2023-2024 Wild Turkeys

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

History

Iowa's primitive oak-hickory forests covered nearly 7 million acres (2.8 million ha) during the original land survey in 1859 (Thornton and Morgan 1959). Settlers' records indicate turkeys were associated with most of this timber. Although turkeys may not have been as numerous in Iowa as in their primary range east of the Mississippi River, they were still plentiful (Peterson 1943). Unfortunately, wild turkeys were eliminated from Iowa by the early 1900s due to habitat loss and partly because of uncontrolled subsistence market hunting (Little 1980).

Habitat

Only 2.6 million acres (1.1 million ha) of forest remained when the second land survey was completed in 1956, a reduction of 63% in a century, and perhaps 50% of the remaining forest was badly mismanaged through overgrazing (Thornton and Morgan 1959). In 1974, Iowa had 1.6 million acres of forestland, which made up 4.3% of the State's land area. Iowa's forests now total 2.1 million acres (850,202 ha), just 5.7% of the State and only 30% of presettlement forests (Leatherberry et al. 1990). Forest types throughout Iowa are second or third growth oak-hickory on uplands and elm-ash-cottonwood on floodplains (Ostrom 1976). Oak types constitute 55% of all forest stands, with red oak - white oak - hickory (35% of all forests) dominant in all regions. Maple/basswood stands (10%) are found on mesic sites and are climax in the northeast and central regions, but are replaced by white oak (10%) and short, scrubby bur oak (10%) in the southern and arid western regions, respectively. Aspen and other northern hardwoods (1%) are found occasionally in the Northeast. Statewide, 65% of all commercial stands are entering sawtimber and 20% are in poletimber (Leatherberry et al. 1990). Ninety-two percent of Iowa's forest land is privately owned, with nearly half of the remaining 8% in state ownership, 38% owned by other public agencies and 14% in park-refuges withdrawn from active management (Ostrom 1976, Leatherberry et al. 1990). Iowa has no national forests, parks or wildlife refuges devoted to forest land management.

Restoration

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) began experimenting with turkey restoration in 1920 using pen-reared birds. Releases were made over the next 18 years but all releases were uniform failures. The first attempts at releasing transplanted wild turkeys were in the early 1960s. Rio Grande and Merriam's subspecies were released at several sites during the 1960s but ultimately their poor adaptation to Iowa's oak-hickory forest led to population failures for both subspecies. The first release of Eastern wild turkeys was in 1966 in Lee County. The population response of these turkeys was phenomenal - survival of released birds, reproduction, and poult survival were all excellent. The success of the Eastern subspecies stocking led to an additional stocking that also proved successful. By 1971 it was obvious that the Eastern subspecies was the turkey to use in future restoration attempts. Since the initial 1965 release 3,578 eastern wild turkeys have been trapped and released at 259 sites at a stocking rate of approximately 3 adult gobblers and 10 hens per site. Nearly all sites are considered successful. No sites are currently considered to be unsuccessful. Most sites were opened to hunting after populations were established, usually about 5 years post-stocking. Restorations by the DNR during the last 2 decades have returned wild turkeys to about 95% of the remnant timber stands in the state. Restoration efforts ended in 2001 with the last release site occurring in Linn County.

SPRING HARVEST SURVEY

History

Spring bearded-only turkey hunting seasons began in 1974. The objective of Iowa's spring season has been to maximize hunting opportunity while maintaining a quality hunting experience. Quality hunting is defined as the chance to hunt turkeys reasonably free of interference from other hunters. The primary method used to reduce interference is to control hunter densities through license quotas and establish multiple zones and seasons. Annual licenses issued, hunters, and harvest increased gradually from 1974-87 (Figure 2.1). During 1988-99, there were dramatic increases in licenses issued and hunter numbers due to an unlimited license quota in the fourth season. The area open for spring turkey hunting in Iowa also increased dramatically from 2 small southern zones and 1 larger northeast zone in 1974 to the entire state during the 1989 spring season (Figure 2.2, a and b). In 2007 mandatory reporting of harvest was

implemented and therefore the postcard harvest survey was eliminated (Table 2.1). Spring harvest success rates fluctuated around 20-30% during the first 12 years (unweighted average = 25.1 for 1974-85) but success increased each year during 1985-88 (Figure 2.3). Declines observed in spring hunter success rates during 1983 and 1984 can be partially explained by poor brood production during the summers of 1982 (Table 2.9). Similarly, the decline in hunter success rates between 1988 and 1993 may be explained by 6 years of poor brood production starting in 1988. The success rates from 2002-2006 averaged 46.0%. The decrease in success rates beginning in 2007 and the number of turkeys harvested is likely due the change in survey methods. Starting in the spring of 2007, mandatory harvest reporting required successful hunters to report a harvested turkey. A follow-up post card survey for spring of 2007 revealed 74% compliance rate, which equated to nearly 4,000 harvested turkeys that were not reported initially during the spring season. The major reasons for the non-reports were attributed to hunters forgetting to report (40%), difficulty in reporting process (29%), and unaware of the requirement (22%).

2024

Iowa's 51th modern spring hunting season recorded 16,082 turkeys harvested, with 57,084 licenses issued (Table 2.1 and Table 2.8). This was the 36th year the entire state was open to spring turkey hunting. The 38-day season (5 April - 12 May, 2024) was partitioned into 5 separate seasons: a 3-day youth-only season, and 4 regular seasons (4, 5, 7 and 19-days). The 5 season format, with unlimited resident license quota for all the periods, resulted in 48,412 resident shotgun/bow licenses issued, which was an increase of 4,266 from the 2023 season. In additional 6,327 resident archery only licenses were issued in 2024 (6,064 in 2023). Archery-only licenses harvested 1,465 turkeys, resulting in a 23.2% success rate (Figure 2.3). Gun/Bow licenses had a 27.5% success rate for residents in 2024 (Table 2.4).

This was the 35th spring that nonresidents were allowed to hunt turkeys in Iowa. Nonresident license sales sold out for all zones except for one license in zone 8 season 2 in 2024. There are now preference points being accumulated for some zones. Of the 150 muzzleloader tags available all were sold out with 54 being awarded and 96 available over the counter. The majority of these tags were assigned to zone 4 (50) with season 4 being the highest amount (67). Non-resident hunters harvested 1143 turkeys (Table 2.1). Nonresidents reported a higher success rate for spring gobblers than did residents (51.7% versus 26.7% respectively) (Table 2.4), which was an increase for both groups.
Age of turkeys harvested resulted in jakes (spurs< ½") 13%, (spurs ½-3/4") 25% and (spurs >3/4) 62%.

Youth Turkey Season

Iowa's 20th youth spring turkey season was held April 5-7. During the 3-day season, youth 15 and younger were allowed to participate with an accompanied licensed adult (adult with a turkey license for one of the regular seasons). In 2005, the first year of the youth season, ages were limited to 12-15. Starting in 2006, ages 15 and younger could participate in the youth season. Youth license sales increased to 6486 from 6175 in 2024 (Figure 2.6). Since the inception of ELSI (Electronic Licensing System of Iowa) in 2001, hunter age and gender has been recorded. From 2001-2006 youth spring turkey hunters (age 15 and under) increased each year. After the first youth season in 2005, youth licenses have shown an overall upward trend (Figure 2.6). A code change in 2014 allowed for unfilled youth season tags to be valid for any other spring turkey season until filled. Youth tag success rate was reported at 29.8% in 2024. This is a recorded high for the youth tag.

FALL HARVEST SEASON

History

Fall, any-sex turkey hunting was initiated in Iowa in 1981 to provide additional hunting recreation from the wild turkey resource. Because any-sex hunts are more controversial than male-only hunts and potential exists for overharvesting hens, carefully controlled fall hunts began in 1981 on an experimental basis. These hunts occurred in portions of southern Iowa, which had established, stable turkey populations. Fall turkey hunting has changed dramatically since the initial experimental 1981 season. The area encompassed by fall hunting zones has increased from 2 small zones in southern Iowa during 1981 to 9 zones in 2005 encompassing the entire state (Figure 2.4, a and b). Fall zone boundaries in 1990 encompassed 9.7 times more area than in 1981, with 13.9 times more by 2005. Although zone boundaries did not change during 1991-1994, only zones 3 and 6 (northeast Iowa) had shotgun licenses available (residents only). The 5 remaining fall zones experienced 6 years of poor brood production and therefore did not have any licenses available. However, in 1995, because of increased brood production in 1994, almost the entire state was opened to fall hunting. In 1999, the amount of land open to fall hunting increased slightly from 1998 with the addition of zone 8 (Figure 2.4).

Results from a radio-telemetry study in southern Iowa and computer modeling of southern Iowa turkey mortality and hatching data suggest as much as 10% of the population could be removed during fall hunting without reducing long term turkey populations. Past seasons' harvest have not approached this theoretical value. The present management objective is to maintain fall hunting opportunities and harvest. The number of fall licenses issued, hunter numbers and harvest increased steadily from 1981-89 (Figure 2.5, Table 2.5, and Table 2.7). As with spring seasons, fall turkey hunters have previously had exceptional statewide success rates, averaging 51% during 1981-89 (Table 2.8). However, fall success rates have had considerable annual variation, ranging from 6-60% (Figure 2.3). Fall license quotas generally surpassed applications from 1981-84 and license quotas filled in only one zone in 1985. With the expansion of 2 hunting zones in 1986 a large increase in applications occurred. This resulted in rejecting a number of permit applications. License quota was increased in 1987 and in 1988. After 2 application periods in fall 1988, 51 licenses remained. Therefore, license quota remained unchanged in 1989 although the hunting zone area increased. Because of the documented poor poult production in 1988 and 1989, license quota remained unchanged for 1990. Fall 1990 hunting zones were expanded to distribute (and hopefully reduce) hunting pressure on flocks. Continued poor statewide brood production warranted dramatic reductions in fall harvest for 1991-1994. Only the northeast corner (Zones 3 & 6) continued to have average brood production that allowed a fall shotgun season. Annual changes in hunter success, harvest and the age-sex composition of the fall harvest are at least partly explained by population events occurring in southern Iowa from 1981 to 1985. Excellent recruitment in the years of 1978 through 1980 produced very high turkey densities (100 wintering turkeys/mi^2 of forest on the southern Iowa Stephens Forest study area and region-wide densities of at least 40-50/mi^2). A cool wet spring in 1981 led to essentially no recruitment just prior to the first fall season. A large carryover of adults from previous successful hatches meant that hunters had high success rates in the fall of 1981, but harvested almost no juvenile turkeys. A slightly better hatch in 1982, coupled with the reduction in available adult turkeys, led to proportionally more juveniles in the bag in 1982, but the harvest and success rates were reduced. A good hatch in 1983 produced more juveniles in the bag and an increased harvest, suggesting populations were recovering from a 2-year depression. Another good hatch in 1984 resulted in even more juveniles in the bag and again an increased harvest. Fall 1985 was similar to 1984. The greatest effect was felt in southern Iowa where spring weather was least favorable in both 1981 and 1982. Indications of over-harvest on popular public hunting areas were greatest in the years when few juveniles were present to buffer adult turkey harvest. Harvest rates of adult hens (>2 years old), the most important age class reproductively, were greatest when few juveniles were produced and decreased to tolerable levels when recruitment was good. A similar scenario developed during the 6-year (1988-93) decline in poult production. Climatic factors, i.e., 2 years of drought followed by floods in 1990, 1991, and 1993, are assumed responsible for the reduced poult production observed over that time period. Likewise, harvest and hunting success declined over the same period, presumably as a result of the decrease in poult production. Fall harvest and hunting success rate increased in 1995 following a slight increase in poult production in 1994. Harvest and hunter success increased slightly again in 1996 - 1999, but decreased slightly in 2000-2001. However, fall harvest levels continue to be below the levels observed in the mid-1980s. Fall active hunters have not been estimated since the implementation of harvest mandatory reporting. This survey was conducted by postcard but was discontinued in 2006 (Table 2.6). Since the DNR's main objective for wild turkeys is to maintain populations in all suitable habitats and provide high quality recreational opportunity, a conservative fall turkey hunting season was established in 1992. Shotgun license quotas were reduced from 7,600 licenses available in 1990 to only 1,530 in 1992, 1993, and 1994. An increase in poult production was observed in 1994, and the shotgun license quota was increased in 1995 to 3,450. Quotas were increased slightly again in 1996 to 3,850, to 4,550 in 1997, to 5,650 in 1998, to 6,225 in 1999. In 1999, zone 8 was created in north central Iowa and zone 6 was reduced east to Highway 63. All other zone boundaries remained the same as in 1998, and all zones had licenses available. In 2009, quotas were decreased. All zones except zone 8 & 9 decreased (zone 4 from 4,500 to 1,500, zone 5 from 700 to 650, zone 6 from 3,000 to 1,400, and zone 7 from 400 to 250). In 2020 50 tags were added to zone 8.

2023

Fall turkey hunter success rates remained constant at 7.5% in 2023 (Table 2.8), this is still well below the 2005 and prior estimates due to the change in harvest estimation (mandatory versus postcard survey as discussed earlier). All fall licenses issued (Gun/bow and bow only) increased in 2023 to 7,714, (7,626 2022). Bow-only season started October 1 and ran until January 10th, 2024 with December 2 - December 11 being closed for the shotgun deer season. Gun/bow season was 54 days long from October 10 - December 1 (Table 2.12). Forty-six percent of the fall licenses were issued free to landowners. Estimated numbers of active hunters were undeterminable since there was no post card survey

after the season (mandatory reporting eliminated the post card survey). Of all turkey license issued 7.5% reported harvesting a turkey, which is consistent with recent years. (Table 2.8). Archery only licensed hunters reported a harvest of 161 turkeys in 2023 which was an increase from the 2022 season. The 5.7% success rate for 2023 archery only licenses was higher than the previous year's success rate of 52 (Table 2.8). Nonresidents have not been permitted to hunt fall turkeys in Iowa since 1990.

Discussion

Fall turkey hunting techniques are sufficiently different from spring hunting so that past experience with spring hunting seems to have little impact on success in the fall. If anything, reliance on camouflage, sitting still, and calling (the basic spring hunting method) may be less successful and less utilized than walking and flushing turkeys in the small woodlot situations which comprise the bulk of Iowa turkey habitat. Even though fall shotgun success can be quite high, fall turkey hunting has not been popular. It doesn't seem to appeal to spring hunters and hunter numbers seem to be more related to zone size than anything else. Fall archery hunting has even fewer devotees. In spite of these differences between spring and fall hunting, they have one important feature in common - hunter concentrations on public hunting areas. Hunter densities are much greater on public hunting areas than on private lands. By the nature of fall hunting this has less impact on perceived interference between hunters than it does in spring hunting. Crowding leads to lower success rates on public areas and, on the largest most popular areas, there are some indications of excessive harvest over theoretically desirable levels. Any area that the DNR intends to manage for quality spring hunting may have to be zoned separately in the fall. Even in years of documented poor reproduction, hunters can still find turkeys due to Iowa's limited forest habitat and high turkey densities. Interference rates between hunters have not been documented in the fall since 1985. Interference rates have been lower during fall than in spring, which is probably due to the different techniques used for spring and fall hunting. Fall turkey hunter densities on public areas (that were surveyed) have been nearly 50 times greater than the average hunter density for private land. Turkey harvest densities on 13 of 16 public areas surveyed equaled or exceeded the theoretical maximum allowable harvest of 2 turkeys/ mi^2 of forest as determined from empirical population data gathered from Stephens State Forest (DNR, unpubl. data). In 1986, only 4 counties sustained >4 hunters/ mi^2 of forest, combined with turkey harvests of >2/mi^2 of forest. In 1987, with the large increase in licenses issued, 12 counties had both hunter densities >4, and turkey harvest >2/ mi^2 of timber (out of 43 counties with reporting hunters). The high seasonal hunter densities were somewhat reduced by a 28-day season during 1987. No more than 34% of the hunters and 39% of the eligible hunters (those who had not yet bagged a turkey) were afield on any day. The opening 2 days and 4 weekend days were the most popular hunting days. There were no evident relationships between daily hunting pressure and daily success rates. To reduce daily hunter densities, hunter interference rates and increase fall recreation days, the 1988 fall season was extended to 49 days (October 10 - November 27). However, a large increase in licenses issued in 1988 increased the number of counties exceeding allowable harvest and hunter density values to 16 (out of 53 counties with reported turkey harvest). Another record license issue in 1989 resulted in 24 counties (of 49 counties with reported turkey harvest) exceeding >4 hunters, and >2 turkeys harvested/ mi^2 of timber. Fewer licenses were issued in 1990 and correspondingly only 16 counties exceeded hunter and harvest rate maximums. Due to continued poor brood production, both hunter numbers and harvest was dramatically reduced during 1991-1993 and increased only slightly throughout 1994-2000, but decreased slightly in 2001. Unfortunately, the present management concern is how to maintain turkey numbers instead of the enviable situation of being concerned about hunter densities. The record number of active hunters in 2005 (since 1989) may be related to this being the first season that turkey hunters where allowed to use dogs. Likely, pheasant hunters took this opportunity to harvest turkeys opportunistically while pheasant hunting. With mandatory reporting system (initiated in 2006), active hunters numbers are undeterminable. It appears that many people may be simply purchasing a turkey tag while fall bow deer hunting with little effort placed on harvesting a fall turkey.

BROOD SURVEY

History

Information on annual variations in turkey productivity is needed to evaluate the status of turkey populations in various regions of the state. Because few reliable wild turkey census techniques have been developed, hunter success rates, turkey harvest levels, and age ratios of harvested birds are the best available indicators of relative turkey populations between hunting zones. Lewis (1975 a, b) found significant correlations between both August poult:hen ratios, percent juveniles in the harvest, and total gobbler harvests in the subsequent spring in Missouri, suggesting that an index to productivity would be useful in establishing hunting regulations. Compared to the more formalized census procedures

used for more visible wildlife species, indices to eastern wild turkey productivity are generally based on random observations of broods.

Methods

In 2023 the turkey survey was conducted completely online through an internet based reporting system. Potential cooperators were contacted via email and postcard and asked to participate. Additionally, the general public was invited through press releases, email and social media posts. A list of cooperators was established from DNR personnel and turkey license holders living in selected portions of Iowa. All turkey license holders living in designated survey areas are sent a postcard explaining the survey. This card contained a QR code and the web-link that allowed them to enter their sightings for the months of July and August. Productivity indices are constructed from these returns. Hanson (1988) compared the brood survey data with spring turkey harvest and data from a radio-telemetry study in southern Iowa. The poult:hen ratio (young/adult) was the variable that correlated best with the telemetry data. Results of additional analyses indicated that the brood survey did have some utility for forecasting turkey numbers available to the hunters in following springs. Additionally, Hanson concluded that in light of the correlations with harvest data the brood survey may also be useful for evaluating the status of turkey populations in various regions of the state. Survey statistics for 2008-2023 are summarized in Table 2.9 and Table 2.10.

The 2023 survey indicated generally good production across the state (Figure 2.3) from the five-year average with a 61% calculated nest success rate. There was no difference from 2022. The two biggest highlights were an 25% drop in NW Iowa and a 10% decrease in East central Iowa. Production in North Central Iowa was highest in number of poults per successful hen at 3.1. West central Iowa had the highest year to year change in successful nests with a 12.6% increase. The number of successful nests was estimated to be the same statewide from 2022 with some variability between regions with 5 regions up and 4 down from 2022. Observers submitted 3,217 (2,788-2021) observations statewide up 15% from 2022 showing a 25% decrease from the 5-year average. This may be a result of the survey being completed only online in 2023. Wild turkey nest success was up equal to 2022 nest success at 61%, but slightly down statewide from 2022 with poults per hen averaging 2.4 (Figure 2.3). This number is still above the 5-year average of 2.2 poults per hen.

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FIGURES

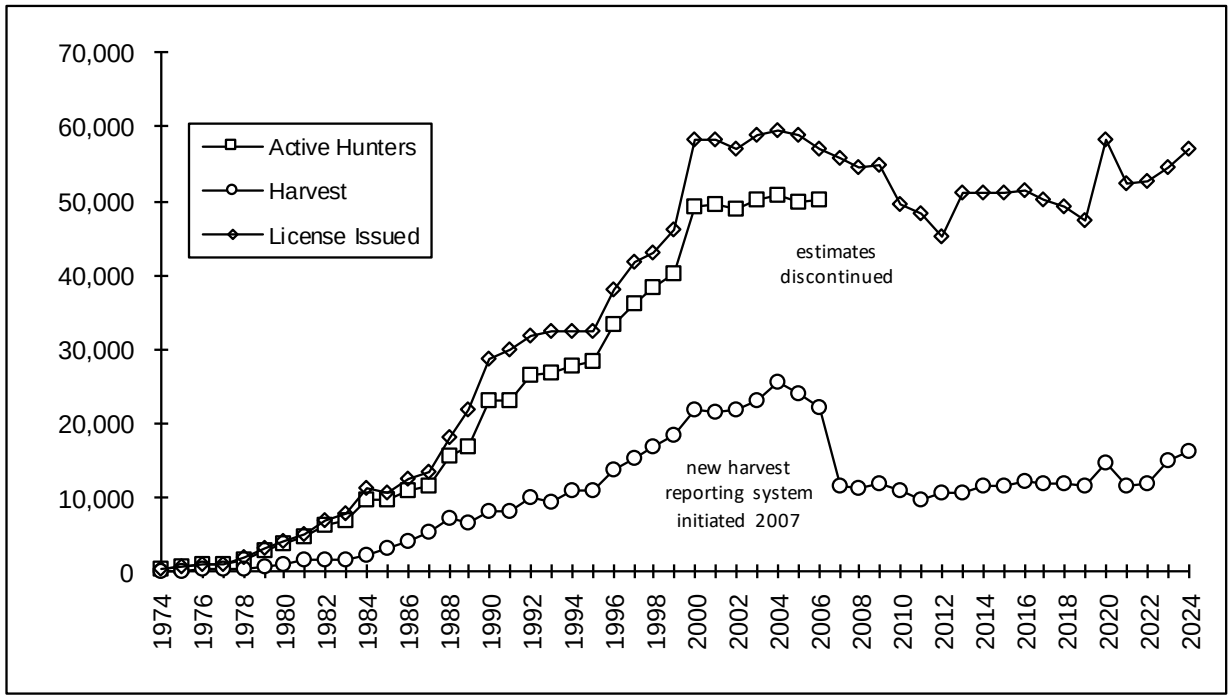

Figure 2.1 Iowa spring turkey hunting statewide estimates, 1974-2024 (Active hunters unknown after 2006 due to survey changes. Harvest estimation methods changed from mail surveys to mandatory reporting beginning 2007.)

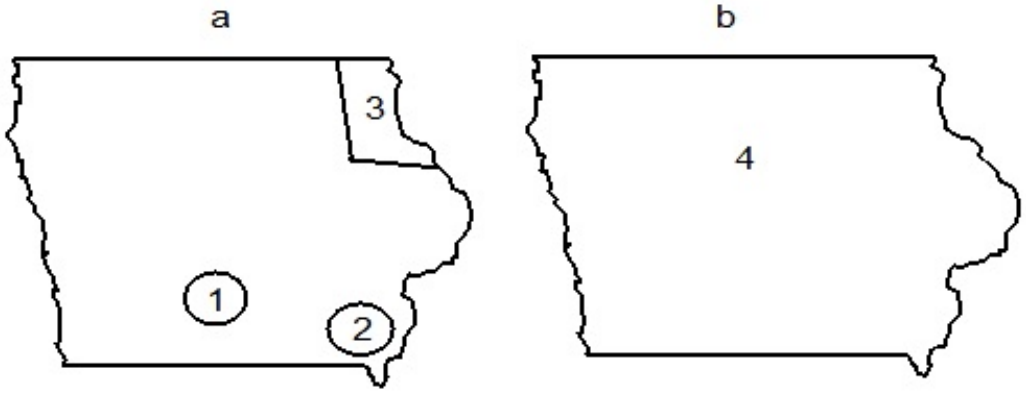

Figure 2.2 Spring Resident Turkey Hunting Zones, 1974 (a) and 2023 (b).

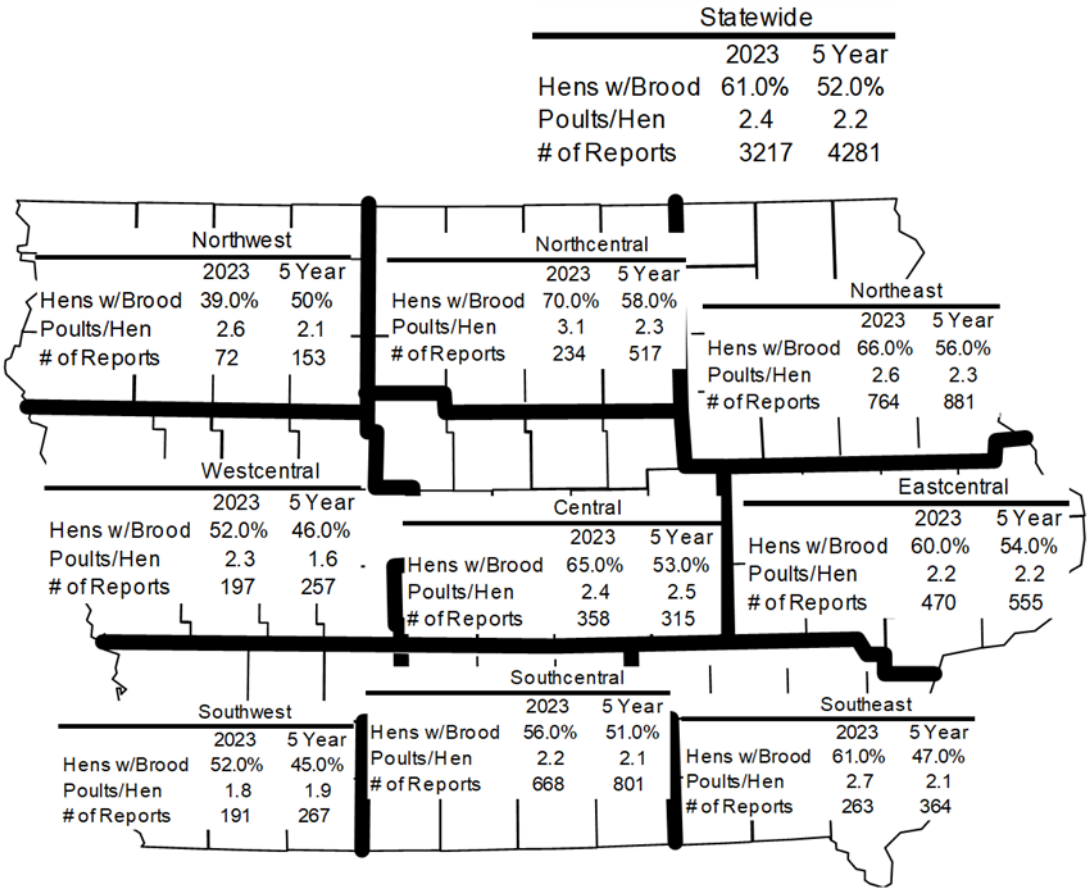

Figure 2.3 2022 Summer Turkey Survey

Hens w/Brood = percent of successful hens observed with a brood.
Poults/Hen = number poults observed per all hens.
# of Reports = number of times turkeys were observed by cooperators.

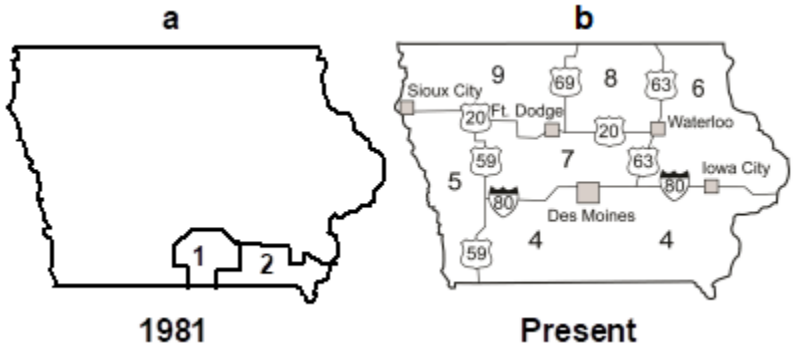

Figure 2.4 Fall Turkey Hunting Zones, 1981 (a) and Present (b)

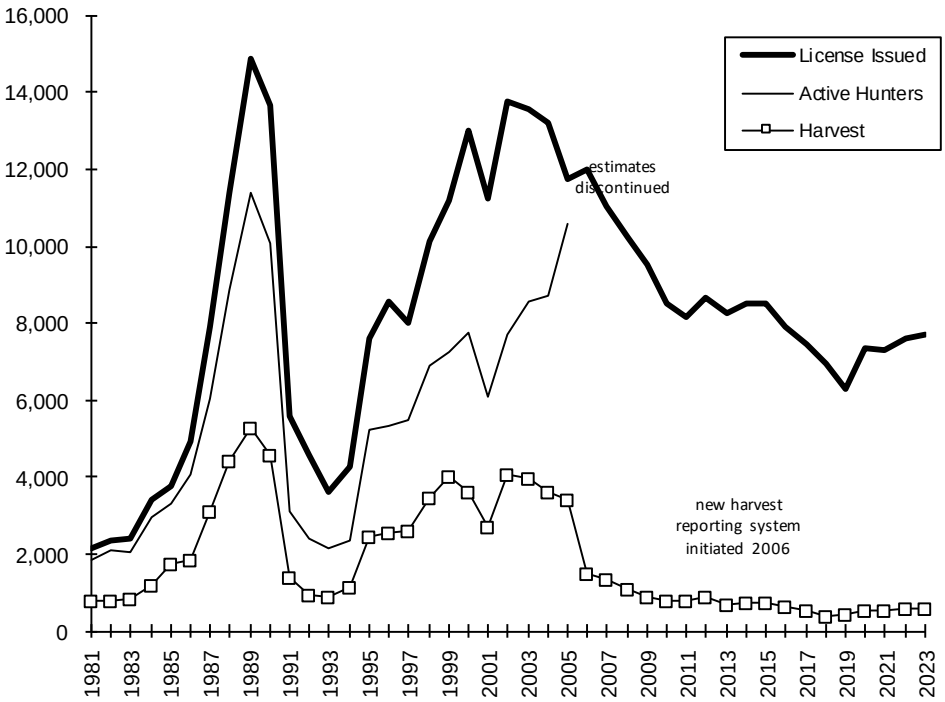

Figure 2.5 Iowa fall turkey hunting statewide estimates, 1981-2023 (Active hunters unknown after 2005 due to survey changes. Success estimation methods changed from mail surveys to mandatory reporting beginning 2006.)

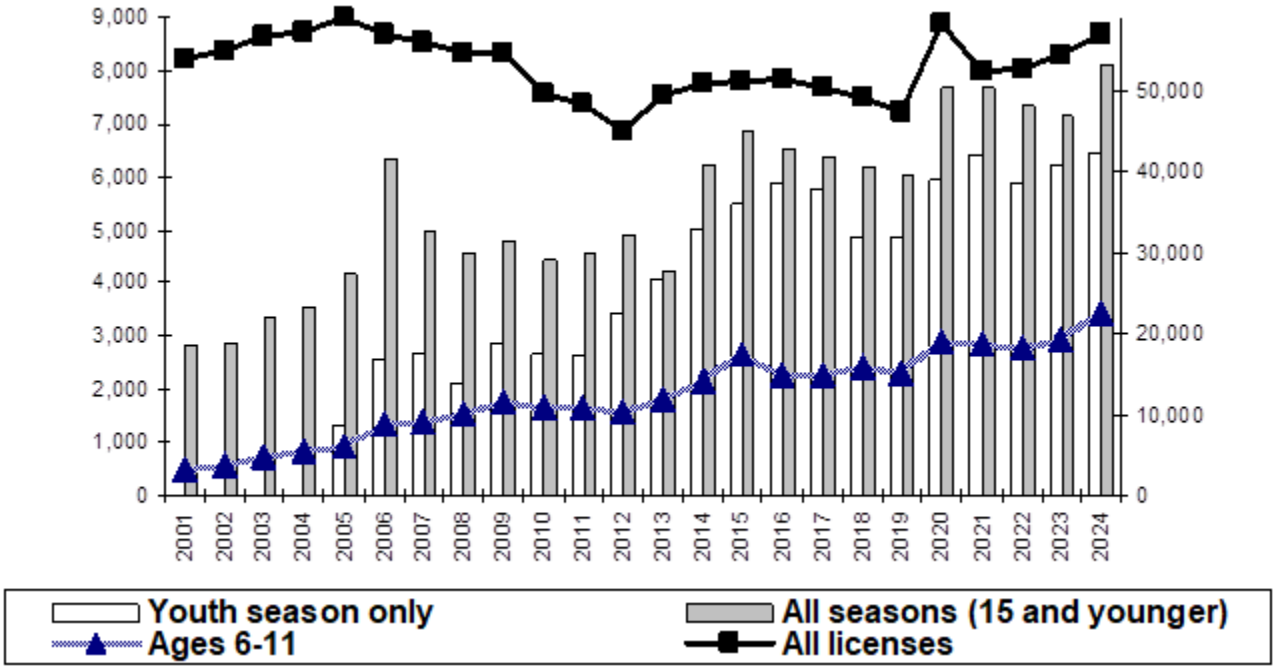

Figure 2.6 Iowa spring turkey license issue, 2001-2024

TABLES

Table 2.1 Number of estimated spring turkeys harvested, 2007-present

In 2007, survey methods changed from a post-mailing survey to mandatory reporting, with an estimated 74% compliance rate.

Year	Gun/ Bow	Bow Only	Resident Total	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
2007	10,008	676	10,684	843	11,527
2008	9,643	788	10,431	898	11,329
2009	10,166	859	11,025	884	11,909
2010	9,156	907	10,063	826	10,889
2011	8,031	830	8,861	666	9,527
2012	8,906	802	9,708	749	10,457
2013	8,838	986	9,824	741	10,565
2014	9,587	1,060	10,647	754	11,401
2015	9,528	1,090	10,618	787	11,405
2016	10,057	1,230	11,287	886	12,173
2017	9,748	1,188	10,936	843	11,779
2018	9,672	1,146	10,818	883	11,701
2019	9,364	1,209	10,573	816	11,389
2020	12,393	1,685	14,079	610	14,689
2021	9,724	1,095	10,819	878	11,697
2022	9,785	1,164	10,949	995	11,944
2023	12,330	1,328	13,658	1,159	14,817
2024	13,340	1,465	14,805	1,283	16,088

Table 2.2 Number of estimated active Iowa spring turkey hunters by zone 1974-present

Starting in 2007, the post card survey was discontinued and active hunters undeterminable.
Archery-only licenses not surveyed.

Year	Zone					Resident Total	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
	1	2	3	4	5			
1974	92	99		92		283		
1975	149	168		223		540		
1976	124	237		484		845		
1977	202	251		435		888		
1978	255	289		1,078		1,622		
1979	174	272		2,381		2,827		
1980	176	213	307	2,909		3,605		
1981	176	379	3,956	3,956	61	4,572		
1982	493	447	270	4,911	123	6,244		
1983	447	441	263	5,523	161	6,835		
1984	233	371	260	8,676	243	9,783		
1985	232	403	292	8,395	249	9,571		
1986	232	445	308	9,581	319	10,885		
1987	236	440	327	10,283	355	11,641		
1988	246	429	298	14,152	547	15,672		

Year	Zone					Resident Total	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
	1	2	3	4	5			
1989	225	442	319	15,193	588	16,767		
1990	231	456	301	21,085	862	22,935	174	23,109
1991	234	477	289	20,905	868	22,773	273	23,046
1992	200	351	213	24,321	919	26,004	418	26,422
1993	124	391	197	24,648	888	26,248	542	26,790
1994	157	365	217	26,561	-	27,300	527	27,827
1995	113	331	211	26,734	-	27,389	881	28,270
1996	178	331	169	31,591	-	32,269	1,057	33,326
1997	152	356	210	34,314	-	35,032	1,229	36,261
1998	174	395	226	35,759	-	36,554	1,858	38,412
1999	139	336	179	37,873	-	38,527	1,803	40,330
2000	183	287	159	46,705	-	47,334	1,841	49,175
2001	75	103	92	47,327	-	47,597	1,822	49,419
2002	70	136	93	46,685	-	47,116	1,796	48,912
2003	100	157	107	47,755	-	48,119	1,939	50,058
2004	76	172	87	48,507	-	48,842	2,004	50,846
2005	115	124	105	47,461	-	47,805	2,120	49,925
2006	113	200	142	47,599	-	48,054	2,166	50,220
2007	estimates discontinued							

Table 2.3 Number of Iowa spring turkey-hunting licenses, 2007-present

Year	Gun/ Bow	Bow Only	Resident Total	Non-Resident	Total Harvest
2007	48,344	5,258	53,602	2,254	55,856
2008	46,822	5,596	52,418	2,258	54,676
2009	46,470	6,139	52,609	2,158	54,767
2010	41,406	6,143	47,549	2,002	49,551
2011	40,393	6,053	46,446	1,859	48,305
2012	37,995	5,287	43,282	1,877	45,159
2013	42,627	6,630	49,257	1,952	51,209
2014	38,259	6,421	42,637	1,908	50,966
2015	36,857	6,886	42,328	1,929	51,143
2016	42,295	7,170	42,295	2,007	51,472
2017	41,123	6,902	48,025	2,043	50,068
2018	40,466	6,701	47,167	2,047	49,214
2019	39,343	6,206	45,549	1,874	47,423
2020	48,573	7,900	56,473	1,713	58,186
2021	43,730	6,550	50,280	2,216	52,495
2022	44,252	6,324	50,576	2,220	52,796
2023	46,146	6,064	52,210	2,240	54,450
2024	48,412	6,327	54,739	2,345	57,084

Table 2.4 Estimated success rate of active Iowa spring turkey hunters, 2007-Present

Year	Gun/ Bow	Bow Only	Resident Total	Non-Resident
2007	20.7	12.9	20.7	37.4
2008	20.5	14.1	20.5	39.8
2009	21.9	14.0	21.0	41.0
2010	22.1	14.8	21.2	41.3
2011	19.9	13.7	19.1	35.8
2012	23.4	15.2	22.4	39.9
2013	20.7	14.9	19.9	38.0
2014	22	16.5	24	39.5
2015	22	12.6	21	40.1
2016	23.7	17.1	23	44.1
2017	23.7	17.2	22.8	41.2
2018	23.5	18.8	22.9	43.1
2019	23.8	19.5	22.3	43.0
2020	24.3	19.6	24.9	35.6
2021	22.1	16.7	21.5	40.5
2022	22.8	18.8	21.5	44.1
2023	26.7	21.9	26.2	51.7
2024	27.5	23.2	25.7	54.7

Table 2.5 Number of licenses issued to Iowa fall turkey hunters by zone, 2007-Present

In 1984 and 2001-present landowners were not broken-down by zone but do appear in the total.
No non-resident licenses issued for fall turkey during 1991-present. Zones 1-3 were eliminated in 2007.

Year	Zone									Bow	Resident Total	Non-Resident
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
2007	-	-	-	2,313	658	1,544	348	150	200	1,721	11,024	0
2008	-	-	-	1,924	620	1,375	348	150	200	1,746	10,243	0
2009	-	-	-	1,500	560	1,284	250	150	187	1,808	9,526	0
2010	-	-	-	1,349	456	1,112	232	150	176	1,956	8,492	0
2011	-	-	-	1,228	357	1,081	250	150	170	1,913	8,172	0
2012	-	-	-	1,273	346	1,190	250	150	196	2,310	8,664	0
2013	-	-	-	1,207	312	1,052	249	150	197	2,242	8,272	0
2014	-	-	-	1,214	292	977	250	150	185	2,343	8,507	0
2015	-	-	-	1,149	230	991	260	151	192	2,514	8,537	0
2016	-	-	-	1,018	232	862	259	150	154	2,488	7,919	0
2017	-	-	-	894	220	747	261	153	146	2,457	7,439	0
2018	-	-	-	754	194	640	255	150	131	2,427	6,935	0
2019	-	-	-	688	209	545	241	150	125	2,220	6,296	0
2020	-	-	-	888	257	602	250	220	159	2,494	7,338	0
2021	-	-	-	808	265	646	250	200	162	2,626	7,321	0
2022	-	-	-	809	213	662	251	200	186	2,769	7,626	0
2023	-	-	-	831	243	673	250	200	159	2,831	7,714	0

Table 2.6 Number of estimated active turkey hunters in Iowa fall turkey seasons by zone, 1981-2006

In 1984 and 2001-present landowners were not broken-down by zone but do appear in the total. No non-resident licenses issued for fall turkey during 1991-present. Starting in fall of 2006, the post card survey was discontinued and active hunters undeterminable.

Year	Zone								Unk	Bow	Resident Total	Non-Resident
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				
1981				1,710						136	1,846	
1982				1,807						290	2,097	
1983				1,650						425	2,075	
1984				1,763	185	530				473	2,981	
1985				1,906	250	699				445	3,300	
1986	89	168		1,953	251	1,025	68			543	4,097	
1987	76	137	92	2,966	264	1,702	87			738	6,062	
1988	100	203	91	3,576	418	3,173	249			1,066	8,876	
1989	83	187	82	4,679	585	4,572	374			846	11,408	139
1990	41	125	55	4,326	509	4,125	400			502	10,083	47
1991			35			3,064				?	3,099	0
1992			22			2,362				?	2,384	0
1993			12			2,157				?	2,169	0
1994			12			2,343				?	2,355	0
1995	30	11	33	1,943	245	2,740	234			?	5,236	0
1996	14	14	16	1,727	334	3,038	195			?	5,338	0
1997	21	18	11	1,572	336	3,293	218			?	5,469	0
1998	11	27	11	2,678	337	3,530	297			?	6,891	0
1999	22	29	21	2,701	347	3,605	300	161	79	?	7,265	0
2000	11	26	23	3,300	355	3,523	309	171	56	?	7,774	0
2001	19	20	10	1,835	221	1,809	157	67	234	?	6,069	0
2002	12	26	18	1,827	233	1,940	149	56	362	?	7,682	0
2003	13	9	15	2,442	352	1,808	139	58	534	?	8,559	0
2004	16	20	22	2,214	328	1,495	268	109	622	?	8,718	0
2005	19	14	13	2,166	392	1,256	260	109	116	528	?	10,593	0
2006	estimates discontinued			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2.7 Estimated harvest for Iowa fall turkey hunting by zone, 1981-Present

In 1984 and 2001-present, landowners were not broken-down by zone (UNK) but do appear in the total.
No non-resident licenses issued for fall turkey during 1991-present.
Zones 1-3 were eliminated in 2007.
In 2006, survey methods changed from a post-mailing survey to mandatory reporting.

Year	Zone									Unk	Bow	Resident Total	Non-Resident
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9				
2007	-	-	-	427	131	298	45	38	34	389	105	1,362	0
2008	-	-	-	286	104	245	48	44	27	321	123	1,075	0
2009	-	-	-	202	84	224	29	33	17	323	103	912	0
2010	-	-	-	192	66	185	25	1	18	268	99	805	0
2011	-	-	-	170	50	197	31	31	24	276	112	779	0
2012	-	-	-	188	47	232	34	32	30	316	131	879	0
2013	-	-	-	164	44	141	28	34	14	278	123	703	0
2014	-	-	-	176	34	140	30	40	19	316	85	755	0
2015	-	-	-	145	41	150	31	35	24	331	117	757	0
2016	-	-	-	115	30	117	24	31	21	289	142	627	0
2017	-	-	-	111	25	66	28	25	9	260	142	524	0
2018	-	-	-	76	22	61	15	25	7	99	108	413	0
2019	-	-	-	76	14	69	26	32	15	91	131	454	0
2020	-	-	-	103	30	71	27	35	18	248	140	532	0
2021	-	-	-	98	28	98	25	48	11	126	123	557	0
2022	-	-	-	96	22	86	28	41	20	138	144	575	0
2023	-	-	-	96	29	103	32	36	14	107	161	584	0

Table 2.8 Success rate Iowa fall turkey hunters by zone, 2007-Present

Landowners were not broken-down by zone but do appear in the total.
No non-resident licenses issued for fall turkey during 1991-present.
In 2006, survey methods changed from a post-mailing survey to mandatory reporting.

Year	Zone						Bow	Resident Mean
	4	5	6	7	8	9		
2008	14.9	16.8	17.8	13.8	29.3	13.5	7.0	10.5
2009	13.5	15.0	17.4	11.6	22.0	9.1	5.7	9.6
2010	14.2	14.5	16.6	10.8	34.0	10.2	5.1	9.5
2011	13.8	14.0	18.2	12.4	20.7	14.1	5.9	9.5
2012	14.8	13.6	19.5	13.6	21.3	15.3	5.7	10.1

Year	Zone						Bow	Resident Mean
	4	5	6	7	8	9		
2013	13.58	14.1	13.4	11.2	22.7	7.1	5.5	8.5
2014	14.5	11.6	14.3	12.0	26.7	10.3	5.5	8.8
2015	12.62	17.83	15.14	11.92	23.18	12.5	6.6	8.8
2016	11.3	12.9	13.6	9.3	20.7	13.6	5.7	7.9
2017	12.4	11.4	8.8	10.7	16.3	6.2	6.1	7.0
2018	10.1	11.3	9.5	5.9	16.7	5.3	4.4	5.9
2019	11.0	6.7	12.7	10.8	21.3	12.0	5.3	7.2
2020	11.6	11.7	11.8	10.8	17.5	11.3	5.6	7.3
2021	12.1	10.6	15.2	10.0	24.0	6.8	4.6	7.6
2022	11.9	10.3	13.0	11.2	20.5	10.8	5.2	7.5
2023	11.6	11.9	15.3	12.8	22.6	8.8	5.7	7.5

Table 2.9 Iowa wild turkey brood survey results by region for birds/flock and young/adult, 2008-present.

Survey Response not adequate in 2014

Y/A=young per adult (italics) and B/F=birds per flock (≥ 4).

Year	Northwest		North-Central		Northeast		West-Central		Central		East-Central		Southwest		South-Central		Southeast		Statewide	
	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH	Y/SH	Y/AH
2008	4.20	2.60	2.90	1.50	3.80	1.90	3.90	1.90	4.00	1.90	3.70	1.90	3.10	1.90	3.60	2.10	3.50	1.70	3.60	1.90
2009	3.70	1.50	3.30	1.80	3.80	1.90	3.10	1.50	3.10	1.50	3.40	1.60	3.50	1.80	3.50	1.60	2.90	1.10	3.30	1.60
2010	4.10	2.10	3.80	2.80	3.80	2.40	3.20	1.60	3.70	2.30	3.70	1.90	3.60	1.70	4.10	2.00	3.10	1.40	3.70	2.00
2011	3.90	2.00	3.50	2.10	3.90	2.50	3.70	1.70	3.50	1.70	3.70	1.70	3.30	1.30	3.90	2.00	3.00	1.40	3.60	1.80
2012	3.90	1.90	4.20	3.00	4.70	3.80	2.70	1.50	3.50	2.10	4.00	2.70	3.70	2.20	3.90	2.30	3.10	1.50	3.80	2.30
2013	3.90	2.00	4.20	1.70	4.70	1.70	2.70	1.20	3.50	1.80	4.00	1.50	3.70	1.50	3.90	2.40	3.10	1.30	3.80	1.70
2014																				
2015	3.49	2.06	2.82	1.81	3.81	2.40	2.04	1.35	3.42	1.79	3.61	1.84	4.22	1.56	3.40	1.80	3.97	1.80	3.42	1.82
2016	3.97	2.14	3.60	2.33	3.86	2.37	3.20	1.64	4.57	2.10	4.40	2.72	3.84	1.80	3.79	1.87	4.32	2.43	3.89	2.20
2017	4.21	2.42	3.69	1.94	4.06	2.04	5.04	2.47	4.40	2.45	4.30	2.46	3.50	1.94	4.40	1.97	4.17	2.20	4.09	2.12
2018	4.29	2.61	3.08	1.96	3.95	2.33	3.49	2.01	5.27	2.10	4.04	1.99	4.13	1.62	4.50	2.24	3.38	1.76	4.00	2.08
2019	4.51	22.8	4.08	2.04	4.28	1.99	4.60	1.33	3.56	1.47	3.50	0.90	4.53	1.64	3.65	1.53	3.57	0.79	4.02	1.56
2020	3.50	1.30	3.90	2.20	4.20	2.10	3.80	1.90	4.60	2.50	3.60	1.80	4.20	1.40	3.90	1.90	4.70	2.60	4.00	2.00
2021	4.78	2.05	4.46	2.98	4.89	2.81	3.32	1.17	5.02	2.93	4.58	2.95	3.78	2.24	4.25	2.42	5.05	2.32	4.53	2.60
2022	4.74	2.48	3.94	2.46	3.91	2.46	3.21	1.48	4.62	3.23	4.66	3.26	4.95	2.79	4.53	2.47	4.29	2.57	4.25	2.58
2023	6.70	2.60	4.50	3.10	4.00	2.60	4.40	2.30	3.70	2.40	3.70	2.20	3.50	1.80	4.00	2.20	4.50	2.70	4.00	2.40

Table 2.10 Iowa wild turkey brood survey results by region for reports and percent hens with broods, 1976- Present

#=total reports and % hens with broods.

Year	Northwest		North-Central		Northeast		West-Central		Central		East-Central		Southwest		South-Central		Southeast		Statewide	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2008	134	62.0	303	50.2	377	48.1	238	48.3	145	48.7	358	49.9	120	60.8	353	58.3	247	47.7	2275	52.7
2009	135	41.3	403	54.1	688	50.8	329	48.8	213	46.6	648	48.3	302	51.4	470	46.8	467	39.4	3655	47.4
2010	200	51.2	433	73	643	63.5	389	50	255	63.7	636	51.4	340	47.2	344	50.3	377	46.2	3617	54.7
2011	164	52.9	514	60.1	629	63.5	255	46.9	281	49.9	512	46.6	286	40.1	379	52.1	424	45.8	3444	50.6
2012	173	46.9	439	72.6	641	79.9	334	56	281	59	495	68.4	308	58.4	372	58.8	391	48.9	3434	60.6
2013	128	57.8	368	50.4	490	50	178	46.7	177	54.9	343	53.4	306	50.4	252	63.7	252	46.1	2494	52.3
2014																				
2015	181	58.9	475	64.2	545	63.1	227	66.1	296	52.5	413	51	190	36.9	485	52.8	193	45.4	3005	45.4
2016	162	53.8	575	64.7	562	61.4	225	51.4	191	46.5	498	61.8	208	47.1	489	49.5	256	56.4	3166	56.6
2017	142	57.5	517	52.6	536	50.2	170	49.1	246	55.7	341	56.4	277	55.6	523	44.9	248	52.7	3037	51.9
2018	171	60.8	512	53.4	663	59.1	235	58.1	224	39.9	494	49.2	301	39.2	731	49.9	370	51.9	3701	52.0
2019	138	57.4	576	51.4	749	49.8	257	28.2	274	44.7	413	34.3	267	36	754	44.1	295	21.4	4562	42.1
2020	171	36.9	549	56	874	49.6	238	48.1	287	52.8	528	51	320	33.7	863	49.1	364	55.9	4202	49.2
2021	198	42.8	620	66.7	1490	57.5	392	51.6	537	58.4	907	64.4	319	59.1	1152	56.9	537	46	6151	57.4
2022	88	52.3	329	62.4	628	62.9	163	46	255	70	433	69.9	130	56.3	506	54.5	256	59.9	2788	60.7
2023	72	39	234	69.8	764	66.1	197	51.8	358	64.7	470	60.4	191	51.7	668	55.7	263	60.5	3217	60.5

Table 2.11 Iowa's spring turkey hunting seasons, 1974-Present

Year	Bag Limit	Poss Limit	Season					Splits	Season Length	# Zones	# Sq Miles	Major Rule Changes
			Youth	1	2	3	4					
1974	1	1/License		4 May-10 May	11 May-19 May				16	3	5,682	$10 Fee
1975	1	1/License		26 Apr-2May	3May-9May	10 May-18May			23	3	2,749	Third season added
1976	1	1/License		24 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-5 May	6 May-16 May			23	4	2,884	NE Iowa closed for restocking
1977	1	1/License		21 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-4 May	5 May-15 May			25	4	3,200	
1978	1	1/License		20 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-3 May	4 May-14 May			25	6	3,683	
1979	1	1/License		19 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-2 May	3 May-13 May		Zones 1-5	25			$15, NE Iowa re-opened;
		1/License		26 Apr-2 May	3 May-9 May	10 May-20 May		Zones 6-8	25	8	9,958	
1980	1	1/License		24 Apr-30 Apr	1 May-7 May	8 May-18 May		Zones 1-5	25			Muzzleloader legal, W Iowa open, Stephens SF Special Zone
		1/License		17 Apr-23 May	24 Apr-30 May	1 May-11 May		Zones 6-9	25	9	12,942	
1981	1	1/License		14 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-10 May			27	9	21,873	Yellow River SF Special Zone, 2nd choice on App, 2 licenses available
1982	1	1/License		13 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-9 May			27	8	21,506	
1983	1	1/License		12 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-8 May			27	10	23,464	
1984	1	1/License		16 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-24 Apr	25 Apr-1 May	2 May-13 May		28	12	25,172	All 3 SF Special Zones, 4th season added
1985	1	1/License		15 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-30 Apr	1 May-12 May		28	13	27,005	$20 Fee, decoys legal
1986	1	1/License		14 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-22 Apr	23 Apr-29 Apr	30 Apr-11 May		28	15	39,211	Combo gun/bow license, free landowner permit, archery-only permit
1987	1	1/License		13 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-10 May		28	13	40,202	
1988	1	1/License		11 Apr-14 Apr	15 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-8 May		28	11	44,112	Unlimited 4th season permits, all day hunting
1989	1	1/License		10 Apr-13 Apr	14 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-7 May		28	5	56,043	Entire state open
1990	1	1/License		9 Apr-12 Apr	13 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-24 Apr	25 Apr-6 May		28	5	56,043	Nonresidents allowed
1991	1	1/License		15 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-30 Apr	1 May-12 May		28	5	56,043	
1992	1	1/License		13 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-10 May		28	5	56,043	$22 Fee
1993	1	1/License		12 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-9 May		28	5	56,043	
1994	1	1/License		18 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-3 May	4 May-15 May		28	4	56,043	
1995	1	1/License		17 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-2 May	3 May-14 May		28	4	56,043	
1996	1	1/License		15 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-30 Apr	1 May-12 May		28	4	56,043	
1997	1	1/License		14 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-22 Apr	23 Apr-29 Apr	30 Apr-11 May		28	4	56,043	
1998	1	1/License		13 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-10 May		28	4	56,043	
1999	1	1/License		12 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-9 May		28	4	56,043	$22.50 Fee, archers allowed 2 permits
2000	1	1/License		17 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-2 May	3 May-21 May		35	4	56,043	

Year	Bag Limit	Poss Limit	Season					Splits	Season Length	# Zones	# Sq Miles	Major Rule Changes
			Youth	1	2	3	4					
2001	1	1/License		16 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-24 Apr	25 Apr-1 May	2 May-20 May		35	4	56,043	
2002	1	1/License		15 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-30 Apr	1 May-19 May		35	4	56,043	$23 Fee
2003	1	1/License		14 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-22 Apr	23 Apr-29 Apr	30 Apr-18 May		35	4	56,043	
2004	1	1/License		12 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-16 May		35	4	56,043	
2005	1	1/License	8 Apr-10 Apr	11 Apr-14 Apr	15 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-15 May		38	4	56,043	Youth season added
2006	1	1/License	7 Apr-9 Apr	10 Apr-13 Apr	14 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-14 May		38	4	56,043	NW Iowa zone added for nonresidents
2007	1	1/License	13 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-24 Apr	25 Apr-1 May	2 May-20 May		38	1	56,043	Mandatory harvest reporting, 3 state forest zones eliminated
2008	1	1/License	11 Apr-13 Apr	14 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-22 Apr	23 Apr-29 Apr	30 Apr-18 May		38	1	56,043	
2009	1	1/License	10 Apr-12 Apr	13 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-17 May		38	1	56,043	
2010	1	1/License	9 Apr-11 Apr	12 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-16 May		38	1	56,043	
2011	1	1/License	8 Apr-10 Apr	11 Apr-14 Apr	15 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-15 May		38	1	56,043	
2012	1	1/License	7 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-24 Apr	25 Apr-1 May	2 May-20 May		44	1	56,043	Youth season extended 6 days
2013	1	1/License	6 Apr-14 Apr	15 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-30 Apr	1 May-19 May		44	1	56,043	
2014	1	1/License	5 Apr-13 Apr	14 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-22 Apr	23 Apr-29 Apr	30 Apr-18 May		44	1	56,043	Unfilled youth tag valid until filled
2015	1	1/License	4 Apr-12 Apr	13 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-17 May		44	1	56,043	
2016	1	1/License	9 Apr-17 Apr	18 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-3 May	4 May-22 May		44	1	56,043	
2017	1	1/License	8 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-2 May	3 May-21 May		44	1	56,043	
2018	1	1/License	7 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-24 Apr	25 Apr-1 May	2 May-20 May		44	1	56,043	
2019	1	1/License	5 Apr-7 Apr	8 Apr-11 Apr	12 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-12 May		38	1	56,043	3 day youth before first season, hard start 2nd Monday of Apr, Shot 4-8
2020	1	1/License	10 Apr-12 Apr	13 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-21 Apr	22 Apr-28 Apr	29 Apr-17 May		38	1	56,043	$28.50 Fee
2021	1	1/License	9 Apr-11 Apr	12 Apr-15 Apr	16 Apr-20 Apr	21 Apr-27 Apr	28 Apr-16 May		38	1	56,043	
2022	1	1/License	8 Apr-10 Apr	11 Apr-14 Apr	15 Apr-19 Apr	20 Apr-26 Apr	27 Apr-15 May		38	1	56,043	
2023	1	1/License	7 Apr-9 Apr	10 Apr-13 Apr	14 Apr-18 Apr	19 Apr-25 Apr	26 Apr-14 May		38	1	56,043	Legalize .410 and 28 gauge with shot not smaller than 10
2024	1	1/License	5 Apr-7 Apr	8 Apr-11 Apr	12 Apr-16 Apr	17 Apr-23 Apr	24 Apr-12 May		38	1	56,043	

Table 2.12 Iowa's fall turkey gun hunting seasons, 1981-Present

Archery only seasons same as deer seasons.

Year	Bag Limit	Poss Limit	Season	Season Length	# Zones	# Sq. Miles	Major Rule Changes
1981	1	1/LICENSE	21 OCT-01 NOV	12	2	4,032	$15 fee
1982	1	1/LICENSE	19 OCT-31 OCT	13	2	5,254	1 Gun & 1 Bow, unlimited bow permits in spring zones
1983	1	1/LICENSE	18 OCT-30 OCT	13	2	5,254	Hunter safety required if born after 1 Jan 1967
1984	1	1/LICENSE	16 OCT-28 OCT	13	3	13,685	Decoys legal; Western, Central, and NE Iowa open
1985	1	1/LICENSE	15 OCT-27 OCT	13	3	13,685	$20 fee
1986	1	1/LICENSE	14 OCT-26 OCT	13	6	21,575	Stephens & Shimek SF special zones, statewide bow season
1987	1	1/LICENSE	12 OCT-08 NOV	28	7	21,575	2 licenses possible, Yellow River SF special zone
1988	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT-27 NOV	49	7	25,402	
1989	1	1/LICENSE	09 OCT-26 NOV	49	7	29,610	Nonresidents allowed
1990	1	1/LICENSE	15 OCT-30 NOV	47	7	39,191	
1991	1	1/LICENSE	14 OCT-30 NOV	48	2 OF 7	9,060	Licenses issued for zones 3 & 6 only (NE Iowa); $22 fee
1992	1	1/LICENSE	17 OCT-29 NOV	44	2 OF 7	9,060	Licenses issued for zones 3 & 6 only (NE Iowa)
1993	1	1/LICENSE	11 OCT-28 NOV	49	2 OF 7	9,060	Licenses issued for zones 3 & 6 only (NE Iowa)
1994	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT-30 NOV	52	2 OF 7	9,060	Licenses issued for zones 3 & 6 only (NE Iowa)
1995	1	1/LICENSE	16 OCT-30 NOV	46	7	39,191	
1996	1	1/LICENSE	14 OCT-30 NOV	48	7	39,191	
1997	1	1/LICENSE	13 OCT-30 NOV	49	7	39,191	
1998	1	1/LICENSE	12 OCT-30 NOV	50	7	39,191	
1999	1	1/LICENSE	11 OCT-30 NOV	51	8	44,056	Zone 8 added, $22.50 Fee
2000	1	1/LICENSE	16 OCT-30 NOV	46	8	44,056	
2001	1	1/LICENSE	15 OCT-30 NOV	47	8	44,056	
2002	1	1/LICENSE	14 OCT-30 NOV	48	8	44,056	$23 Fee
2003	1	1/LICENSE	13 OCT-5 DEC	54	8	44,056	
2004	1	1/LICENSE	11 OCT-3 DEC	54	8	44,056	
2005	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT-2 DEC	54	9	56,043	NW Iowa zone added, a 3rd license available, dogs allowed
2006	1	1/LICENSE	16 OCT-1 DEC	48	9	56,043	Mandatory harvest reporting
2007	1	1/LICENSE	15 OCT-30 NOV	47	6	56,043	3 SF zones eliminated
2008	1	1/LICENSE	13 OCT-5 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2009	1	1/LICENSE	12 OCT-4 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2010	1	1/LICENSE	11 OCT-3 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2011	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT-2 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2012	1	1/LICENSE	15 OCT-30 NOV	47	6	56,043	
2013	1	1/LICENSE	14 OCT-6 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2014	1	1/LICENSE	13 OCT-5 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2015	1	1/LICENSE	12 OCT-4 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2016	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT- 2 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2017	1	1/LICENSE	16 OCT-1 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2018	1	1/LICENSE	16 OCT-30 NOV	46	6	56,043	
2019	1	1/LICENSE	14 OCT-6 DEC	54	6	56,043	$28.50 Fee

Year	Bag Limit	Poss Limit	Season	Season Length	# Zones	# Sq. Miles	Major Rule Changes
2020	1	1/LICENSE	12 OCT-4 DEC	54	6	56,043	Added 50 tags Zone 8
2021	1	1/LICENSE	11 OCT-3 DEC	54	6	56,043	
2022	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT-2 DEC	54	6	56,043	Legalize .410 and 28 gauge with shot not smaller than 10
2023	1	1/LICENSE	10 OCT-1 DEC	54	6	56,043	