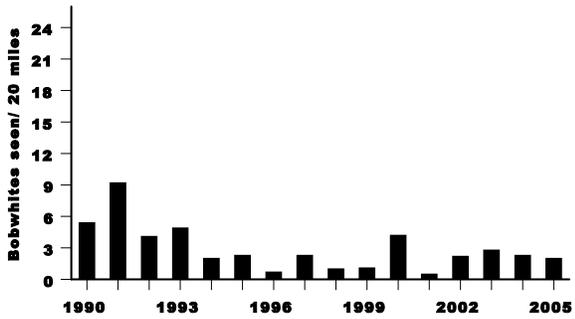
Regional boundaries for Oklahoma used for quail roadside surveys.



### Southwest



### Southcentral



## Southeast

