

2013 August Roadside Quail Survey Summary

Jena Donnell, Quail Habitat Restoration Biologist

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has conducted annual roadside surveys in August and October since 1990 to index quail populations across Oklahoma. The survey provides an index of annual population fluctuations. Observers report the number of quail seen to provide an index of quail abundance (number of quail seen per 20 mile route) and reproductive success. Currently, ODWC employees run 83, 20-mile routes in all counties except Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties. Larger counties including Beaver, Ellis, LeFlore, McCurtain, Osage, Pittsburg, Pushmataha and Roger Mills Counties have two routes.

The 2013 August roadside quail survey show the statewide quail index is down 69 percent from the 23 year average (Table 1). Even so, the statewide index is up 38 percent from the 2012 August survey. The average number of quail seen per route increased in most regions (Northeast, Northcentral, Southcentral, and Southwest). Declines from the previous survey year were seen in the Northwest and Soutcentral regions. Of the birds seen in 2013, 94% were reported as either $\frac{3}{4}$ grown or full grown.

Weather is a critical factor in quail and other ground nesting bird productivity. Even though some areas of the state experienced a severe late freeze, most of Oklahoma had a mild winter. Spring and summer rains and fewer days above 100 degrees Fahrenheit have likely improved nesting conditions and insect availability in a majority of the state. It appears the habitat and weather conditions were favorable for early nesting attempts as most quail were at least $\frac{3}{4}$ grown. The increased rainfall also likely increased vegetative cover along the roadways which can restrict the visibility of quail during the survey period.

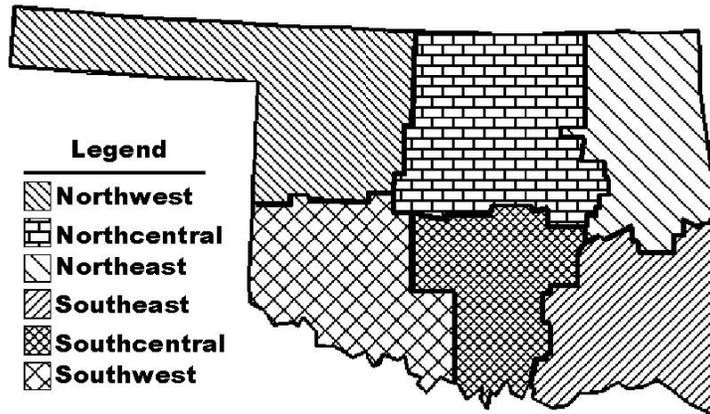
The October Roadside Quail Survey will provide important information in determining any second or third nesting attempts and additional clarity about this falls population and season outlook.

The Quail Season Outlook is posted on www.wildlifedepartment.com the last week of October.

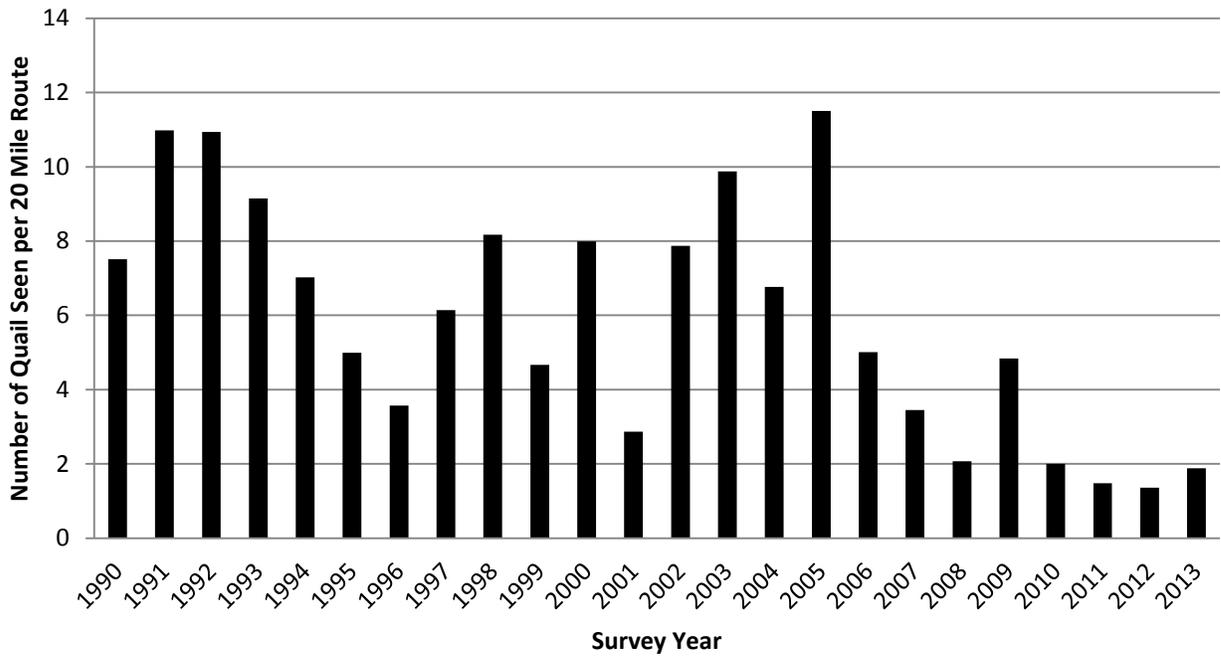
	Previous 23 year Average	2012 Average	2013 Average
Statewide	6.08	1.36	1.88
Northeast	3.19	0.29	1.21
Northcentral	3.72	0.13	0.27
Northwest	8.49	4.5	1.93
Southeast	4.74	1.15	0.08
Southcentral	2.54	0.77	0.92
Southwest	14.36	0.83	7.58

Table 1. Average number of quail seen per 20 miles during the August Quail Roadside Survey.

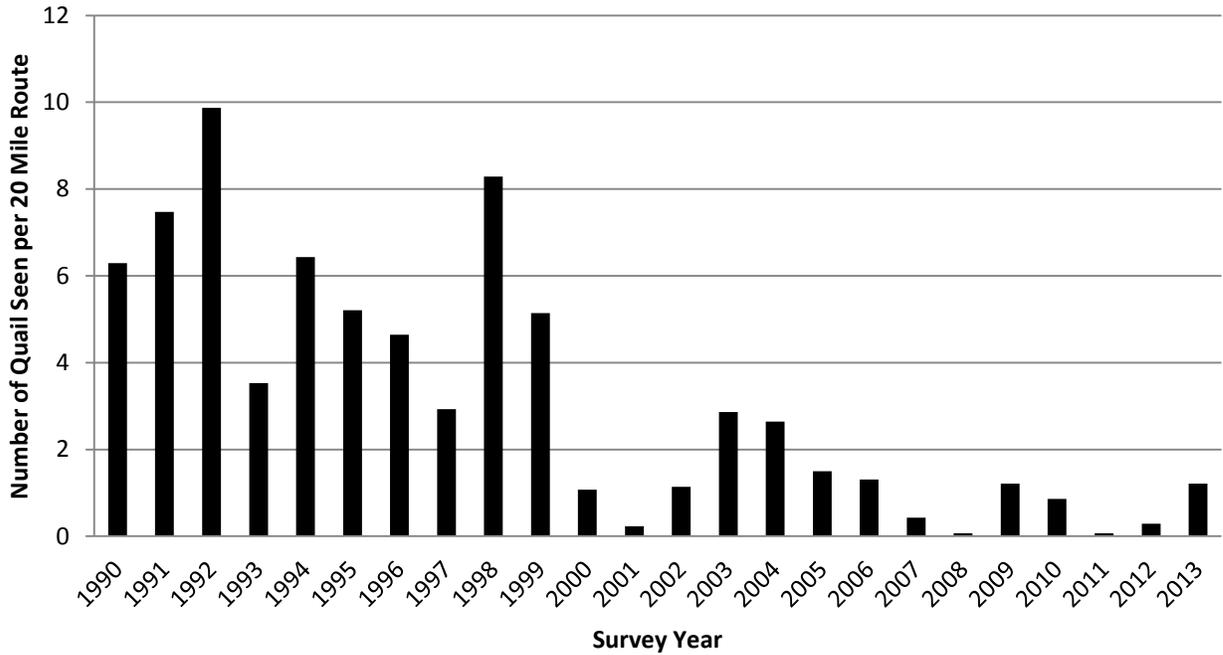
Figure 1. Regional Boundaries for the Quail Roadside Survey



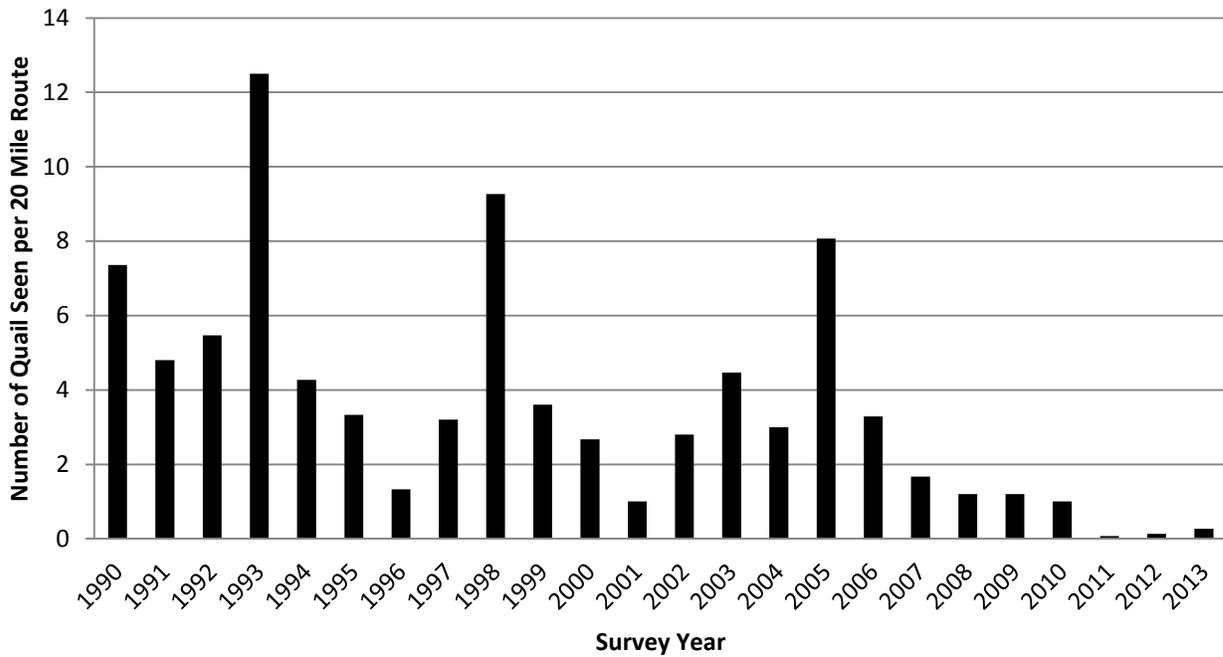
2013 Statewide August Quail Roadside Survey



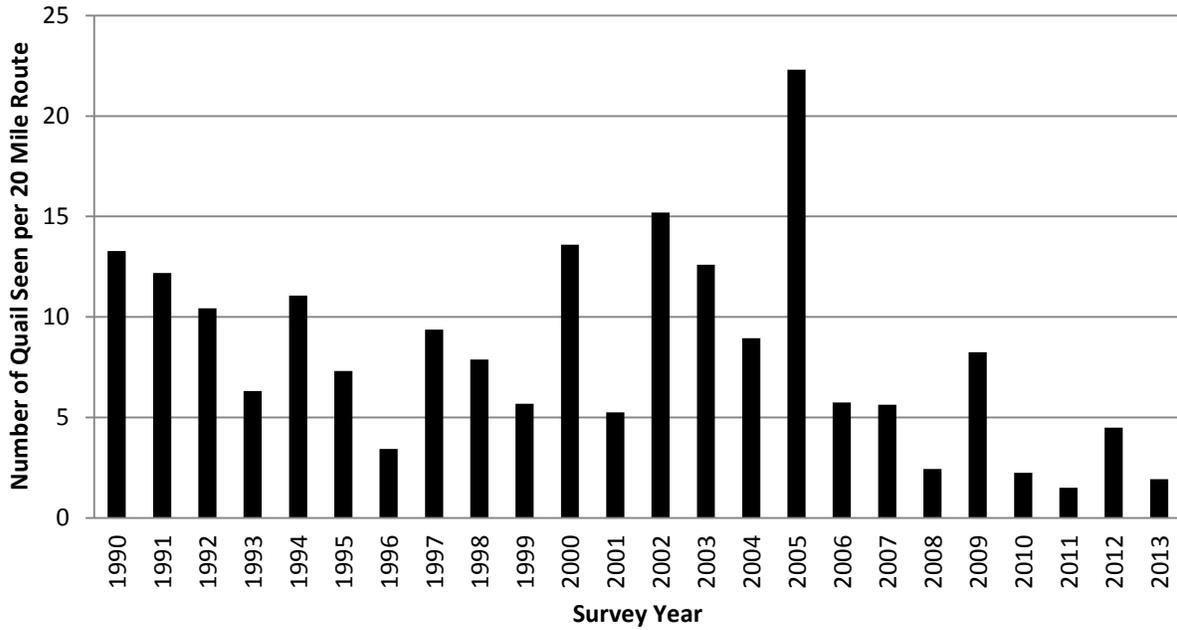
2013 Northeast August Quail Roadside Survey



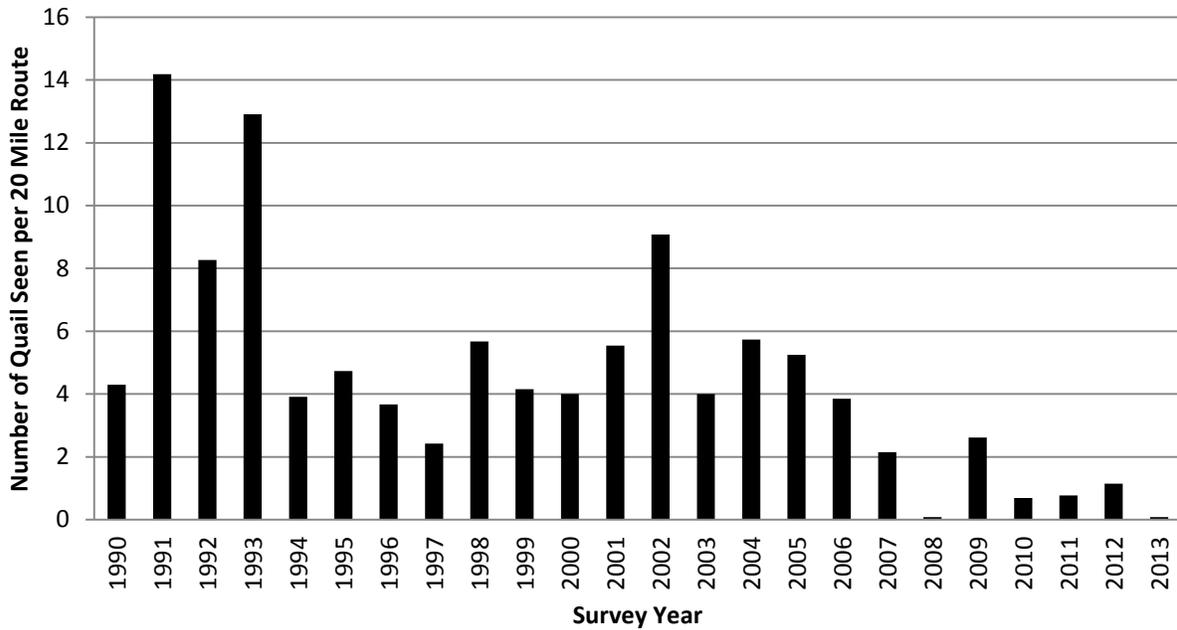
2013 Northcentral August Quail Roadside Survey



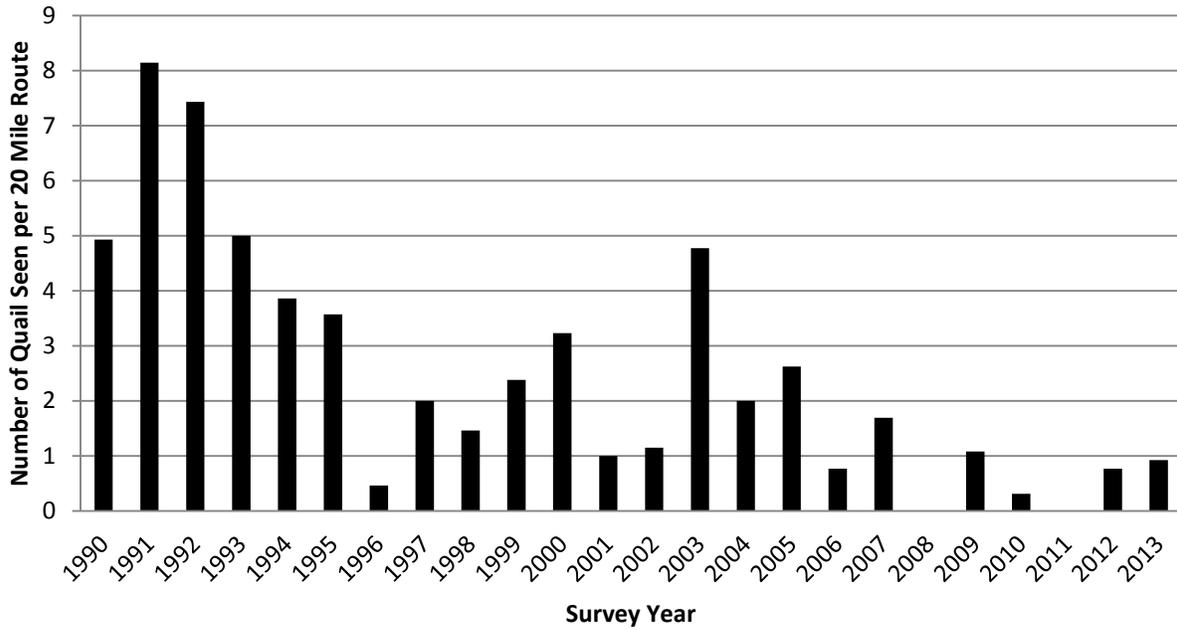
2013 Northwest August Quail Roadside Survey



2013 Southeast August Quail Roadside Survey



2013 Southcentral August Quail Roadside Survey



2013 Southwest August Quail Roadside Survey

