



2023 Oregon Upland Game Bird Production Inventories

Following are the statewide results of the upland game bird production inventories collected by ODFW biologists during the summer of 2023. When considered collectively, these indices are generally a good predictor of fall populations and harvest for some of the popularly hunted species such as pheasant, California quail, and chukar. These indices are not as reliable for forest species such as mountain quail, ruffed grouse, and blue grouse.

Upland game bird populations can vary greatly from year to year. Generally, hunting has little influence over the annual population fluctuations of upland game birds whereas weather and habitat conditions drive population trends. The winter of 2022-23 was long, lasting well into typical nest initiation and incubation dates. Snowpack was above average, but temperatures were not severely cold for long periods of time. These conditions likely impacted or delayed breeding and early nesting species, but biologist observations indicate this will be an above average season for most upland game bird species. Oregon is still recovering from several years of drought conditions, but forage and cover have improved noticeably, particularly in southeastern Oregon.

Chukar continue to thrive, with a strong showing across their range. Pheasant are predicted to have one of their better turnouts in recent years. Difficult to survey, mountain quail may be benefitting from some post-fire habitat in the Cascades and Coast ranges. Early reports indicate a dip in forest grouse populations in western Oregon, but a remarkable year in the Blue Mountains. California quail numbers will be strong, with improved production over the previous year.

2023 Statewide Upland Game Bird Indices for Oregon

Species	Year	Production Index (chicks/ad*)	Abundance Index (birds/10mi)
Gray Partridge	2023	1.6	2.2
	2022	2.3	0.5
	5yr Avg	3.7	0.7
Chukar	2023	2.4	40.2
	2022	3.4	23.0
	5yr Avg	2.8	22.5
California Quail	2023	1.9	15.7
	2022	1.9	11.7
	5yr Avg	2.1	14.5
Mountain Quail	2023	3.8	1.3
	2022	4.0	1.1
	5yr Avg	3.4	0.9
Pheasant	2023	3.8	3.6
	2022	3.7	1.3
	5yr Avg	3.4	3.3
Ruffed Grouse	2023	0.3	0.2
	2022	2.6	1.0
	5yr Avg	2.7	0.5
Blue Grouse	2023	2.0	0.2
	2022	1.1	0.9
	5yr Avg	1.8	0.8
Turkey	2023	1.1	1.8
	2022	2.1	2.8
	5yr Avg	2.0	3.1
Mourning Dove	2023	na	14.1
	2022	na	12.3
	5yr Avg	na	14.3