

NDG&F July 1st Newsletter

Deer Lottery Scheduled for Last Week in July

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department will conduct the 2013 deer gun lottery the last week in July.

Licensing manager Randy Meissner said several thousand paper applications need to be entered into the system before the lottery is held. "In the past we were able to run the lottery once all regular gun applications were entered, but with the new law it looks like the end of July will now become the normal time period for holding the deer lottery," Meissner said.

The 2013 state legislature passed a law that requires gratis applicants interested in receiving an any-legal-deer license to submit the application before the regular lottery application deadline.

"Therefore, both regular gun and gratis applications submitted by paper have to be entered manually before the lottery can be run," Meissner said.

Applicants who applied online and submitted an email address will receive notification once the drawing has been held. Others can access the Game and Fish Department's website at gf.nd.gov to find individual results, or to sign up for email/text alerts.

Pheasant Crowing Counts Down Statewide

North Dakota's 2013 pheasant crowing count survey indicates that rooster numbers were down about 11 percent statewide compared to last year, heading into the spring breeding season.

All four pheasant districts had lower counts than last year. The number of crows heard in the northeast declined by 18 percent, southeast and southwest by 11 percent, and the northwest by nearly 2 percent. Stan Kohn, upland game management supervisor for the State Game and Fish Department, said only the southwest was initially spared a harsh winter, but a spring snowstorm in April buried much of the area in more than 12 inches of snow.

"Had it not been for the long winter in most of the state and the April storm, I would have expected a higher crow count statewide this spring," Kohn said. "But I think we did lose some birds during late spring, which reduced our 2013 spring breeding population slightly from 2012."

The late spring snowstorms and cooler than normal April delayed breeding and nesting for all upland game birds, Kohn said, with early nesting hens facing rainy conditions, and probably some flooded nests. "On the positive side, this occurred early enough in the nesting season that most hens should have renested," he added. "In addition, the wet spring seemed to jump start grass and forb growth in pastures, helping later nesting pheasants with improved quality of nesting habitat. Unless we experience some early summer weather problems, I still expect much better upland game production this summer from all our species."

However, Kohn noted, the loss of CRP is going to reduce nesting and brooding cover in the future, and will negatively affect the pheasant population.

Spring crowing count data is not a good indicator of the fall population. It does not measure population

density, but provides an index of the spring rooster population based on a trend of number of crows heard. Brood surveys, which begin in mid-July and are completed by September, are a better indicator of the summer's pheasant production and provide insight into what to expect for a fall pheasant population.

Pheasant crowing counts are conducted each spring throughout North Dakota. Observers drive specified 20-mile routes, stopping at predetermined intervals, and counting the number of pheasant roosters heard crowing over a two-minute period during the stop. The number of pheasant crows heard is compared to previous years' data, providing a trend summary.

Watchable Wildlife Photo Contest

The deadline for submitting photos to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's annual Watchable Wildlife Photo Contest is Sept. 30.

The contest has categories for nongame and game species, as well as plants/insects. An overall winning photograph will be chosen, with the number of place winners in each category determined by the number of qualified entries.

Contest entries are limited to digital files submitted on disk or via email. Contestants are limited to no more than five entries. Photos must have been taken in North Dakota.

By submitting an entry, photographers grant permission to Game and Fish to publish winning photographs in North Dakota OUTDOORS magazine, and on the Department's website, gf.nd.gov.

Photo disks should be sent to Watchable Wildlife Photo Contest, C/O Patrick T. Isakson, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095.

Send emailed digital photos to photocontest@nd.gov. Digital submissions can be either original digital photographs, or scans made from prints or slides/transparencies. Photographers will need to supply the original image if needed for publication.

Photo disks will not be returned. All entries must be accompanied by the photographer's name, address, phone number and email address if available. Other information such as photo site location and month taken are also useful.