



Arkansas Wild Turkey Harvest Summary 2007 Spring Season



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Introduction: The spring turkey season for 2007 was conservative when compared to recent spring seasons. The overall framework included a three-week season beginning April 14 and ending May 4, with a statewide special youth hunt on April 7-8. Several zones had a restricted 2-week regular season. In Zone 17, the special youth hunts occurred one week earlier, and the regular season was April 7-29. The overall regular season was one week shorter and one week later than the 2005 and 2006 spring seasons. Bag limits were unchanged from recent years, with a two-bird limit, no more than one of which could be a jake.

Information contained in this report comes from mandatory checking of wild turkeys at volunteer checkstations throughout the state and via internet checking. AGFC extends a special **Thank You** to volunteer checkstation operators for their assistance in collecting harvest data.

Results: A checked harvest of **11,069 turkeys** was recorded in 2007, down from 13,598 in 2006 and down from the record harvest of 19,947 in 2003 (Table 1). A total of 889 turkeys were harvested during special statewide youth hunts prior to the regular season, down from 944 in 2006. Jakes made up 25% of the statewide harvest, varying from 31% in the Ozarks to 14% in the Gulf Coastal Plain.

Sharp County led the state with 419 turkeys checked (Fig. 1), followed by Fulton (392), Baxter (325), Independence (317), Randolph (315), Izard (314), Cleburne (283), Union (280), Boone (279) and Searcy County (277). No county harvest records were established in spring 2007. Harvest increased from 2006 levels in 18 of Arkansas's 75 counties, mostly in the GCP and Delta regions (Fig. 1).

On public hunting areas, Ozark NF Wildlife Management Area (WMA) led the state with 91 turkeys checked, followed by White Rock WMA (71), Sylamore WMA (68), Winona WMA (58), Piney Creeks WMA (58), Mt. Magazine WMA (56), Muddy Creek WMA (55), White River National Wildlife Refuge (45), St. Francis National Forest WMA (44) and Lake Greeson WMA (19).

Physical characteristics of wild turkeys checked in 2007 increased slightly over 2006. Average weights of adult gobblers varied from a high of 20.7 pounds in the Ozarks to a low of 19.08 pounds in the GCP. Average beard lengths of adult gobblers varied from a high of 9.82 inches in the Ozarks and Ouachitas to a low of 9.49 inches in the Delta. Average spur length of adult gobblers varied from a high of 0.97 inches in the Ozarks to a low of 0.92 inches in the Gulf Coastal Plain.

Table 1. 2007 Arkansas spring season turkey harvest by region.

Region	Number Harvested (% of Total)	% Change from Spring 2006	WMA Harvest (% of Region Total)
Ozarks	5,003 (45%)	22% Decrease	396 (8%)
Ouachitas	2,163 (20%)	20% Decrease	228 (11%)
Gulf Coastal Plain	2,679 (24%)	11% Decrease	77 (3%)
Delta	1,224 (11%)	4% Decrease	125 (9%)
Statewide	11,069 (100%)	18% Decrease	826 (7%)

