

# 2003 August Quail Roadside Survey Summary

By

*Mike Sams, Upland Game Biologist  
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152*

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has conducted annual roadside surveys in August and October since 1990 to index quail populations across Oklahoma. Currently, department employees run 83, 20 mile routes in all counties except Oklahoma and Tulsa; some larger counties have two routes. Observers count the number of quail seen to provide an index of quail abundance (number seen/20 mile route) and reproductive success. The survey provides a crude index of annual population fluctuations. Due to inherent biases associated with the survey results are not meant to be predictive, however, the August survey has shown a positive correlation to quail harvest.



This is the 14 year of this survey and the statewide quail index is up 37% from the previous 13 year average (Table 1). All regions reported increases in quail over last year with the exception of the southeast region. The statewide index is up 21% over the 2002 august survey. The largest increases were observed in the south central and southwest regional indices. Quail sighted in the southwestern, south-central, northwestern and north-central regions (Figure 1) exceeded their previous 13 year averages. Conversely, the southeastern and northeastern regional indices remain well below their 13 year averages.

**Table 1. Quail seen/20 mile route during the August roadside surveys.**

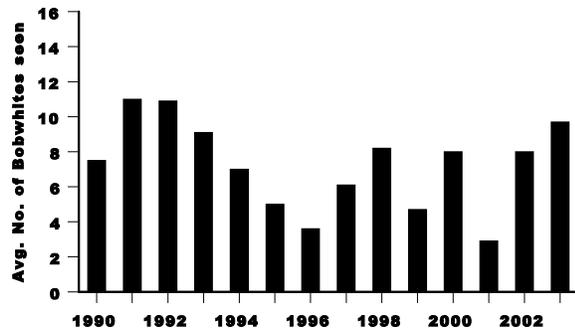
Region	Previous 13 yr. average	2002	2003
Statewide	7.1	8.0	9.7
Northwest	8.9	9.8	12.6
Northcentral	4.2	4.1	4.5
Northeast	5.6	2.3	2.9

Despite drought conditions throughout much of the early nesting season, June rains appear to have negated any effects on early

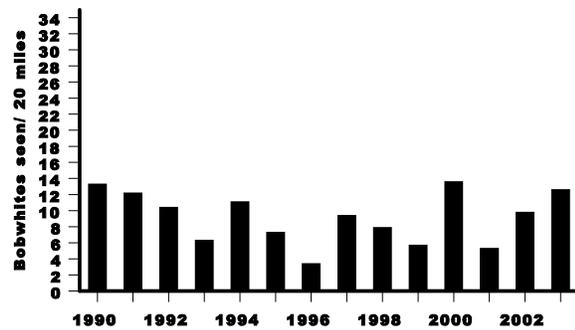
Southwest	14.7	24.0	32.2
Southcentral	3.4	0.9	4.4
Southeast	6.8	9.2	2.1

production. Fifty-seven broods were observed during the survey most of which were either full or  $\frac{3}{4}$  grown. Results of the August survey generally don't include quail produced from the second hatch which occurs in late August but a few landowners and sportsmen have reported seeing young broods in late August. Since a successful second hatch often determines the difference between an average and good quail season the October counts should provide important information about this falls quail population and season outlook.

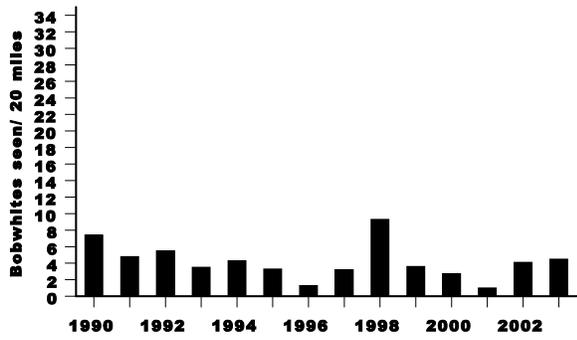
### Statewide



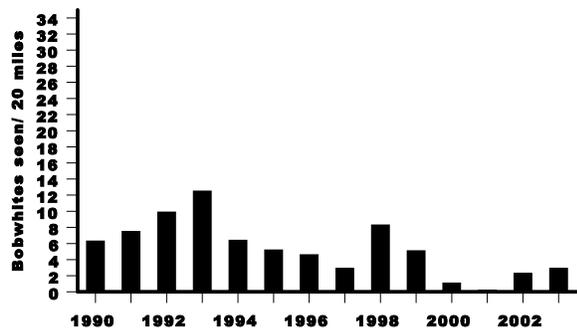
### Northwest



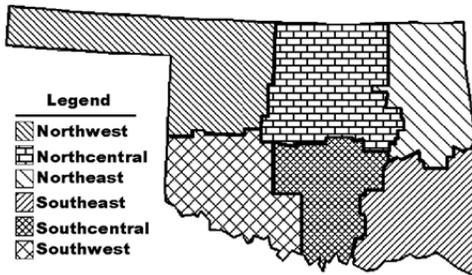
### Northcentral



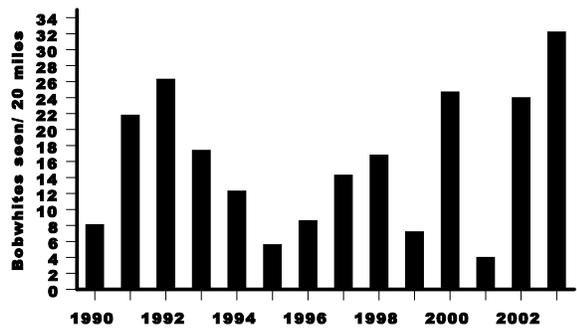
### Northeast



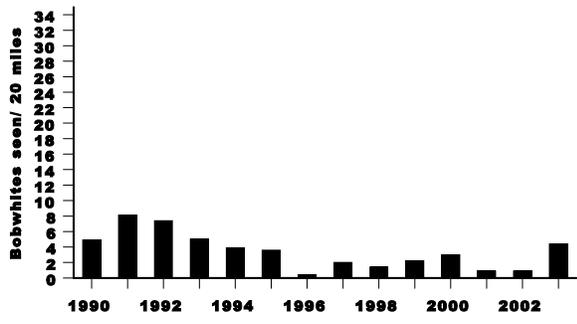
Regional boundaries for Oklahoma used for quail roadside surveys.



### Southwest



### Southcentral



### Southeast

