

# GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING WILD TURKEYS FOR SUMMER TURKEY SURVEY

## Gobblers:

- ✓ Body appears black; In sunlight, metallic iridescence is noticeable
- ✓ Head brightly colored but variable with red, white, and blue
- ✓ 6+ inch beard protruding from chest
- ✓ During summer, gobblers do not typically display with tail fan open
- ✓ Often travel alone or in bachelor groups with other gobblers in summer



*Typical gobbler in summer. Look for darker body and more brightly colored head than hens and poults. Adults gobblers almost always have a 6+ inch beard.*

## Hens:

- ✓ Body brown and tan; duller than gobblers
- ✓ Head gray or pale blue sometimes with light pink evident
- ✓ Hens typically beardless but some have thin beard
- ✓ Smaller than gobblers but usually larger than poults
- ✓ Several hens (with or without young) will often travel together in summer



*Hen with poults. Note the dull brown body and gray or pale blue head.*



*Bearded hen with poults. About 5-10% of hens will have beards, making other characteristics more important in sex determination.*

## Poults (young of year):

- ✓ Young can vary in size from baseball-sized to almost full-grown
- ✓ Will almost always be seen with 1 or more adult hens
- ✓ Size difference is best way to identify poults
- ✓ Sexes not discernable
- ✓ No visible beard
- ✓ Older poults can be similar in size to adult hens, especially in late summer



*Older poults can be similar in size to adult hens, making age determination difficult. When in doubt, record flocks of older poults and hens as “unknown.”*