

Northwest Area -- UPLAND

North and Mid-Coast (Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln and Western Lane Counties)

The Coast range experienced a warm year with plentiful berry crops early in the season. This should lead to a good survival rate of upland game birds and an average hunting season. Many different game bird species (quail, grouse, band-tailed pigeons) all use berries as an important food source. Remember to check for [access closures related to fires](#).

Multiple large coveys of quail have been seen along the coast. Mountain and California quail can be found in brushy clear cuts along gravel roads. Pay particular attention to areas that hold berry plants. However, quail becomes hard to find once the fall rain begins.

Grouse species most likely also benefited from the early berry crops. Ruffed and sooty grouse can often be found along gravel forest roads in mature timber stands. Search for ruffed grouse in riparian areas and lower elevations and sooty grouse at high elevations and ridgelines. Both birds are most active in the early mornings and late evenings.

Band-tailed pigeons can typically be found among mineral springs and in thick riparian areas that hold berries, especially elderberries. Keep in mind that band-tailed pigeons are considered migratory birds and not upland game birds, check the [ODFW Game Bird Regulations](#) for more information.

Coos County

Weather conditions in spring and early summer can be a primary driver for upland bird chick survival which tends to drive overall abundance of birds in local populations. This spring was much milder and dryer than the previous two years. The conditions extended into the nesting season for a better production year across most of the upland broods. Since this is a year where we should see an increase in production overall, population is still recovering from the previous two spring seasons. In the county, upland bird hunting in general may still be challenging than in recent past. Biologists in Coos County conduct surveys of upland birds annually. This year broods were around average estimates with average size of individuals within the broods low in numbers and the size of the broods found seems to be about average. However, persistent hunters will find upland birds if they can determine what the birds are focusing on for feed.

Grouse hunters should hunt the usual areas, which are closed roads with grass and clover growing on them and riparian areas with brushy cover. Grouse in the Coast Range can be somewhat randomly distributed throughout a variety of habitats. At any given time, birds will be drawn to some specific food resource, and bird location can change based on the availability of the food. This year's forage earlier in the season can be found around berry crops that were proved to be in abundance this year.

As for quail, hunters will find the best mountain quail hunting near ridge tops, rocky outcroppings on hillsides and around the periphery of clear-cuts. California quail (aka valley quail) are generally found near private agricultural lands for the most part. Due to increased timber harvest in recent years, which creates early serial habitats, California quail are being seen farther from agricultural lands this year than in the past. Hunters may find opportunities to hunt California quail in clearcuts in the vicinity of agricultural fields as opposed to only finding them in the agricultural settings.

Wild turkey populations have been increasing steadily for the past several years. As with the other upland birds, brood survival looks like it increased this year due to the better spring weather. Hunters will find most turkeys in and around private agricultural lands, which is their traditional habitat choice. However, one of the best ways to locate wild turkeys is to cruise forest roads looking for tracks, droppings and feathers. With the apparent expansion of turkeys locally, searching for birds in forest lands adjacent to agricultural lands is worth the time spent.