

# Small Game Harvest 2007-2008

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## **Abstract**

The number of small game hunters decreased 0.7% in 2007-08 small game hunting season from 2006-07 levels. This is the sixth decrease in license sales in the last seven years. The estimated harvest increased from last season for bobwhite quail, cottontail, coyote, gray partridge, pheasant, red fox, ruffed grouse and woodcock, while decreases occurred for crow, gray fox, mourning dove, raccoon, snowshoe hare, and squirrel.

## **Methods**

A sample of survey names was drawn from 2007-08 sports, small game, senior citizen small game, junior small game, and conservation patron license holders in proportion to the license sales for each county. Ten thousand surveys were mailed in early February. Surveys asked recipients for information on whether they hunted, type of licenses purchased, county of residence, species harvested, number of days hunting each species, and county of harvest for each species. These data were entered into the DNR UNIX production server and analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

## **Results**

Responses were received from 3,021 of the hunters surveyed. The corrected response rate was 30%.

Most hunters purchased a small game license to hunt during the season. Approximately 40% of the licensed small game hunters used a dog during the season. Most dogs were used to hunt game birds. The most commonly used dog was the Labrador Retriever. On average hunter's spent 49.7 days afield either training or hunting with their dog. Hunters spend an average of \$586.69 on dog maintenance per dog owned (Table 1).

The number of people who bought small game, sportsman, senior citizen small game, non-resident small game, 5-day non-resident small game, or conservation patron licenses decreased from 276,603 in 2006-07 to 274,582 in 2007-2008. Hunters spent approximately 2.8 million days in the field during the 2007-08 small game season. The total number of days spent in the field pursuing small game decreased by 1.8% during the 2007-08 season from previous years totals. The estimated harvest increased from last season for bobwhite quail, cottontail, coyote, gray partridge, pheasant, red fox, ruffed grouse and woodcock, while decreases occurred for crow, gray fox, mourning dove, raccoon, snowshoe hare, and squirrel (Table 2).

No corrections are made for response or prestige bias. Therefore the harvest estimates for some of the less hunted species (bobwhite quail, gray partridge, and gray fox,) are probably less accurate. Small sample size can also have an effect on the results of the counties of highest harvest. Because of this, counties of highest harvest should be viewed with caution. The twenty-four year trend in small game harvest for all species is shown in Figure 1.

**Table 1.** Responses to the 2007-2008 Wisconsin Small Game Hunting Questionnaire.

Question 1. What type(s) of hunting license(s) and stamps(s) did you purchase for your own use for this season?

License Type	Count	Percent
Did not purchase a license	11	0.2%
Sports	854	12.2%
Small Game	1,335	19.0%
Deer	1,061	15.1%
Archery	758	10.8%
Bear	149	2.1%
Patron	818	11.7%
Wisconsin State Waterfowl Stamp	661	9.4%
Federal Waterfowl Stamp	893	12.7%
Pheasant Stamp	478	6.8%

Question 2. Did you use dogs while hunting?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	1,208	40.3%
No	1,789	59.7%

No Response = 24

Question 3. Which of the following did you hunt with the aid of dogs?

Response	Count	Percent
Game Birds	631	52.7
Migratory Game Birds (excluding waterfowl)	264	22.0
Small Game Mammals	149	12.4
Furbearing Animals	69	5.8
Unprotected	12	1.0
Other	73	6.1

Question 4. What Breed(s) of dog did you use?

Response	Count	Percent	Response	Count	Percent
Airdale	2	0.10%	Gordon Setter	7	0.50%
American Water Spaniel	4	0.30%	Griffon	5	0.30%
Basset Hound	2	0.10%	Hound	14	1.00%
Beagle	119	8.10%	Irish Setter	5	0.30%
Bear Dog	3	0.20%	Italian Spinone	1	0.10%
Black & Tan	8	0.50%	Jack Russell	1	0.10%
Blue Tick	18	1.20%	Lab	609	41.50%
Border Collie	2	0.10%	Lab Mix	15	1.00%
Boykin Spaniel	5	0.30%	Large Munster Lander	4	0.30%
Brittany	57	3.90%	Mix	8	0.50%
Chesapeake Bay Retriever	14	1.00%	Mountain Cur	2	0.10%
Cocker Spaniel	4	0.30%	Plott Coonhound	22	1.50%
Coon Hound	5	0.30%	Pudelpointer	9	0.60%
Dachsund	1	0.10%	Rat Terrier	2	0.10%
Deutsch-Drahthaar	4	0.30%	Redbone Coonhound	9	0.60%
English Cocker Spaniel	8	0.50%	Red tick	6	0.40%
English Pointer	13	0.90%	Running Walker	4	0.30%
English Setter	76	5.20%	Setters	4	0.30%
English Springer Spaniel	32	2.20%	Siberian Husky	2	0.10%
Field Spaniel	1	0.10%	Small Munster Lander	2	0.10%
French Brittany Spaniel	5	0.30%	Springer Spaniel	68	4.60%
French Pointer	1	0.10%	Treeing Walker	7	0.50%
German Longhaired Pointer	1	0.10%	Unknown	3	0.20%
German Shepard	3	0.20%	Vizsla	9	0.60%
German Shorthaired Pointer	112	7.60%	Walker	30	2.00%
German Wirehaired Pointer	32	2.20%	Weimaraner	12	0.80%
Golden Retriever	76	5.20%			

Question 5. Approximately how many hours did you (or others), spend training each dog used?

**Mean = 135.5 Hours**

Question 6. Approximately how many days per year do you use your dog(s) in the field (training and hunting)?

**Mean = 49.7 Days**

Question 7. Approximately how much money do you spend annually on maintenance per dog?

**Mean = \$586.69**

**Table 2.** *The number of small game hunters, percent of total hunters, days hunted, harvest, harvest/day, and top three counties of harvest for all small game species during the 2007-2008 season.*

Species	Number of Hunters	Percent Hunting	Days Hunted*		Harvest*		Harvest/Day	Top Three Counties
Bobwhite Quail	989	0.4%	5,090	±4,440	1,545	±1,661	0.30	Sauk, Iowa, Eau Claire
Cottontail	47,888	17.4%	265,497	±39,127	275,858	±50,643	1.04	Manitowoc, Fond Du Lac, Dodge
Coyote	26,909	9.8%	187,602	±42,981	46,173	±17,596	0.25	Oconto, Chippewa, Iowa
Crow	8,265	3.0%	31,267	±9,537	40,174	±18,672	1.28	St. Croix, Columbia, Marathon
Gray Fox	5,904	2.2%	30,267	±12,404	5,181	±2,992	0.17	Crawford, Oneida, Buffalo
Gray Partridge	906	0.3%	5,817	±4,856	1,091	±1,068	0.19	Price, Washburn, Bayfield
Mourning Dove	17,546	6.4%	74,077	±15,318	140,520	±36,722	1.90	Sheboygan, Brown, Iowa
Pheasant	70,541	25.7%	619,977	±63,811	360,207	±44,208	0.58	Kenosha, Dane, Dodge
Raccoon	7,908	2.9%	85,893	±27,710	126,977	±59,271	1.47	Monroe, Sauk, Iowa
Red Fox	9,089	3.3%	53,354	±17,473	8,544	±6,515	0.16	Rock, Wood, Chippewa
Ruffed Grouse	103,903	37.8%	845,390	±72,877	493,637	±55,998	0.58	Price, Sawyer, Forest
Snowshoe Hare	8,897	3.2%	45,264	±18,929	30,540	±13,176	0.67	Taylor, Price, Clark
Squirrel	60,903	22.2%	355,844	±39,787	371,750	±46,821	1.04	Sauk, Shawano, Grant
Woodcock	23,367	8.5%	160,516	±30,671	107,889	±30,524	0.67	Marinette, Price, Forest

\* Confidence interval is 95%.

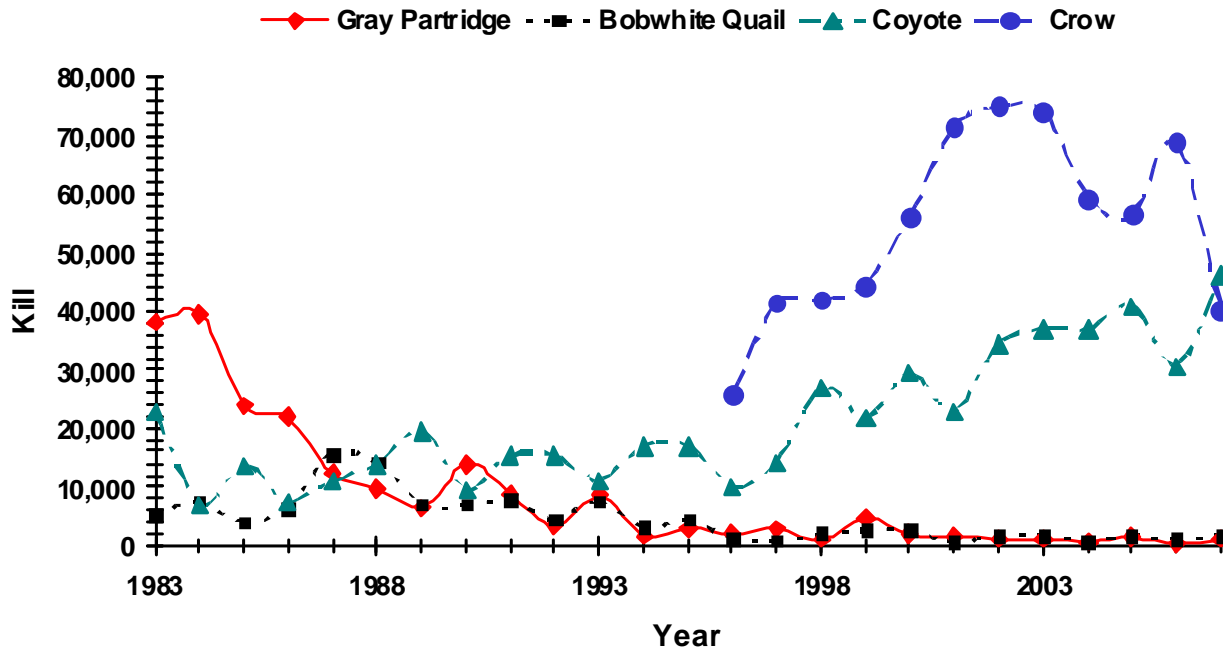
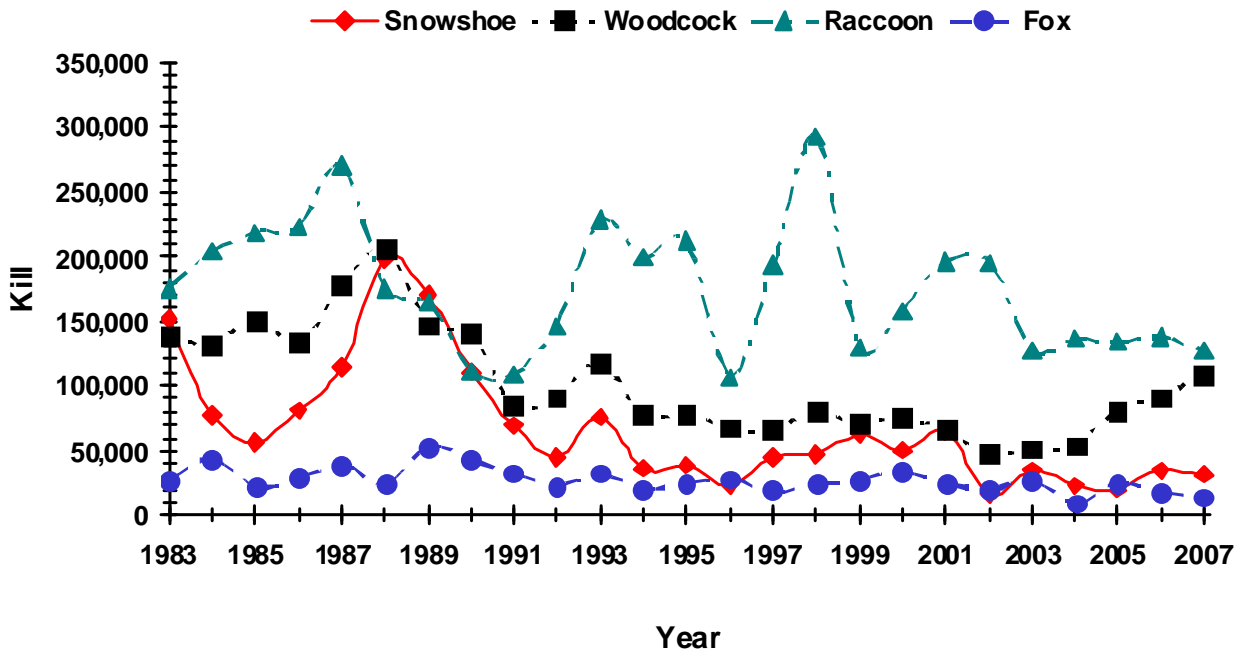


Figure 1. Small game harvest trends for all species 1983-2007.

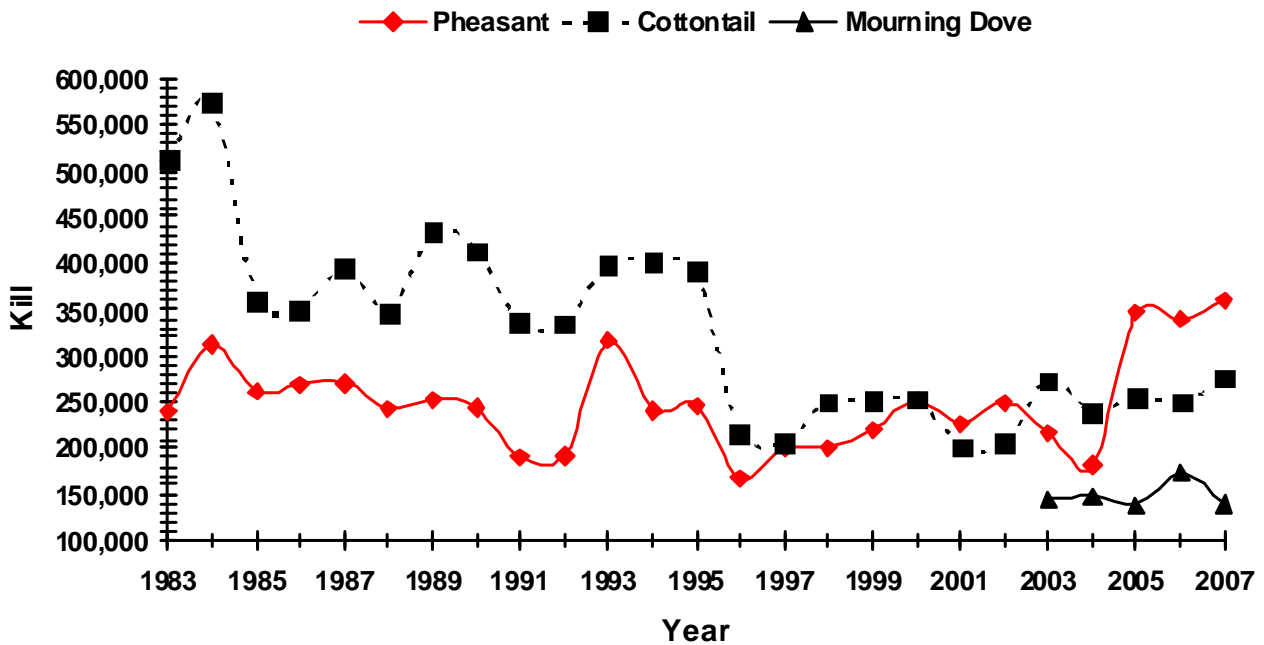
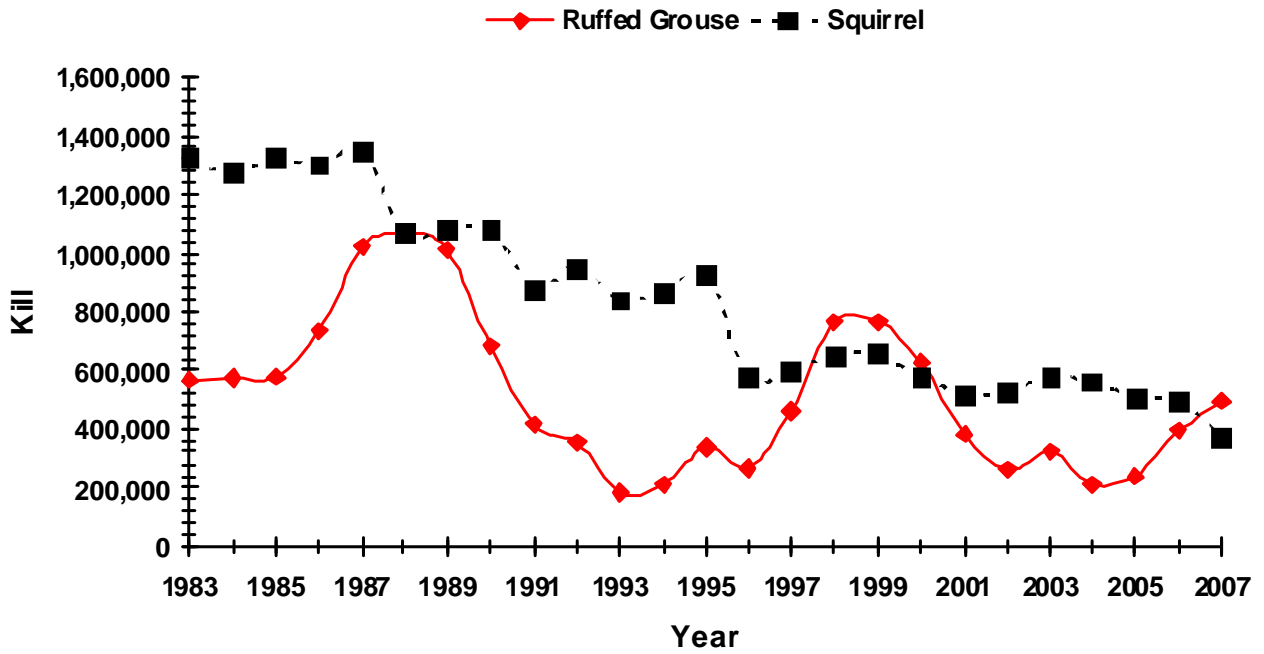


Figure 1. Small game harvest trends for all species 1983-2007 (continued).