



Ruffed Grouse Society Northeast Region FAN Update September 2012

Hunting season 2012 is looking promising. I haven't yet heard the early reports from New York's north zone, which opened September 20, but the word from the woods since last spring has had an optimistic tone. Good drumming activity and singing woodcock were replaced by numerous brood sightings across the Northeast. Many woodcock nested early, and those hens that failed on their first nest attempt had plenty of time to try again. Grouse brood reports indicated many successful nests, with a staggered hatch and variable chick survival - some large broods and some small ones.

Dry summer conditions in many areas had some folks wondering where the woodcock had gone, as they were largely absent from the usual hardwood feeding coverts. Often when the woods get dry, the best places for a woodcock to find food are in coverts that normally wouldn't be considered good habitat - in fairly dense conifer (e.g. spruce and fir) cover, or down in areas typically so wet you expect to find snipe rather than woodcock. The soil under the conifer stands holds moisture better than the typical hardwood coverts, so in dry times the soil invertebrates in the top few inches of soil will be more abundant than in the parched soils of the hardwoods. Expect the birds to be back to the usually places when we get enough rain. Good hunting,

- *Andy*

American Woodcock Population Status, 2012

By Thomas R. Cooper and Rebecca Rau, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Abstract: Singing-ground Survey data for 2012 indicate that indices for singing American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) males in the Eastern and Central Management Regions are not significantly different from 2011. There was no significant 10-year trend for woodcock heard in the Eastern or Central Management Regions during 2002-12. This marks the ninth consecutive year that the 10-year trend estimate was not significant in the Eastern Region and the second year that the 10-year trend in the Central Management Region was non-significant. Both regions have a long term (1968-12) declining trend of -0.8 % per year. The 2011 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.68 immature per adult female) was 13.7% greater than the 2010 index and 2.5% greater than the long-term regional index, while the recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Central Region (1.53 immature per adult female) was 0.8% lower than the 2010 index and was 2.6% lower than the long-term regional index. Estimates from the Harvest Information Program indicated that U.S. woodcock hunters in the Eastern Region spent 156,000 days afield and harvested 77,000 woodcock during the 2011-12 season, while in the Central Region, hunters spent 350,500 days afield and harvested 231,700 woodcock.

Andy's Note: Woodcock numbers in 2012 remained fairly close to 2011 levels across New York, New England, and the Maritimes. High note: New Brunswick's count was the 4th highest for the province since 1977. Low note: The woodcock survey index in Massachusetts this spring was the lowest since the survey began in the 1960s (must... cut...more...trees!). The entire report can be viewed at

<http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewReportsPublications/PopulationStatus/Woodcock/2012%20American%20Woodcock%20Population%20Status,%202012.pdf>

RGS Files Brief in Case before the US Supreme Court

If left to stand, ruling will have a severe impact on wildlife

In what it considers a vast error in judgment, the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) has filed an amicus curiae brief with the Supreme Court, regarding a 2011 ruling by the 9th Circuit Court in California in which the court ruled that rainwater runoff from forest roads that is caused by timber harvest activity is an "industrial pollutant."

As is noted in the brief, this ruling applies to all landowners, including private individuals, who typically have little knowledge of, or expertise with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permitting processes. If required to go through an EPA permitting process, the cost and complexity of this process would greatly discourage private individuals from implementing a timber harvest on their lands – this would

drastically reduce habitat availability for ruffed grouse, woodcock and the other wildlife that depend on young forests habitats today created only through timber harvest.

“This decision overturned 35 years of regulatory interpretation. Prior to this ruling, the “silvicultural exemption” in the Clean Water Act allowed this type of runoff to be treated as a “nonindustrial source,” said John B. Eichinger, RGS President and CEO.

“The 9th Circuit’s ruling places an absurd regulatory burden on individual private landowners that would lead to drastic reductions in wildlife habitat development on private forest lands. Millions of acres of important young forest habitats will be lost over time if this ruling is allowed to stand. We certainly hope that the Supreme Court will overturn this ill-advised regulatory mandate,” said Dan Dessecker, RGS Director of Conservation Policy.

Ryan Woody, pro-bono attorney for the Ruffed Grouse Society, filed its brief on August 28th, 2012. The Supreme Court will review the RGS brief, as well as those filed by other interests, and hear oral arguments in early December. The Court is expected to release a ruling early in 2013.

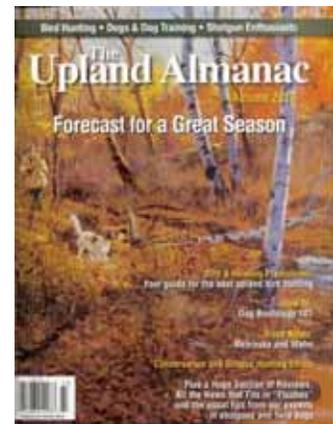
Subscribe to The Upland Almanac and help out RGS

As a Ruffed Grouse Society supporter, The Upland Almanac is pleased to extend to you a special subscription offer that also supports RGS.

* For every 1-year (4 quarterly issues) UA subscription placed during this promotion, a \$3 contribution will be made to RGS by UA.

* For every 2-year UA subscription, a \$6 contribution will be made.

At The Upland Almanac's [shopping cart page](#), just be sure to enter the promotion code **RGS0812** and you'll not only receive your next issue soon, you'll support the wildlife habitat conservation efforts of the Ruffed Grouse Society.



You'll have to be quick with your trigger finger, as this promotion **ends October 15, 2012!**

NH Ruffed Grouse Wing and Tail Survey

Statewide New Hampshire Survey

New Hampshire Fish and Game conducts an annual grouse wing and tail survey throughout the state to help gain critical information about ruffed grouse in New Hampshire. Hunter participation is key to this effort -- we need your help!

Win a gun! All those who turn in completed and useable grouse study survey packets will be entered into a drawing for a quality shotgun donated by the Ruffed Grouse Society.



How to take part:

Any grouse hunter can participate by picking up grouse sample packets, which include envelopes and survey cards for two grouse samples, from any of the participating locations listed below. Hunters are asked to remove all tissue from wing and tail samples and to let them dry completely before placing the samples in the envelopes. Do NOT place the samples in plastic of any kind. Hunters should place only one wing and tail in each envelope with the corresponding completed survey card. Completed packets must be returned to one of these locations.

Packets will be available as of **September 26, 2012**, check the following website for locations:

http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Hunting/hunt_ruffed_grouse_survey.html

Win a gun! All those who turn in completed and useable grouse study survey packets will be entered into a drawing for a quality shotgun donated by the Ruffed Grouse Society.

Please let other ruffed grouse enthusiasts know about this survey and help us increase participation this year, and say thanks to these business owners for their effort, as well.

For more information on the grouse survey, call Julie Robinson, N.H. Fish and Game Small Game Project Leader, at Fish and Game's Region 3 Office in Durham at 603-868-1095.

New York Grouse and Woodcock Hunting Log

Grouse and woodcock hunters needed! (for more info visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9351.html>)

This survey asks hunters to record their daily grouse and woodcock hunting activities in a "hunting log", including the number of grouse and woodcock flushed, the number of hours hunted, the number of birds killed, and if a dog was used to hunt. The primary purpose of the log is to monitor the number of birds flushed per hour. Grouse and woodcock share many of the same habitats, so the information you provide will help monitor populations of both of these great game birds as habitats change both locally and on a landscape scale.



Print or download the [2012-13 Ruffed Grouse and American Woodcock Hunting Log \(PDF\)](#) (621 kB), or contact us to get on our mailing list (see contact information below).

Completed survey forms can be sent to:
Grouse Log, NYSDEC
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4754
Phone: (518) 402-8886

[e-mail Grouse Log](#) (Please leave the words "Grouse Log" in the subject line.)

After you have completed your hunting log, you can contact the Department at the address above for a postage-paid envelope to send in your data sheet(s).

After data have been analyzed, your hunting log will be returned to you along with a report of this survey (full reports from previous seasons can be found in the links in the left-hand column). In subsequent years, you will receive a hunting log in the mail just prior to the hunting season. The personal information you provide (e.g., name, address) will be kept confidential.

Thanks and good luck!



Grouse log cooperators arm patches

Vote Online to Raise Money for RGS and Win Prizes

The second-annual TruckVault Cares ... for conservation, canines & kids is now underway. Raise funds for six different groups and possibly win prizes for yourself with every online vote. Cast your vote daily for RGS on <http://truckvaultcares.com> and earn funding to support ruffed grouse and woodcock management while also entering into random drawings for fantastic prizes including a South Dakota duck and pheasant hunt at Warne Ranch, Peet shoe dryers, Kent Cartridge ammunition, Filson apparel, a TruckVault, Ugly Dog Hunting Co. gear, and Happy Jack dog care products. This year prizes will be awarded every 5,000 votes as well as at the conclusion of voting on Dec. 31, 2012.

Viewers have chosen English Setters as the breed to represent each beneficiary group. Every vote puts kibble into the pup's food bowl and sends a proportional amount of the \$10,000 fund to that group's treasury. Wingshooting USA is the official TV series of the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Pass the link on to your friends and raise even more money for RGS.

Got Grouse Camp?



Take some good photos of your hunting camp crew and hunting activities this fall – we'll try to put them together for a slide show at your banquet. Save digital photos in large file size and send to me; include date, location, who's who, and other pertinent facts for the photo. Thanks!



2012-2013 National Raffle

FOUR PRIZES - WINNER'S CHOICE

ORVIS UPLANDER DELUXE SHOTGUN, LIMITED EDITION

- Over-and-under 20-gauge, 28" barrels
- Hand-engraved woodcock and grouse with traditional English-style scroll and bouquet engraving on receiver, side plates and fore-end iron.
- Deluxe grade Turkish Circassian walnut stock and forearm
- Long tang trigger guard
- Solid, tapered top rib and high-luster deep blue finish
- Comes with a velvet-lined leather case

Only 10 will be made | Retail value: \$7,995
Orvis Company, Donor



SOUTH DAKOTA PHEASANT HUNT

- Two people, 3 days /4 nights in the 2013-2014 season.
- Hunt pheasants on Orvis endorsed wingshooting grounds at Pine Shadows Daybreak lodge near Frederick, South Dakota. Meals, lodging, ammunition, dogs, guides and bird cleaning are included. Hunt over 6,000 acres of private land with huntsmen and Orvis Endorsed Pine Shadows English springer spaniels.
- Travel expenses up to \$1,000 included, upon arrival, transportation to and from airport and hunting grounds will be provided.

Visit www.pineshadows.com/Daybreak.htm for more information.

Package value: over \$7,000

Pine Shadows Daybreak, Hunt Donor



KANSAS QUAIL HUNT

- Two people, 3 days/4 nights in the 2013-2014 season.
- Hunt wild bobwhite quail over English setters with certified Orvis Wingshooting guide Steve Grossman near Medicine Lodge, Kansas. You'll have access to over 22,000 acres - including open prairie, river bottoms and draws of cedar. Two hunters per guide, double guns only and fresh dogs will be on the ground all day long. All meals provided.
- Travel expenses up to \$1,000 included.

Visit www.doublegunbirdhunts.com for more information.

Package value: \$5,800.00

Double Gun Bird Hunts, Hunt Donor



2013 NATIONAL GROUSE AND WOODCOCK HUNT

- Two people, 3 days/4 nights from October 8-11, 2013.
- This deluxe, guided hunt includes lodging (double occupancy) at the Sawmill Inn in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Enjoy an outdoor festival at the local gun club and two full days of grouse and woodcock hunting. Experienced guides and trained bird dogs provided. All meals, bird cleaning and many extras included.
- Travel expenses up to \$1,000 included. Transportation to and from hunting areas will be provided.

The value of this package is \$3,450.00.

The winner of this package has the option of waiving the hunt in lieu of \$2,500 cash - your choice!

Donation for each ticket is \$20.00. Up to 10,000 tickets to be sold.

Four winners to be drawn on June 28, 2013 at RGS Headquarters in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania. This raffle is winner's choice. First person drawn chooses from all four prizes, second person chooses from remaining prizes and so on.

Winners responsible for applicable taxes.

All raffle participants will receive a free issue of *Orvis News*.

To purchase raffle tickets, mail coupon to:

Ruffed Grouse Society
451 McCormick Road - Coraopolis, PA 15108

or call 888-564-6747 or buy online at ruffedgrousesociety.org

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

_____ Tickets @ \$20.00 Each = \$ _____ Total Enclosed

CHECK (Payable to RGS) CREDIT CARD

CC # _____ Exp. _____

Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

Upcoming RGS Events in the Region

October 19-21 – Inaugural Northern New York Grouse and Woodcock Hunt, Malone, NY. Contact Bruce Bennett 413-237-1054 or bbennett82@comcast.net.

November 8-11 – Inaugural Northern Maine Grouse and Woodcock Hunt, Millinocket, ME. Contact me, or Mark Gray 207-299-4172.

November 9 – Central New York Chapter Annual Banquet. 6:00 pm, The Whitetail Restaurant, Chittenango, NY. Contact Norm Webber 315-697-3377, lutherwebb@earthlink.net.

November 12 – Triple Flush Chapter Annual Banquet. Elmira, NY. Contact Walter Booth 607-733-9121.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions:

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