

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>Ruffed Grouse</u> | <u>1974</u> | <u>1975</u> | <u>1976</u> | <u>1977</u> | <u>1978</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>Woodcock</u> | <u>1974</u> | <u>1975</u> | <u>1976</u> | <u>1977</u> | <u>1978</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<br>(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      |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|                 |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| 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



