

Douglas County

Douglas County hunters should see another good year for Mountain and California quail. Surveys showed brood production/survival was above average. Bird numbers in the coast range seem especially high.

It was another low year for forest grouse as counts were below the five-year average for the county. Number of chicks per hen was low but hunters should find some success in the areas with good habitat.

California quail will be difficult for most hunters to focus on because they are primarily found on low elevation private property. Hunters targeting California quail should head for low elevation industrial timber company property once the fire restrictions are lifted. It's also good to make sure you know the property ownership and if they allow access.

Mountain quail hunters should be targeting open habitats at mid-elevations. Clear-cuts around 3-6 years old provide great habitat on industrial timber property. On federal grounds be looking for natural openings and areas with shrubs or low growing vegetation in thins, burns and powerlines.

Blue grouse hunting is best in mid to high elevations of the Cascades in partially open timber stands, edges and ridgetops.

Ruffed grouse can be found near creeks and overgrown roads, mostly at mid-elevations of both the Cascades and Coast ranges.

Check local fire restrictions and closures before going hunting for the first couple months, the county is under drought conditions and high fire danger.

Jackson, Josephine and Curry counties

Trend surveys suggest mountain quail, ruffed grouse, and sooty grouse numbers are down from recent years. However, incidental sightings throughout the district indicate that the population is still doing well and hunting opportunities should be plentiful.

As always turkey numbers are very good in southern Oregon and are likely on the increase in many areas in Jackson and Josephine counties. This year ODFW will be issuing beardless turkey permits that are each valid for up to three birds without a visible beard and each hunter can buy three permits for a total of nine turkeys per hunter. The permits will be valid on private lands (excluding private industrial timber lands) within the Rogue, Applegate, and Josephine County portion of the Evans Creek WMU. The permits are valid from Oct. 1-Feb. 28 and are part of an effort to address damage and nuisance issues caused by turkeys.

Mountain quail are widely distributed throughout this district and are usually found near brush fields, old clearcuts, and at higher elevations surrounded by manzanita and scree. Ruffed grouse are found in middle-elevation mixed conifer and deciduous forests, near water sources, whereas sooty grouse prefers higher elevation habitat consisting of a mix of large conifer trees, old growth timber, and meadows. Some dove hunting is available on the Denman Wildlife Area in agricultural fields or in dry brushy areas, however harvest success drops quickly after the first few days of the season or after the first colder temperatures arrive on the valley floor. Band-tailed pigeons are usually found at high elevations feeding on elderberries or acorns. They are shy birds and can provide a more challenging hunt. Check the latest fire closure information before heading out into the field. The Denman Wildlife Area will host a Youth Pheasant Hunt on Sept. 20 and 21, and a Fee Pheasant Hunt from Sept. 22-Oct. 10. Birds will be stocked randomly during this period, and the Denman Wildlife Area does not provide a stocking calendar for pheasant release. Hunters new to hunting the wildlife area are encouraged to call Clayton Barber (Denman Wildlife Area Manager) at (541) 857-2397.