

2006 VERMONT WILDLIFE HARVEST REPORT

Wild Turkey



VERMONT
FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT
(802) 241-3700 / www.vtfishandwildlife.com



2006 VERMONT TURKEY HARVEST REPORT

Most of the programs described in this report are funded through the **Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program**. This program initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid In Wildlife Act and created a system where by taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States. The State of Vermont use these monies for acquiring land, and for restoring and managing wildlife. These excise tax dollars, coupled with state hunting license fees have been the predominate source of money funding the successful restoration and management of Vermont's wildlife resources.

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Protecting the integrity, diversity and vitality of Vermont's fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Agency of Natural Resources

103 South Main Street, 10 South
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-0501

(802) 241-3700 / www.vtfishandwildlife.com

2006 Wild Turkey Report

Spring Turkey Season

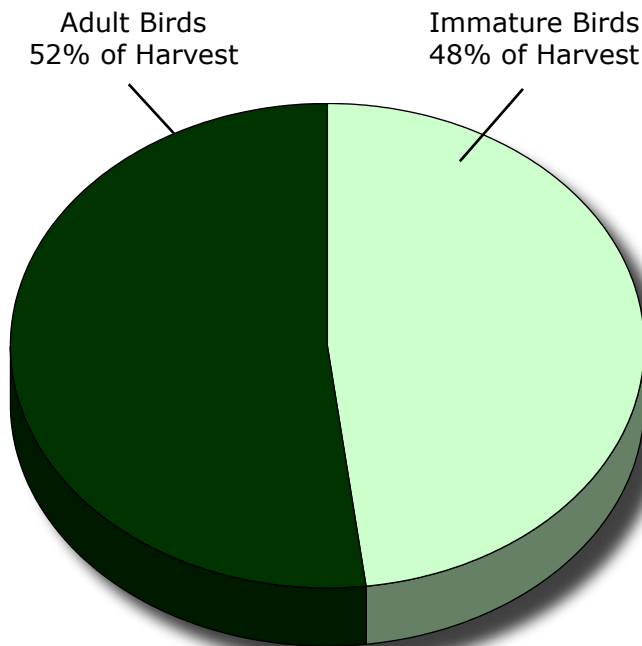
Vermont's 2006 spring season resulted in a new, all-time record harvest of 4,672 bearded birds, topping the previous record harvest of 4,649 birds set in 2005. The 2006 record tally includes 529 birds taken in the April 29-30 youth turkey season, which also established a new record harvest for that season. Season dates for the regular spring season were May 1-31.

Weather can play a significant role in the turkey harvest. The 2006 spring record turkey harvest was achieved despite the very challenging hunting conditions resulting from the state's third wettest May on record. Some portions of the state experienced nearly two straight weeks of drenching rain during the hunting season. Hunter success rates, however, were high with 25.9% of hunters harvesting at least one turkey. Among these successful hunters, 26.3% harvested a second bearded bird to fill the two-bird spring bag limit. Hunting pressure in 2006, measured in spring turkey license sales (14,294) was slightly higher than 2005 license sales of 13,999 and 2004 sales of 13,992. The number of turkey licenses sold in the last four to five year period has remained almost unchanged. It appears that Vermont maintains a fairly stable and skilled cadre of turkey hunting enthusiasts.



Mark Scott

4,672 TURKEYS HARVESTED



Typical of Vermont's spring turkey seasons, adult birds comprised 52% of the harvest and immature birds comprised the remaining 48%. The 2006 season also included 34 bearded hens in the tally. For the third consecutive year, the entire state of Vermont was open to hunting for all licensed turkey hunters. Again in 2006, another new record was established as spring turkeys were harvested in an unprecedented 240 of Vermont's 253 towns, by 3,700 successful hunters.

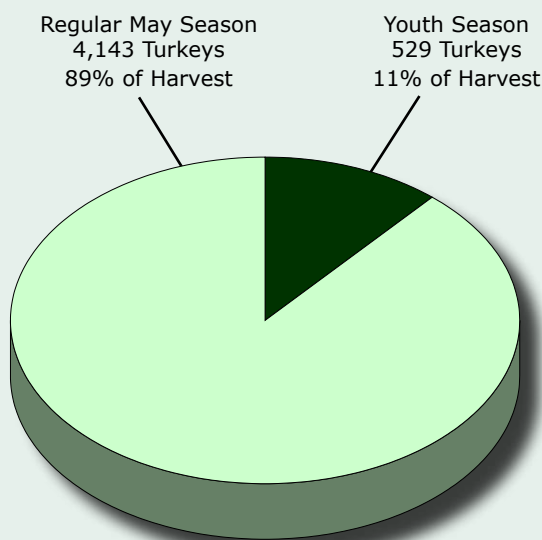


2006 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Non-Resident	Resident	Total Harvest
ADDISON	1	33	34
ALBANY		17	17
ALBURG		15	15
ANDOVER		8	8
ARLINGTON	1	10	11
ATHENS		4	4
BAKERSFIELD		21	21
BALTIMORE		3	3
BARNARD	6	6	12
BARNET	2	24	26
BARRE	1	34	35
BARTON	1	18	19
BELVIDERE		2	2
BENNINGTON	2	28	30
BENSON	4	38	42
BERKSHIRE		6	6
BERLIN		34	34
BETHEL	7	25	32
BLOOMFIELD	8	8	16
BOLTON		4	4
BRADFORD	5	29	34
BRAINTREE	2	10	12
BRANDON	1	27	28
BRATTLEBORO	2	14	16
BRIDGEWATER	1	16	17
BRIDPORT		25	25
BRIGHTON	2	11	13
BRISTOL	1	25	26
BROOKFIELD	1	20	21
BROOKLINE		9	9
BROWNINGTON		11	11
BRUNSWICK		2	2
BUELS GORE		1	1
BURKE		20	20
CABOT	4	48	52
CALAIS	2	28	30
CAMBRIDGE	1	39	40
CANAAN	2	4	6
CASTLETON	1	28	29
CAVENDISH	2	15	17
CHARLESTON		31	31
CHARLOTTE	1	46	47
CHELSEA		27	27
CHESTER		43	43
CHITTENDEN	1	18	19
CLARENDON		32	32
COLCHESTER		15	15
CONCORD	3	30	33
CORINTH	4	26	30
CORNWALL	1	26	27
COVENTRY		11	11
CRAFTSBURY		34	34
DANBY	1	28	29
DANVILLE	4	39	43
DERBY		16	16
DORSET	2	19	21
DOVER		10	10
DUMMERSTON		22	22
DUXBURY		8	8
E HAVEN	1	4	5
E MONTPELIER	2	56	58

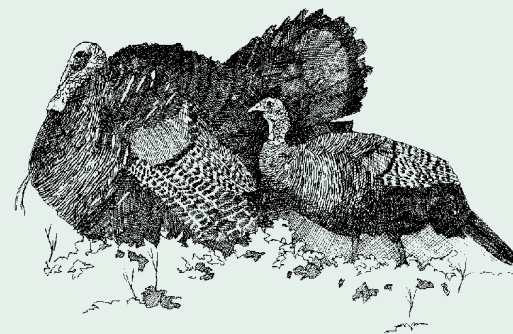
The 2006 harvest was up over the 2005 record in 10 of Vermont's 24 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) lead by WMU K2 with 349 birds reported, followed by B (329 birds) and D2 (328 birds reported) in northeast Vermont. Harvests were down just slightly in WMUs F1, F2, H1, and M2.

TURKEY HARVEST BY SEASON

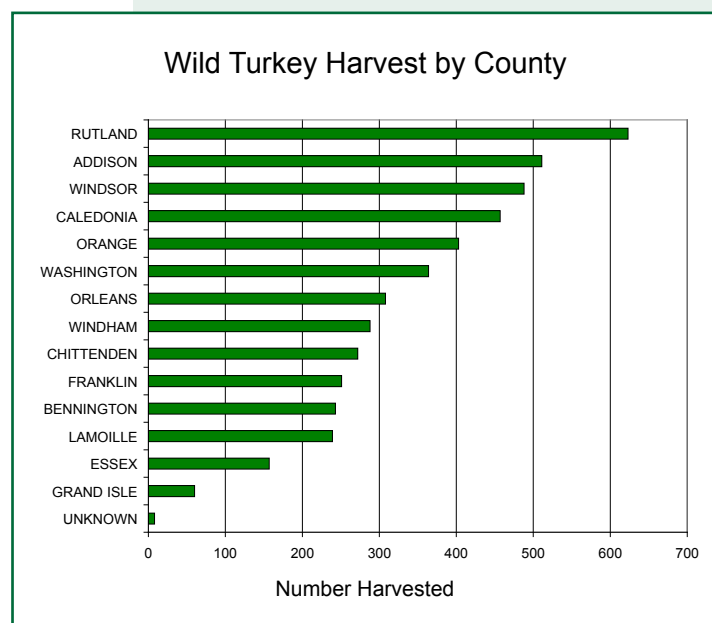


2006 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Non-Resident	Resident	Total Harvest
EDEN		24	24
ELMORE		15	15
ENOSBURG		23	23
ESSEX		7	7
FAIR HAVEN		9	9
FAIRFAX		24	24
FAIRFIELD		38	38
FAIRLEE		16	16
FAYSTON		4	4
FERDINAND		2	2
FERRISBURG		48	48
FLETCHER		10	10
FRANKLIN		11	11
GEORGIA		30	30
GLOVER	1	24	25
GOSHEN		8	8
GRAFTON	1	12	13
GRANBY	2	2	4
GRAND ISLE		26	26
GRANVILLE	2	7	9
GREENSBORO		20	20
GROTON	2	27	29
GUILDHALL	10	11	21
GUILFORD	8	27	35
HALIFAX	5	5	10
HANCOCK		9	9
HARDWICK	1	40	41
HARTFORD	7	23	30
HARTLAND	3	26	29
HIGHGATE		27	27
HINESBURG	2	33	35
HOLLAND		17	17
HUBBARDTON		22	22
HUNTINGTON	1	5	6
HYDE PARK		28	28
IRA		15	15
IRASBURG		27	27
JAMAICA	1	17	18
JAY	2	6	8
JERICO		7	7
JOHNSON	3	31	34
KIRBY	3	24	27
LEICESTER		8	8
LEMINGTON	1	2	3
LINCOLN		3	3
LONDONDERRY		8	8
LOWELL	1	9	10
LUDLOW		7	7
LUNENBURG	20	15	35
LYNDON	1	39	40
MAIDSTONE	5	3	8
MANCHESTER	1	11	12
MARLBORO		11	11
MARSHFIELD		12	12
MENDON		7	7
MIDDLEBURY	1	30	31
MIDDLESEX		21	21
MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS	1	25	26
MILTON		43	43
MONKTON		23	23
MONTGOMERY		13	13
MONTPELIER		1	1



Counties with the highest harvest in 2006 were Rutland County (623) followed by Addison County (511) and Windsor County (488). The northeast region of the state continues to contribute significantly to the harvest from Caledonia County (457 birds) over Orange County's harvest with 403 turkeys reported.



The 2006 harvest is the sixth new spring turkey harvest record produced in the past nine years. In 1998, the Department's Wild Turkey Management Team initiated structural changes in the turkey hunting season to strongly emphasize high quality spring hunting over providing more fall hunting opportunities. The Team believes this management strategy helped stimulate a three-fold population increase over subsequent years, resulting in this string of record harvests. In the interest of maintaining Vermont's high quality spring turkey hunting seasons, and in light of our recent record harvests, the management team feels our current, conservative fall harvest structure is most appropriate and should be continued.

2006 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Non-Resident	Resident	Total Harvest
MORETOWN		10	10
MORGAN		10	10
MORRISTOWN		39	39
MT HOLLY		19	19
MT TABOR		5	5
N HERO		4	4
NEW HAVEN	1	55	56
NEWARK		9	9
NEWBURY	26	58	84
NEWFANE	3	20	23
NEWPORT		20	20
NORTHFIELD		17	17
NORTON		4	4
NORWICH	6	14	20
ORANGE		16	16
ORWELL	3	54	57
PANTON	1	15	16
PAWLET	16	53	69
PEACHAM		15	15
PERU		5	5
PITTSFIELD		5	5
PITTSFORD	5	36	41
PLAINFIELD		24	24
PLYMOUTH	2	12	14
POMFRET	4	16	20
POULTNEY	1	43	44
POWNAL	4	43	47
PROCTOR		8	8
PUTNEY	1	4	5
RANDOLPH	1	13	14
READING		4	4
READSBORO		2	2
RICHFORD		17	17
RICHMOND	2	19	21
RIPTON		5	5
ROCHESTER	3	12	15
ROCKINGHAM	5	30	35
ROXBURY		7	7
ROYALTON	1	18	19
RUPERT	14	43	57
RUTLAND TOWN		12	12
RYEGATE	20	44	64
S HERO		15	15
SALISBURY		23	23
SANDGATE	1	9	10
SEARSBURG		1	1
SHAFTSBURY		30	30
SHARON	2	27	29
SHEFFIELD	1	18	19
SHELBURNE		18	18
SHELDON		21	21
SHERBURNE	1	3	4
SHOREHAM	1	48	49
SHREWSBURY	1	20	21
SOMERSET	1		1
SPRINGFIELD	9	38	47
ST ALBANS		8	8
ST GEORGE		5	5
ST JOHNSBURY		23	23
STAMFORD	1	2	3
STANNARD		10	10
STARSBORO		21	21



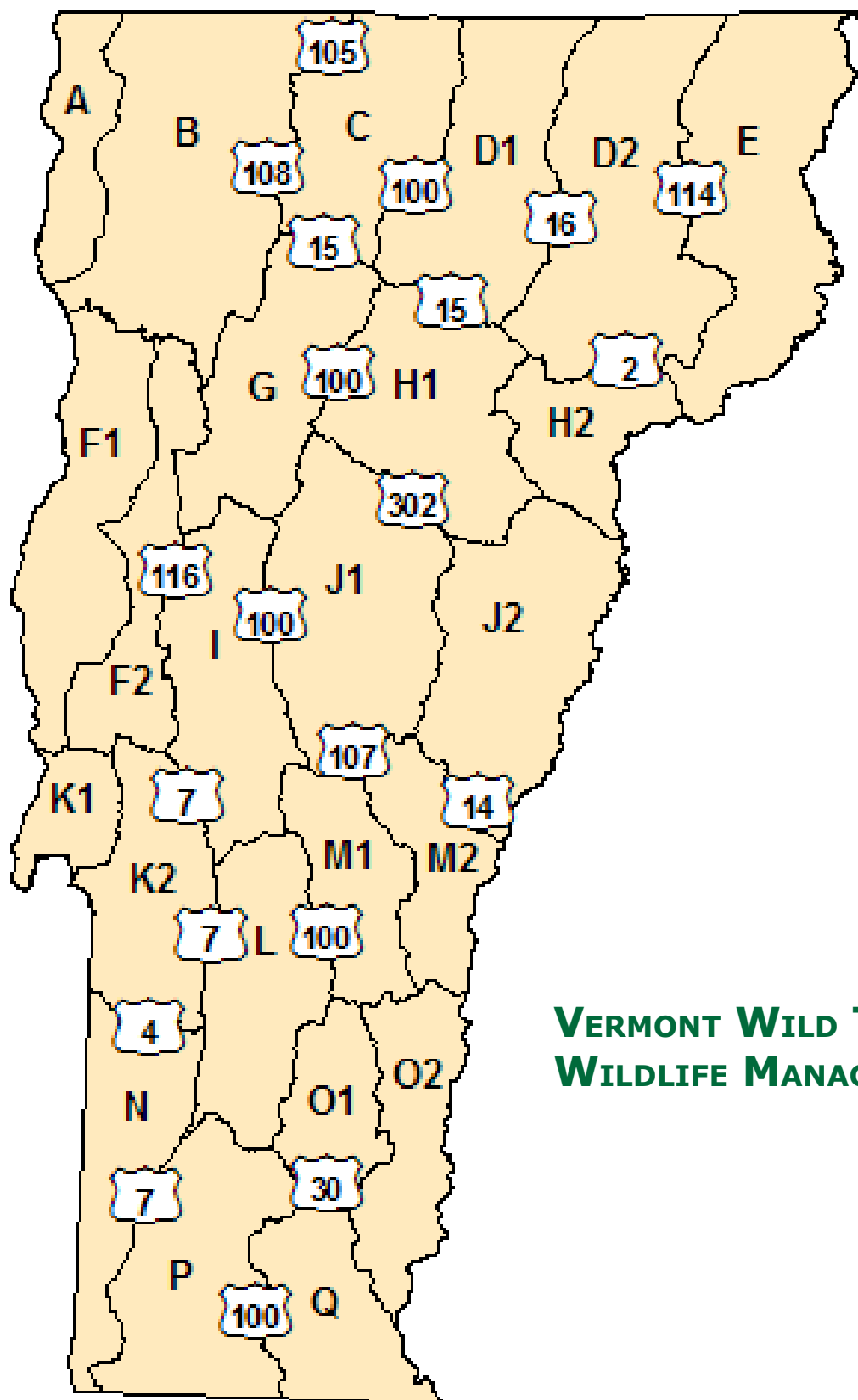
Stephen Bauer - NWTF.org

2006 LEGAL SPRING TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND RESIDENCY

Town of Kill	Non-Resident	Resident	Total Harvest
STOCKBRIDGE	2	16	18
STOWE		32	32
STRAFFORD	4	20	24
STRATTON		2	2
SUDBURY		17	17
SUNDERLAND		1	1
SUTTON		16	16
SWANTON		2	2
THETFORD	1	14	15
TINMOUTH		24	24
TOPSHAM	1	7	8
TOWNSHEND		26	26
TROY		18	18
TUNBRIDGE	4	28	32
UNDERHILL	1	17	18
UNKNOWN		8	8
VERNON		11	11
VERSHIRE		11	11
VICTORY		5	5
W FAIRLEE	2	13	15
W HAVEN	8	23	31
W RUTLAND		20	20
W WINDSOR	6	11	17
WAITSFIELD	1	14	15
WALDEN		18	18
WALLINGFORD	1	26	27
WALTHAM		4	4
WARDSBORO		4	4
WARREN		6	6
WASHINGTON		7	7
WATERBURY		18	18
WATERFORD	5	40	45
WATERVILLE		1	1
WEATHERSFIELD	15	30	45
WELLS		18	18
WESTFIELD		9	9
WESTFORD		22	22
WESTMINSTER		8	8
WESTMORE		5	5
WESTON		3	3
WEYBRIDGE	1	14	15
WHEELLOCK	1	11	12
WHITING		14	14
WHITINGHAM		1	1
WILLIAMSTOWN	1	36	37
WILLISTON		23	23
WILMINGTON		6	6
WINDHAM		10	10
WINDSOR	2	17	19
WINHALL	2	3	5
WOLCOTT	1	23	24
WOODBURY		4	4
WOODFORD	1	7	8
WOODSTOCK	1	19	20
WORCESTER	1	7	8
TOTALS	364	4,308	4,672



The vagaries of weather and its impact on winter survival, spring productivity, turkey populations and harvests are unpredictable and difficult to gauge. This year's challenging hunting conditions likely dampened the harvest somewhat. Establishing a new spring harvest record, despite the poor weather, speaks not only to Vermont's robust turkey population, but to the skill and tenacity of its hunters as well. Examination of longer-term harvest trends suggests that after a fairly dramatic and steady population increase through the period of the mid to late 1990s, Vermont's turkey population may be stabilizing in the last few years near peak historic levels.



**VERMONT WILD TURKEY
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT UNITS**

2006 LEGAL FALL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND METHOD

Town of Kill	Archery	Shotgun	Total Harvest
ADDISON		6	6
ANDOVER		1	1
ARLINGTON		2	2
ATHENS		1	1
BARNARD		3	3
BARNET	1	4	5
BARRE		4	4
BENNINGTON		1	1
BENSON		2	2
BERLIN		4	4
BRADFORD		1	1
BRAINTREE	2		2
BRANDON	1	1	2
BRATTLEBORO		2	2
BRIDPORT	1	7	8
BRISTOL		2	2
BROOKFIELD		4	4
CABOT	1	7	8
CASTLETON		2	2
CAVENDISH		1	1
CHARLOTTE	2	10	12
CHELSEA		1	1
CHESTER		3	3
CLARENDON	1	4	5
CORINTH	1		1
CORNWALL		5	5
DANBY		3	3
DANVILLE		3	3
DOVER		1	1
FAIR HAVEN		2	2
FERRISBURG	1	8	9
GRAFTON		1	1
GROTON	1	3	4
GUILFORD		1	1
HARTFORD	1	1	2
HARTLAND	1	4	5
HINESBURG		2	2
HUBBARDTON		3	3
JAMAICA		1	1
JERICHO	1		1
JOHNSON		1	1
LEICESTER		1	1
LINCOLN		3	3
LUDLOW		1	1
MARSHFIELD		1	1
MIDDLEBURY		12	12
MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS		3	3
MONKTON		3	3
MORETOWN		3	3
MORRISTOWN		6	6
MT HOLLY		1	1
NEW HAVEN		15	15
NEWBURY	2	8	10
NORTHFIELD	1		1
ORANGE		2	2
ORWELL	1	5	6
PANTON		3	3
PAWLET	1	11	12
PEACHAM	2	1	3
PITTSFORD	1	9	10
POMFRET		1	1

Fall Turkey Season

Vermont's 2006 fall turkey season resulted in a harvest of 374 either-sex birds, down 62% from the fall 2005 harvest of 991 birds and substantially lower than the average of the previous three fall seasons (1,069 birds). A robust fall hard mast crop, especially beechnuts, coupled with challenging spring nesting conditions in 2006 are two factors that likely contributed to this low harvest. It is important to note, however, that fall harvests typically are poor indicators of Vermont's turkey population trend.



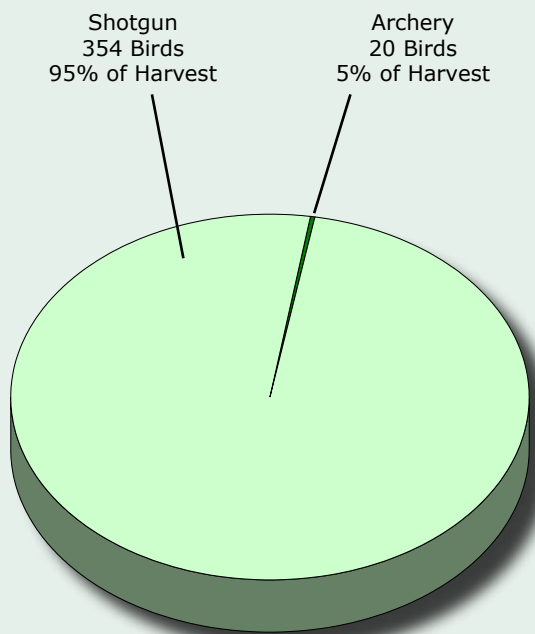
The 2006 fall turkey archery season accounted for 20 of the harvested birds, with the balance of the birds (354) taken in the shotgun season. Fall birds were taken in 111 Vermont towns.

2006 LEGAL FALL TURKEY HARVEST BY TOWN AND METHOD

Town of Kill	Archery	Shotgun	Total Harvest
POULTNEY		12	12
POWNAI		1	1
PROCTOR		4	4
RANDOLPH	1	6	7
READING		1	1
READSBORO		1	1
RIPTON		2	2
ROCHESTER		1	1
ROCKINGHAM		1	1
RUPERT		6	6
RUTLAND TOWN		1	1
RYEGATE	2	13	15
SALISBURY		6	6
SHAFTSBURY		2	2
SHARON	1		1
SHELBURNE	2	2	4
SHOREHAM		7	7
SHREWSBURY	1	1	2
SPRINGFIELD		2	2
ST GEORGE		1	1
ST JOHNSBURY		1	1
STAMFORD		1	1
STARSBORO		1	1
STOCKBRIDGE		1	1
STOWE		6	6
STRAFFORD		2	2
SUDBURY		2	2
THETFORD		3	3
TINMOUTH	1	2	3
TOPSHAM		1	1
UNKNOWN		3	3
W FAIRLEE	1		1
W HAVEN	1	4	5
W RUTLAND		2	2
W WINDSOR		1	1
WAITSFIELD	1		1
WALLINGFORD		4	4
WARREN		1	1
WASHINGTON		3	3
WATERFORD		8	8
WEATHERSFIELD		1	1
WELLS		4	4
WEYBRIDGE		3	3
WHITING		1	1
WHITINGHAM		1	1
WILLIAMSTOWN		5	5
WILLISTON		1	1
WILMINGTON		3	3
WOODFORD		1	1
WOODSTOCK		3	3
TOTALS	34	340	374

FALL TURKEY HARVEST METHOD OF HARVEST

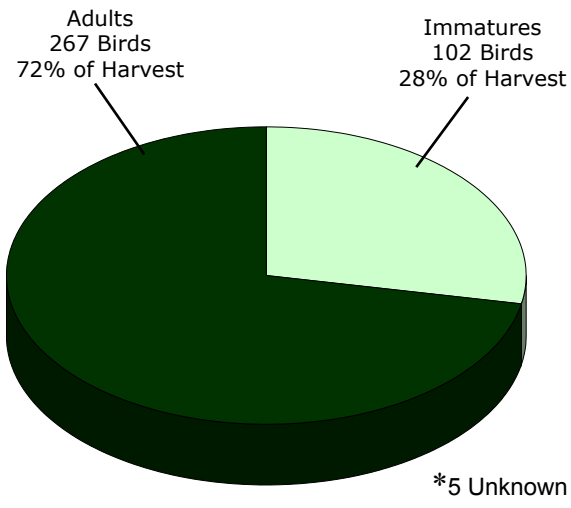
374 TURKEYS HARVESTED



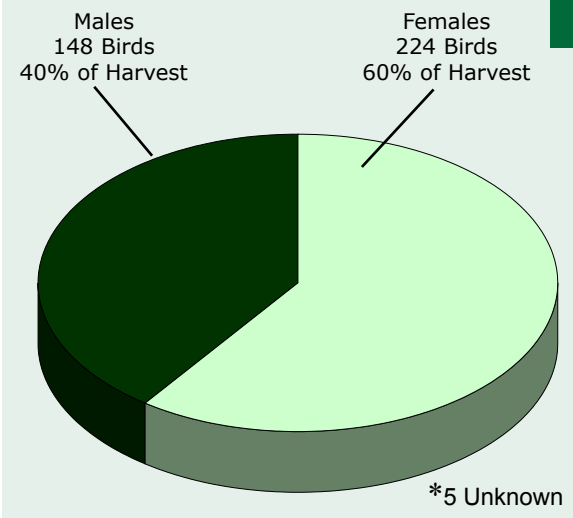
Henry Zeman - NWTF.org

As many of our reporting agents and hunters have a difficult time determining the sex and age of fall-harvested birds (particularly immature birds), we have learned to view the accuracy of our fall sex and age reported data with caution. Final tallies indicate immature birds comprised 28% of the harvest, while females accounted for 60% of the total harvest. Of this female component, 76% were adults and 24 % were immature. The immature to adult female ratio was 1: 1.6.

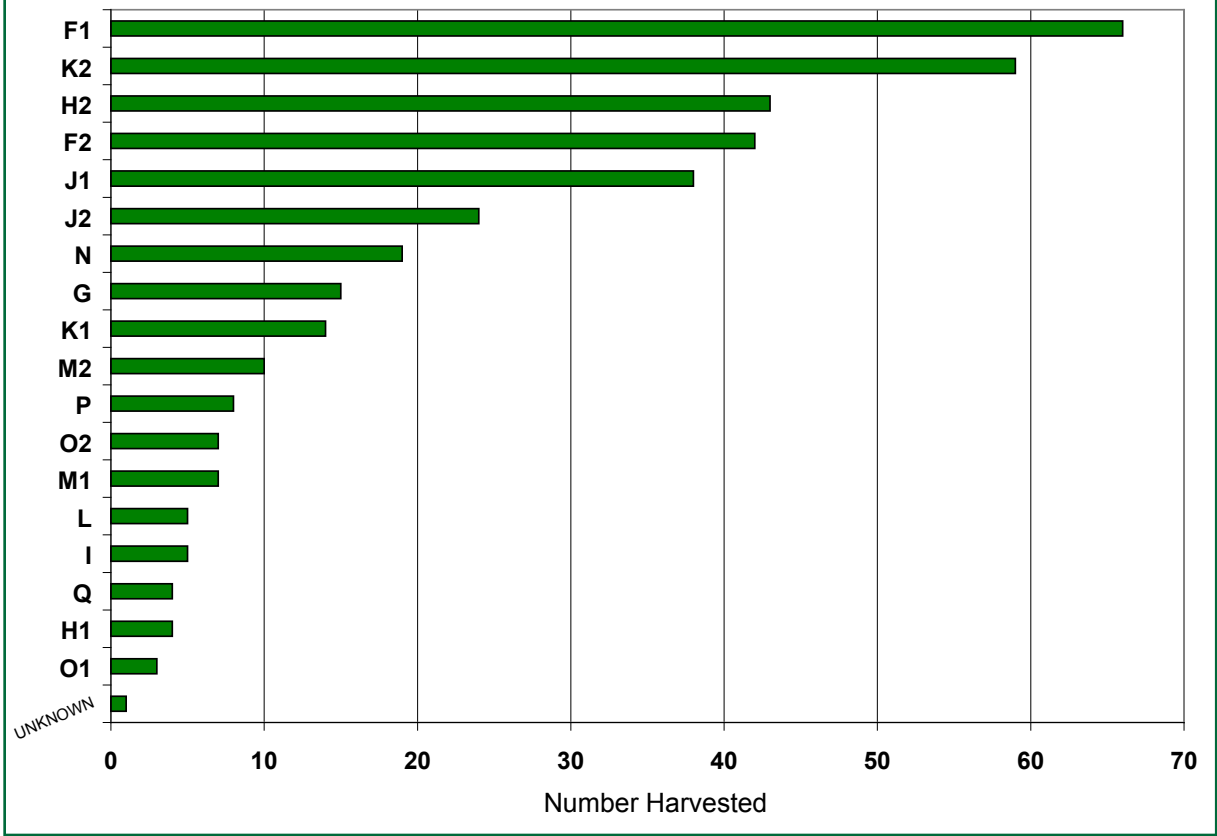
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF HARVEST*



SEX DISTRIBUTION OF HARVEST*



Wild Turkey Harvest by WMU



Wildlife Management Unit F1 reported the highest number of fall birds with 66 taken, followed by WMU K2 with 59 birds and H2 reporting 43 birds.