

2017 Pheasant Season Outlook

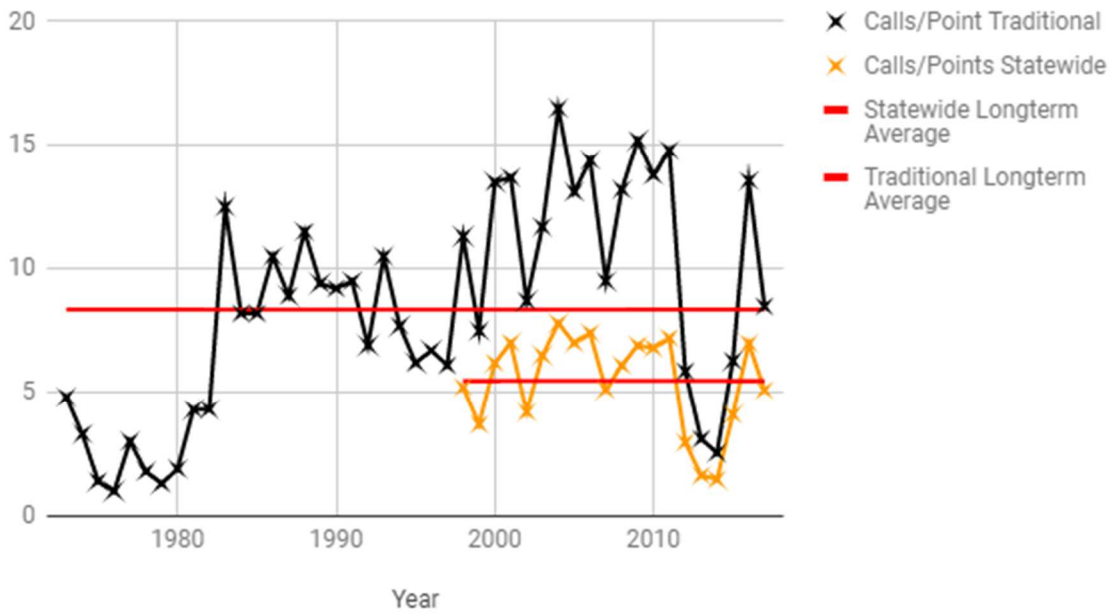
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Ring-neck pheasants are becoming increasingly popular among Oklahoma hunters. We at ODWC keep track of pheasants through two surveys, spring crow counts and August brood surveys. The data collected provides an index of the spring breeding population (crow counts) and what production was that year (brood surveys). We survey 13 counties for pheasants: Alfalfa, Beaver, Cimarron, Ellis, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kay, Major, Noble, Texas, Woods, and Woodward. There are five counties that have been surveyed with spring crow surveys since 1973 that, traditionally, have had the highest pheasant numbers. Those counties are: Alfalfa, Beaver, Cimarron, Grant, and Texas. Brood surveys have been ongoing since 1980 in those five counties. In 1998 the survey was expanded to include the remaining 8 counties.

The spring 2017 surveys indicated that the pheasant population was slightly down from spring 2016. However, we were unable to survey one of the counties that has the highest pheasant populations in it due to extremely bad road conditions during the survey period. When removing that county from the spring 2016 surveys the number of crowing pheasants was up approximately one pheasant/survey point this spring. The August brood surveys were slightly down from 2016 with 0.027 broods/mile observed compared to 0.054. The traditionally strong counties were also slightly down from 0.09 to 0.06 in 2017. However, the total number of pheasants observed increased from 113 in 2016 to 142 in 2017. Conditions for production were good across northern Oklahoma for pheasants this year with plenty of rainfall and fairly cool temperatures. Pheasant season was good last year in many areas; this season should be about the same this year.

Pheasant season opens on December 1st 2017 and runs through January 31st 2018. Hunters are allowed to harvest two cock pheasants only. 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.

Pheasant Crows/Point



Pheasant Broods/20 Mile Route

