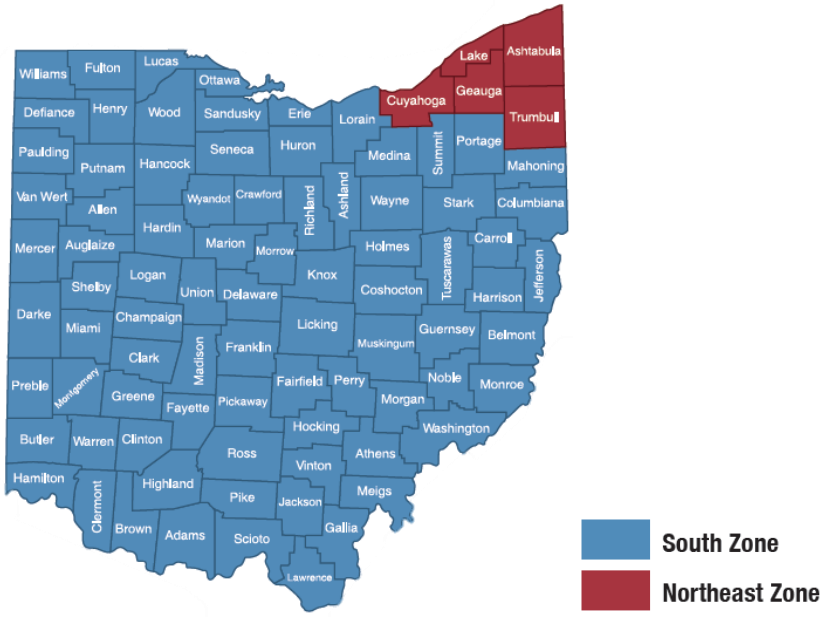
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

2026 SPRING WILD TURKEY SEASON RESULTS

Regulation Summary

Ohio's 2026 spring wild turkey season included two zones (Figure 1) with offset dates for both youth season and the regular season. The youth season was open April 18-19 in the south zone and April 25-26 in the northeast zone. The regular season was open April 25-May 24 in the south zone and May 2-May 31 in the northeast zone. A spring turkey permit was required of residents and nonresidents in addition to a valid Ohio hunting license. Neither a permit nor license was required for landowners hunting on property they own. All turkeys harvested in Ohio were required to be reported to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) by 11:30 p.m. on the day of harvest. The bag limit for the 2026 spring season was one bearded turkey. Hunting hours were 30 minutes before sunrise to noon during the first 9 days and 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset during the last 21 days of the regular season in each zone.

Figure 1. Ohio's spring wild turkey zone map in 2026.



Permit Summary

ODNR issued a total of 52,779 spring wild turkey permits in 2026, a less than 1% increase from the 2025 spring season total (52,692). The spring permit total has increased for four consecutive years since the bag limit was reduced from two to one in 2022. Of all 2026 spring permits, 63%, 7%, and 16% were resident, nonresident, and youth permits, respectively. Approximately 13% of all permits issued were reduced cost or free permits (Table 1).

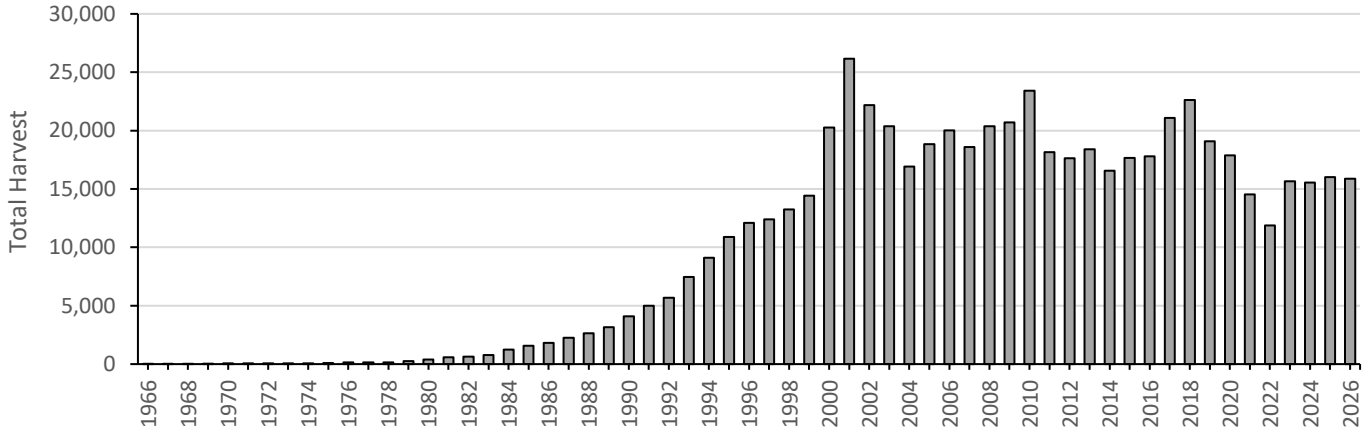
Table 1. Total spring wild turkey permits issued in Ohio during 2022-2026.

Year	Resident		Nonresident		Youth		Reduced Cost		Free		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2022	31,695	64.9	3,499	7.2	7,533	15.4	4,637	9.5	1,451	3.0	48,815
2023	32,458	64.7	3,638	7.3	7,886	15.7	4,798	9.6	1,394	2.8	50,174
2024	32,789	63.6	4,033	7.8	8,274	16.1	5,058	9.8	1,376	2.7	51,530
2025	33,494	63.6	4,132	7.8	8,699	16.5	5,012	9.5	1,355	2.6	52,692
2026	33,180	62.9	3,900	7.4	8,630	16.4	5,646	10.7	1,423	2.7	52,779

Harvest Summary

Total turkey harvest during Ohio's youth and regular seasons was 15,887 in 2026, a 1% decrease from 2025 (16,010). ODNR opened the first modern spring turkey hunting season in 1966, and total spring harvest increased annually from 1966-2002, a period in which both hunting opportunity and the turkey population were expanding. Spring turkey season opened statewide in 2000 and spring harvest total peaked in 2001 (26,156). Spring harvest total has fluctuated between 23,421 and 11,872 over the past two decades (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Total spring wild turkey harvest in Ohio during 1966-2026.



Ohio turkey hunters reported 92% of the spring turkey harvest on private land and 8% of turkey harvest on public land in 2026. Landowner tags were used to take 2,493 turkeys, or 16% of the total spring harvest. The percentage of adult males in the total harvest (85%) was above the five-year average (81%) while the percentage of juvenile males (14%) was below the five-year average (18%). The percentage of bearded hens in the spring harvest was similar to previous years (Table 2). The percentages of turkeys taken by shotgun, vertical bow (compound, recurve, etc.), and crossbow were nearly identical to the previous four years (Table 3). The percentage of harvested male turkeys reported to have spurs ½ inch or less decreased while the percentage of turkeys reported to have spurs greater than ½ inch increased in 2026 (Table 4).

Table 2. Summary of spring wild turkey harvest by turkey type during 2022-2026 in Ohio.

Year	Adult male		Juvenile male		Bearded female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2022	8,791	74.1	2,950	24.8	131	1.1	11,872
2023	13,153	83.9	2,354	15.0	166	1.1	15,673
2024	12,780	82.3	2,594	16.7	162	1.0	15,536
2025	12,900	80.6	2,924	18.3	186	1.1	16,010
2026	13,442	84.6	2,284	14.4	161	1.0	15,887

Table 3. Summary spring wild turkey harvest by hunting implement during 2022-2026 in Ohio.

Year	Shotgun		Vertical bow		Crossbow		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2022	11,639	98.0	123	1.0	110	0.9	11,872
2023	15,360	98.0	173	1.1	140	0.9	15,673
2024	15,249	98.2	163	1.0	124	0.8	15,536
2025	15,747	98.4	157	1.0	106	0.7	16,010
2026	15,631	98.4	144	0.9	112	0.7	15,887

Table 4. Summary of reported spur length for wild turkeys harvested in Ohio during 2022-2026.

Year	1/2 inch or less		>1/2 inch but <1 inch		1 inch or greater		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
2022	3,430	29.2	2,437	20.8	5,874	50.0	11,741
2023	2,918	18.6	3,994	25.5	8,761	55.9	15,673
2024	3,102	20.0	3,260	21.0	9,174	59.1	15,536
2025	3,595	22.5	3,354	20.9	9,061	56.6	16,010
2026	2,856	18.0	3,731	23.5	9,300	58.5	15,887

Hunters checked 2,080 turkeys during the two youth seasons in 2026, a 20% increase from 2025 (1,740). Youth hunters reported 1,957 turkey harvests during the south zone youth season and 123 during the northeast zone youth season in 2026. The youth season harvest accounted for 13% of the total spring harvest in 2026. Hunters checked 3,104 turkeys during the opening days of each zone, accounting for 20% of the total spring harvest. Spikes in harvest were apparent on weekends throughout the season (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Figure 3. Total turkey harvest by day during the 2026 spring season in Ohio's south zone.

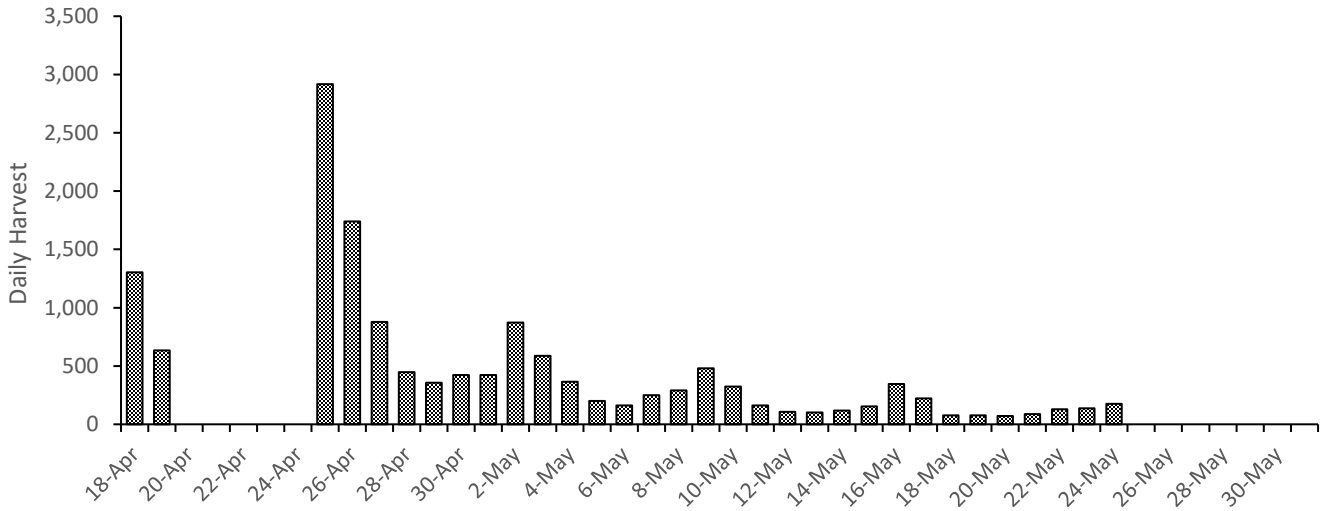
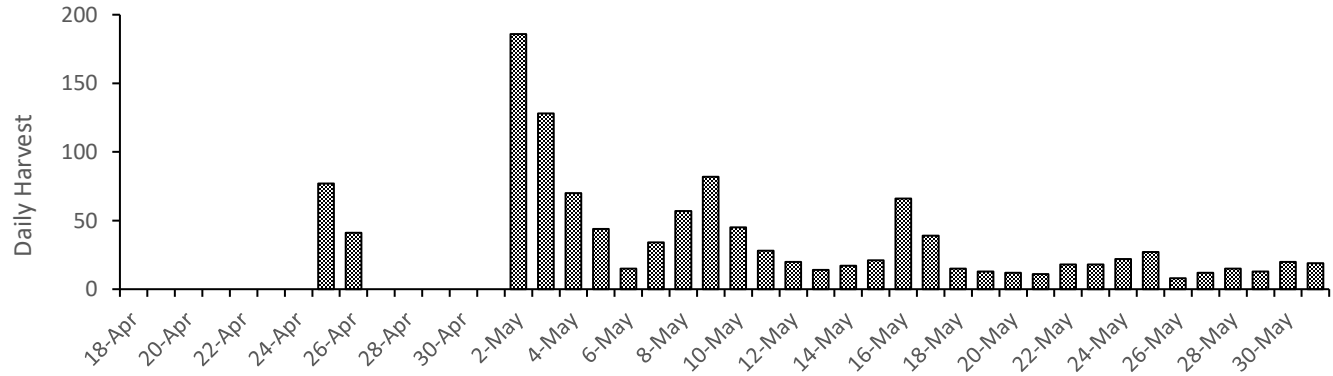


Figure 4. Total turkey harvest by day during the 2026 spring season in Ohio's northeast zone.



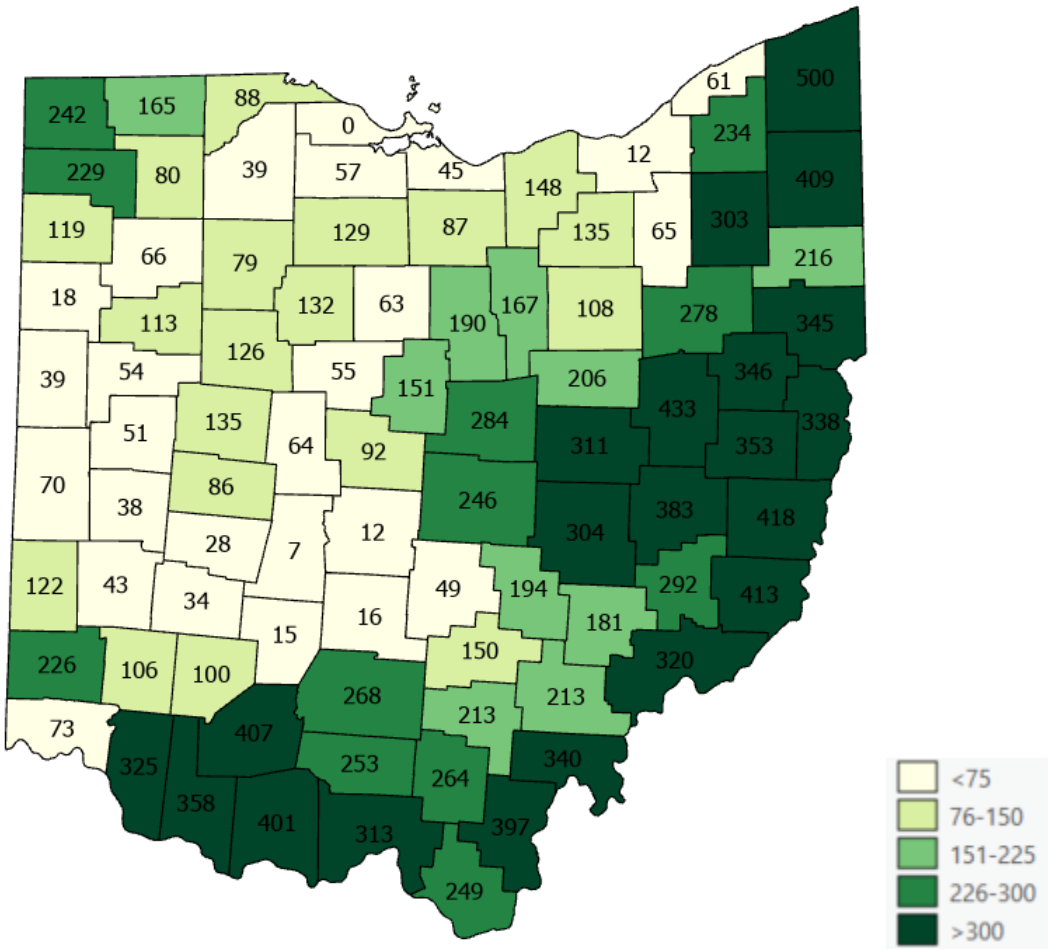
Approximately 26%, 28% and 30% of resident, nonresident, and youth spring turkey permits, respectively, resulted in a reported harvest during 2026. Reduced cost permit holders were slightly less successful (19%) while 6% of free permits resulted in a reported harvest (Table 5). We cannot determine landowner success rate since permits are only issued to landowners when a harvest is reported.

Table 5. Spring turkey permit success rate (%) during 2022-2026 in Ohio.

Year	Resident	Nonresident	Youth	Reduced cost	Free
2022	20.9	21.4	23.0	16.7	3.5
2023	26.5	29.3	30.8	20.1	4.6
2024	26.0	26.1	29.4	20.3	4.3
2025	26.4	25.9	28.7	20.3	4.7
2026	25.8	27.6	30.2	19.1	5.7

Counties in eastern Ohio reported the highest turkey harvest in the state in 2026. The top counties were Ashtabula (500), Tuscarawas (433), Belmont (418), Monroe (413), and Trumbull (409; Figure 5).

Figure 5. Map of total spring wild turkey harvest by Ohio county during 2026.



Appendix A. Spring wild turkey harvest totals for Ohio counties in 2026.

County	Adult Male	Juvenile Male	Bearded Female	TOTAL	County	Adult Male	Juvenile Male	Bearded Female	TOTAL
Adams	326	71	4	401	Licking	209	35	2	246
Allen	88	20	5	113	Logan	116	19	0	135
Ashland	137	28	2	167	Lorain	116	32	0	148
Ashtabula	420	76	4	500	Lucas	73	13	2	88
Athens	190	23	0	213	Madison	4	3	0	7
Auglaize	39	15	0	54	Mahoning	192	23	1	216
Belmont	376	39	3	418	Marion	40	14	1	55
Brown	296	59	3	358	Medina	118	17	0	135
Butler	201	25	0	226	Meigs	313	25	2	340
Carroll	299	43	4	346	Mercer	28	11	0	39
Champaign	71	15	0	86	Miami	30	6	2	38
Clark	21	7	0	28	Monroe	391	22	0	413
Clermont	270	52	3	325	Montgomery	34	9	0	43
Clinton	76	22	2	100	Morgan	155	26	0	181
Columbiana	301	40	4	345	Morrow	111	39	1	151
Coshocton	268	40	3	311	Muskingum	267	35	2	304
Crawford	51	9	3	63	Noble	255	32	5	292
Cuyahoga	10	2	0	12	Ottawa	0	0	0	0
Darke	57	11	2	70	Paulding	102	16	1	119
Defiance	196	31	2	229	Perry	179	14	1	194
Delaware	74	16	2	92	Pickaway	13	3	0	16
Erie	35	10	0	45	Pike	212	40	1	253
Fairfield	42	7	0	49	Portage	249	46	8	303
Fayette	9	6	0	15	Preble	99	18	5	122
Franklin	12	0	0	12	Putnam	46	19	1	66
Fulton	143	20	2	165	Richland	165	22	3	190
Gallia	312	79	6	397	Ross	210	53	5	268
Geauga	206	24	4	234	Sandusky	43	13	1	57
Greene	28	6	0	34	Scioto	266	44	3	313
Guernsey	352	26	5	383	Seneca	96	33	0	129
Hamilton	68	5	0	73	Shelby	43	8	0	51
Hancock	65	12	2	79	Stark	247	30	1	278
Hardin	103	21	2	126	Summit	58	7	0	65
Harrison	317	34	2	353	Trumbull	348	56	5	409
Henry	61	18	1	80	Tuscarawas	379	46	8	433
Highland	312	93	2	407	Union	45	19	0	64
Hocking	132	18	0	150	Van Wert	15	3	0	18
Holmes	171	32	3	206	Vinton	185	28	0	213
Huron	63	24	0	87	Warren	66	40	0	106
Jackson	222	35	7	264	Washington	291	27	2	320
Jefferson	311	26	1	338	Wayne	83	24	1	108
Knox	241	37	6	284	Williams	204	31	7	242
Lake	48	13	0	61	Wood	33	6	0	39
Lawrence	187	62	0	249	Wyandot	106	25	1	132
					Statewide Total	**13,442**	**2,284**	**161**	**15,887**

Appendix B. Ohio's spring wild turkey season dates, regulations, permits, and total harvest, 1966-2026.

Year	Season Dates	Open Counties	Bag Limit	Permit Fee	Permits Issued[a]	Total Harvest[b]
1966	05/04 – 05/07	9	1	Free	500	12
1967	05/03 – 05/06	9	1	Free	898	18
1968	05/08 – 05/11	9	1	Free	914	20
1969	05/07 – 05/10	9	1	Free	945	37
1970	04/29 – 05/02	14	1	Free	909	30
	05/06 – 05/09				896	36
1971	04/28 – 05/01	14	1	Free	1,000	37
	05/05 – 05/08				1,000	17
1972	05/03 – 05/06	14	1	$5.35	917	32
	05/10 – 05/13				881	25
1973	05/02 – 05/05	14	1	$5.35	1,034	39
	05/09 – 05/12				1,034	32
1974	05/01 – 05/04	14	1	$10.50	999	61
	05/08 – 05/11				184	10
1975	04/28 – 05/03	14	1	$10.50	996	75
	05/05 – 05/10				267	19
1976	04/26 – 05/08	14	1	$10.50	1,471	139
1977	05/02 – 05/14	14	1	$10.50	1,751	137
1978	05/01 – 05/13	18	1	$10.50	2,000	147
1979	04/30 – 05/12	18	1	$10.50	2,000	265
1980	04/21 – 05/03	20	1	$10.75	2,097	387
1981	04/27 – 05/09	20	1	$10.75	3,458	577
1982	04/26 – 05/08	20	1	$10.75	4,262	651
1983	04/25 – 05/07	21	1	$10.75	5,141	764
1984	04/23 – 05/12	31	1	$10.75	6,935	1,233
1985	04/22 – 05/11	31	1	$10.75	10,084	1,583
1986	04/28 – 05/17	31	1	$10.75	11,913	1,816
1987	04/27 – 05/16	32	1	$10.75	13,396	2,268
1988	04/25 – 05/14	32	1	$11.00	16,208	2,629
1989	04/24 – 05/13	36	1	$11.00	18,887	3,171
1990	04/23 – 05/12	37	1	$16.00	19,613	4,096
1991	04/22 – 05/11	38	1	$16.00	22,898	5,009
1992	04/27 – 05/16	38	1	$16.00	28,974	5,678
1993	04/26 – 05/15	42	1	$16.00	29,538	7,470
			2	$32.00	4,106	
1994	04/25 – 05/14	44	1	$16.00	29,334	9,098
			2	$32.00	5,187	
1995	04/24 – 05/13	44	1	$20.00	30,837	10,892
			2	$40.00	6,136	
1996	04/22 – 05/11	46	1	$20.00	31,003	12,098
			2	$40.00	7,700	
1997	04/28 – 05/17	47	1	$20.00	30,511	12,393
			2	$40.00	8,130	
1998	04/27 – 05/16	50	1	$20.00	31,037	13,251
			2	$40.00	8,133	
1999	04/26 – 05/16	57	1	$20.00	42,363	14,419
			2	$40.00	7,846	
2000	04/24 – 05/14	88	1	$20.00	49,982	20,276
			2	$40.00	9,720	
2001	04/23 – 05/13	88	1	$20.00	54,841	26,156
			2	$40.00	11,092	
2002	04/22 – 05/19	88	1	$20.00	48,821	22,190
			2	$40.00	24,633	
2003[c]	04/28 – 05/25	88	2	$20.00	94,989	20,368
2004	04/26 – 05/23	88	2	$24.00	74,119	16,927
2005	04/18 – 05/15	88	2	$24.00	85,053	18,833
2006	04/24 – 05/21	88	2	$24.00	85,248	20,023
2007	04/23 – 05/20	88	2	$24.00	75,408	18,584
2008	04/21 – 05/18	88	2	$24.00	79,962	20,389
2009	04/20 – 05/17	88	2	$24.00	81,049	20,710

2010	04/19 – 05/16	88	2	$24.00	78,388	23,421
2011	04/18 – 05/15	88	2	$24.00	76,665	18,162
2012	04/23 – 05/20	88	2	$24.00	70,291	17,657
2013	04/22 – 05/19	88	2	$24.00	73,914	18,409
2014	04/21 – 05/18	88	2	$24.00	68,960	16,568
2015	04/20 – 05/17	88	2	$24.00	65,883	17,652
2016	04/18 – 05/15	88	2	$24.00	66,436	17,805
2017[d]	04/24 – 05/21 05/01 – 05/28	83 5	2	$24.00[e]	65,486	21,097
2018[d]	04/23 – 05/20 04/30 – 05/27	83 5	2	$24.00[e]	63,838	22,612
2019[d]	04/22 – 05/19 04/29 – 05/26	83 5	2	$24.00[e]	63,604	19,088
2020[d]	04/20 – 05/17 05/04 – 05/31	83 5	2	$31.20[e]	68,148	17,894
2021[d]	04/24 – 05/23 05/01 – 05/30	83 5	2	$31.20[e]	61,135	14,546
2022[d]	04/23 – 05/22 04/30 – 05/29	83 5	1	$31.20[e]	48,815	11,872
2023[d]	04/22 – 05/21 04/29 – 05/28	83 5	1	$31.20[e]	50,174	15,673
2024[d]	04/20 – 05/19 04/27 – 05/26	83 5	1	$31.20[e]	51,530	15,536
2025[d]	04/19 – 05/18 05/03 – 06/01	83 5	1	$31.20[e]	52,692	16,010
2026[d]	04/25 – 05/24 05/02 – 05/31	83 5	1	$31.20[e]	52,779	15,887

[a]Includes all permit types.
[b]Total recorded harvest by all hunter types.
[c]The special bonus wild turkey permit was eliminated in 2003. Hunters no longer classified as one-bird or two-bird permit holders.
[d]South and Northeast Zones established in 2017 with offset dates.
[e]Includes resident permit fee only.