



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Hunting News

Conservation and Recreation



Pheasant hunting on Thanksgiving as traditional as pumpkin pie

For many Iowans, a Thanksgiving Day pheasant hunt is as much a part of the holiday tradition as football, battling over the last turkey leg and an afternoon nap, and this year's outing may be one of the best.

"Everyone has time off and we're all together so it's a great opportunity to get outside, enjoy the fresh air," said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "Having spent many Thanksgivings hunting with my family, it's just being together that makes the outing special. Bagging birds is usually a bonus."

He said for those who've drifted away from pheasant hunting, this year would be a good time to restart the tradition, just keep an eye out for any hard-to-find shotgun shells during the trip over the river and through the woods.

"We have good bird numbers regionally, primarily north of Hwy. 30. Most of the crops are harvested so things are shaping up for good pheasant hunting over the Thanksgiving holiday. Hopefully Mother Nature will cooperate," he said.

Iowa's [pheasant hunting outlook](#) is similar to 2020 when hunters harvested nearly 300,000 roosters. The Iowa DNR has an [online hunting atlas](#) that identifies the state, county and federal land where hunting is allowed and open to the public, and the private areas enrolled in the Iowa Habitat for Access Program. Need a refresher on the rules? [Click here](#). Pheasant season closes Jan. 10, 2022.

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