

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

*Wildlife Division
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The 1978 Grouse and Woodcock Season and Outlook for 1979

by
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The 1978 Season in Review

State-wide

Hunter numbers were down four percent (223,880 hunters) in 1978 as was the grouse and woodcock harvest. Even though 704,104 grouse were taken, approximating the 1973 kill, it was a dip of eight percent from 1977. Woodcock totaled 309,080 birds; down 12 percent.

Regionally

Region I, the Upper Peninsula, averaged 1.32 grouse flushed per hour. This was down .44 of a bird from last year; surprising, as field reports suggested something better.

Region II, though down .2 of a bird, had an average flush rate of two grouse per hour. Some counties showed improvement, especially toward the west side.

Region III, southern Michigan, had a flush rate of 2.40 grouse per hour. Again a slight drop of .21.

Upshot

We had 239 grouse hunter-cooperators last year that recorded 8,680 hours of hunting pressure; almost doubling the 1977 figures. Some had glowing reports, other's not! Opinions were so varied that the 1978 figures will have to stand for themselves.

Outlook - 1979

In Region I, it is felt that in the west end of the Upper Peninsula grouse numbers are definitely better. In the east end, the field force is seeing more birds.

Region II, Gaylord, Cadillac, and Gladwin districts express optimistic reports and feel that the season will be better than last year. Mio district--so,so!

In Region III, most state game areas will be good.

State-wide, the natural fruit crops seem to be abundant. The wild cherry crop is excellent! Good blackberries, decent crops of gray dogwood, and acorns everywhere. Thornapples still spotty.

TABLE 1

Estimates from Postcard Poll

A. Kill

<u>Ruffed Grouse</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Region I	194,000	278,110	232,300	270,000	210,190
Region II	520,000	433,010	385,800	377,000	372,700
Region III	129,000	119,400	110,400	118,000	121,250
TOTAL	843,000	830,520	728,500	765,000	704,140

<u>Woodcock</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Region I	48,000	103,270	84,600	47,000	67,580
Region II	166,000	202,960	216,200	214,000	175,240
Region III	69,000	82,830	89,000	89,000	66,260
TOTAL	283,000	389,060	389,800	350,000	309,080

B. Number of Hunters

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
<u>Ruffed Grouse</u>					
Region I	44,770	51,610	49,200	50,000	46,270
Region II	140,460	140,340	130,700	129,000	117,370
Region III	69,260	65,140	54,900	55,000	60,240
TOTAL	254,490	257,090	234,800	234,000	223,880

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
<u>Woodcock</u>					
Region I	16,520	21,330	19,700	18,000	16,800
Region II	50,510	59,400	58,400	59,000	50,320
Region III	37,390	45,460	48,000	43,000	35,460
TOTAL	104,420	126,190	126,100	120,000	102,580

TABLE 2

Cooperators Hunting Records - 1973-1978

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Number of cooperators reporting	199	181	158	127	131	239
Total hunting hours	8,675	7,307	5,208	5,120	4,039	8,680
Average hours each cooperator hunted	44	40	33	40	31	36
RUFFED GROUSE FLUSHED PER GUN HOUR						
Region I (Upper Peninsula)	1.11	1.11	1.19	1.27	1.76	1.32
Region II (Northern L. P.)	2.76	2.63	2.05	1.78	2.20	2.00
Region III (Southern L.P.)	2.10	2.22	2.09	2.40	2.61	2.40
WOODCOCK FLUSHED PER GUN HOUR (September 15 - November 14)						
Region I	1.24	1.95	2.48	1.88	1.73	1.65
Region II	1.30	1.27	1.64	1.92	1.85	1.45
Region III	.57	.40	.93	.55	.72	.64

TABLE 3

Ruffed Grouse Flushed Per Gun Hour by Cooperators - by Half-Month Periods

	Region I				Region II			
	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Sept. 15-30	.96	1.14	1.41	1.08	2.08	1.79	2.16	2.00
Oct. 1-15	1.13	1.20	1.45	1.05	1.78	1.73	2.28	2.05
Oct. 16-31	1.52	1.53	1.82	1.64	2.25	1.68	1.93	2.04
Nov. 1-14	1.66	1.58	1.50	1.23	2.21	2.19	2.66	2.39
Dec. 1-15	*	*	*	*	1.80	1.58	2.27	2.05
Dec. 16-31	*	*	*	*	2.30	2.11	1.73	1.32
Region III								
	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>				
September 15-30	*	*	*	*				
October 1-15	*	*	*	*				
October 16-31	2.44	2.09	2.56	2.11				
November 1-14	2.12	2.18	2.80	2.85				
December 1-15	2.16	2.06	2.90	2.37				
December 16-31	1.94	1.66	2.59	2.21				

TABLE 4

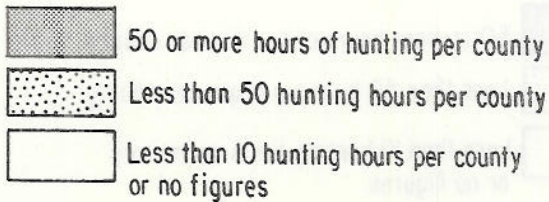
Woodcock Flushed Per Gun Hour by Cooperators - by Half-Month Periods

	Region I				Region II			
	1975	1976	1977	1978	1975	1976	1977	1978
Sept. 15-30	3.26	2.23	2.05	1.99	2.30	2.85	2.12	2.07
Oct. 1-15	2.72	2.17	.92	2.20	1.98	1.91	2.00	1.74
Oct. 16-31	1.78	1.42	.90	.66	1.26	1.35	1.13	1.17
Nov. 1-14	.92	.02	.18	.15	.71	.04	.19	.44

Region III

	1975	1976	1977	1978
September 15-30	*	*	*	*
October 1-15	*	*	*	*
October 16-31	1.32	1.05	1.35	1.02
November 1-14	.58	.11	.25	.50

*Season Closed

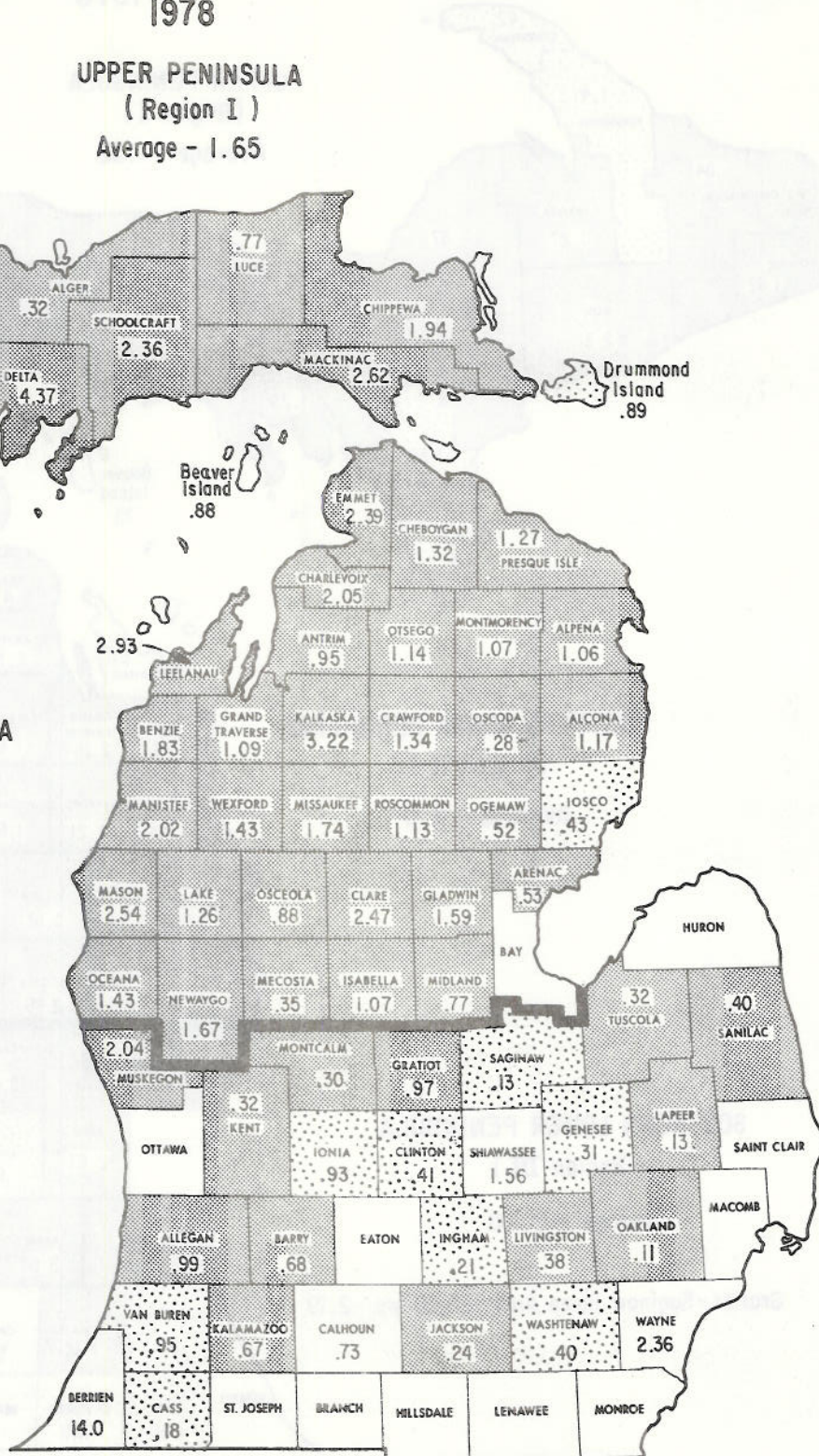


WOODCOCK FLUSHED PER GUN HOUR BY COOPERATORS 1978

UPPER PENINSULA (Region I) Average - 1.65

NORTHERN LOWER PENINSULA (Region II) Average - 1.45

SOUTHERN LOWER PENINSULA (Region III) Average - .64



- 50 or more hours of hunting per county
- Less than 50 hunting hours per county
- Less than 10 hunting hours per county or no figures