

## **2009 August Roadside Quail Survey Summary**

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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 like Beaver, Ellis, Le Flore, McCurtain, Osage, Pittsburg, Pushmataha, and Roger Mills have two routes. The survey provides an index of annual population fluctuations. Observers report the number of quail seen to provide an index of quail abundance (number seen/20 mile route) and reproductive success.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the survey and the statewide quail index is down 63% from the previous 19-year average (Table 1). The statewide index is up 24% from the 2008 August survey and all regions were up except for the southwest region, which decreased 3%. Quail numbers in the southwest, north central and northeast (Figure 1) were the closest to the 19-year average. The number of broods observed during the August survey increased from 13 in 2008 to 17 in 2009. Of the broods observed during the August survey, 89% were either full or  $\frac{3}{4}$  grown. However, abundant cover in the bar ditches may have affected observers ability to see adult quail and especially young broods.

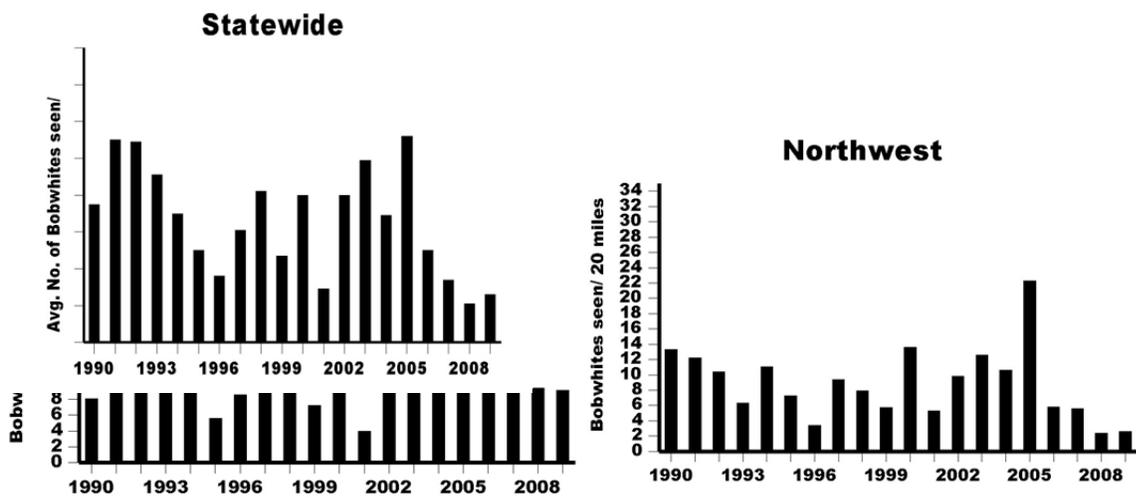
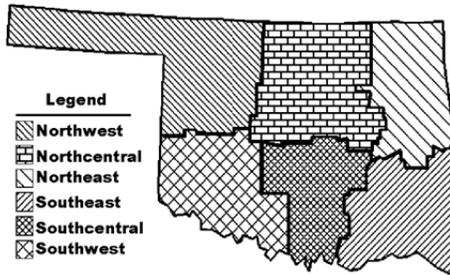
With a mild winter last year, the carryover of adult quail was expected to be good going into the 2009-nesting season. However the population is still recovering from two poor nesting seasons in 2006 and 2007. The 2009 nesting season has seen its good times and its bad. The hot and dry weather in June may have negatively affected early nesting success, but in July and August, although there was about 10 days of triple digit high temperatures, the weather changed generally for the better with milder average temperatures and periodic rainfall in most of the state. Abundant insects and weeds that are important for quail and brood survival were apparent during the August roadside survey period, therefore the likelihood for late hatch broods remains good with recent reports from the field being positive. October surveys should reflect the success of late nesting attempts and provide some clarity about the fall quail population status and season outlook.

**Table 1. Quail seen/20 mile route during the August 2009 roadside surveys.**

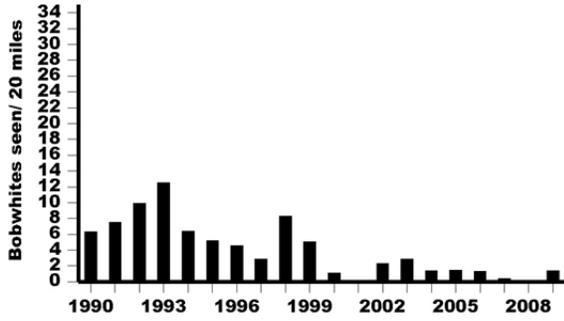
Region	Previous 19-yr. Average	2008	2009
Statewide	7.0	2.1	2.6
Northwest	9.4	2.4	2.6
North Central	4.1	1.2	1.5
Northeast	4.3	0.1	1.4
Southwest	16.0	9.4	9.1
South Central	3.0	0	.5
Southeast	6.1	0.1	1.1

Figure 1

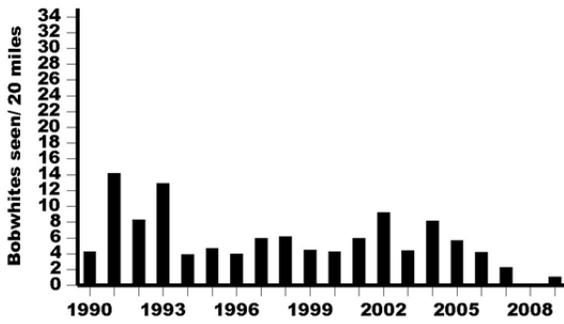
Regional boundaries for Oklahoma used for quail roadside surveys.



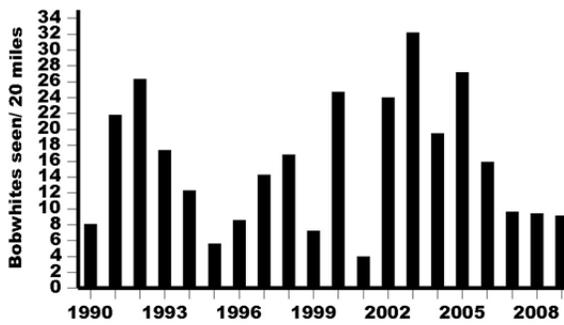
### Northeast



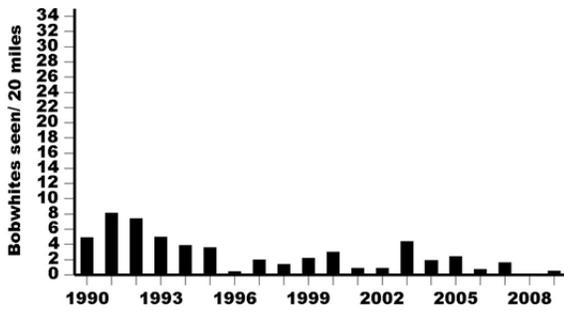
### Southeast



### Southwest



### Southcentral



## Northcentral

