

2023 Manitoba Wild Turkey Harvest Report

Wildlife Branch, Manitoba Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources

March 2024

Season and Survey Details

The province of Manitoba sold a total of 1475 wild turkey licences in 2023, consisting of 1327 Resident licences and 148 Resident Youth licences (Table 1). The spring youth season opened on April 15, followed by the resident season on April 22, with both closing on May 21. The fall hunting season opened on September 15 and closed on October 15. Wild turkey harvest questionnaires were made available to licence holders on Manitoba's electronic licencing system, with hunters sent two reminders to complete their questionnaire following the closure of the fall season. The response rate was 25.6% for total licence sales and 32.4% for the individual email addresses that were sent a reminder.

Table 1: Manitoba 2023 wild turkey licence and harvest survey details.

Total Licences Issued	Licence Holders Surveyed*	Total Responses	Response Rate for Total Licences	Response Rate for Hunters Sent a Reminder
1475 (1327 Resident, 148 Youth)	1164	377	25.6%	32.4%

*Number of valid email addresses in the licencing system.

Participation and Success

Total wild turkey hunter participation was 85.1% in 2023, resulting in an estimated 1256 active hunters (Table 2). The success rate for all active hunters was 57.9%, with slightly lower success reported by youth hunters than adults.

Table 2: Manitoba 2023 wild turkey season participation.

Licence Type	Hunting Participation Rate	Estimated Number of Active Hunters	Success Rate for Active Hunters	Estimated Number of Successful Hunters
Resident	84.6%	1123	58.9%	662
Youth	92.3%	137	45.8%	63
Pooled	85.1%	1256	57.9%	728

Harvest

It is estimated that 728 wild turkeys were harvested during the 2023 spring and fall seasons by licenced hunters (Table 3). Total seasonal harvest was estimated as mean reported seasonal harvest per active hunter multiplied by estimated number of hunters, with estimates and error calculated using the survey package in R Statistical Software. Eighty-one percent of the reported harvest were toms, or adult males, 15% were jakes, or juvenile males, and 4% were hens. It is estimated that 590 toms, 110 jakes, and 28 hens were harvested in 2023. Eighty-nine percent of the reported harvest occurred during the spring season and 11% in the fall season.

Table 3: Manitoba 2023 wild turkey hunter harvest.

Mean Annual Harvest per Active Hunter			Harvest Reported in Survey	Estimated Total Annual Harvest		
<i>x</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>n</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
0.58	0.02	0.53 – 0.63	186	728	29.9	669 - 786

The largest proportion of reported wild turkey harvest occurred in Game Hunting Area (GHA) 31 at 32% (Figure 1). Notable levels of harvest also occurred in GHA 30 (17%), 35A (14%), and both 31A and 32 (10% each).

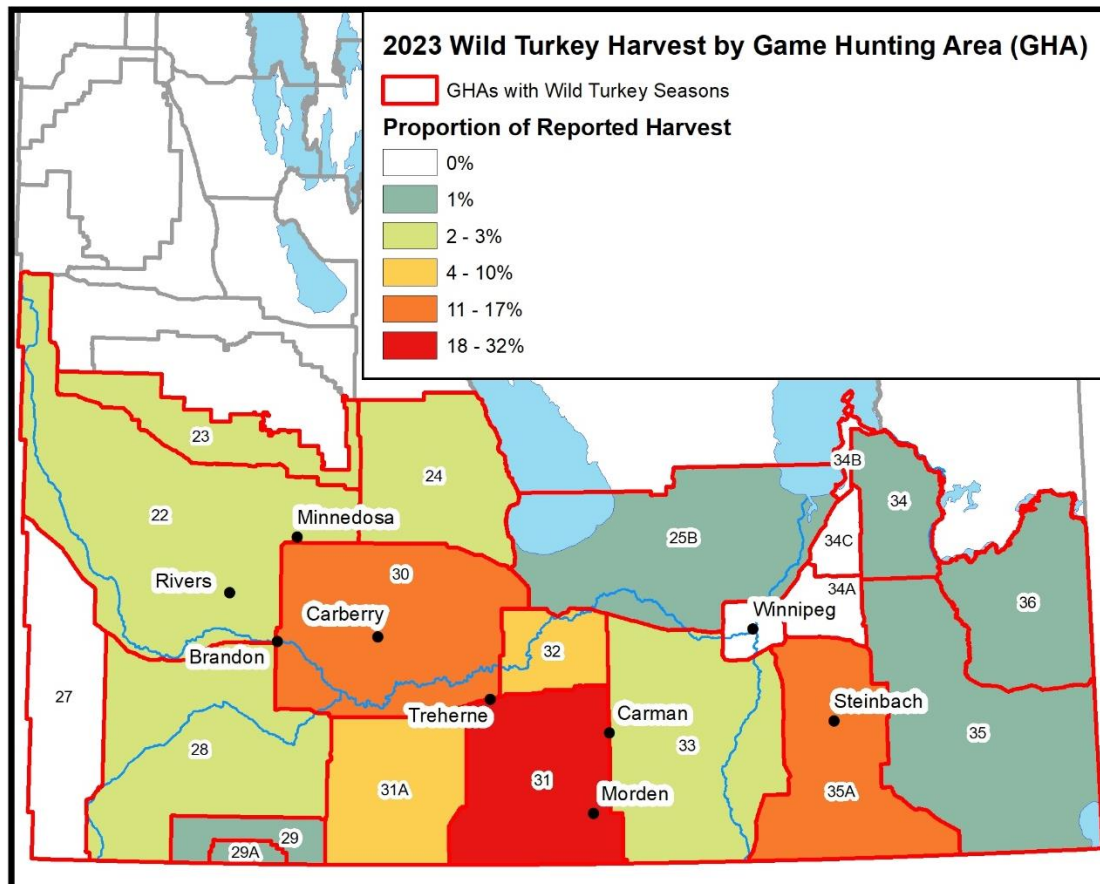


Figure 1: Proportion of reported 2023 Manitoba wild turkey harvest by Game Hunting Area (GHA).

Effort

It is estimated that Manitoba wild turkey hunters spent 4331 days afield in 2023, with active hunters reporting hunting an average of 3.45 days over the course of the year (Table 4). Total days hunted was estimated as mean reported days hunted per active hunter multiplied by estimated number of hunters, with estimates and error calculated using the survey package in R Statistical Software. Eighty-four percent of hunters participated in the spring season only, 9% in both the spring and fall, and 7% in the fall only.

Table 4: Manitoba 2023 wild turkey hunter effort.

Mean Days Hunted by Active Hunters			Days Hunted Reported in Survey	Estimated Total Days Hunted		
<i>x</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	<i>n</i>	Total	<i>SE</i>	95% CI
3.45	0.16	3.12 – 3.77	1107	4331	207	3925 – 4738

Hunter Information

The 2023 wild turkey harvest survey also revealed the following information about wild turkey hunter tactics and experience:

- 85% of the reported harvest occurred on private land, compared to 15% on Crown land.
- 94% of the reported harvested turkeys were taken using a shotgun, compared to 5% with a bow, and 1% with a crossbow.
- On a scale of how difficult it was to find a place to hunt wild turkeys, 17% of respondents said it was very easy, 45% somewhat easy, 31% somewhat difficult, and 7% very difficult.
- On a scale assessing their perceptions of wild turkey abundance compared to the previous five years, 8% of respondents said there were much more, 19% slightly more, 40% about the same, 11% slightly less, 3% much less, and 19% said not applicable.
- Only 2% of active hunters reported hitting a wild turkey that they were unable to retrieve.
- Reported harvest was spread across the 30-day resident spring season, with the highest proportions occurring during the first week of the season (33% of harvest), and on weekends (47% of harvest) (Figure 2).

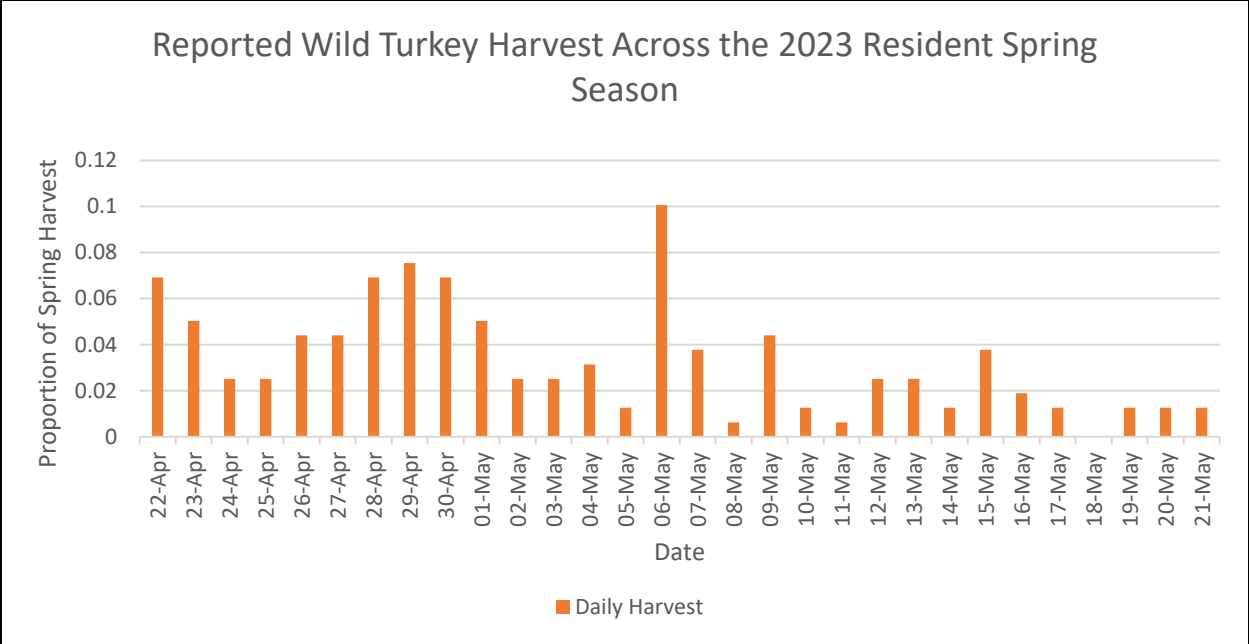


Figure 2: Proportion of reported 2023 Manitoba wild turkey harvest across the resident spring hunting season.